

An
Adventure
of
Ideas

QUEST

Editors: Abu Sayeed Ayyub, Amlan Datta

GEORGE E. GORDON CATLIN

Rabindranath Tagore

ASHIN DAS GUPTA

The Historian in India 1962

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

A Chinese Wall in Europe

RAM JOSHI

Decentralisation and Leadership

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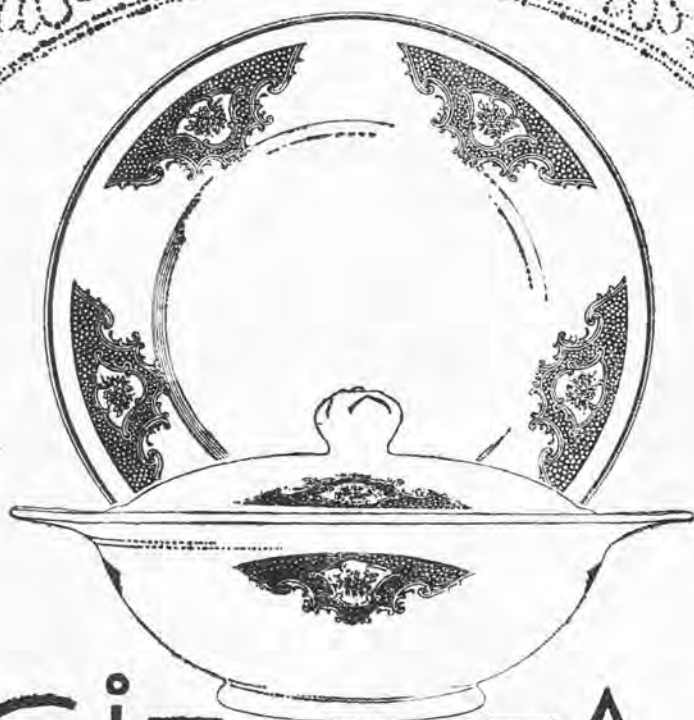
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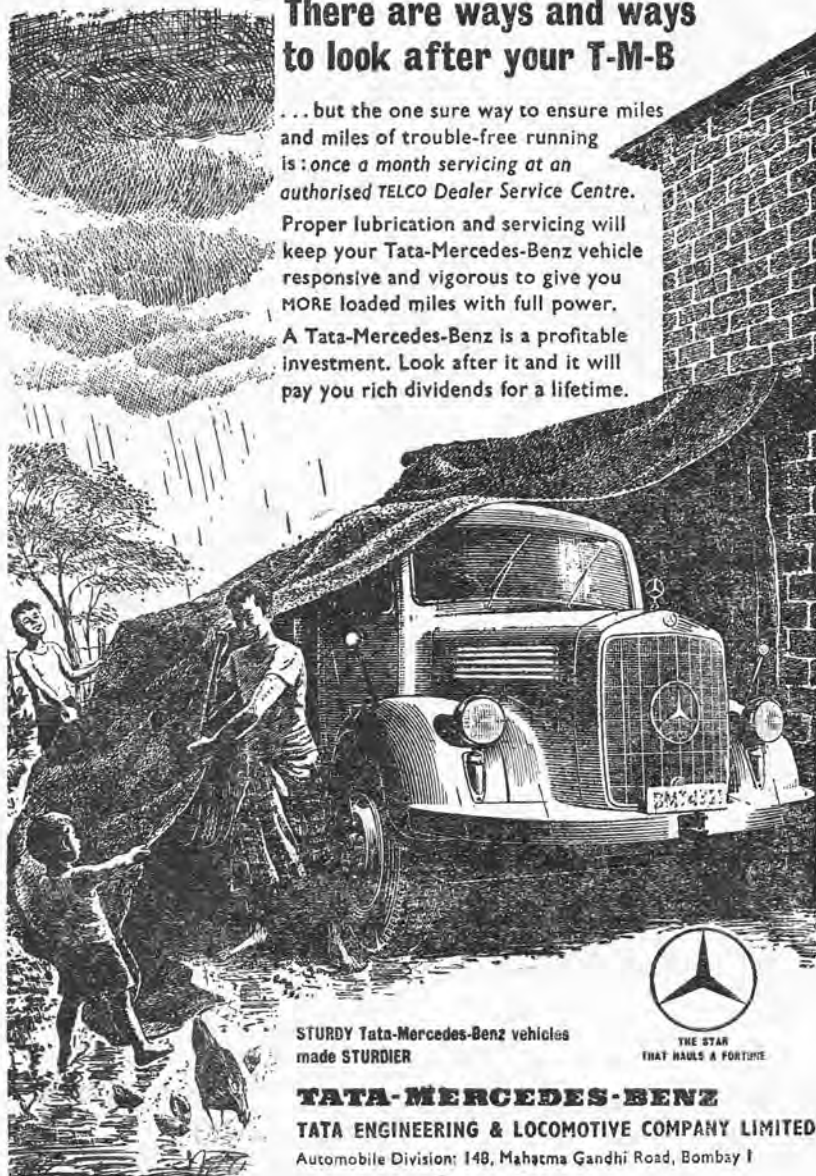
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QUEST

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A Quarterly of Inquiry, Criticism and Ideas

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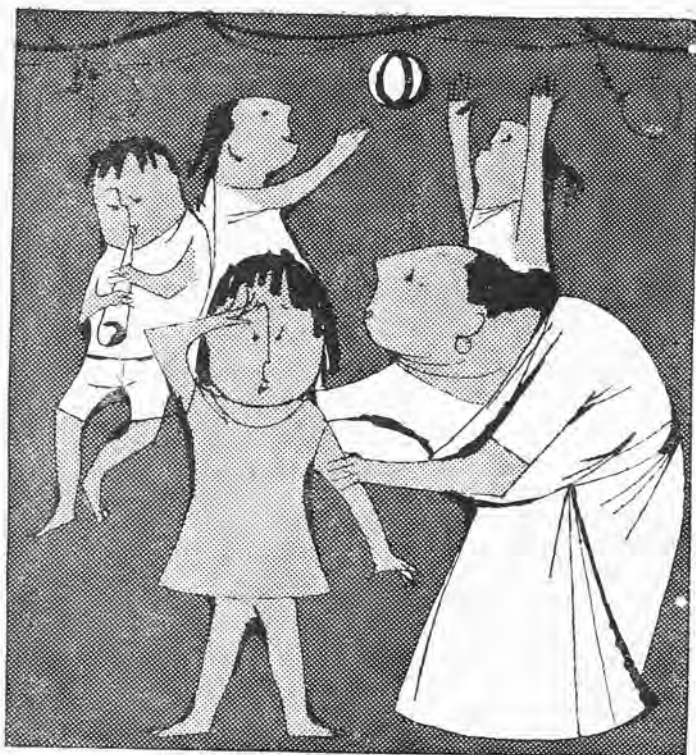
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Rabindranath Tagore*

By GEORGE E. GORDON CATLIN

TAGORE was a polymath in that great tradition which includes Aristotle, Aquinas, Leonardo, Diderot and Goethe—a tradition unfortunately more honoured to-day than imitated. He was painter, poet, singer, dramatist, actor, orator, political prophet and religious philosopher. Born 1861, we have to remember that he was the younger contemporary of Tennyson and Browning. Some would think of him as the contemporary of Maeterlinck, also a Nobel Prize winner, and of Sir James Barrie. It would be better to note his spiritual affinity with Romain Rolland. It is the weakness of such wide humanism that it makes itself vulnerable to those who, not knowing something about everything, do yet know everything about something. It is quite impracticable — and anyhow beyond my powers — to survey with adequate attention all Tagore's activities. On this commemorative occasion, however, I do propose to pay some attention to Tagore's work as political guide and as what Gandhi called 'the Great Sentinel', watchful of India's and of humanity's treasure of spiritual values.

In some ways Rabindranath's political career was unexpected. He regarded himself as the singer and poet, who declined to dedicate his life to struggle in the midst of the political fray. He was only once seen at the annual meeting of the Congress Party when he sang *Bande Mataram* to a tune he had designed himself. Like Fletcher of Saltoun, he preferred giving to the people their songs rather than sitting in some legislative assembly, making their laws. Himself of Brahmin stock and a

wealthy Bengali zamindar or land-owner, the grandson of Dwarkanath Tagore, who was known, from his almost spendthrift magnificence as 'the Prince', with a family name which means 'lord', he liked to think of himself as being 'where the pathmaker is breaking stones', and was over-enjoyed that the common people sang his songs.

In the words of K. R. Kripalani, in his *Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru*: 'All his life he planned and strove for social justice, for the right of the poor to material well-being, of the citizen to self-government, of the ignorant to knowledge of the child to unfettered development, of the woman to equal dignity with the man.' He saw an economic remedy for distress in increased 'socialization', coupled with local government development. With so many others of the period, he shared the admiration of 'that red dawn' of the Russian Revolution and of the Soviet Union of the 'twenties—not least because of the advances in popular education, and to an extent that, in retrospect, may seem uncritical in terms of his own chosen, and very individualist, standards. He himself, at Santiniketan and elsewhere, was no mean pioneer of national education. Even rural reconstruction and encouragement of co-operatives were not beyond his reach. One of the most interesting of contemporary complaints about British India, made by Kripalani, was that the budget for maintaining 'Law and Order' of the raj, left very little over, it seemed, for any educational enterprises. This was also part of Tagore's concern.

Four political events indeed stand out in Tagore's life. All are marked by the characteristic of moral indignation. In 1900 he published his *Stories and Tales*, a

* Abridged from article in *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, London.

collection of patriotic songs. He campaigned against the administrative division, under Lord Curzon, of the ancient Kingdom of Bengal—a problem still with us and to which I shall return. Two decades later, in a famous letter, he resigned his knighthood after the Jallienwalla Bagh affair, with which the names of General Dyer and Sir Michael O'Dwyer are connected. Writing in 1919 to the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, while paying tribute to 'the nobleness of heart' of his predecessor, he concludes, 'the time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation, and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of those of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance, are liable to suffer a degradation not fit for human beings'.

Later still, the swaraj movement, with its demand for refusal to use foreign cloth and for a concerted policy of non-co-operation, swept India. Usually, Gandhi and Tagore, who first met in 1915, stood together. Most of us have seen the famous photograph of those two *patres patriae* seated beside each other, taken in Santiniketan. But, on this occasion, Tagore was alarmed by the isolationist excesses of swaraj; he feared a chauvinism not impossible in Bengal; and, as his manner was, he withdrew into himself and into his beloved school near Bolpur. There is an unwonted note of asperity—but, after all, the Mahatma was capable of impatience—in Gandhi's comment: 'I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir'. Tagore, on the other hand, the champion of Raja Ram Mohan Roy of the Brahmo-Samaj as against Gandhi's view, saw what he supposed to be 'the distracted mind of the West knocking at the gate of India' for its peculiar wisdom. 'And is it to be met by a hoarse shout of exclusion?'

In 1940, just before Tagore's death, Eleanor Rathbone, a woman not marked by tact but of great integrity and of admirable intention, appealed to Tagore to persuade India to come into the war

against Hitler, whatever the human cost, on the side of freedom. His reply was fierce. If the war was for human and national freedom, what freedom did India enjoy? India had been brought, by the raj, into the Second World War without even being paid the respect of being consulted. No wonder Sir William Rothenstein, even thirty years before, had been warned by the Establishment, when he determined to visit India, 'lest he encourage the Nationalists'. The brute issue whether Hitler was to win or lose—or, for that matter, whether Stalin was to win or lose—was not one that weighed with the mind of the poet, who shared much of the pacifism of the Eastern sages. With justification he resented a moral lecture from those who, however honest and even excellent their intentions, in the name of a jihad for freedom, withheld political freedom from India herself.

Tagore's political career may have been detached and spasmodic in its incidents. His leadership in political ideas was not—and indeed was given precise literary formulation in lectures in Japan, the great emergent Asian country of the early years of this century, as well as in the United States, later published in 1920 as *Nationalism*, as well as in his still later (1934) correspondence with Gilbert Murray, published as *East and West*, and in his *Crisis of Civilization*. I may speak with the bias of a political philosopher but, his plays apart, his *Nationalism*, seems to me to be the most important of his prose works. Certainly it throws a flood of light in the explanation of what may seem to be inconsistencies in his practical political activities.

To begin with, India was for him 'not a Nation'; and he registered his alarm at the thought that India might become one, in the peculiar sense in which he chose to use that term. It is necessary here to appreciate the idiosyncratic but important sense in which he uses the word. It is sharply different from that in which the Abbé Renan, who defined it as a perpetual plebiscite in living together, or in fact most political theorists have used it. It is not the

tribe nor the People; and is set in contrast to the People and Society.

The Nation is 'a machinery of commerce and politics'. 'It is like a hydraulic press whose pressure is impersonal.' It is an organization of power; and those under it are 'continually turning the wheel of power' for their own sake, 'or for the sake of the universal officialdom'. It was a bloodless metaphysical abstraction, or rather a practice into whose values men did not inquire because they were blinded by a mental stereotype—what Hobhouse called 'The Metaphysical Idea of the State' and what to-day, less reverently, we dismiss as 'metapolitics'. Varying his metaphor, Tagore speaks of 'the Nation fixing its fangs deep into the naked flesh of the world'. 'Great China' was among its predestined victims. It all involved a dehumanizing process—what to-day, in our current jargon, taken from the French, we call 'alienation'.

Tagore welcomed with open arms the impact of the ideas of West upon East and of East upon West. So far, as much as Goethe, he was a great world-citizen. As the last chapter of his book *Creative Unity* shows, it was precisely to inculcate at once Indian culture and the perspectives of world culture that he founded what was to be his International University at Santiniketan, his Visva-Bharati, where 'music and art would have their prominent place of honour'. Here, like Goethe, he rises to the heights of being the apostle of Universal Man. But he resented a novel and, for him, upstart system, however named 'democratic'—that of the organized will of one people being imposed upon another. He resented a situation where a man who might be one degree short of certification for mental imbecility could contribute his millionth part of a popular will, that of an exclusive Nation, to put a yoke upon another people, be it in Kenya, Cyprus or India, whose people had no vote. Whereas 'the seed of Romulus' in Rome were prepared to be 'paid off', and to take the rewards of empire in doles and entertainments, the English, Scots and Welsh, having got as far as calling themselves the

British nation, have never been prepared to follow the clear logic of empire farther, admitting Maltese and Kikuyu and Rajput to full citizenship and being ruled, like ancient Rome, in one decade by someone Spanish-born like Hadrian, in another by an Arabian, and perhaps by an Indian. The farthest they got was the Venetian-descended Disraeli. The British, unlike the Romans, proposed to eat their cake of empire and to keep their cake of nationalism too. They acquired their Empire 'in a fit of absent-mindedness' and, to tell the truth, never took it quite seriously. Let us hope that their philosophers and statesmen, guardians of a world language (the importance of which they have hitherto, unlike the French, ignored), will take the Commonwealth seriously. The rights of a 'true-born Englishman' did not entirely extend, beyond an insular application, to 'overseas possessions' (significant word) where there could be peculiar acts for deportation of subjects to other colonial areas or for their detention on security grounds, unknown—or almost so—in the homeland. The old Empire contained an internal contradiction.

What, above all, outraged Tagore was that an educational system, designed by the Scotsman, Lord Macaulay, should be imposed like a strait-waistcoat upon the great Indian culture, with which Tagore, as poet, was especially concerned. 'Let us not exist', he writes in *Creative Unity*, 'as the eternal rag-pickers in other people's dustbins'. Culture must be free; must be autonomous. Whether he would have appreciated a Hindi culture being imposed upon Bengal is another matter; and we do not know the answer. Certainly India was not 'one Nation', in his sense, for him. It is here, in this passionate emphasis upon cultural autonomy, in its fight against administrative efficiency—not to speak of alien exploitation or even of alien bounty—that Tagore is at his strongest and his message most immortal.

II

Tagore's distrust of science—and one sus-

pects of social as much as of physical science—goes deeper than dislike of the appanages of a commercial-minded, production-mad, 'adman's' civilization. He dislikes it, as Burke did, because in its own way it is oddly metaphysical, a matter of 'velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers', cat-like meta-physicians, mathematical, abstract, cold, impersonal and anti-human. When it hatches creatively, it hatches as its egg a hydrogen bomb; and then, asked about its moral responsibility, replies like some Pilate of the laboratories, 'Are not all morals relative?' If truth, to which scientists and academics pay homage, is absolute, then it is not relative. If truth is relative, then this truth of the scientific humanists also is relative, and there is no reason why we should sacrifice calculated self-interest and power to what is merely relatively worth while, without an imperative. Tagore is never tired of telling us that Reason is something other than the intellect; that power is the means to full life but not its master; and that India has always known this. As for Japan, let her beware of imitating the Western sorcerers, the Western secularist blasphemy. After 'the Age of Reason' came the age of intellect, of science. We all know that intellect is impersonal. . . . Reality, however, is 'the harmony which gives to the component parts of the thing the equilibrium of the whole'. 'The vital ambition of the present civilization of Europe is to have exclusive possession of the devil'. It blasphemes against beauty, who is God. And its fate will be that of Babel, a rolling up the heavens in that day of wrath, a rolling up in very fervent heat, *solvet coelum in favilla*.

What, then, is this wisdom of the Upanishads, in which, as rephrased by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Tagore very profoundly believed? And is it wisdom? Let us grant the crucial importance for our civilization of studying the means of power, as Faust did of old. 'Thou shalt then learn how move the stars', says Faust. Soon the brain, as much as the bomb, will reveal its secrets, to be under the control of the physician,

the psychologist, the manipulators and hidden persuaders. But is Mephistopheles, offering power, the only guide beyond? Is there no end, no purpose, no content, but only 'Sound and fury, signifying nothing', chaos being king—but all viewed efficiently on a three-dimensional screen? Is the end the apotheosis of phenomenalism—what the Indian calls *maya*? The poems of Tagore express his own answers. Are they rationally satisfying, as Gurudev certainly thought that they were?

Before giving an answer, it may be well to state the theme in the reflective language of an Indian Philosopher, the speaker at Tagore's Jubilee in Calcutta and now Vice-President of India, Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. He is himself the author of a book, *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*. Like Tagore, he emphasized that the European contribution to human culture, unlike the Indian, is in its essence intellectual, a matter of what the Germans call *Verstand*. However, 'the living, the concrete, the individual is distinct from the merely logical'. So far I do not think that either natural scientist or historian will object. What, however, these Indian writers are affirming is that there is a reality beneath the phenomenal, although also immanent in it. I do not think it can properly be said that the teaching of the Upanishads is simply pantheist or solely immanentist. It could be said that they disregard the immortality of the individual. But it must be noted that Tagore quite specifically did not do this. For him, reality transcends, but sustains and is incarnate in, the material. There is a creative energy. *Tapo Brahma*. Religion is not concerned just with happiness but with a co-operation with this energy; virtue is such an energizing. In a striking poem, for which again I am indebted to Mr. Aurobindo Bose, Tagore, who claimed he had 'no caste', writes:

I will say
'It is truth, therefore poetry'.
This is my pride —
Pride on behalf of all men.

It is in the canvas of man's pride
That the great Artist's art is shown.
(*Poems of Wonder*)

The contemplation of beauty, great art, aids in such a selfless-detached empathy. With serenity of spirit the world of joy reveals itself in innumerable forms: *anandarupam amrtam yad vibhati*. This is the message of Tagore's own Hibbert Lectures of 1931, *The Religion of Man*.

The question I would wish to put is how far this teaching is specifically Indian—or Eastern. That the whole universe is in travail and is designed to evolve towards a culmination in the fine structure of the mental, the intelligent, the purposeful, and that what contributes even the smallest mite 'hereto is properly called 'good', is the theme of a great Frenchman, not indeed uninfluenced by the East, but by the very different East of China. The whole material universe is one vast field, potential for incarnation, reaching to incandescence here and there, of reason or Logos or spirit. What to some is mystery and opaque veils, to other significantly symbolizes and declares the very nature of the cosmic process; shows the reality incarnate; and permits the beauty of the fundamental harmony to blaze forth. *Lumen aeternum mundo effudit*. In the whole world of quality, with which category by the nature of our minds we necessarily make contact, here and there we apprehend pre-eminent value. I quote, 'Nothing less than this full presence', of the creative spirit, 'is needed to counterbalance and dominate

in our hearts the glory of the world that is coming into view.'

Some here will prefer to talk in terms of the destiny described by a logical dialectic. Others will feel it nearer to the truth to say: '*Et elevata est magnificentia Tua*'. Allowing for differences in orthodoxy of expression, what I have quoted seems to me to express, alike in active aspiration and in intellectual intention, almost exactly the same pattern of thought as Tagore and Radhakrishnan have expressed. Power over means, not evil in itself, is here recognized, articulated and transcended in the only fashion in which, in my view, it can be transcended. Power as means finds its valid end in the realization of beauty. As you may have recognized, the author of the quotation is the distinguished French Jesuit, Pere Teilhard de Chardin, in his *Milieu Divin*.

Despite whatever may be said by critics, both of style and of literary fashions, 'the Great Sentinel', the poet of India, the humanist and world-citizen, peer in his own fashion of Dante, Erasmus and Goethe, is likely not only to be recalled as one of the founding trinity from which Nehru's India has sprung, but to remain in his own right immortal. This will be because he was able to sing songs in the river villages of Bengal or in his school by Bolpur but, still more, because he was able to intuit and to express verities which are not those either of India or of the East alone, but of the profoundest human spirit.

Democratic Decentralisation and the Problem of Local Leadership

By RAM JOSHI

THE nationalist revolution in India which culminated in Independence was led by a western oriented middle class which drew its inspiration from the liberal democratic ideas and institutions of the West. With the achievement of independence, this Western educated group of middle class intellectuals rose to political power. The avowed objective of this class is the establishment in India of parliamentary democratic institutions on Western model and reconstruction of Indian Society into a modern society. The political objective of this class is a unified national state, rapid economic growth and significant and large-scale reform of the traditional social structure. In a word, the leadership of Independent India is largely in the hands of modernists.

This modernist elite in power is attempting to reconstruct Indian Society on an unprecedented scale; the Directive principles of State Policy enunciated in the Constitution is the agenda of their reform programme: longterm economic plans are directed toward accelerating the pace of economic change; the Community Projects Administration aims at changing not only the techniques of agriculture in villages but the villagers' attitudes towards social change itself. Their aim is to revitalise India's four hundred thousand villages by altering the rhythm of life and work and by lifting them to a new and higher tenor of life.

Unlike the Soviet collectivisation or Chinese communisation, this silent revolution which is gradually changing the face of the countryside in India is being attempted through democratic institutions. Union

Parliament, State legislatures and the entire network of local self-governing institutions are being pressed into service as instruments for achieving the gigantic task of nation building. Not only is the process of development of democratic institutions telescoped but a tremendous pressure of the stresses and strains of growth is being exerted on the new and tender fabric of parliamentary democracy. Establishment of national government has been followed by rapid expansion in the scope of that government, that is, in the growing power of the government to influence and shape the lives of the people. The most important single result of the nationalist movement was that it aroused mass expectations which has forced the newly independent government to cater to these expectations in order to survive. This in turn has further expanded the scope of government. The present leadership thus finds itself into positions of unmatched power for good or for evil. The break-up of the traditional order set men searching for new centres of loyalty. In the absence of rational understanding of new tasks they turned to charismatic leaders as objects of their attachment.

The emergence of charismatic leadership in India is not an accidental phenomenon; it is quite in accordance with the traditional concept of leadership in this country. That tradition lends itself to authoritarian and status concepts but not to modern democratic or liberal concept of leadership. In the stratified caste society where the secular idea of individual rights was absent and rights were strictly related to the performance of caste function, the idea of

leadership was always related to a superior personality to whom habitual obedience was rendered by the mass of men. Leadership in India is, thus, in the words of Schmidt 'symbolic' and not 'creative'. The absence of a genuine consciousness of the self and the nature of the relationship of the self with the rest and an insufficient development of pluralistic institutions have made participation in political processes an experience of very limited scope for the people. Democracy, in such circumstances, becomes a soulless formalism and people turn apathetic and largely apolitical. The sorry spectacle of gigantic schemes of social welfare which leave people unmoved which we witness in the country to-day is the direct result of the unworkability of the usual political levers which operate in a modern democratic community. Feeling the pressure of mass expectations, Governments take up large developmental activities and call upon the people to co-operate with them wholeheartedly. When they find that co-operation is not forthcoming, they rely on the bureaucracy for the execution of the sanctioned works. Heavy reliance on the beauracracy further isolates the government from the people in the sense that they do not come forward to co-operate with the government. Symbolic political leadership, which is very useful in providing people with a focus for national unity, thus turns out to be totally ineffective in enlisting the support and energies of the masses for social and economic programmes. Neither the civil service nor the party machinery can provide sustained liason between the leadership and the people at large. Requirements of survival and political effectiveness necessitate reducing reliance on government servants and transferring power and responsibility to the lower echelons of administration. To remove inertia from the people and to enthuse them for initiative and leadership are tasks which mere exhortations can never achieve but which require appropriate institutional arrangements.

Schemes regarding decentralisation of power and authority and devolution of

functions to local authorities which are being worked out in various states are attempts in that direction and need to be evaluated with reference to their impact upon traditional and authoritarian leadership and the possibility that they contain of throwing up constructive and capable leadership from the villages and the districts. It is there that the consequences, if not the causes, of political developments are to be found. Adoption of a socialistic pattern of society increases the importance of local administrative and political factors. 'In fact, it may be safely asserted that the success or failure of India's Five Year Plans, and indeed of more general political aspirations as stated in her constitution may well depend upon the adequacy of needed reforms in the governmental processes at village, town and district levels. The district, in particular, has always been the king-pin of the administrative set-up both in British days and after independence. Thus, in free India the supreme importance of the collector as the eyes and ears of the State government has remained unaffected, and the district administration continues to be beaurocratic. The local self-governing institutions continued their existence more or less under the same terms and conditions. No conscious effort was made to create that oneness of purpose between the local bodies and the state government or its various agencies which is necessary for co-ordinated development. With the achievement of independence, the administration which was so far organised for performance of regulatory functions was called upon to shoulder new tasks and new responsibilities which required a thorough orientation in their attitudes, methods of working and training. The administration suffers from certain handicaps because of its relation with the past. It was unable to establish an emotional liason with the people and enthuse them to co-operate with the administration in its welfare activities. The Balvantraya Mehta Committee observed that one of the least successful aspects of the Community Development and National Extension Service Programme

was its attempt to evoke popular initiative, that few local bodies at a level higher than the village panchayat had shown any enthusiasm or interest in this work and that even the village Panchayats had not come into the picture to any appreciable extent. After studying the present function of the existing District Boards and noticing a tendency of late on the part of the States to impinge on their functions, the Mehta Committee went on to suggest that decentralisation of responsibility and power to levels below the State was an urgent requirement. It, therefore, recommended devolution of powers to a body which will have the entire charge of all development work within its jurisdiction. The Committee felt that the jurisdiction of the proposed local body should be neither so large as to defeat the very purpose for which it is created nor so small as to militate against efficiency and economy. The Mehta Committee thought that the district was too large an area for the people to take personal interest and to make sacrifices for common good. The Committee thought that the block was a suitable unit for this purpose.

The scheme of decentralisation of power proposed by the Government of Maharashtra, however, differs from the fore-mentioned opinion expressed by Mehta Committee. While the Mehta Committee suggested a Block as a suitable unit the Maharashtra plan proposes the District for that purpose. The Second important departure of the Maharashtra plan is in respect of the structuring of the District administration. The Mehta Committee suggested directly elected Gram Panchayats each covering a large village or a group of small villages at the rural base. The administrative pyramid which is to be on this base and which has its apex in the Zila Parishad is to be indirectly elected. Members of State Assembly and Parliament elected from the district are also ex-officio members of the Parishad. The Maharashtra Plan, on the other hand, is distinctly more democratic with its directly elected District Councils and the elimina-

tion of any ex-officio membership except in the case of the co-operatives. It also revitalises the Gram Panchayats firstly by placing more funds at their disposal and secondly by making them the executive agencies of Plan projects decided upon by the District Councils. The success or failure of this plan will depend upon its ability to stir up and energise the rural people by making its impact on the villages and upon the type of leadership it produces.

The advocates of decentralisation very often take their stand on history. They say that India has a long and glorious tradition of village self-government which carried on their work undisturbed by all the changes that took place at the Imperial level. They insist that our democracy must be built upon this unique foundation so as to be in harmony with the tradition of our people. It is necessary to examine to some extent the validity of the insistence.

It needs to be remembered, in this connection, that the tradition of self-sufficient village republics is also the tradition of the absence of a unified central political control in ancient India. The village had to be sufficient unto itself because it lived in isolation. Its sufficiency was built upon what Goldsmith would say 'ignorance of wealth', or inarticulation of economic wants. While such a village did enjoy social stability, it lacked mobility and the dynamism to move forward. In fact its stability was due to fatalistic adherence by men to the wonted routine of a caste-determined vocation. Both socially and economically, the ancient village was stunted and stagnant; it was the arrested village.

A moment's reflection is enough to make us realise the inadequacy of such a village in the context of modern civilisation. With the modern complex civilisation has inevitably come the modern state with all its panoply of central power. Village government is no longer the alternative to centralised state; it is its prop. If what is being attempted is devolution and not disintegration of authority, the problem is not one of reviving the traditional village

but of creating vigorous and pulsating new units which will function as the organic links of a developing democratic community. 'All power to the village' becomes in such a context an empty cliché on the part of well-meaning but naive gentlemen. Devolution or decentralisation of authority has to be an instrument for creating the much lacking response in villages and districts towards our developmental efforts. Villages will have the double task of initiating development within their area and also of assisting in the implementation of State and Central Schemes.

Yet another problem which has to be considered in connection with decentralisation is the character of the village community. That community is rigidly hierarchical in structure being stratified by caste. Its main characteristic is absence of social homogeneity. It is true that the predominance of the old castes is very largely over but that does not mean that caste rigidities are loosening. On the contrary casteism is in some sense on the ascendance in many regional communities, and is buttressed by the numerical logic of democracy. In so far as the sanction behind political power in a democracy is the backing of a majority, castes which form a major or a substantial part of a community enjoy political power and are assured of its continuous enjoyment as long as the preponderance of its numbers lasts. Holding together then becomes necessary for power and this results in the hardening of castes and the solidifying of caste loyalties. Nowhere are narrow loyalties stronger than in villages. They colour the entire outlook of people; their social behaviour as well as their political divisions are conditioned by the psychology of caste. Conformism in thought and behaviour is stressed as the dire need of village survival and progress. Majority and minority opinions express permanent groups which are not political or ideological but personal followings of local caste leaders held together by kinship and common economic status. The village community is still largely authoritarian in temper and the danger of power being abused for settling scores bet-

ween organised rival groups in the village cannot be overlooked. This is not to question the need and the desirability of decentralisation. If the citizen is to participate directly in the making of decisions which affect him, power must lie as near him as possible. However, care must be taken to prevent gross and unscrupulous misuse of that power to buttress casteism, parochialism, and village gangsterism. If decentralisation is only geographical, it will be powerless to prevent the rise of the aforementioned evils since at the lower level all economic and other functions will be performed by a single group or committee.

Let it be conceded at once that despite the dangers mentioned above, decentralisation of power and devolution of functions to local bodies such as village Panchayats, Block Committees and District Councils are very necessary. It is one of the imperatives of our economic planning. The Mehta Committee was entirely right when it said, 'so long as we do not discover or credit a representative and democratic institution which will supply the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon local objects conforms with the needs and wishes of the locality, invest it with adequate power and assign to it appropriate finances, we will never be able to evoke local interest and excite local initiative in the field of development.' Decentralisation would have presented no difficulties if we had a tradition of democratic and efficient local self-government. If we had one, local bodies would have voluntarily demanded to be given developmental responsibilities and curtailment of states' overriding powers. It must be admitted that there appears at the present moment little demand from local bodies for substantially increasing their powers except perhaps from Borough Municipalities and City Corporations. Rural people are seldom noticed asking for an increase in local responsibility for local affairs. On the contrary, there is a strong opinion in favour of the retention of the office and power and dignity of the District

Collector as protection against the predatory invasion on their power and purse by the local politicians. The experiments in democratic decentralisation that are being made in various states are not so much in response to popular demand as in response either to ideological or doctrinaire belief in decentralisation or in response to the realisation that programmes of economic development are in danger of failing unless popular interest is created in them.

For a number of reasons local bodies have a very low power of attraction so far talent is concerned. The main reason is that elected members have very little real power as government officers like the Collector are the final authorities in decisions and their executions. University graduates or other educated and capable people would not feel interested in the dreary and innocuous work of village or block committees. It is therefore, to the credit of the Maharashtra Scheme of decentralisation that it has proposed to treat a fairly wide area such as district as a unit and provide the District Council with democratic membership and requisite powers and finances. Intelligent young men have got a good field for showing their constructive abilities and potentiality for leadership. It is quite possible for active social or political workers to maintain close contact with a constituency of some thirtyfive thousand people and got elected not on the strength of purse but of hard and honest work. Political parties which feel frustrated because of poor representative in State legislature can also win, if it has roots in the people, a sizable number of seats in the district and prove its worth. Of particular significance is the modus operandi of the District Council. It is proposed that the council should work not on the cabinet principle but on the Committee principle. Members of these committees are to be elected in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. Every political or other group is thus assured of representation in Committees in pro-

portion to its strength in the council. Unlike the procedure in the legislature where the only business of the opposition is to oppose, in Committees of the District Council they will share in the making and execution of decisions. This may well inform the tactics of opposition parties with a greater sense of responsibility and bring a higher degree of realism to the administration of the District Council. It may energise the politics of the whole district through a healthy competition among political parties for popular support. The purely negative and agitational approach may yield place to a constructive approach. In their attempts to strike roots in the people, parties will contribute to the reconstruction of the district community. Effectiveness of a party will be judged not by its nuisance value but by the number of seats it holds in a district or the number of districts it controls in a state. Despite the fact that, atleast in the initial period, it is bound to create many administrative difficulties mentioned by the Naik Committee, such a scheme will alter not only the face but also the mood of the rural areas. 'The fundamental purpose of decentralisation', says the Naik Committee Report, 'should be to train the local leadership to assume higher responsibilities and to serve the people with maximum efficiency and economy and with minimum vexation so as to meet their growing needs within the resources at their disposal, giving priority where it is legitimately due. This is the real content of decentralisation'.

In a welfare-seeking society, a large number of local leaders are needed to carry out plans carefully prepared at the state or national levels. One of the major bottlenecks in the Five Year Plans is the failure of the villages to produce a sufficient number of men capable of constructive leadership and having necessary technical competence to fulfil the tasks in hand. That much needed leadership at the local level can be created only by bringing the process of modernization to the doorsteps of villages.

Stendhal and Romanticism

By DAVID McCUTCHION

...l'instinct de la liberté est dans tous les coeurs et on ne la choque jamais impunément dans tous les pays ou l'ironie a désenchanté les sottises.* — Stendhal.

ROMANTICISM combined exalted idealism (its roots in religious yearning) with unrestrained egoism (called 'genius', 'nature', 'sincerity', etc.) Irving Babbitt in his *Rousseau and Romanticism* has convincingly shown how, after the Renaissance had undermined the Mediaeval Church and the Baconian movement had diverted men's analytical keenness from the moral to the natural law, Rousseau took his opportunity of 'transforming conscience from an inner check to an expansive emotion.' The romantics would have agreed with Rilke that 'God is only a direction for love.' Their emotions would be content with nothing less than ideal realisation. Thus deprived of moral discipline and making absolute claims on the world, they infallibly fell victims to the *mal du siècle*: romantic disillusion. This took many forms, from Byronic exhibitionism to a pained withdrawal. By the time Musset wrote his *Confession of a Child of the Century* (1836), the type was well established in European literature: the children of Werther included Chateaubriand's, René, Sénancour's Obermann, Constant's Adolphe, and Vigny's Chatterton, all bleeding like Shelley on the thorns of life.

They combined intense but indefinable longing with never-ending self-analysis and paralysis of the will. They felt they had been born too late in an alien world. Rene spoke for them all:

The multiplicity of books dealing with man and his sentiments make us clever without experience. We are undeceived before we begin the game; our desires remain, but we have no more illusions. Our imagination is rich, abundant and marvellous; existence poor, dry and disenchanté. We live

with a full heart in an empty world, weary of everything without having enjoyed anything.

They admired ideal heroes of strength, energy and passion, and set them in past glamorous ages remote from the present era of petty bureaucracy. 'What can one do after Charlemagne?' exclaims Don Carlos in Hugo's *Hernani*. Thus continually torn between the real and the ideal, refusing to compromise and attempting to act as if the impossible were potentially real, the romantics cultivated self-deception or developed split personalities. Either the gulf is outrageous between their professed ideals and actual behaviour (Chateaubriand's false humility, Hugo's treatment of his wife), or they achieved sufficient detachment to observe the division in their own nature. Musset in *Les Caprices de Marianne* presents his ideal and real selves, the pure soul and the debauchee, as two separate characters.

Stendhal was acutely aware of this division in himself — of the 'logique' (French analytical intellect) continually in conflict with his 'espagnolisme' (sensitivity nurtured on the *Nouvelle Héloïse*). First and foremost he is a realist, a shrewd 'observer of the human heart', with an eighteenth century cast of mind. 'Try to see things as they are,' he notes in his diary; 'That's the basis of everything for me: pleasure, glory, happiness.' No romantic illusion here! He was the first to accommodate himself to the failure of absolutes, and to realise that relativity is the price of freedom. He was fascinated, more than dismayed, by the piquant discrepancy of dreams and life. And if dreams could be realised, so much the better. There could be no greater contrast with the normal romantic attitude than that passage in *The Life of Henri Brulard* where Stendhal, recalls his adolescent ideal of 'tender sentiments and sweet voluptuousness', inspired by a landscape painting of Le Roy: three women are bathing in a clear

*...freedom, the instinct of which is in every heart, can never be jolted with impunity in any country where irony has robbed follies (i.e. pious absolutes) of enchantment.

mountain stream shaded by tall trees. Then he remarks:

Later, I mean towards 1805 at Marseille, I had the delicious pleasure of seeing my mistress, so exceptionally beautiful in form, bathe in the Huve-aune overshadowed by tall trees.

And there, he says, was the ideal — realised! No true romantic would ever admit that. But Stendhal is always doing it: he knows when he is happy, and joyfully proclaims it — on arrival in Italy for the first time, or at Richmond, and whenever he is favoured in love:

As far as I can judge... the three most delicious moments of my life have been: Adèle leaning on me at the Frascati fireworks, in the year X I think; the Sunday at Claix in the year... and today. (The diary)

There is nothing metaphysical about Stendhal. He knows that if he does not get his happiness in this world, it will not be waiting for him in the next. Stendhal's realism can be brutal. He lays down rules in his diary for getting on in the world:

1. Submit to events, which, having happened, are inevitable.
2. In a nation where vanity is supreme, and consequently a witticism can count for so much, always act with sang-froid.
3. Ask myself every evening this question: 'Have I sufficiently flattered the vanity of those with whom I spent the day?'

But poor Stendhal, he can't play this role at all, for by temperament he *is* a romantic ('romanesque... to the point of madness,' he says in *Henri Brulard*), and his sensibility, catches him out at every turn. Never could he compromise with his father (for more money), or the church ('a powerful corporation with which it is an advantage to be affiliated') or the higher authorities: his dreams of glory and advancement ended in a provincial Italian consulate. So too Stendhal's heroes are never quite capable of being the hypocrites they set out to be. In *Henri Brulard* Stendhal quotes Vigny's description of the poet in the preface to *Chatterton* ('His sensitiveness has become too acute: what only brushes the skin of others, from him draws blood') and comments:

So I was in 1799, so I still am in 1836, but I have learnt to hide it all beneath an imperceptible irony which the common herd misses.

But if his sensibility prevents him from being

a practical realist in life, and forces him into false roles ('My reputation as a *roué* and a man already surfeited, with this soul so tender, timid and melancholy!'), at least in his writing he will be true to his vision of the world, and bring out all its irony and complication: '... it is better to express the truth clumsily than any approximation however more effectively.' Try to see life as it really is ('*Tâcher de voir la vraie nature...*'), that was his life-long aim. Not to be taken in by the images we prepare ourselves of life. It is hard now to believe that *Hernani* and *Scarlet and Black* appeared in the same year (1830) — the one so full of 'Romantic' posturing, a period-piece of exalted self-sacrifice, miraculous escapes, and sentimental extravagance; the other so consistently refusing the heroic, startling by its unexpected turns, and so modern in its psychology. But the two heroes are cast in the same mould: Julien parodies *Hernani*. Stendhal took the literary puppets of his time, and set them in motion in the real contemporary world. In this way the images would be revealed for their real worth. Julien Sorel combines the energy which the romantics admired with the sensibility which they cultivated. He is unashamedly a wish-fulfilment — but the world remains as harsh and incalculable as Stendhal always found it. The result is a unique presentation of the romantic predicament: that every attempt to actualise an ideal betrays it — compromise or withdraw.

Julien Sorel, like René, Obermann, Werther, Musset, is an 'exceptional being', a man whose very intelligence and sensibility exclude him from the society into which he has been born. René and the others withdrew; Julien marches boldly forward. He is successively initiated into provincial society, the church, and the Parisian aristocracy. In all three he is a misfit. Everywhere he comes up against inhumanity, foolishness and greed. M. de Rênal, the mayor of Varrières, seems a grave and dignified personage, but his mind is wholly preoccupied with money and prestige. His political rival, M. Valenod, is an upstart vulgarian, a blackmailer, swindler, liar and tireless intriguer, who 'parades his importance amidst a mass of portfolios.' He is superintendent of the workhouse and keeps a good table by depriving the inmates of their meat ration. On one occasion Julien is invited to dinner along with various officials and their wives, and the party is disturbed by one of the prisoners singing on the other side of the dining room wall. M. Valenod has him silenced, and Julien can hardly choke

back tears of indignation: 'Fortunately no one noticed his ill-bred emotion. The inspector of taxes had struck up a royalist song.'

In a vulgar and careerist society Julien is thus continually torn between his ambitious pride and his finer instincts — the would-be Titan with a tender soul. His sensibility continually belies his hypocritical calculations. He is moved to helplessness by the beauty of Mme. de Rênal (to her husband she is a 'complicated machine' always going wrong), and at any emotional crisis is likely to burst into tears. His hypocrisy (his only means of advancement — of survival, Irving Howe would say⁹) is a constraint, which he throws off when he can with intense relief. Sincerity, when he permits himself to be sincere, is an exquisite pleasure. Julien's haughty demeanour is what Dr. Johnson called 'defensive pride', i.e. susceptibility to humiliation. When Father Chélan, or Fouqué, or Father Pirard show him affection, he throws himself into their arms. He meditates in prison: 'I have a heart that is easily moved; the most commonplace things, when uttered with the accent of truth, can make my voice tremble with emotion and bring tears to my eyes.' At Paris he reveals himself a passionate revolutionary idealist, defending Béranger and embracing the cause of the Count Altamira who is under sentence of death in his own country, where the revolution failed. Julien's imagination is 'lost in dreams of glory for himself and liberty for all mankind.' But outside his dreams Julien is no more than a secretary in a patron's household, and after embarking on his affair with Mathilde expects every moment to be set upon by his master's kitchen staff, and turned out of the house. Of such is the kingdom of revolutionaries.

Romantic attitudes are even more overtly satirised in the figure of Mathilde de la Mole, whose imagination is possessed by her ancestor Boniface de la Mole, executed on the Place de la Grève, 30th April 1574, for a daring attempt to kidnap the young princes who were prisoners of Catherine de Medici. He was the lover of Queen Marguerite of Navarre, who sent for her lover's head after the execution, and the following midnight carried it herself in her own carriage and buried it in a chapel at the foot of Montmartre. Mathilde's extravagance will lead her to imitate this action, after the execution of Julien, in a grotesque coda to the story. Like Julien she admires Count Altamira: 'I can see nothing conferring honour on a man except sentence of death

... It's the only thing that can't be bought.' Her wild exorbitant nature demands continual excitement. She flouts society and despises caution (cutting off her hair, calling Julien 'Master' in her mother's presence) in sheer enjoyment of the risk. Love is inconceivable except as a 'grande passion': 'She gave the name of love only to that heroic feeling which was to be met with in France only in the days of Henry III and Bassompierre.' Her personality is completely unstable: no sooner does she attain her object than she tires of it, passing abruptly from the heights of passion for Julien to the depths of scorn. Both she and Julien have got all their notions about life from books — *Manon Lescaut*, the *Nouvelle Héloïse* and the *Memorial of St. Helena*.

But if Julien has a tender impulsive heart, he has a determination of steel and a mind that never stops calculating. He is for ever analysing his motives, planning his actions, guarding his 'honour' — would it be lowering to accept money from Mme. de Rênal? has Mathilde the right to give him orders? Like Obermann or Musset, he is perpetually self-engrossed. Only a violent shock can jerk him into spontaneous feeling. Mostly, he stands outside his actions, watching himself act. Hence the pattern of his two love-affairs — partly determined by careful scheming, partly by helpless emotion. It is the familiar conflict of head and heart, 'logique' and 'espagnolisme'. Just as Adolphe had embarked on his courtship of Ellenore as a deliberate calculation, so Julien makes love to Mme. de Rênal from self-imposed duty: 'Julien felt it his *duty* to manage things so that his hand should not be withdrawn when he touched it.' To win her love will be a victory over the moneyed class, over God Himself! Yet after the crisis over Stanislas' illness, as Julien realises how deeply he is loved, his joy prevails over his caution, and he gives full reign to his feelings: 'Julien had lost the habit of thinking.'

This perpetual shifting between feeling and calculation is nowhere more ironically demonstrated than in Julien's affair with Mathilde de la Mole. Unlike Mme. de Rênal, whose love was pure giving, Mathilde is a self-centred as Julien himself. Julien rouses her passion by his very disdain (a protective pose), which goads her pride and distinguishes him from her colourless flatterers. Again Julien embarks on the affair as a challenge to his honour: Mathilde has dared him to climb up to her room by ladder in full moonlight. It is not surprising the lovers are more embarrassed than gratified when they find themselves in each other's presence: 'To tell the truth their trans-

⁹ *Politics and the Novel*

ports were somewhat forced. Passionate love was still rather more of a model they were imitating than the real thing.' But thereafter nothing goes according to the rules. Mathilde regrets her imagined passion, Julien suffers all the bitterness of a forsaken lover. The young man who thought by calculation to have the world at his feet, is the helpless victim of a love he scarcely deigned to pursue. Only by feigning indifference can he win her back again. Mathilde finally admits herself defeated:

Julien embraced her, but at once the iron hand of duty gripped his heart. If she sees how much I adore her, I shall lose her, he thought. And, before he withdrew himself from her arms, he had resumed all the dignity that befits a man.

So much for the communion of souls! The whole episode is satirising romantic love. Julien and Mathilde love themselves and their dreams in each other. Too late Julien learns what Mme. de Rênal had taught him, that love is sacrifice and demands nothing.

Stendhal's 'espagnolisme' makes him sympathise with his characters and yearn for their ideals, but his 'logique' makes him a realist. He quotes Machiavelli: 'And will it be my fault if things are so?' Faithful love, and perfect understanding, and political justice, not to mention peace and happiness, rest upon the illusion of a stable personality and consistent reasonableness. In fact a man is a continuous flux of sensations and immediate convictions. We live in and for the moment. Our thoughts and feelings are *momentarily* determined — by the situation as it happens to appear to us and by such memories as happen to be present in our mind. Only thus can we act. When Julien is trying to decide whether he should or should not respond to Mathilde's advances, he cannot possibly keep in his head all the reasons for and against, and decide which ones outweigh the others. He finally acts on impulse. For Stendhal all personal relationships are between two subjective and changing states of feeling, which only rarely coincide. Hence all the misunderstandings that arise, not only as so often between lovers, but as when Julien threatens to leave the service of M. de Rênal (because he considers he has been insulted), and M. de Rênal thinks he is holding out for more money. We communicate, but do not understand. Just when Mme. de Rênal is trembling lest she seem too old for Julien, he is afraid of appearing ridiculous by his inexperience in her eyes, unaware that it is his very lapses into childlike naturalness which

have endeared him to her. Mathilde sees him as a potential revolutionary hero at a time when he is broken with despair from love for her, and contemplating suicide. She returns his love, her father makes him a lieutenant, his despair vanishes, and on the parade ground at Strasbourg he forgets all about her.

Were it not for his romantic sensibility, Stendhal might have been great satirist. He himself realised this: 'This *espagnolisme* prevents my having comic genius...' In fact he has an acute sense of the absurd: whether he is describing romantic exaltation, church ceremonial, or a cloak-and-dagger conspiracy of outdated aristocrats, the attitudes are all too human and yet larger than life with the typical exaggeration of the satirist. Stendhal sees the world as a comic farce. For all Julien's attempts at self-determination, events are quite beyond his control. His promotion to Paris is the results of a whim, and he owes his intimacy with the Marquis de la Mole to a providential attack of gout which makes the old man need his company. At the moment when his wildest ambitions seem near fulfilment, all his hopes are shattered by Mme. de Rênal's totally unforeseen letter. Stendhal is frankly pejorative at the expense of his hero. He mocks at him for his naivety, his lack of taste, his attitudinising, even his hero-worshipping. When Julien is included in the guard of honour to greet the King at Verrières, his horse jumps at the firing of a tiny cannon: 'By great good fortune he did not fall off, and from that moment, he felt himself a hero. He was Napoleon's orderly officer leading the charge against a battery.' The satire of military idealism is taken up again in the famous Waterloo episode of *The Charterhouse of Parma*. Fabrice is robbed and bullied and imprisoned by the people he has come to fight for, but finally gets on to the battlefield, where he sees a lot of scurrying and confusion with dead men all over the place. After failing to recognise Napoleon, who gallops close by, is finally wounded when he tries to prevent some French stragglers from retreating. After it is all over, he has lost his comrades and finds no one to answer his anguished question: was I really in a battle?

Stendhal's satire takes two forms: on the one hand, scathing contempt for corruption and stupidity, on the other indulgent mockery of his heroes' romantic idealism. His books tend to get more preposterous, concluding with the anarchistic *Lamiel*. *Lucien Leuwen* is already more boldly satirical than *Scarlet and Black*, the element of fantasy less restrained (Stendhal's method might

be described as real psychology in unreal situations). Lucien has all the virtues — young, handsome, sensitive, intelligent — besides being the son of the richest banker in Paris. In Part II a situation of splendid comic improbability is contrived. Lucien has returned from Nancy, where he had been serving with the garrison (Part I), with the image of Mme. de Chasteller in his heart: not only will he never love another, she comes to symbolise his higher moral self. His father places him as the secretary to the Minister of the Interior. But the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with whom Lucien quarrels, spreads the rumour that he is a saint-simonien. To combat this atrocious charge (like being called a communist in America today), Lucien's father determines his son must have a dazzling love-affair (lovers are never saint-simoniens!). Lucien considers this disgusting and a bore, but accepts the task to please his father. Mme. Grandet, however, the object of his feigned passion, has other ideas: she aspires to the aristocracy, whereas Lucien is not noble. Thus both of them play the conventional roles: to Lucien's 'sombre and silent melancholy', Mme. Grandet responds with 'cold disdain' (much to Lucien's relief). Subsequently, however, Lucien's father is in a position to make her husband the new Minister of the Interior, and insists as a condition that she accept the advances of his son. So next time Lucien declares: 'Unless you respond to my fatal passion, I shall have no recourse but to blow my brains out,' Mme. Grandet replies: 'Come back tomorrow at one o'clock.' Lucien is very flattered that he should have managed to storm so impregnable a reputation, not by 'the contagion of love' but on his own merits as a suitor. He is therefore dismayed when his father reveals the reason for this surrender, and forth-with refuses to see Mme. Grandet any more. But now Mme. Grandet has fallen in love with him according to the best principles of 'concretisation' laid down in *De l'Amour*: passionately she seeks him out at his office, and only by going to Italy can he escape her. Life is full of such reversals. At Verrières Julien is spellbound with wonder at the sight of the young Bishop of Agde (practising blessings in a mirror, though Julien does not at first realise this): at Paris, when Julien sees his own way to a bishopric, he is no longer interested. The dominant tone of Stendhal's work is ironic scepticism, especially evident in the chapter headings ('Sensibility and a Pious Lady', 'Is he a second Danton?' etc.), Stendhal stands back from

his world as he creates it, and regards it with a quizzical detachment.

But it would be wrong to assume that Stendhal does not care about his heroes, or that his books contain no positive values. Julien Sorel has energy (Lucien's 'zeal', Fabrice's 'brio'), and it is as a symbol of energy that he is a focus of value. Stendhal presents not so much the opposing forces of good and evil, as a conflict between the forces of life and the forces of death. It is the primacy of this concern which makes Stendhal seem an amoral writer, cynically winking at the connivance of his heroes in corruption. He presents French Restoration society as devitalized in all its spheres. At Verrières the thwarted and embittered lives of the people, money-centered, walled-in, and tyrannised by public opinion, are symbolised in the stunted growth of the municipal plane trees, whose branches are lopped off twice a year by order of the town council — more drastically than ever since M. Maslon 'acquired the habit of annexing the profits from the clipping.' The petty vindictiveness and false piety of jealous minds nips all natural aspirations in the bud. It is the same in the seminary at Besancon, but here there is no escape into the countryside: the forces of life are ruthlessly shut out by the Seminary walls. When Julien enters, immediately after a flirtation with a buxom barmaid, 'a deathly silence reigned throughout the house.' In a room with yellowed panes and dirty flower vases, sits Father Pirard in a tattered cassock: 'Julien's eyes could barely distinguish a long narrow face completely covered in red spots save on the forehead where a deathly pallor could be seen.' The seminary willfully suppresses all bright intelligence, all natural self-expression; it imposes submission, sanctimoniousness, and reverence for money. Julien's heart leaps up at the sound of the church bells, but his fellow-seminarists are more concerned 'whether the degree of emotion felt by the public was worth the money these bell-ringers were paid.'

When Julien goes to Paris he has high hopes of escaping the narrow restrictions and petty selfishness of provincial walls and manners. But he finds a society in decay. Life in the aristocratic houses is stifled by ceremony: the 'drawing room constitution' imposes strict artificiality. All desire, all inspiration fades beneath 'the withering effect of that exquisite politeness, so measured, and so perfectly graduated according to the rank of the recipient, that characterises good society.' It is a society dying of boredom with its own existence. Original ideas are deprecated, politics politely avoided, eccentricity frowned upon. All en-

counters, even duc's, are governed by the laws of perfect good form from which emotion is excluded. Mathilde's prospective husband, the Marquis de Croisenois, is a 'masterpiece of education' in this respect — he never says a word too many, his moustache is just the right length, his deportment immaculate. But in Julien there is flame and vitality. His sensibility may be bad manners, but it shows he is alive. His eyes flash and there is a mysterious 'spark' in him to which even Father Pirard pays tribute. Mathilde notices the uneasiness of her brother in his presence: 'In this age in which all energy is dead, she thought, his energy makes them afraid.'

What then is the young man of energy and sensibility to do in the modern world? In another age Julien would have served his nation by sheer force of his intelligence and courage. As Mathilde sees it: 'In the heroic age of France in the days of Boniface de la Mole, Julien would have been the major and my brother the young priest.' Napoleon is the model Julien sets before himself: lieutenant at sixteen, general at twenty three, Emperor and Commander of Europe at thirty five. But the days of Napoleon are finished for good. The money ethos has taken over: the way to power lies through intrigue and deceit.

A large part of *Scarlet and Black* is taken up with a devastating exposure of the complicated means whereby the shrewd and mediocre make their way to the top. From the petty stratagems of M. de Rênal, who makes three journeys to Paris in order to build a parapet to commemorate his own importance, to the sinister manoeuvrings of the Abbé de Frilair, or the plotting of the *ancien* nobility, the strings of influence are endlessly pulled behind the scenes. From speculation in housing when a street is to be widened, or arranging for public buildings to be rented at give-away prices with a rake-off for the officials, to the elaborate distribution of bishoprics among selected tools, or the imposition of a corrupt ministry, every sphere of public life is rotten. Justice, truth, morality have collapsed; only appearances remain. Father Chélan, the kindly priest of Verrières, is driven out of his living because he dared reveal to a liberal the conditions in the workhouse. There is no appeal: injustice is supported to the topmost ranks of the administrative hierarchy. The pettiest rogue has 'friends at the château'. Valenod is made baron and prefect. The starving and suffering continue to starve and suffer.

The theme of political responsibility turns on a central passage arising out of the persecution

of Father Pirard. Father Pirard, Julien's protector in the seminar, is a Jansenist, and the Ultramontane *Congrégation* will stoop to any subterfuge, however base, to discredit and aggrieve him — spreading lies, hunting for incriminating evidence in private lockers, even poisoning his dog, Julien is also persecuted, because he is Father Pirard's favourite pupil: he is tricked into praising Horace (a profane author) in an exam oral, and instead of coming first, is given the position 198. When finally Father Pirard receives the offer of a rich living in Paris and is able to resign, he details his grievances in a long letter to the Bishop — six years of calumny and obstruction. His enemy is the Vicar-general, M. de Frilair, a Valenod of the church, who had arrived twelve years before quite poor, and is now one of the richest property-owners of the district. He is engaged in a lawsuit with the Marquis de la Mole, which he is winning by bribing the lawyers with the Cross of the Legion of Honour. Julien takes Father Pirard's letter along to the Bishop, who is delighted with the young man's learning and especially his knowledge of Horace. But when Julien reveals the injustice of his exam result, the Bishop merely laughs: 'All's fair in war,' he observes, and goes on to compare the demoralisation of France with that of the age of Constantine. Political life is a game, with its rules like any other game, which have nothing to do with justice or injustice: the Abbé de Frilair is simply a good player. This theme is frequently taken up in Part II. There's no point in playing if you don't accept the rules, Count Altamira tells Julien: he is in exile because he broke the rules: 'I did not want to let three men's heads be cut off, and distribute among our supporters some seven or eight millions which happened to be in a safe to which I had the key.' When the news of Father Pirard's rich new living reaches the Bishop, he congratulates him on his 'good play'. At the house of the Marquis de la Mole, Julien approaches a crisis of conscience: 'Must one steal? Must one sell oneself?'

After some time in Paris Julien finds himself indistinguishably part of the system that made Valenod a prefect and put Béranger in prison, that supports the Abbé de Frilair and evicted Father Chélan. Such are the conditions of a public career. And but for the intervention of Mathilde and Mme de Rênal, Julien shows every sign of continuing in this career with Stendhal's ironic approval. Lucien Leuwen adapts himself to similar conditions: 'Will you be enough of a rogue for

the job?' wonders his father, as he considers making his son secretary to the Minister:

...a rogue (*coquin*) — I mean a politician... In ten years time you will know that Colbert, Sully, Cardinal Richelieu, in a word all men in any way political, that is to say *ruling others*, have raised themselves at least to the first degree of *coquinerie* where I wish to see you. Now don't do like N..., who when he was appointed secretary general to the police, submitted his resignation at the end of fifteen days because the job was too dirty...

Lucien does not resign: he takes refuge in contempt — not merely for the baseness but for the vulgarity of the men in power. His disgust is aesthetic rather than moral: he is as much offended by the trite phrases, rude servants and tasteless decorations as by the moral unscrupulousness. His sympathies are with the liberals, but the strictures of his liberal friend Gauthier at Nancy reminded him of honest women speaking badly of actresses: 'he did not amuse, and he spoke of people generally considered most amusing,' i.e. the witty trickster Du Poirier, whose company Lucien so much preferred. He is a true *enfant du siècle* ('weary of myself and life'), insufficiently convinced of the justice or value or ultimate success of any cause to fight for it. Happiness comes first, and happiness lies with the elegant salons of the corrupt rich: 'Washington would bore me to death.' He will put his 'zeal' to the service of *any* cause, because the zeal is more important than the cause. He assists his Minister in a number of shady deals on the Paris *Bourse*, closes the mouth of a dying man with bribes to avoid a scandal, and departs for the provinces to manipulate a couple of elections, armed with limitless funds and authority to award offices and dismiss incumbents. Only when he is pelted with mud and insulted ('Now his soul is on his face!' i.e. the mud), does he realise for a moment that personal honour might be incompatible with public chicanery.

But like Stendhal, Lucien cannot work for social equality, for men are not equal and democracy exalts mediocrity. At heart these bourgeois, the author and his heroes, are aristocrats:

I would do anything in my power to ensure the happiness of the people; but I think that I would rather spend a fortnight of each month in prison than have to do with shopkeepers. (Henri Brulard)

The end of *Lucien Leuwen* is a satire on parliamentary democracy — 'that soft mixture of hypocrisy and mincing scruples', as Lucien had called

it at the beginning of Part I. Lucien returns from his election-juggling to find his father a deputy ('after three polls with the flattering majority of seven'). Leuwen père, annoyed at the shabby treatment his son has received after so much zeal (in the second election the honest man had won in spite of all Lucien's efforts), determines to topple the Minister. He chooses some thirty or forty of the most dim-witted deputies, invites them to his house for sumptuous dinners, and teaches them the principle of 'Unity is Strength'. His little group, mainly from the South of France, is called 'La Légion du Midi'. After discussion of any issue, they put it to the vote and subsequently in the Chamber the entire group will vote as one man according to their majority: in this way, Stendhal is at pains to point out, the most stupid side of any question will always prevail. M. Leuwen encourages his troupe with a number of stamp and tobacco concessions in Languedoc, and a couple of stars of the Legion of Honour. By reason of this block voting and his own brilliant (if irrelevant) speeches, Leuwen finally outvotes the Minister. The character of this smooth, elegant banker is a tour de force: with his frivolous wit, total cynicism, and brilliant (though so casual) business acumen, he literally rules France. He is at the head of the bank, he tells Mme. Grandet,

...and since July the bank is at the head of the state. The bourgeoisie has replaced the faubourg Saint-Germain and the bank is the nobility of the bourgeois class.

Small wonder that Stendhal has been called the most subversive of writers. Lucien can admit no responsibility to a society which will never acknowledge his true worth. Nor is there any escape from this society. Lucien has his pastoral dreams ('Live on a farm with Mme. de Chasteller...'), and even considers commerce, but in either case he will be subject to the pressures and tricks of ministers, prefects and curés. Fly to America? He shudders: 'There the majority reigns...' So Stendhal evolves a philosophy of 'the happy few' — those who have intelligence and courage enough to be a law unto themselves. They accept 'the rules of the game', not in order to participate in a demoralised money culture, but to gain scope for their own gifts and energy. So Julien affects piety as a means to power, Fabrice becomes a famous preacher in order to renew contact with Clélia, and Stendhal in real life evaded his military and consular duties. There is no appeal to eternal principles. As Julien concludes in prison:

There is no such thing as natural law; this term

is merely an ancient piece of Tommy-rot quite worthy of the Public Prosecutor who hunted me down the other day, and whose ancestor was enriched by property confiscated by Louis XIV.

This cynicism is the reverse side of the romantic medal. From the positive side — ego-centric sensibility — Stendhal tries to evolve a new code of behaviour based on individual worth. A man cannot be true to society, but he must be true to himself. He cannot change the world, but he is master of himself. Life is absurd, but the individual can create his own values. Political integrity is impossible, but private integrity makes a man truly noble. For this reason Julien chooses to die: he has always been a 'prince in disguise', now he can demonstrate his nobility — which lies precisely in his contempt for society. For similar reasons, after the death of M. Leuwen, Lucien prefers to pay his father's debts in full rather than go bankrupt: he is not a slave of money. For in what does happiness consist? In truth and freedom. Lucien finds himself happy in the knowledge his experiences have given him of himself and the world. The initial dismay into which his father's revelation about Mme. Grandet had thrown him, gives place to exaltation. Returning from the Opera that night, he avoids going home before two a.m., and rents a room incognito for a few hours in a small hotel. Here he is free! 'Here, he told himself, walking up and down with delight, here I shall be safe from all paternal, maternal, sempiternal solicitude.' It is a dream of perfect independence, and Stendhal presents it as absurd. Is it the last dream of a dispossessed intelligentsia before the state finally takes them over? For individual freedom is always at the price of social order — no liberty for the few without license for the many. And when irony pricks the bubbles of those 'foolish' absolutes upon which society thrives (religion, patriotism, honour, duty...), then society is in danger of disintegrating. In the words of Albert Schweitzer, whose solemn patriarchal figure provides so appropriate a contrast to Stendhal:

If the ethical foundation is lacking, then civilisation collapses, even when in other directions

creative and intellectual forces of the strongest nature are at work.

Stendhal's work certainly characterises one of the chief forces of disintegration in European society today. If superior intelligence is to be the criterion of the happy few, the happy many are usually most confident they possess it. Everyone is on the 'chase for happiness': variety, sensation and 'experience' have become the main aims in life. An affluent society has provided the means. The 'betrayal of the clerks' is complete.

Kierkegaard defined the 'stages on life's way' as the aesthetic, the ethical and the religious — in that order. Might it be that societies follow the reverse order — the age of faith, the age of reason ('natural' religion seeking to reconcile ethics and nature), and the age of pleasure? And from the depredations of pleasure comes the urge to order and discipline again, as Christianity grew out of the degenerate Roman Empire? According to Kierkegaard, the aesthetic man seeks only the 'interesting' — whether he undertakes a particularly difficult seduction (*Diary of a Seducer*) or studies philosophy or travels. This might be an apt characterisation of the dominant trend in Western society. Of course there are innumerable exceptions, religious revivals, D. H. Lawrence... But the trend is dominant enough to explain much in contemporary behaviour. A recent book by an Austrian *sanyassin*, Swami Agehananda, shows a typical example of a man in Kierkegaard's aesthetic category, for whom the life of a *sanyassin*, even the mystic experience itself, can only be regarded as so many sensations to be experienced for their own sake. The success of Durrell's Alexandrian Quartet was similarly symptomatic. Edgar Wind in the 1960 Reith lectures pointed out how we surrender to art with almost no discrimination: 'The sacred fear is no longer with us.' Beethoven quartets can be background music for elegant conversation. Of course 'la chasse au bonheur' is as old as man's emancipation from his basic needs, but we need only think of *Scarlet and Black* beside, say, *Middlemarch* or *Anna Karenina* to get some measure of the contrast between an aesthetic and an ethical concern, and to realise which is more representative of modern society.

The Historian in India, 1962

By ASHIN DAS GUPTA

BEFORE the action commenced at Trafalgar Lord Nelson is alleged to have signalled his ships to say that England expected every Englishman to do his duty. It is further alleged that the Englishmen present on this occasion were so inspired by the message that they proceeded to pulverise the French who were, obviously, not feeling so inspired. It is not my intention here to inquire into the truth or falsity of these statements; all I wish to maintain is this that if a Nelson were to command the Indian nation today at a symbolic Trafalgar, his signal would read: India expects every Indian to do more than his duty. The recognized signal is inadequate because doing the traditional duty will not save India in 1962. This statement, of course, is general enough to lead to an interminable discussion. As I am denied this indulgence, I shall confine my remarks to that minute section of the Indian society which is concerned with the study of the Indian past and try to show how our historians can and must transcend their traditional duty.

I

The traditional duty of historian is to discover the truth about the past and then to state it. Philosophers disagree as to the nature of historical truth; historians do not. Disagreements among historians are about the adequacy of different methods of arriving at the truth and the acceptability of particular judgments about the past. A historian can be said to have done his duty when he has searched his sources with the best of available techniques and made out a case adequately covered by ascertained facts. No one, I believe, would disagree

with this statement but not many, I fear, would regard this as adequate. The chief difficulty about this position is that it is far too indulgent. Given an appropriate methodology, granted an adequate acquaintance with the relevant facts, a historian is still not giving you the 'truth about the past,' he is only stating some truths about the past. The whole truth of history is, in fact, beyond redemption. Faced with this impossibility inherent in his craft, the historian consoles himself with a segment of the truth and thus, by omission, distorts.

Further complications are introduced by personal predilections from which no historian is exempt. This is a point I do not wish to labour but it is necessary to add one word of caution about the detached antiquarian who is usually regarded as incapable of holding a point of view. Scholarship at its purest, that is when it is concerned with ascertaining facts of no conceivable significance, distorts history by robbing the past of its vitality. The quality of life of a bygone age is just as much a part of historical truth as is information about the sewerage of an ancient city. If an opinionated writer perverts history by the tendencies of his thought, the purest of scholars distorts the past by his lack of imagination.

It would seem then that the traditional duty of a historian is one which it is impossible to perform. None the less the effort to discharge this duty to the best of one's ability is of cardinal importance. To write history without a methodology or adequate knowledge is an absurdity. To claim however that nothing more goes into the writing of history is foolish. It is well to acknowledge that all history is false, but some history is less false than others. To

work with diligence and write with circumspection is to approximate to that truth which, in its totality, is beyond attainment.

It is, however, important to remember that to write at all is to perform a social act. All history that is being written can, in some sense, be seen as the outcome of a particular milieu and, once written, a part of that mental climate. If no history gives you 'the truth about the past', it becomes of grave import to see to it that the mental atmosphere which is influenced by the writing of history, is influenced towards the better. And nowhere is the need for clarity of thinking on this issue more acute than in India in 1962.

II

It appears probable that in some years from now the Republic of India will break down in confusion. The anarchy which will follow will affect all Indians adversely and among them will be all historians whatever their persuasion. It is for this reason that I maintain that historians, along with all other sensible Indians, have a vested interest in the integrity of their country and should, at least, be aware of her perils. No one will suggest that the collapse threatening India is the outcome of a faulty reading of her past. Still less is it possible to hold that a 'correct reading' of Indian history will meet the crisis. As no history gives you 'the truth about the past', there can in fact, be no 'correct interpretation.' But the point that seems beyond dispute is that the disintegration of India, if it comes, will come largely as a result of a vicious mental climate that is being steadily built up in the country. Numerous factors, material as well as psychological, are contributing to this process. Among these is a kind of history that is being written from a pernicious point of view. Many historians, it is pleasing to note, do not write this kind of history but few seem to be aware of the dangers of it. It is thus vital for our historians to transcend their preoccupation with traditional

duty, consider the social situation connected with the writing of history and then write for its improvement. Propaganda for the good cause has become a necessity.

It goes without saying that the special pleading this would involve would not on the face of it be recognizable as propaganda at all. When I speak of pleading a cause I am not thinking of yellow journalism, posters and loudspeakers. To explain what I mean by propaganda for that which is good, it is convenient to take a look at the pleadings for that which is evil. At the moment in our history-writing this is taking two easily recognized shapes: one is historical support for the communal attitude, the other is a pervading effort to exalt particular regions at the expense of others. It would be a costly mistake to assume that historians who are delving into our past to bring up stories of sustained Muslim atrocities against the Hindus are making false statements. It would be unwise to suppose that no historical support can be found for feelings of regional superiority. These writers are doing the gravest disservice to the nation not so much because they are historically inaccurate as because they are morally reprehensible. Placed as we are today, communal and regional preoccupations are immoral. To counter this brand of immorality, the traditional discipline affords only limited help. Traditionally we are permitted to put two major questions to any historical thesis. First, are the facts stated in it accurately ascertained? Second, does it account for most of the known facts? Any competent advocate of evil should pass the first test as it is never difficult to find *some* facts for a thesis, however vicious. The second question will have him in difficulties and with the help of this test we can always work to restore the perspective which bigotry seeks to destroy. If a communal thesis is built round stories of atrocity, it is possible to restore the balance by exploring other trends of historical experience where harmony between communities was the predominant feature. If books are written on the Renaissance in Bengal, it is

not difficult to correct any false impressions by stressing the Renaissance in North India and studying the developments in Maharashtra. This, however, is all that we can do with the help of traditional tests and this, by far, is not enough. The effort to plead for the good society through the writing of history should make us concentrate not so much on refuting the evil evidence as on building up new preoccupations. To challenge the case for disintegration, although vital, does one great disservice. Attention remains steadily focussed on issues like communalism and regionalism. This is poor stuff to feed the future generations. We must turn them to new pastures, and, fortunately, this task, at the moment, is not difficult to accomplish. In the writing of our history we have, very recently, mastered our predilection for political developments. By and large the effort now is to tell the story of the common people as seen from various angles — administrative, economic and social. It is exciting to piece together our rich and varied experiences. And to undertake this task with deliberation not to speak in terms of communities, not to write of regions in exclusion, is to plead for that which is good. If in decades to come we succeed in telling the story of India, quietly underlining its totality and synthesis, we will have contributed, our mite to the formation of a healthy mental climate. This task must never be attempted at variance with the traditional discipline. The work will only be accomplished when traditional duty is transcended.

III

The position I have outlined above will, probably, be subjected to three major criticisms. First: if we maintain that no history can give us the truth about the past, we in fact deny the objectivity of historical knowledge and, in this case, it becomes impossible to criticise any historical thesis except on emotive grounds. Second: once we begin to accept or reject

historical judgments on moral grounds we allow every individual to choose his own brand of history as no morality can be demonstrated to be true. Third: the attempt to create one particular kind of history is either pernicious or futile; it will be pernicious if we try to dictate to individual historians what type of history they should write, thus robbing them of their personal inspiration and it will be futile if the dictation is not attempted as, in that case, everyone will write what pleases them.

To meet the first criticism it is necessary to distinguish between two levels at which historical statements are made. The first level is that of specific factual assertions and in so far as they are accurate, they are completely objective. The fact that Aurangzebe destroyed a number of temples can be shown to be true beyond reasonable doubt. The second level is that of abstraction from particular facts. It is fatuous to claim complete objectivity for generalized abstractions in history. Some generalizations, however will be more objective than others. To find out the degree of objectivity attained by one such statement the traditional tests are the only relevant ones and they are adequate.

It would be clear from this that I do not advocate the acceptance or rejection of historical theses on moral grounds. Once a historical judgment is formulated, the only way to make up one's mind about its validity is to test the truth of its factual assertions and find out how far it accounts for facts already known. In this process morality does not come into the picture. Moral considerations, I suggest, should operate in making us aware of the harm being done by bigoted history and in re-orienting the process of historical inquiry. It is a theoretical possibility that moral considerations would vary from person to person but, in practice, this danger usually appears negligible. In this case the morality that I am stressing is that of national survival. Such considerations as that it is necessary for the nation to survive and that this becomes difficult if separatist tendencies are stres-

sed must weigh with all people who are not mentally warped. There are people, I am aware, who suffer from an irresistible urge 'to tell the historical truth' about religions they themselves do not profess and regions where they themselves do not happen to live. No doubt to them this urge is a moral one. But I am convinced that such people are not numerous.

Most people will respond to the morality of national survival without the necessity of any dictation. In any case the kind of considerations it involves will not be capable of dictating particular themes to individual researchers. The totality of Indian history is enough to accommodate personal inspirations of considerable diver-

sity. The only difficulty will arise if the individual urge of a writer takes him along communal lines. In this case I would be inclined to question the inspirations but not the morality. Further, the role of individual inspiration in the writing of history can be over-stressed. Unlike as in literature and art, most history is written out of an effort to solve current problems in research. The orientation of an individual writer is, very largely, derived from the orientation of research as a whole. Traditionally the direction of research has been determined in isolation from the problems of our society. We have now reached a point when we must transcend the traditional duty by breaking this insulation.

The West's Real Debt to the East

By HAROLD A. GOULD

RECENTLY, a scholar writing about the present state of Indonesian society has said: 'If a Javanese peasant, who had fallen asleep in 1600, were to awaken today he would find a great deal to gape at'. At the same time, however, this author was impelled to observe that 'social change was comparatively slow in Java. Tradition,' he declared, 'still plays an extremely important role in Javanese village life . . .'¹

The upshot of these words is simply that this gentleman saw Indonesia today as a curious congeries of progress and stagnation — the modern and the archaic juxtaposed in a manner remote to the experience of Western man. He is actually at a loss to understand why — even though, as I propose to show, it is Western man himself who is primarily responsible for this striking paradox in the social institutions of Indonesia. For the modern and the archaic are indeed profoundly in evidence there. Each is constantly impinging upon the other in the most complex and unexpected ways. And, at the same time, a gulf divides them which is so vast and basic that the society seems to be two irreconcilable worlds rather than a single, integrated one.

The point is, of course, that this situation described for Indonesia is not unique to her alone. On the contrary, it is recognizable at once to anyone who is either a student or a citizen of any of the so-called 'under-developed societies', by which is meant that group of peoples whose problems and aspirations are symbolized at the political level by the activities of the

Afro-Asian Bloc at the United Nations and whose common lot is that they were until recently colonial dependencies of the West. They also enjoy other important historical and structural characteristics concerning which I shall have something to say presently.

The author of this book on Indonesia said something else too which I regard as significant. When it comes to rendering judgement on Dutch rule there, he asserts: '...the Pax Neerlandica meant a significant improvement [in the lives of the Indonesian people] when compared with the former feudal conditions . . .'

The notion is dismissed that the Dutch could have had any profoundly adverse effects on the society that would not have occurred anyway, and it is claimed that the colonial regime 'only' (*sic*) proved a 'heavy burden' where the Dutch 'were tempted to exploit intensively an abundant labour supply or to encroach drastically upon the native land rights, as on the densely populated island of Java.'²

I have quoted them at some length because arguments like these have been used in the cases of India, Burma, the Near East, and of all the other European colonies as a basis for justifying colonial rule. But I contend that what is actually shown in statements like these is not *justification* but the *basis* and the *consequences* of colonial rule. For when we analyze the nature of the changes produced by Western colonialism, which are so often perceived as an interweaving of 'progress' and 'non-progress', the nature of the effects of colonial rule upon so-called 'native land rights' (i.e., indigenous social and economic institutions), and the reasons both historically and structurally for these effects, — then

¹ Wertheim, W. F., *Indonesian Society in Transition*. The Hague, 1959.

² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

we come to understand what the East really owes to the West and what, which is the actual subject of this discussion, indeed the West in turn really owes to the East both with regard to the past and the present (and speaking primarily in terms of social and economic matters rather than mystical and the cultural). For, in point of actual fact, it is a misnomer to believe that the consequences for both the rulers and the ruled under colonialism were either unmixed blessings or unmixed curses. They were both and it is important to understand how much of each was involved as well as how it all came about historically so that responsibility can be assigned and decisions can be made in the contemporary context of affairs as to what is morally required in order to rectify the wrongs that were actually committed.

Let us begin with a brief inquiry into what we mean by colonialism and how it came about. Let us explore its most important facets and relate these later on with our central theme: That in the aftermath of this phenomenon, the West owes something to the East, that 'something' being an *industrial revolution*.

First, there is the historical context of the meeting of East and West which led to the eventual emergence of the colonial process and its nationalist aftermath. It is sometimes not realized that the earliest period of contacts between the two 'worlds' did not at all lead to a dominance-submission relationship but, on the contrary, to a working commercial arrangement which was in some ways more profitable to the Eastern than to the Western societies involved in it. From the 15th century to the first half of the 18th century, European society was experiencing a great commercial revival which had begun in the trading cities of the Mediterranean, had spread northward into the regions where for centuries the Medieval system had prevailed, and had become revolutionary in its scope after European mariners had rediscovered the New World and had opened up sea routes to South Asia and the Far East. The Asian societies with which this

trade occurred were rich, powerful, and flourishing during this period. India was experiencing the apex of Mohammadan civilization in the Subcontinent in the form of the great Mughal synthesis. Indonesia and Malaya, Laos and Cambodia, and Siam were enjoying the fruits of their strategic situation between the Indian and Chinese loci of civilization. China herself was relishing the prosperity ushered in by the flowering of the Ming Dynasty. Compared to the European nations, Asia was more prosperous, more civilized, and more venerable. The forms taken by human civilization prior to the Industrial Revolution reached their apex at this time in China, Japan, India, and the nations of Southeast Asia.

Under these conditions, the encounter between West and East during the mercantilist phase of European history proved to be a draw from the standpoint of power. Both profited economically; and in the occasional clashes of arms, mostly at sea or in the vicinity of the great seaports of Asia, they cancelled each other out. The sea battles, such as they were, were normally won by the Europeans because their marine technology and armament were superior. The land engagements, such as they were, were normally won by the Asians whose land forces were vastly superior to anything the mercantilist powers could bring to bear in Asia from such long distances. In both instances the scope of conflict was not large and the commitment of men and ships by the Europeans was always modest indeed.

What upset this balance of power between the mighty terrestrial civilizations of Asia and the small but increasingly vibrant maritime civilizations of Europe was the emergence of a radically new system of technology in the West. The Industrial Revolution simultaneously had numerous consequences all of which dramatically altered the nature and the magnitude of the West's involvement with the East. First, and perhaps most fundamentally, the rise of factories meant that Europe ceased being interested in the purchase of finish-

ed goods produced by Asian handicraft industries but instead became interested in locating and controlling supplies of raw materials to be fed into the factories, and in locating and controlling markets where these quantities of factory-produced commodities could be sold.

But this change would not in itself have been sufficient to alter the balance of power in the world. It was that, additionally, and this is the second point, industrialization sent the population of the Western nations soaring upward — not because the birth rate rose, but because modern technology applied to the human condition dropped death rates fantastically while birth rates tended to remain high and only decline gradually at a far less steep rate. Europeans increased their numbers six hundred percent in the first century-and-a-half of the Industrial Revolution and this of course meant introduction of tremendous instability into the fabric of Western society while at the same time making available a vast increment of manpower, restless and discontented, which could be utilized to intensify expansionist inclinations already set in motion within the framework of the more modest-sized mercantilist societies. In fact, expansionism became intimately linked to the population explosion in the sense that it constituted one of the main solutions to the resultant problem of population pressure in Europe. Thus, a situation developed where Europe could make more and more guns to be put in the hands of more and more soldiers. And the more factories, the more people, and the more production there were, the more markets, raw materials, and living space, not to mention adventurism for its own sake (the byproduct of the whole dynamic pattern of growth), were desired and actively sought.

It is at this juncture that we see the whole picture begin to shift markedly in Asia. Ironically, however, historical events more or less strictly internal to the great Asian civilizations brought about conditions which immeasurably paved the way

for the rapidly expanding European nations, which made the whole process of asserting their dominance infinitely easier than it had any right to expect on the basis of its own intrinsic merits and depth. Here I refer, of course, to the amazing, nearly simultaneous collapse of both India and China, the two great foci of power on the Continent.

In India, the process of collapse was set in motion when Aurangzeb, the narrowly sectarian Muslim, defeated his elder brother, Dara Shikoh, who would normally have succeeded to the Mughal throne and who is alleged to have been a synthesizer in the tradition of his great-grandfather, Akbar, and of Ashoka and Chandragupta. For India's epochs of greatness have always corresponded with the emergence of these rulers of flexible bent of mind who saw the need to harmonize and reconcile the diverse molecules which thrive on the Indian soil; and her nadirs have always been associated with those who attempted to weave the fabric of Indian society too tightly and who, consequently, sent major segments of the community into insurrection. For the triumph of Aurangzeb led inexorably to the counterveiling Mahratta power which eventually worked his and his empire's downfall. And the Mahratta power, in turn, due to its own narrowness and incapacity to achieve any meaningful internal unity, was shattered at Panipat by Mohammed Shah at virtually the moment when the first textile factories were going into operation in the Midlands of England. India was a political wasteland of minor contending parties at the point where her civilization was about to be challenged as perhaps never before in her entire history.

So it was also with China. The Ming Dynasty was crushed by 1640 by the alien Manchus, a sinicised version of the Mongols, who established a dynasty known as the Ch'ing, and who never enjoyed support from the gentry class (from whence China's Confucian officialdom derived) because of their 'barbarian' origins. Resultantly, the Ch'ing (Manchu) Dynasty quickly lapsed into decadence, corruption,

and disunity which was approaching a climax after the middle of the 18th century. This rendered the Chinese nearly powerless to cope with the challenge presented by the rapidly industrializing and expanding West.

Therefore, the great civilizations of the East were in such advanced states of political prostration that they suffered the indignity of being dominated not merely by non-Asiatic power but initially by mere trading companies consisting of business enterprisers of the most naked sort who were no more than indirect representatives of their respective governments! A Dutch company triumphed in Indonesia; a British company triumphed in India, Burma and Malaya; a French complex of enterprisers triumphed in 'Indo-China'; and a galaxy of nationalities converted China into a private Leasehold of the imperialist. Only Japan escaped this fate, due perhaps to her remoteness and her lapse into rigid isolationism under the Tokugawas. And, ironically, Japan was the first Asian nation to emerge with a modern economy, doing this through a revolution which restored the ancient monarchy to its old prestige rather than vice versa as was the pattern in the West.

Progressively, from the period following the successful conclusion of the Carnatic Wars by the British in India and their subsequent attainment of the *diwanship* of Bengal, after Monro's defeat of Mir Kassim and Suraj-ud-daula at Buxar, the Asian nations were converted into suppliers of raw materials to the factories of Europe and the receivers of finished products from the same source. The 'abundant labour supply' of these societies was mobilized in behalf of these ancillary economic ends with the consequence that the old pre-industrial integration of their economies was destroyed. 'Native land rights' were violently altered to facilitate cash cropping and increased revenue yields. Of Bengal, the *Imperial Gazetteer* of 1908 (Vol. VII, P. 271) declares:

'British trade with Bengal commenced about 1633; but prior to the acquisition of

the Province it was on a very small scale... The 150 years of British rule have witnessed a commercial revolution. Hand-woven silks and cottons are no longer exported, and machine-made European-piece-goods have taken the first place among the imports. On the other hand, owing to the increased facilities for the transport of goods, the food-crops have been largely displaced by fibres and oilseeds, which now figure largely among the exports...'

It was these developments which assured the successful fulfilment of the Industrial Revolution in the West. By organizing vast areas of the world as suppliers of raw materials and receivers of finished products the rate of industrial growth there was able to stay ahead of the rate of population growth, thus assuring the eventual restabilization of the population at a higher magnitude and at a vastly higher standard of living.

But this was achieved only at a certain cost. And the cost was high, for it gave rise to the conditions which we now signify when we employ the phrase 'underdeveloped societies'. First, the Asian nations were pushed backward into a more total dependence upon agricultural production than ever before, born from the utter destruction of their handicraft industries and from the sudden upward surge of population produced by the coming of modern administration and sanitation. The growing numbers could not flow into burgeoning factories as in the West because Western dominance barred development of this necessary concomitant of a balanced modernization process. Thus, the land became ever more glutted with humanity and living conditions sank lower and lower as time passed, an irony of the first order when seen as occurring simultaneously with the increased preservation of life through improved medicine, sanitation, etc.

However, the utilization of colonies depended in turn upon the establishment of modern administration, modern communication, modern transportation facilities, modern seaports, and at the same time

mines, plantations, irrigation networks, etc. And this meant simultaneously bringing into the orbit of training in modern skills of various kinds an ever-larger number of the indigenous inhabitants, thus creating a nucleus of modern social and economic institutions which inevitably set in motion certain trends in population growth, aspiration levels, political awareness, urbanization, and occupational differentiation which are irreversible. It was this which Marx had in mind when he wrote in 1853 that:

'Modern industry, resulting from the railway system, will dissolve the hereditary divisions of labour, upon which rest the Indian castes, those decisive impediments to Indian progress and Indian power.

'All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social condition of the mass of the people, (this) depending not only on the development of the productive powers, but (on) their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both....'

In other words, colonialism means the creation of societies that are economic ancillaries of industrial societies and that are, on that account, 'modern' in those dimensions of their structure which pertain to administration, transport, and communication but 'backward' in those dimensions which pertain to the production of finished products. The consequences of this are: (a) The creation of a class of 'modern' types who acquire traits, tastes, and outlooks akin to their colonial masters and who, resultantly, feel completely alien to and alienated from the peasants and menials who are their countrymen but who have been prevented from entering economically into the modern era. This is the basis for the oft-repeated view that 'underdeveloped' societies both progress and non-progress. For this is precisely what they do.

(b) The release of population controls occurs, just as it did in the West. There is

enough modernization inherent in the colonial process to produce this result. But the industrialization of production cannot keep pace due to the controls imposed by the colonial regime in order to protect the competitive position of home industries. The productive apparatus remains 'feudal' in its technology and is, therefore, incapable of creating either new non-agricultural occupations, increased agricultural productivity, or higher standards of living.

(c) The eventual occurrence of a crisis in food and other production of necessities which leads to revolutionary unrest, and a crisis of aspirations among the modernized native elite which converts them into ever more intense nationalists who harness the general discontent into effective anti-colonial political movements. The latter see that their own survival and the development of their societies depends upon the removal of the colonial master who prevents the occurrence of a complete Industrial Revolution, the only thing that can hope to solve the kind of problems inherent in this situation.

This brings us down to our fundamental thesis, as a matter of fact. It is my contention that the so-called 'underdeveloped societies' are 'underdeveloped' to the degree and in the respects in which their natural tendencies toward the development of modern economic systems were arrested by European powers in order to assure the successful completion of their own industrial Revolution. Progress for the West was bought at the price of terrible economic imbalance and consequent suffering for the East. It, therefore, becomes not merely the privilege but the *right* of the underdeveloped countries to expect repayment from the West in the form of assurances of receiving whatever capital resources may be required to complete the industrialization process now precariously underway in these areas.

It may be argued, as in fact our Dutch friend quoted earlier has argued, that the West owes the East nothing in this context because whatever degree of modernization exists here, albeit incomplete, was a gift

* Marx K. and Engels, F., *The Indian War of Independence*, Moscow, 1959.

from the West anyway. The implication of such a remark is that the Asian nations were too 'static' and 'traditional' in their outlook to change. What was needed, it is claimed, was some dynamic new force to stir things up a bit and set change going in new directions.

I stand opposed to this argument, even though I am aware it is held almost as widely by Asians themselves as it is by people in the West. I stand opposed because my inquiries have led me to the discovery of contrary evidence. Let us take India as our first case in point. Despite the political disintegration which closed out the Mughal period, there was throughout this very Medieval period in Indian history a trend at the more fundamental sociological and cultural levels toward reform and synthesis, toward universalization of the moral and ethical essences of Islam and Hinduism. For this was the era of the great mystics — of Ramanand, Kabir, Nanak, Garibdas, Chaitanya, etc. — who were working and reworking the principles inherent in the old faiths into new creations which rejected caste rigidities and many of the other formalisms upon which ritual separatism was based. How vividly has Professor D.P. Mukerjee described the effects of Bhakti mysticism:

'...the mystics performed great deeds: they revolted against idolatry, the tyranny of caste and creed and the mechanics of ritualism, but along the submerged tradition of the dissenting Rishis of the Upanishads ... They bridged the gulf between the communities, the Hindu and the Muslim, and made them one in faith, love, and deeds ... Some of the mystic sects even permitted free selection of companions, separation, and widow-remarriage. Temples had no sanctity for them; the heart was the temple, and its keys were love and intuition...'¹

Was there not germinal here something with an Indian flavour an indigenous hue, which was parallel to those elements of

faith and ethics which in the West ultimately crystallized into the Protestant movement? I ask this question because the great German sociologist, Max Weber, has fairly well established the view that modern capitalism in the West was given its spiritual and ethical basis by the Protestant injunctions to work for the sake of work, to be virtuous in conduct, and to be responsible for the state of one's soul as an individual matter between yourself and God. Regarding India, however Weber contended that:

"The core of the obstacle did not lie in (ritual factors per se), which every one of the great religious systems in its way has placed, or has seemed to place, in the way of the modern economy. The core of the obstruction was rather embedded in the 'spirit' of the whole system. In modern times it has not always been easy, but eventually it has been possible to employ Indian caste labour in modern factories... A ritual law in which every change of occupation, every change in work technique may result in ritual degradation is certainly not capable of giving birth to economic and technical revolutions from within itself, or even of facilitating the first germination of capitalism in its midst."²

But Weber might have missed a salient historical fact in coming to this conclusion. For the coming of the European, especially the British Raj, might have had the effect of saving the groups who represented the moral authority of the caste system and leading to a reversal of the trend inherent in Bhakti away from caste rigidities. The essence of British policy was to 'honour native custom', as they put it, and their conception of native custom was bound to come from the ruling and high caste factions who were the authority behind caste, who were being challenged by Bhakti, who were alone communicating with the Europeans, and who were confirmed in their prerogatives wherever they conformed to British colonial rule. It was, after all, not so much the British themselves who started, (or should I say restarted) sociological and cultural reforms

¹ Mukerjee, D. P., *Modern Indian Culture*, Bombay, 1942.

² Weber, Max, *The Religion of India*, Glencoe, Illinois, 1958.

even after the establishment of European Rule. Let us recall that it was again the so-called natives like the great Raja Ram Mohun Roy of Bengal! These were the men whose energies returned the stream of Indian social life to the river-bed leading toward reform and flexibility in the social order of the kind which Weber has felt a prerequisite of the development of 'capitalism', i.e., the Industrial Revolution.

My point, then, is only this. It is not at all certain that European rule was necessary before the inner changes could occur in the structure of Indian spiritual and social life suitable to give rise to modernization. The tendencies were already there in the Indian Middle Ages and were running very strong under the political surface when the European entered the scene and froze the process in its tracks. Had that political disintegration not been quite as deep as it was, I think it a most reasonable hypothesis that India might have succeeded in borrowing the idea of industrialization from the West, combining this with its own indigenous reform currents, and producing a more balanced and culturally integrated modern era not afflicted, as this present one is, with a modern superstructure supported on a Bronze Age productive base, and with an elite who are middle-class in a Western rather than an Indian sense and, consequently, seriously alienated from the historical sources of their own culture.

The only concrete case I can cite as indicative of the possibilities about which I speak is Japan. For here, alone among all the great Asian civilizations the opportunity arose for having a full Industrial Revolution minus the attendant burden of a colonial power to inhibit the local enjoyment of most of its real benefits. Certain elements in the Japanese feudal aristocracy looked out from their island world upon the growing menace of Imperialism with horror. They witnessed the Opium Wars which led to the terrible humiliation of China; and eventually they were compelled to witness the bombardment of Shimonoseki, a port in Japan itself, by a

mixed fleet of European warships. This was the last straw. The feudal house which had ruled them for two hundred years, the Tokugawa, which had kept the emperor shut away and harmless, and had kept Japan cut off ostrich-like from the rest of the world was too moribund to act. Like China, Japan was on the threshold of becoming a looting-mart of the 'barbarians' (as the Europeans were uniformly called throughout Asia). So the dissident nobility acted. They deposed the Tokugawas, reinstated the Emperor to his traditional position of absolute authority, and they embarked upon what would be called in this modern era of phrase-coining, a crash programme of industrialization. The result is there for all to see today. Japan is modern to a greater degree than any other Asian society and it is modern in a way that, despite many inconsistencies, is compatible with Japanese character and temperament. It looks much less like a thing grafted incongruously into an alien body and it has the completeness needed to resolve the demographic and other dilemmas cast up by the industrialization process. And I see no reason why this might not have also been the case for India, or China, or Indonesia, had the early script been varied only slightly.

In saying all this, however, I do not mean to paint the kind of infantile Frankensteinian picture of the motives of a so-called European bourgeoisie which is one of the hallmarks of the typical Marxian analysis. My task is to assign responsibility without rancor or distortion so that mature moral action can follow. The men who came from the West to the East in search of adventure and opportunity, from Vasco Da Gama onward, were blind and ignorant and even rapacious if judged by the standards of civilized men today. But they were none of these things when viewed in the context of their own times. Jehangir more than once had innocent women and children trampled beneath the feet of his elephants as punishment for the crimes of their menfolk, crimes which today would not be considered a statutory

matter in the first place. That makes Jehangir no less great in relation to those around him. And the men who braved the vast seas and the hostile shores of Asia were the greatest men of their day in Europe, the ones who stood for that which was newer, freer, and superior by comparison with what the Middle Ages had stood for.

But when, in the evolution of social life, we move from one technological stage to another we move up a notch culturally and morally as well because a higher stage in social evolution means a higher measure of control over and understanding of the nature of ourselves and our environment. The late Professor Robert Redfield has put this better than I ever could:

"We do not expect the preliterate person to cultivate and protect individual freedom of thought as we expect civilized people to do. We do not blame the Vedddha for failing to have a subtle graphic art. We understand how it is that the Siriono husband leaves his wife to die alone in the jungle, and we do not condemn him as we condemn the suburban husband who leaves his wife to die in a snowdrift. We do not expect a people to have a moral norm that their material conditions of life make impossible. On the other hand, when a people surmount the difficulties of their material conditions to reach a moral norm which puts them, by so much, on the road which civilization has taken, we value highly what they do."^o

It is us, looking back over the deeds sincerely executed by our ancestors, who must render the judgements which their state of civilization denied them the capacities to render. We may applaud the good which they did here in India and elsewhere in Asia, for the amount was not insignificant. Perhaps the greatest gift of Western man to India is the Parliament which meets annually in Delhi, without question the most stable, articulate, and effective parliament anywhere in the Afro-Asian world to-

day. Even Mahatma Gandhi's beautiful mind and heart were partially gifts from the West, albeit unintended, to the extent that this extraordinary man's outlook upon life was compounded of ideas which originated in the West, including *ahimsa* itself which he derived in part from his reading of Ruskin, Tolstoy, Emerson and Thoreau (who themselves had ironically gotten their insights into non-violence from Hinduism).

But we may not, as modern civilized beings, applaud the grotesque admixture of the modern and the archaic which the colonial process created in the economic sphere. It is this which lies at the root of the terrible crises which are besetting Asia today. And it is this which the West owes it to the East to help solve, not by haphazard means as an act of voluntary charity but in a systematic fashion as an act of repentance for the frightful wrongs that have been done, and as an act of gratitude for the help, involuntarily and unconsciously, given in the Industrial Revolution. It is merely a form of saying, 'You gave us the Industrial Revolution in the 19th Century, now we are returning it to you with thanks in the 20th.'

Let us put this a little differently. We speak today about the need for 'aid programmes to the underdeveloped societies' because we must help others to help themselves. But it is time we realized that in the 18th and 19th Centuries it was the Western nations who were 'underdeveloped' in precisely the same sense that Asians are 'underdeveloped' today — namely, there was a shortage of development capital. The rate of industrial growth required could not be supported by the internal resources of the West. Colonialism solved the problem of capital shortage, of 'underdeveloped.' Thus, it would not be far-fetched to assert that in the 18th and the 19th Centuries, the countries of South Asia, the Far East, not to mention Africa and the Middle East and South America, constituted involuntary 'aid programs' for the industrialization of the West. In the process, because the 'aid' was involuntary

^oRedfield, Robert. *The Primitive World and its Transformations*. Ithaca, New York, 1953.

and strictly one-way, these areas of the world became the 'underdeveloped' nations of the 20th Century. This is because their capital resources were wholly drained-off or rearranged investment-wise to suit the requirements of the colonial masters. It therefore behooves the West to make their 'aid programs' voluntaristically as generous now as the East's involuntary 'aid programs' were during the colonial era.

Only then will the balance of power and well-being in the world be returned to an equilibrium comparable to what it was during the mercantilist age. And this is all the more imperative and right when, as I have demonstrated, there is strong evidence to indicate that Asians, especially, might in the long run have discovered the key to self-development on their own if given a little more time.

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.**

Recent Trends in the Distribution of Income in India

By PRANAB BARDHAN

*But I was thinking of a plan
To dye one's whiskers green,
And always use so large a fan
That they could not be seen*

LEWIS CARROLL

INDUSTRIALLY advanced countries in the West had been historically fortunate in the sense that they could gear their economies on to the path of sustained growth before the ideas of economic democracy became widespread and made it politically difficult to delay the accrual of the benefits of increasing incomes to the spending masses. England, for example. While Rostow puts her 'take-off' dates at 1783-1802, effective parliamentary reforms and a strong labour movement came much later; as a matter of fact, there is evidence enough to believe that income inequality in England might have been widening from about 1780 to 1850. Similar is the case for the United States and Germany. They are supposed to have 'taken off' in 1843-1860 and 1850-1873 respectively, while income inequality went on widening from the 1840's to the 1890's in both countries. Kuznets actually deciphers a long secular swing in income inequality; widening in the early phases of industrialisation, becoming stabilised for a while, and then narrowing in the later phases. The developing economies today, however, have to pay the price for short-circuiting the stages of history. In their all-out bid for rapid growth, socialist aspirations frequently break in, much as the friend of Dr. Johnson found it difficult to become a philosopher since 'cheerfulness kept breaking in'.

In India we have adopted, as our leaders are never tired of assuring us, the objective of achieving rapid economic growth along

with socialist ideals. The experience of the last decade, however, may easily lead one to suspect that we are having neither rapid growth nor economic equality. Over the decade the economic distance that separated India from most of Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Soviet Union, China and Japan has lengthened rather than narrowed. Our rate of growth of income of 3.5% per year has been half of that of Turkey and a third of Iraq's. Even apart from the question of the rate of growth, there is the problem of income distribution. The common man is often heard to complain that after ten years of planned development, his lot is none the better for it. Where then has the nation's income increasing accrued? This is a question so often parried, particularly at a time when the General Elections are in the offing. The Government has appointed, under popular pressure, a Committee with Prof. P. C. Mohalanobis in the chair, for investigation. But more than one year has elapsed and we are still in the dark about its findings. One only hopes that this does not turn out to have been one more instance of the appointment of a Committee to shelve issues of public urgency as meanwhile time is expected to do its proverbial healing business.

Data relating to income distribution in India are meagre as well as scattered, and it is very difficult to make a comprehensive study. But information from miscellaneous sources can still be marshalled and used to work out some tentative hypotheses re-

garding changes in the distribution pattern over the last decade. For all the limitations of the data available, some impressionistic conclusions may not be entirely valueless.

In a mixed economy, one of the most important instruments of redistribution is the tax policy. Our tax system over the decade has achieved precious little in that direction. In the middle of the last decade a number of brave new direct taxes (theoretically 'progressive') was introduced with much ado. What with ineffective administration and what with unduly liberal exemptions, they have practically made no dent at all. In a country where the income from property is estimated to contribute more than 25% of the national income, receipts from the Wealth Tax in 1960-61 constituted only 0.05% of the national income. The total yield of the Estate Duty, the Gifts tax, the Expenditure tax and the Wealth tax in 1960-61 came to 0.08% of the national income of that year. The mountain has evidently produced a poor little mouse.

It is also important to note that despite all the innovations in our direct tax structure, indirect taxes continue to be the mainstay of our budgets. Over the last decade, there has been a decline in the importance of direct vis-a-vis indirect taxation. Taxes on income and property contributed 32.6% of our total tax receipts in 1951-52; the percentage has gone down to 29.5% in 1960-61. The percentage for taxes on commodities and services was 59.3% in 1951-52 and 62.7% in 1960-61. Which section of the population is hit hardest by these indirect taxes will be evident if we note, as an illustration, that whereas in 1950-51 'wage-goods' (e.g. kerosene, sugar, matches, tea, footwear, soap, cotton cloth, etc.) contributed 43% of total Central Excises, in 1959-60 their importance increased to nearly 50%; more important still, the contribution of 'amenities and luxuries' (e.g. motor cars, woollen fabrics, artificial silk, electrical fans, tobacco, etc.) to Central Excises declined from 48% to 26% over the same period (Tata Quarterly, Oct. 1959).

Apart from excluding the huge amount

of business and professional income that at present evades taxation, income tax data do not cover the large category of agricultural income. On the basis of the N.S.S. data on land holdings and some simple, but not quite unrealistic assumptions, it has been estimated that in 1953-54, about 10% of the agricultural population enjoyed more than half the total agricultural income, earning a per capita income of Rs. 858 per year, while the residual vast mass scraped through with a per capita income of Rs. 112. The increase in income from 1950-51 to 1959-60 at current prices, from agriculture as a whole has been placed at about Rs. 1300 crores in the official national income data. Of this, according to a rough calculation similar to that made by Dr. Raj (*Economic Weekly*, Annual Number, 1961), over 30% has accrued to the 'upper-income group' in the agricultural sector (operating holdings of 30 acres and over, and accounting for only 3% of the rural population). A major share of agricultural prosperity has thus gone to the big farmers and traders. This class is subject to an agricultural income tax that is but mildly progressive. The considerable amount of appreciation that has taken place in the capital values in agriculture, which our tax system has not seriously touched at all, has also served as a powerful engine of inequality in the rural sector.

What about the economic position of the Indian labourer? Agricultural labourer (accounting for nearly one-third of the rural population) constitute, socially and economically, by far the most depressed class in India; the per capita income of agricultural labour households was about 34% of the national per capita income of Rs. 292 in 1956-57. One of the major findings of the Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry was that while between 1950-51 and 1956-57, agricultural income at current prices rose by 13%, the total income of agricultural labour families fell *absolutely* by 11% (the share of participants other than labour rose by 17%) and the average annual income per family declined by 2.2%, inspite of 10% increase in the number of

earners per family. Nothing indeed can be more ominous in an economy supposed to have been undergoing planned development. Though sampling and definitional anomalies detract much from the reliability of the findings, there is no doubt that the income of this under-privileged section of our population has failed to keep pace with the growth of national income and that some structural changes in the rural economy (such as land reforms leading to mass evictions, resumption of land for personal cultivation, etc.) have actually weakened the economic position of the agricultural labour.

The share of organised industrial labour in national income, as Sri B. N. Datar recently pointed out, remained more or less constant over 1948-58, inspite of expanding wage-paid employment and increasing importance of factory establishments in total output. (The share of wages and salaries of workers in the net value added by the 29 industries covered by the C.M.I. actually declined from 49.0% in 1948-50 to 43.5% in 1956-58). While the index of productivity went up to 132.7 in 1958 (base: 1953), the index of real earnings of industrial workers only crept up to 102.6. Real earnings of workers have thus kept a respectable distance behind productivity rise. The index of profits, on the other hand, increased, according to an estimate by the Reserve Bank, from 100 in 1950 to 151.7 in 1958.

Finally, no study of the economic position of Indian labour can be complete without a consideration of the mounting level of unemployment and underemployment in this country. The Second Plan started with an estimated backlog of unemployment of about 5 million persons; by the end of the Second Plan, the backlog has increased to 9 million. In addition, underemployment in the sense of those who have some work but are willing to take up additional work is believed to be of the order of 15-18 million.

Data relating to consumer expenditure may also give us some broad indications as to the changing pattern of income distribution. From N.S.S. data on household

consumer expenditure on an all-India level, it has been found by Sm. S. Basu (*Economic Weekly*, Aug. 12, 1961) that there was hardly any change in the share of the lowest 75% of the population, which remained at about 50% of the expenditure of the total population from 1952-53 to 1956-57. The top 10% of the population, on the other hand, accounted for 25% of the total expenditure in 1952-53 and 28% in 1956-57. The situation is actually worse from the income-distribution point of view, since for the poorer people income notoriously lags behind expenditure levels. A Middle Class Family Living Survey by C.S.O. in 1958-59 reveals that the families earning below Rs. 200 per month are burdened with chronic deficit budgets.

The disparities in standards of living are most striking in the urban areas. While there was a decline in the share of the poorer three-fourths of the urban population from 49% of total urban expenditure in 1952-53 to 46% in 1956-57, the top 10% increased their share from 30.8% to 33.1% over the period. Sustained inflation, prosperous trading and speculative activity, protected markets due to import controls, monopolistic restrictions and a general buoyancy lent by the tempo of economic development—all these have swelled the profits of the urban business and industrialist class, a large part of which ingeniously escape the tax net. No wonder that conspicuous consumption is so rampant.

What little evidence we have thus more or less lends support to the common notions about increasing income and consumption disparities, while it gives the lie to some of the ideas assiduously aired by interested quarters, such that the Government's tax policy is destroying business incentives (the familiar killing-the-goose-with-its-golden-eggs type of argument), that direct taxation has long reached its maximum stretching point, that wage increases are outpacing productivity and adding fuel to inflation and so on. Admittedly, all the data that have been cited above have many important limitations and to that extent one must have some reservations as to the con-

clusions drawn. But the broad suggestions about the changes in *direction* are perhaps clear. Despite all the talk about a progress towards a 'socialistic pattern of society' (this unfortunate phrase will no doubt be repeated times without number in this election year) and our professed aim of 'a reduction of inequalities in income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power'—to quote from that monument of platitudes and clichés, *The Third Five Year Plan*—ten years of planned economic development seems to have been taking us in a different direction.

We are often told that some worsening of the income distribution position is inevitable in the initial stages of economic growth. In corroboration, many are quick to invoke some alleged historical tendencies while our task, it is so often forgotten, is precisely to change them. To come so perilously close to suggesting the re-enactment, scene by scene, of that long and troubled drama of the industrialisation of the now-developed private enterprise economies (with its tragic heights of the 'hungry forties' and all) on a totally different stage and in a totally different milieu, is nothing short of an outrageous anachronism and an admission of the failure of all planning efforts. It is again said that the stress on egalitarianism with its disincentive effects is not conducive to economic growth. But in a country where the teeming millions continue to be pressed down to miserable living standards, while the demonstrably increasing prosperity of the fortunate few stands in rankling contrast, it is precisely the incentives to work and participate in the nation's development that are most seriously affected. Here, and not elsewhere, lies the main reason why our plans have admittedly failed to elicit in the

people that sense of active participation which is vital to their success, why we find so many around us simmering with an enervating discontent and why many others stifle yawns as the Government documentary films thrust upon their eyes glowing blast furnaces, gigantic dams and all the other monuments of progress in sweeping succession. Nor can we say, the economist's theory of consumption notwithstanding, that the increasing inequality of income distribution has served to promote savings significantly. According to the latest estimate of the Reserve Bank, our savings as a proportion of national income rose from 6.7% in 1950-51 to only 7.7% in 1958-59. To quote from Kuznets*: 'There is danger in simple analogies; in arguing that because an unequal income distribution in Western Europe in the past led to accumulation of savings and financing of basic capital formation, the preservation or accentuation of present income inequalities in the under-developed countries is necessary to secure the same result. Even disregarding the implications for the lower-income groups, we may find in at least some of these countries today the consumption properties of upper-income groups are far higher and savings propensities far lower than were those of the more puritanical upper-income groups of the presently developed countries'. Another stock argument is that an active policy of redistribution is not politically feasible under the existing balance of forces. But one may very well question the political wisdom in the long run of a policy that continues to connive at the widening economic disparities, while all the time ceremoniously passing pious socialist resolutions. It is high time that we start meaning what we say. Or, are we having second thoughts on socialist ideals?

* Simon Kuznets: 'Economic Growth and Income Inequality', *American Economic Review*, March, 1955.

The True Disciple: An Essay on Kabir

By F. R. STANLEY

'... There are different roads by which this end may be reached: the love of beauty which exalts the poet; that devotion to the One and that ascent of science which make the ambition of the philosopher, and that love and those prayers by which some devout and ardent soul tends in its moral purity towards perfection. These are the great highways conducting to that height above the actual and the particular, where we stand in the immediate presence of the infinite who shines out as from the deeps of the soul.'

(PLOTINUS, from a Letter to FLACCUS)

AT Maghar which is a village about sixteen miles from Gorakhpur, situated on the bank of the Ami river, stand two shrines, one Hindu and the other Muslim, divided by a high wall. The Hindu shrine, which is the smaller of the two, is in the hands of a pujari, who is a sadhu of the Kabir Panth or Kabir Brotherhood, an organization of disciples with headquarters at Benares. The Muslim shrine is in the centre of an enclosure and is surrounded by a platform. It is in the hands of a family of Muslim weavers who claim to have had charge of the tomb from the time of Kabir's death. Both these buildings combine the characteristic features of Hindu-Muslim architecture, the pointed arch, the plain aspiring dome, the tall minarets and spacious interiors blending with a general ornamental richness and design, the simplicity, grandeur and majesty. Both stand as enduring monuments of the mystic Oneness of God which Kabir preached during his lifetime, the vision of inner unity, of personal self-realisation which Hinduism teaches, and the upward-pointing, God-seeking vision of Sufi mysticism.

Of all the legends about Kabir that have come down to us, perhaps the most beautiful is the one which describes to us the

manner in which he became the disciple of Ramananda, the great Hindu teacher of the 15th Century. It tells us that the young Kabir, who was reproached at not having a 'guru' (without whose guidance one could not hope to obtain salvation) resorted to a stratagem in order to become Ramananda's disciple. Knowing Ramananda's custom of bathing in the Ganges early in the morning, Kabir lay in his path, thereby causing the teacher's wooden sandals to strike against his head. Ramananda, astonished, exclaimed, 'Ram, Ram!' the holy name of the incarnation which he worshipped, and Kabir, claiming that he had received the 'mantra' of initiation from the guru, remained his disciple. Whatever the truth of this story (and like all legends about saints and mystics it has plausibility which is very attractive) we know that Kabir was the first teacher to actively practise that religious synthesis on which the Hindu saint had based his religious teaching. Many of the Sabdas in the Bijak (one of the sources of Kabir's teaching) sing of the one, the true God. 'Rama, Khuda, Sakti, Siva are one: tell me pray how will you distinguish them?' he asks in one place, and asserts in another, 'By the one name I hold fast; this Kabir proclaims aloud.' (Bijak, Sabdas, 48 and 62) Kabir's

entire teaching is based on the ideal of the unity of God being manifested in the unity of love which he believed would unite all castes and creeds. This explains his rejection of Hindu as well as Muslim dogmas about God, the caste system, the external ceremonials of pilgrimage, fasting, sacred threads, and circumcision, the practice of idolatry, asceticism, and the paraphernalia of ritual. 'What is the use of Hindus bathing at Jagannath in Orissa: what is the use of Mussalmans bowing their heads in a mosque?' he asks in a verse, and adds: 'With deception in their hearts they repeat prayers; what is the use of their going on a pilgrimage to Mecca?' (Adi-Granth, Prabhati 2).

Paul was a tent-maker, Bunyan a tinker, and Christ a carpenter; Kabir was a weaver by profession, and this is the only authentic piece of information which has come down to us. His name is undoubtedly Muslim, and he probably took the weaving profession because his adopted parents, Niru and Nima were weavers by profession. In his poems there are frequent references to weaving and the weaver caste, and in an 18th Century Rajput painting in the British Museum he is shown at his loom, weaving and instructing his disciples. Many of his images are also drawn from the weaver's loom. The 28th Ramanai in the Bijak describes God as a weaver in the most sublime and radiant images:

'No one knew the mystery of that weaver:
who came into the world and spread the warp.

The earth and the sky are the two beams:
the sun and moon are two filled shuttles.
Taking a thousand threads, he spreads them
lengthways: today he weaveth still, but
hard to reach is the far-off end.

Kabir says, the Weaver weaves splendidly
joining karma with karma, woven with
unwoven thread.'

The Benares of Kabir's boyhood, with its temples and pilgrims, was undoubtedly a holy city whose religious glamour must have fascinated the boy. Ramananda was teaching there at the time, and his simple teaching with its emphasis on union with

God must have contrasted strangely with the pedantry of the Muslim mullahs and the ceremonial of the Hindu priests, and cast a spell over the boy who wanted to find God. In one of the poems attributed to him, Kabir says: 'I became suddenly revealed in Benares, and Ramananda illumined me.' (Poems 29, Tagore's translation.)

Tradition represents him as a teacher in Benares, sometimes wandering from place to place in the company of mystics and ascetics, but working at his loom, leading a normal domestic life as a householder (his wife's name is supposed to have been Loi) and continuing to follow his vocation of a seeker after God. His verse marks him out as a man who was humble, who scorned all outward piety and conventional religion, denounced sin and weakness openly, rejected dogma, and believed in his own convictions and experience. Faith is not merely the evidence of things unseen; it is right knowledge which arranges all experience in a vast framework of meaning which is called the Will of God. Kabir's poetry reveals the nature of his experience of God. The God whom he sought was not a mere abstraction; the impersonal infinite Being without qualities did not satisfy him; and like all mystics Kabir experienced the difficulty of finding adequate expression for a description of God's nature. In the 6th and 7th Ramanais of the Bijak he asks:

'How can I explain His form or outline?
there is no second who has seen Him.

How can I describe the condition of the
unconditioned, who has neither village
nor resting-place?

He who must be seen without qualities; by
what name shall I call Him?

The mystic seeks to experience God. The vision of every mystic is by its very nature transcendental; it is prophetic, visionary, intense, passionate, and above everything 'real' in the nature of its communion. The most beautiful of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount says: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Kabir was a mystic. In the Adi-Granth (one of the two important source-books of Kabir's work)—the sacred book of the Sikhs

—Kabir says: 'My heart being pure, I have seen the Lord; Kabir having searched and searched himself, has found God within himself.' (7th Bhairau) The one consistent theme running through Kabir's work may be described as the desire and hunger for God, the quest for and the finding of God.

Dr. Tara Chand, Rev. Keay and many other eminent scholars agree in pointing out that Kabir's religious teaching was the first major attempt to reconcile Hinduism and Islam. Kabir's teaching emphasized the middle path, and pointed out that impurity of heart, brought about by sin, was the only hindrance in the path of the man who would see God. This explains Kabir's condemnation of external ceremonial and ritual, which without inner purity seemed to him either indicative of pride or of falsehood and vanity. Kabir appealed to both Hindus and Muslims to give up the extremes of asceticism and worldliness, and to choose a way of life in which all action became dedication. In one of his poems he said: 'Whatever I do becomes His worship, All I achieve is His service.'

Kabir lived at a time when there was a lot of political uncertainty and chaos. The Delhi Sultanate was in its decline, and the terrible invasion of Timur in 1398 which brought in its wake massacre, pillage, and rapine, had completed the desolation wrought by the rebellion, cruelty, and famine which had characterised the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlak. The Lodi rulers had succeeded to the Sultanate, and their reign was marked by bigotry and religious persecution. But just as the persecution of the early Christians during the time of the Roman Emperors brought about a strengthening and resurgence of that religion, this period of hostility to Hinduism saw the emergence of the Bhakti movement, one of the greatest and fundamental concepts of modern Bhakti which means devotion or faith taught the idea of a personal God, who is full of pity and love for his devotees. It accepted the doctrine of incarnation, and maintained that the human soul is a portion of the divine. The teachings of Ramanuja (c. 1100) and

Ramananda (c. 1400) spread this teaching in active form, and Kabir, who lived and taught in Benares, the most sacred of Hindu towns, gave it a fresh impetus and vital meaning. Kabir maintained that religion without Bhakti was no religion at all, and exalted the ideal of 'Bhajan' or devotional worship, in his Ramanais short doctrinal poems), Sabdas (literally 'Words'), and Sakhis (short spiritual utterances consisting of a single couplet or 'doha'). Most of Kabir's teaching is to be found in Bijak (literally 'seed' or key to treasure), a collection of hymns written in various metrical forms in mixed north-Indian dialects. The language and spirit of the poems in Kabir's Bijak and in the Adi-Granth, the sacred book of the Sikhs, are similar. It is difficult to say with certainty which of the poems are really Kabir's work, and how much the work of his followers writing in his style. There are only six poems which occur in most collections. Besides these works, there are innumerable 'sakhis' attributed to Kabir which are current in Northern India. A conservative estimate puts their number at five thousand.

Kabir wrote at a time when Hindi literature was in its infancy, and he is one of the first important Hindi writers of any note. The circumstances of his caste and upbringing make it probable that he knew neither to read nor write. In a poem in the Adi-Granth he says: 'I am not skilled in book knowledge, nor do I understand controversy.' Elsewhere he says: 'My speech is of the East; no one can understand me; only he can understand me, who is from the furthest East.' (Bijak, Sakhi 194) But he did not despise learning. In the Adi-Granth he says: 'I know that learning is good, but better than learning is meditation.' (Slok 45) His language was virile, terse, and vigorous, and he specialised in the short didactic poem, there is a wonderful compactness about his writing. The rhythm and meaning in his verse often spring from his fondness for playing on words, as in the following couplet:

'Mālā pheratā yuga gayā; gayā na mana kā phēr,

Kara kâ manakâ chhānrike; mana kâ manakâ phēr.

('As he resolves his rosary, life passes away, and he knows not the secret of the heart. Throw away the rosary of the hand and revolve the rosary of the heart. ') Kabir plays on the words 'manakā' (of the heart) and 'manakā' (rosary), 'pher' (secrets) and 'pher' (revolve) to achieve his meaning.

As poem after poem testifies, Kabir's teaching stressed the personal relationship between man and God. But the path to God requires a discipline of the soul. In a celebrated prayer, St. Anselm says: 'Lord, teach me to seek thee and reveal thyself to me when I seek thee, for I cannot seek thee except thou teach me, nor find thee except thou reveal thyself. Let me seek thee in longing, let me long for thee in seeking, let me find thee in love and love thee in finding. 'To Kabir the search for God was contained in the longing for God, and this in its turn was linked up with the total submission of the self to God, and the submerging of the self in God. The discipline of the worshipper is one which involves a dying to self, and this involves a constant struggle against the snares of self, the passions, the temptations of desire, and the seductions of material things. In one of his poems, Kabir says, 'In the field of this body a great war goes forward against passion, anger, pride and greed.' (Poem, 37, Tagore's translation.) In another place he says, 'Renounce honour, renounce boasting, then the pride of your mind will be broken. For those who steal and devour, that plant will blossom again. If one pursues riches and wordly honour, that plant brings him again into the world. Give up lies, know them to be lies; this world is all illusion. For this cause do I speak,

that you might find escape.' (Bijak, 60th Ramaini)

But the realisation of God within the self involves not only the dying to self, but the awakening to God. This is the mystic union of man with God, and the nature of such a union can only be described by the saint. The basis of this union is love, and the steps by which a man may attain this union are the stations of the soul on its spiritual pilgrimage. Kabir's own spiritual pilgrimage is described for us in his poetry. All the conditions of this mystic union which the Sufi mystics of — contrition and sorrow, hope and fear, nearness and awe, violence and kindness, separation and union, absence and presence, amazement and satisfaction — are described for us in Kabir, God is 'the breath of all breath', 'the breath, the word, and the meaning'; He is 'the true Guru'; He is 'the Formless in the midst of all forms'; He is 'all light'; He has 'neither form nor formlessness', He has 'no name'. He has neither colour nor colourlessness, He has no dwelling-place.

That his teaching outlived him and spread far beyond the places where he taught and worked and sang, bringing him a following running into a million or more devotees, that thousands of his sayings and apophthegms are still current in Northern India, many of them handed down by word of mouth, and that the various Kabir Panth sects of both Hindus and Muslims regard him as a saint and spiritual leader is all the more amazing when we consider the circumstances and the times in which he lived and wrote. The illiterate weaver who sang at his loom wove his hunger and longing for God into his poems as the shuttle flew to and fro in front of him; and could declare at the end of his life in the simplest of statements 'By devotion I have obtained the Lord.' (Adi-Granth, 6th Gauri)

Psychoanalysis Re-examined

By JAGANNATH PRASAD DAS

IF popularity were an index of greatness, Freud would be one of the greatest persons of our time, perhaps only second to Marx. His influence on painting and sculpture, drama, fiction and poetry is known to every one interested in these things. Indeed, as some one has remarked, some of the contemporary novels can hardly be distinguished from psychiatric case reports. To the man in the street, psychology is synonymous with psychoanalysis and the latter with Freud's theory, as philosophy is another name for a discourse on God. But for all its popularity psychoanalysis is seldom accepted as science by scientific experts. Freud's status as a scientist is a matter of serious controversy. The opponents of psychoanalysis claim that Freud, its originator, gave a system which to a large extent is not experimentally verifiable. So how can psychoanalysis claim a place of honour in psychology which is ever aspirant to the status of a fundamental science? Very often what is forgotten in these aggressive verbal attacks on psychoanalysis is that useful contributions can be made by theories even when they cannot produce scientifically rigorous laws.

Although there are different sects of psychoanalysts, all accept certain fundamental Freudian tenets. Of course, those following Jung or Adler are bound to oppose Freud. But their relative rarity pushes them to obscurity. The basic link between the different varieties of psychoanalysis is provided by a common recognition of two phenomena: repression and the unconscious. Repression is associated with sex. Jung left Freud because he could not move freely in the master's camp without constantly coming up against some reference to sex. He was most disturbed by

Freud's attitude towards religion and the religious urge. Jung regarded the religious urge as genuine and primary, not derived from the sex urge by way of sublimation. He accused Freud of regarding mind as a mere appendage to the gonads. But Freud thought that Jung 'courted popular favour by means of certain lofty ideas' and this reactionary movement that branched off from psychoanalysis was unintelligible, obscure and confused. The Freud-Adler alliance met the same fate. Adler could not share Freud's belief in the importance of the unconscious. He did not bother about the source from which desires came. Besides, he felt the need of degrading sex from its position of the supreme urge. Freud was very bitter. Adlerian advocacy of 'will to power' as the strongest urge was viewed by Freud to be working in Adler and he cites a conversation in support of this. Adler is reported to have told Freud that he did not like to work under Freud's shadow all his life. Surprisingly, it was a consistent characteristic of Freud to ascribe personal motives to theoretical disagreements. Whenever his theory met with disfavour, he would attribute it to repressed complexes that the theory touched off in his opponent and admit the resentment as the most logical reaction. It seems nothing could take Freud by surprise, a characteristic transferred to his innumerable disciples. Everything is explicable, a cause can be located somewhere even for the most bizarre behavioural symptoms. This has an innate attraction for us imperfect mortals who hate to float in ambiguity and crave equilibrium. Our elaborate system of beliefs in life after death bears testimony to this tendency to escape from the uncertain and the unanswerable. One is tempted to

mention here how Freud destroyed his opponents by damaging psychoanalytical interpretations of their motives. Havelock Ellis, the author of the very famous *Psychology of Sex*, was anti-Freudian. Therefore Freud considered his work a result of reaction to some personal sexual abnormality. He mentioned this explicitly on one occasion to psychiatrist, Wortis, who was known to Ellis. Freud said Ellis must be impotent, an idea suggested to him by the fact that Ellis had no children and thus Ellis must have written all those exhaustive volumes on sex for a vicarious satisfaction. Ellis came to know about this and assured Wortis that he got himself examined and the report was he did not lack in healthy sperms.

Indeed, the popularity of psychoanalysis lends itself to favourable comparison with that of mythology. People today are as much bewildered by the intricacies and potential power of mental processes as their remote ancestors were by the sun, moon, air or fire. The explanations of these natural objects provided in the mythologies must have made deep impressions, for even today we discover traces of it in the simple folks who have not assimilated Western ideas. But those explanations were not necessarily correct. So also ideas and concepts advanced by psychoanalysis may be accepted by common people, these may bring solace to the restless, an attitude of resignation and reconciliation to the distressed mental sufferer. Utilization of the concepts of psychoanalysis may effect sporadic cures. Still the picture of mental processes presented by psychoanalysis may not be the correct one.

Psychoanalysis may be regarded as having two aspects: theoretical and practical. The theory may be incorrect and fanciful, but the practice may still bring about desirable results. For, the theory only provides the rationale, but during practice important forces not recognized by the theory may be at work and thus make it effective.

Let us attend to the theory first. Mental processes owe their origin to the dynamic

and topographical nature of mind, describable in terms of id, ego, superego, and, again, conscious, unconscious and subconscious. The id is the storehouse of innate, unsocialised urges, the superego of social sanctions and the ego tries to strike a balance between the two. The latter is identified with a person's conscious, readily apparent personality. Id is all unconscious, superego partially so and ego has contact with both the conscious and the unconscious as an object floating has with the sky above and the water below. Our innate desires like sex and aggression are granted satisfaction in socialized forms guided by the pressure from id and the severity of superego. Freud recognizes the presence of two primary urges variously named as Eros and Thanatos, Life and Death, Sex and Aggression. The id derives its energy from these basic instincts and is regarded as a primordial reservoir of instinctual energy. Id is unorganised in contrast to the ego. Ego is reality-conscious, and hence needs to be highly organised. Id is pleasure-conscious and superego morality-conscious. Our profound sense of guilt mainly comes from the unconscious part of the superego. Like the id desires, the desires of the superego in the form of guilt feelings crave satisfaction and goad the person to suffering and self-punishment. Conscience obviously is a derivative of superego.

As soon as a desire apt to be regarded as antisocial and undesirable appears, it is pushed down to unconscious and repressed. But the unconscious id desires sometimes become intense and threaten to come out. Therefore in dreams they are granted partial satisfaction secretly, in disguise, to ease tension. Some of the desires appearing in dreams, however, may be innocent ones like the striving man's unfulfilled hope of getting food. The ego has an array of defences against the id desires of which repression is an important one. Rationalization is also another which is very often made use of by the ego. It implies assigning conscious explanations to actions provoked by unconscious motivation. Subli-

mation by far is the best defense mechanism. It is a healthy way of disposing of undesirable urges as through painting, poetry or mountaineering. When all the ego-defenses fail to keep back the upsurge of some violent id desires, the worst mechanism, regression to an infantile form of behaviour is used. Regression symptomatizes mental abnormality, and the greater the regression, the more severe is the abnormality. Sexual aberrations, so often noticed in the mentally ill, are pinned down to regression.

The unconscious is known to cause frequent troubles in the conscious. Such common happenings as the forgetting of a name, slip of the tongue or slip of the pen, are taken as evidence of unconscious motives. The house-wife forgetting her bunch of keys several times a day does not want to be burdened with the responsibility of keeping the keys and probably, the house; the intimate friend who absent-mindedly greets you with a good bye unconsciously does not want your company. Wit and humour are avenues of letting out unconscious vulgar and aggressive urges. Why else does a man's stumbling against a pillar provoke laughter? Satires admittedly exploit the weakness in others and are aggressive in intent. These incidents of everyday occurrence, the 'psychopathology of everyday life', may escape our notice, but are observed and explained by Freud in intelligible terms. The fallacy often committed here is in regarding *observation* and *explanation* as inseparable. The truth of the observations casts a halo and in a way appears to justify the explanations. In this way, Freud may have built a consistent, highly imaginative structure with no moorings on experimentally verified grounds, but illuminated by the truth of his observations.

Freud's system is biologically oriented, but with disastrous consequences. He forgot that man essentially is a social animal. He is born into and raised in a social environment. He did not seem to realise how social forces modify and sometimes change biological characteristics.

Instead he started at the opposite end explaining the growth of society and civilization in terms of the innate biological nature of man. His faith in the universality of the basic concepts like the Oedipus complex or the primitive sexual and aggressive instincts was founded undoubtedly on his equally untenable belief that man is primarily a biological unit. An example of his blind adherence to biological explanations may not be out of place here. Man assumes an erect posture in standing which is not found in most animals. It appeared to Freud that this must have repressed man's pleasure in smell denying full sexual gratification and thus 'compelled man to seek other than sexual outlets for his libido, leading to all the cultural developments...' It illustrates how some of his contribution to sociology and anthropology could be ridiculous and weird in character. His theme in *Totem and Taboo* was the correspondence between the customs and beliefs of primitive races and the unconscious material revealed from the analysis of children and neurotics. Primitive peoples are regarded as infantile and 'irrational'. Like children they repress their incestual desires, a basic component of Oedipus complex. Hostility to father (because he is an obstruction in the realisation of child's incestual desire) which is expressed in a wish to kill or castrate him is also forbidden. Totem is only a symbol of the father and hence there prevails a taboo against killing or injuring the totem. A totem may be any object like a plant or an animal. Such a psychoanalytic interpretation of animism, inevitably noticed at a certain stage of cultural growth, could not be very realistic. Genuine anthropologists reacted very strongly to it and described *Totem and Taboo* as a woeful performance. Westermarck, for one, could not believe how a little son embracing and kissing his mother could be satisfying an incestual desire.

Freud's biological orientation enkindled an internal revolt. The rebels are the neo-Freudians. Their aim was to reform psychoanalysis from within. They were perhaps

in greater contact with the 'zeitgeist' and hence were able to give the movement the social orientations that it needed. But as would be apparent even from a swift survey of the neo-Freudian systems, merely the *form*, not the *content* of psychoanalysis is retained in them. Abram Kardiner, described as a psychoanalytical anthropologist seems to have rejected Freud's view that all institutions are central struggles against incest. He maintains that institutions shape ones basic personality, hence individual and cultural differences cannot be ignored. However, with the help of psychoanalysis, it is possible to reveal a basic personality structure characterizing a culture. He retains the term Oedipus complex, but it is reinterpreted to imply a fusion of dependency and sexual craving on the same object. Unlike Freud, he holds that basic personality cannot be independent of primary institutions.

Another neo-Freudian, Erich Fromm, seems to be in greater disagreement with the fundamentals of psychoanalysis. Man's anxieties and passions are to him, not incestual but cultural products. He is a psychoanalyst who believes in ethical values and considers ethical validity an absolutely necessary requirement for a proper study of personality. For holding a similar view, Jung had to be disowned by Freud, but Fromm remains a neo-Freudian and brings back value judgement to psychoanalysis. Otherwise, his theory is also interesting. The growth of personality in Fromm's conception is dialectical in nature. Birth separates the child physiologically from its mother but imposes a functional dependence on her. As the child grows up, he gives up this dependency on parents, but at once feels insecure and craves for belongingness. This urges him to engage in productive work for society and love for others. Then develops a sense of unity and common destiny with mankind which make him a normal person.

It should be apparent from this brief digression how even the basic concepts of Freud were either completely rejected or, at best, condescendingly retained only in

form. This happened because Freud had the gift of extraordinarily sharp perception, but also had the folly of over-simplification and illegitimate generalization. His sample was neurotic men and women of the upper middle class in Germany. But the range of some of his concepts like the Oedipus complex covers humanity of past, present and future. Because of such ability for keen perception, he would not accept anything as true that he had missed. This made his theory very biased and by his rejection of fresh interpretations, the theory set into a rot.

Psychoanalysis has contrived to remain isolated and unaffected and therefore sterile by listening only to the faithful. Unless you are analyzed, you cannot possibly contribute anything worthwhile to psychoanalysis. But by the time you have had the prolonged analysis, which may last from one to three years, your complexes are washed out and with them goes your critical attitude to psychoanalysis. There is always that dictatorial note in psychoanalysis which was first expressed by Freud when he was suggested some modification in his theory: since he was the creator of psychoanalysis, he knew best what it was. Probably he liked to have the monopoly of discovering facts. Such attitude did a greater harm to the movement than the criticisms of any outside heretic.

Psychoanalysis would have faced less opposition had it not tried to establish itself as a science. By enthroning himself as a scientist Freud became a target for the attacks of genuine admirers of science. When on one occasion Havelock Ellis sympathetically described Freud as a great artist, he saw in it hostility; for to him it was the 'most refined and amiable form of resistance, calling me a great artist in order to injure the validity of our scientific claims.' But everyone was impressed with his artistic qualities. Einstein wrote after reading one of Freud's books: 'I quite specially admire your achievement as I do with all your writings from a literary point of view.' There was no denying the fact that Freud was an artist. He likened him-

self to Moses (perhaps as a persecuted prophet). He was an intuitionist whose main weapon was insight. Therefore his interpretation of mythological characters like Moses in his book *Moses and Monotheism* are very revealing and attractive. The high ethical standard among the Jews, which to Freud suggests an incorrigible guilt feeling at the back of it, is brilliantly analyzed. Since the Jews had killed Moses, the father of their race in an act of rebellion, the consciousness of this guilt haunts them. The Jews often believe themselves to be God's chosen people. Freud explains this by indicating that Moses at the first instance chose his people whose descendants are the present-day Jews. All these ingenious interpretations brought him appreciation from literary people like H. G. Wells. But these could not be seriously taken as scientific. Even as Ernest Jones has pointed out, Freud was subscribing to discredited Lamarckism by asserting that acquired traits like guilt-feeling can be transmitted. Besides, scientific works are not born out of emotional necessity which was behind Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*. For towards the end, Freud was disturbed by the persecution of his race by the Nazis when antisemitism assumed an ugly form. He then set upon explaining how the Jews came to be what they were.

Freud was aggressively anti-religious and described his theory as mechanistic and materialistic. But behind this suspiciously intense atheistic facet must lurk a secret irresistible spiritual urge. Otherwise he could not have been a convert to occultism. This happened in his later years; but the germs of spiritualism can be traced to his association with Jung. He got support for his occultism from his own experience like so many of us do for the existence of ghosts. Had he limited it to his private beliefs without letting it infect his system, it might have been permissible. But he modified his theory of dreams in the light of occultism. Dreams could be built out of materials supplied by telepathy. In refuting the claims of religion as something real, Freud had said, '...in the long run,

nothing can withstand reason and experience, and the contradiction religion offers to both is only too palpable.' But he defended occultism on the basis of his experiences and 'experiments in my private circle' little suspecting how experiences are vulnerable to emotional influences.

Freud's support for lay analysis is a serious pointer to his unscientific orientation. Lay analysis is psychoanalysis practised by persons who do not possess medical qualifications. He regretted that American psychoanalysts did not favour lay analysis. It should have made him happy that psychoanalysis was incorporated as a legitimate branch of psychiatry. Instead, he was persecuted by a feeling that it had become a mere hand-maid of psychiatry. Strange that he did not desire psychoanalysis to be limited and practised only by the experts in the art of mental healing!

As a therapy, psychoanalysis is uncertain. It is prolonged, expensive and uncomfortable as long as it lasts. Past events with unpleasant emotional association are constantly dug up by the analyst and cause distress to the patient. Complexes are discovered, but in most cases the patient is only taught to live with them. Sometimes, cures occur, but the percentage of cure is not significantly different from those receiving no treatment. Of course after a session with the analyst, the patient may feel vastly better, but so would he do with a pleasant intelligent and a sympathetic listener who is willing to accept fees for his services. The authorities of American psychoanalytical associations do not claim to find statistically acceptable evidence as to the curative powers of psychoanalysis.

Nevertheless, in the present impersonal set up in big cities, the psychoanalyst is a great source of comfort and consolation. Minor mental ailments do disappear with some rational discussion in the presence of the analyst. But this proves little. The hunter of rich dowagers of the popular cartoons does act as a friend, philosopher and guide in old age. But it is not because he believes in id, ego or superego that he is of such great help.

Chinese Wall in Europe

By SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

DURING the hasty building of the Chinese Wall which the Soviet Union has directed Herr Ulbricht to erect across Berlin, an Eastern German armed guard escaped West through a stratagem in connivance with the cameramen present. The cameramen, who had taken a position close to the barbed wire, pointed their cameras at his comrades in the communist armed guard and as no one in Germany cares to be photographed serving the servant of Moscow, the guards turned their backs to the cameramen. Instantly, the fugitive leapt over the barbed wire.

Isn't this episode a symbol, though in reverse, of the whole operation? Mr. Khrushchev found himself in a position dangerous enough to verge on the ridiculous. He was on the eve of sending his first settler to the Moon; but his German colony, the Eastern Zone, was emptying itself into the West through the Berlin hole in the Chinese Wall of his empire. He was promising free bread and free transport to his subjects by 1970; but in 1961 there was no bread in the Eastern Zone, and no one was allowed to move without police scrutiny lest the traveller turned out to be a fugitive and later a refugee.

The Eastern Zone was thus for the Soviet Union a twofold cause of shame: it proved to the world that a free Germany could become a miracle of wealth, peace and freedom while a communist Germany was so utterly unable to compensate its subjects with peace and prosperity for their lack of freedom that its police had to go about armed to the teeth and its inhabitants fled to the West at the rate of one a minute.

Nor was this enough. For the disastrous lowering of the standard of living in the Eastern Zone was bound to be so injurious

to the Soviet Union and to communism, the contrast between the two Germanies was so dramatic and flagrant, that the Soviet Union must have considered the securing of a decent standard of living in the Eastern Zone as one of its highest priorities. For the Soviet Union, the Eastern Zone of Germany was what the window is to a shop. The world of onlookers, passing from brilliant, well-stocked, rich cities such as Dusseldorf, Frankfurt or West Berlin, to dark, ill-kept, empty-stored East-Berlin, Leipzig or Dresden, was bound to conclude that communism does not deliver the goods. Therefore, since the Soviet Union has allowed her German colony to remain in a drab, poverty-stricken and even hungry state, there is only one explanation possible: that she is not capable of remedying the situation and therefore that the economic state of the Soviet Union herself is also parlous.

Such was the situation which confronted the Red Tsar. How did he face it? There is no denying the fact that he has acted with the utmost skill and coolness. The facts before us warrant the following summary of his strategy: 'We cannot improve the situation in the Eastern Zone, but we can secure at least two immediate objectives: we can stop the leakage of East Germans, particularly the young; and we can stop the scandalous spectacle of the contrast between the two Germanies and the two Berlins, which demoralizes the Easterners and emboldens the Westerners, and which robs us of our prestige in the whole world. In order to secure these two aims, all we have to do is to build a wall across Berlin. True, this will break every possible arrangement we have made with the Western Powers about Berlin, but as we

have broken other such arrangements before and the Powers have not reacted, the risk is small'.

'In order to ensure our success', the Red Tsar evidently went on thinking, 'we must distract, bamboozle and, if possible, frighten the West. In the name of holy coexistence, we shall make imperious demands under nuclear threats, though insisting on the fact that it is they who are threatening us; we shall declare our firm intention to sign a peace treaty with both Germanies and, if denied this, with our own Germany, while under-scoring the peaceful nature of such a demand (though backed by a nuclear threat); we shall assure the world that all accesses to Berlin will be solemnly guaranteed, but that any attempt to pass a closed gate would be repelled by force; and should the West not accept our demands, we shall throw on the West the responsibility for the destruction of the world, should the world (after its destruction) wish to investigate the author of it.

'These carefully contradictory statements will create in the West a mighty confusion, which our comrades in those lands will endeavour to increase with their usual shrewdness, and which our friends there will in fact increase without endeavouring to do so, thanks to their delightful mixture of idealism and silliness. The governments will then be forced to divert their attention from the real problems to the purely formal ones such as how to avoid the nuclear war and how to negotiate. Then, while the three western heads will be busy studying the situation on their maps and reports, we shall suddenly erect the wall. There will be an outcry and the three heads will look up. What, they will say, ah, just a wall. And they will lower their heads again to carry on their study of how not to destroy the world and how to negotiate.'

We must recognise that the Red Tsar has got away with it. His Ambassador in Bonn went to see Dr. Adenauer and explained to him that the dearest wish of his master was not to increase tensions. I ask you, how could a mere wall increase tensions? Of course, answered Dr. Adenauer, no one wants to increase tensions. And so the wall remains as a monument to Mr. Khrushchev's anti-tensionist devotion and determination. A purely temporary wall, he assures us as an expert in temporariness, with such monuments of the kind as the temporary occupation of all Eastern Europe by Soviet troops. A purely temporary wall until the peace treaty is negotiated.

The Western press was most wise. Few were the papers which did not agree with the view that there was nowhere in the record a single word laying on the western powers a definite obligation to prevent Herr Ulbricht from building a wall between the two Berlins. The crisis remains, of course, in the offing and may even be stimulated by this initial success. It might come to a head in the autumn, or at Easter or at Trinity; but the fact is that the erection of that wall was not a sufficient cause for anyone but a madman to risk a nuclear war. And so, Mr. Khrushchev got his wall and achieved the two aims for which he had ordered Herr Ulbricht to build it: the Iron Curtain has now blinded the window which showed the West and the whole world that there is not enough bread in East-Germany, and there will be no more fugitives from communism towards the West. The East Germans are now well trapped in their prison and they will have to work for the Red Tsar and go hungry or altogether starve. The whole of Eastern Europe will be discouraged and the most signal cold war victory since Budapest-56 will have been won by the Soviet Union.

Clean Germans and Dirty Politics

By MARTIN S. DWORKIN

SIX years after Victory in Europe and the Trials at Nuremberg, there was a scene in a movie, made from a British book by an American company, in which Field Marshal Rundstedt (Leo G. Carroll) complained to Field Marshal Rommel (James Mason), about the Allied landings in Normandy. If it were not for interference from political generals in Berlin, he said, he would show the invaders of *Festung Europa* '... what a German general can do.' The tone makes all the difference, of course, between this scene from *The Desert Fox* (1951) and so many similar scenes in the anti-enemy films of the war years, in which patently villainous officers boasted of victories we in the audience knew would never—*could* never be won. Carroll and Mason appear as Germans, wearing Nazi eagles. But the film intended them to be believed in for their dutiful optimism, and accorded a subtle sympathy because they would not win, after all. More, the sympathy would not be misdirected, as these Germans obviously were enemies only in the old chivalric sense. Once defeated, they could be looked upon with affection—magnifying the victory, to be sure, in praising the vanquished.

As David ages, Goliath grows. But turning old enemies into friends is something other than boasting of old battles. And on screen, making allies of the Germans is no easier than elsewhere. In fact, it may require an imaginative wrench, and a renovation of memory, that the movie-makers are less able to manage gracefully than can professional adepts at *realpolitik*. For, to admire the Germans' military prowess—or their peace-time regenerative power—is no more difficult than to admire ourselves, for having been superior in battle and strate-

gically magnanimous in victory. But to turn Germans into movie heroes, with whom we can associate our sympathies, requires either an unthinkable repudiation of ourselves, for having been *their* adversaries, or some alteration of the past, to make it all seem right.

A new enemy must be found in the old war, against whom we may imagine the ordinary, good, law-abiding Germans united with us—however fiercely and bloodily we may have fought. It would seem that the most accessible villains would be the Nazis—as they were in our own hortatory films during the war. But 'the Nazis' can turn out to be embarrassingly specific, or vacantly general. They are either real people—hence, the very ones we try to heroicize; or they exist only rhetorically—and all the individuals and millions of our dead were struck down by abstractions. The two generals in *The Desert Fox* are *not* Nazis. They may wear Nazi insignia, being Germans in uniform. But they are not involved in 'politics.' They despise all ideological considerations, which soil the military purities of warfare with civilian concerns. Politics, dirty civilian politics, brought on the defeat—if not the war itself. The soldiers, the ordinary decent Germans, are not to blame. It is the politicians who are—and they happen to be Nazis. This is the point of the scene, and of the whole film. In ways often refined and elaborated, it is the point of almost all American and British films—but, significantly, of only a very few French and even fewer Russian films—since the old shooting war ended and the new political war began. For a complex of political, economic, and psychological reasons that are as effective as any official directives for propaganda strategy,

a pattern came to be set that by 1958 *Variety* headlined as 'FILMS' NEW NICE-NASTY NAZIS.'

For another complex of reasons, the reaction, including what by early 1961 *Variety* was nothing as a 'NEW "NAZI BEAST" FILM CYCLE,' at first emphasized documentary realism, rather than dramatized rebuttal, using rediscovered newsreel and official footage, in addition to photographs and documents—as in the television presentations of the Winston Churchill memoirs, *The Valiant Years*, the numerous presentations of background of the Eichmann trial, and the Swedish made *Mein Kampf* (1960). This film, an eloquently detailed, if compressed and selective survey of the Nazi epoch, was produced originally (by Erwin Leiser) to inform German youth about a history evaded or distorted by most of their elders. That the dreadful images of the film have been seen by great numbers of stunned, perplexed Germans surely justifies its making. That so many Germans, and so many others everywhere, see them unprepared can only condemn its timing. (The response may also point up the indeterminate impact of the Germans' own bitterly self-critical films—including the East German *The Murderers Are among Us* (1947), *Marriage In the Shadows* (1947), and *The Blum Affair* (1949), and the West German *The Devil's General* (1955), *The Last Ten Days* (*Der Letzte Akt*—1955), *Aren't We Wonderful?* (*Wir Wunderkinder*—1958), and *The Bridge* (1960).

One hastily made dramatization, the American *Operation Eichmann* (1961) was banned by the West German Film Censorship Board as 'oversimplified.' As melodrama, some form of exaggeration would be inevitable—even in this case. But the film itself provides what inevitably is no more than a minor gloss upon what is actually and principally a massive production of documentary realism. The Eichman trial was managed to be publicized via all possible means of mass information—including films, for theater and television showing. The immense effort was surely

intended to make propaganda: to tell the story of the Nazi horror to so many who had forgotten, and to so many more who had never known. But the telling also had to be counterpropaganda—less against resurgent Nazism than against recurrent inclinations of the victors themselves to separate the Germans from their politics. Not a small part of the background against which the trial must be viewed—and its justice or expediency measured—is made up of the 'Nice-Nasty' pattern of presenting Germans in movie fiction, that became so striking a design of the decade.

Within the pattern there is some variation, as, for example, between British and American films—reflecting, among other things, hallowed differences in national style or temperament. The British, to begin with, enthusiastically specialize in movies about triumphant ingenuity, stiff-lipped gallantry under fire and nervy prison-camp escapes. An Australian critic, Allen Boase, remarking that '...the war film of Britain has its Hollywood counterpart in the Western,' goes on to complain that 'World War II has been converted into a grand adventure story with the British serviceman always shown in a heroic light.' An essential ingredient of this continued celebration, he might add, is the glorified German antagonist. Field Marshal Rommel of the African desert and Normandy, Admiral Canaris of naval intelligence, Captain Langsdorff of the raiding *Admiral Graf Spee*, General Kreipe of the garrison on Crete, and scores of others, real and fictional, are presented with chivalrous admiration and generous sympathy.

It is surely pukka British to rehearse, in *The One That Got Away* (1958), the damned good show put on by one conspicuously unpolitical German, Luftwaffe Lieutenant Von Werra, in escaping from such connoisseurs of escape—in one exploit all the way back to Germany from Canada. Such esteem would be commendable, and at its worst only wistfully boyish over manly games, if it were not for the unanswered, and largely unasked questions of morality in practice. In most of these films,

it isn't the humanity or dignity of the erstwhile enemy that is being stressed, in order to decry the total hatreds of the years of conflict, or to depict the futilities or stupidities of war—as in *The Bridge On The River Kwai*. In subtle or obvious ways, careful distinctions are made among the enemies—not so clearly between the 'Germans' and the 'Nazis' as between the 'soldiers' and the 'politicians.' In the process, issues of why we fought at all tend to be ignored, minimized, or deliberately despised as unworthy of military concern. Soldiers—or sailors—are the heroes, and politicians the villains; and political soldiers, of courses are no soldiers at all.

The contrast, in *Sink the Bismarck!* (1959), between the gallant, resourceful regular naval captain and the fanatic favourite of the Fuehrer who happens to be an admiral, is by now so multiplied a cliché of war movies that any truth or point in the matter is fatally exaggerated. And, the recurring separations of the regular military acting under orders and the believers-in-uniform fighting for this truth or that carry certain ironies involving the attitudes of civilians on questions of responsibility. The fundamental issues of the Nuremberg Trials—and the Eichmann case—would seem to be most often judged irrelevant, at the least, before the romantic tribunals of popular melodrama. The black enemies and white heroes of wartime certainties are still opposed. But they are simply and comfortably redrawn, to distinguish between the black imperatives of those who care about a cause—be it Nazi or not—and the white triumphs or noble defeats of those who do their unquestioned duty for the unquestionable right.

American movies about the Germans have been even more romantically generous—and ideologically confusing—than the British, under pressures that have been somewhat more obvious and direct. The Hollywood studios seem to have been unusually responsive to State Department hints about the political importance of the feelings of an overseas audience—perhaps because the commercial importance of this

particular audience has increased in the changing economics of the industry. Since the mid-1950s, there has been a sizable production of American films devoted largely or even primarily to favourable depiction of Germans during and after the war. And because these films have to sell their images of Germans to Americans first of all, and will always be American productions to the Germans after all, it is no surprise to see the Germans on screen bearing careful resemblances to Americans. What distinguishes the good Germans from the bad Nazis is not simply politics, unbecoming to patriots and soldiers, but degrees of American appearance and mannerism—ranging from John Wayne and Van Johnson, to John Gavin and Marlon Brando. Only conventional movie accents sometimes articulate any differences there may be. General Patton's memorable comparison of Nazis and anti-Nazis with Republicans and Democrats may now suggest no more than a simple soldier's innocent disparagement of politics, and an American's wholesome effort to comprehend foreign complexities in American terms.

The unvillainous, anti-/or non-political German is a curious, recurrent figure of recent American films. His appearance is the more puzzling when seen simultaneously with those more numerous, familiar images of evil and enmity of the old war films endlessly unreeling on television. One way of defining his lack of sympathy for or contact with the contemporary Nazi politics of Germany is of particular interest. The good and true German doing his patriotic duty in World War II sometimes shows that his true loyalties lies with the old Imperial Germany—not, notably, with any attempt at democracy that may have intervened before Hitler. A little commercial psychology may be involved, too, in raising the ghosts of the gallant Count Von Luckners and Baron Richtofens of the books, movies, and radio programmes of another era of romanticized enemies after victory.

The captain (John Wayne) of the German freighter in *The Sea Chase* (1955),

sustains his resolution to outrun the British fleet, from Australia to the North Sea, by adverting to the code of honour of the old Fatherland and the Imperial Navy—while an admiring not-so-Nazi spy (Lana Turner) offers unique encouragement. The inevitable Nazi political officer (Lyle Bettger) who is aboard as first mate is clearly more villainous than the somewhat unsavory British pursuers. But the logic of loyalty to the Junker code obviously demands that there be no treason against any evil, so long as it wears a German uniform. Similarly, the German U-Boat captain (Curt Jurgens) of *The Enemy Below* (1958), nostalgically recalls the 'other' 1914-18 war as the 'good' war, when it was possible to be patriotic without politics—again personified by the single Nazi fanatic (Kurt Krueger) apparently carried by all German ships as standard equipment. The U.S. destroyer captain (Robert Mitchum) who is pitted against the noble German goes even further in eschewing not only politics, but all personal feelings about the war. The enemy submarine might be the very one that torpedoed the freighter carrying his own wife. But he is out to sink it only because he is doing what he has to do, '...like that German captain down there.'

The search for benign Sea Devils seems to beset the triumphant Allies a few years after each *Götterdämmerung*. One film, produced by an Italian company with an international cast, significantly places an American (Van Heflin) in the principal role of a latter-day Von Luckner. Based on the memoirs of Captain (now Admiral) Bernhardt Rogge, *Under Ten Flags* (1960) recounts the remarkably successful operations of a German surface raider masquerading as a merchant ship of several nationalities, against the concerted might of the British Navy, directed from the Admiralty in London by the shaggiest sea dog of them all (Charles Laughton). These operations are carried out with a minimum of bloodshed and with some deliberately unpolitical humanity — including consideration for a pregnant Jewish woman and

her agonized husband. A substantial basis in fact may support this bit of treacherous reassurance that there were some Germans who did not soil their practice of the game of war with any of the motives for which Germany went to war in the first place. But the reiterations in the movies, however well-intended by those who were finally and bloodily the victors, make what history must count as exceptions into exemplars—and the war loses any meaning, and its horrors all their reality, beyond what is convenient for melodrama.

Doing one's duty, the supreme military virtue, reinforces politics precisely because it insists that politics are irrelevant. In a way, the film of Erich Maria Remarque's novel, *A Time To Love And A Time To Die* (1958), tries to hold up the paradox as a light upon the German character. The young Wehrmacht soldier (John Gavin), struggling for a few shards of happiness with his bride (Lilo Pulver) amid the wreckage of Berlin, does make choices. While rejecting the opportunity to join the corrupt, pathological Nazi élite, he is hardly more than a spectator of the desperate life of the anti-Nazis in hiding, represented by his old schoolteacher (played by Remarque himself). His true loyalty, and his destiny, lie with his comrades in combat, the ordinary *frontschweine*, who are celebrated in a manner barely reminiscent of *All Quiet On the Western Front*. The decent Germans with whom we are supposed to associate vicariously are made to have as little use for politics as our own G.I.s or Tommies. They fight because they must, and other reasons, involving votes and choices, and notions of right and wrong are carefully made academic.

The heroes of *The Young Lions* (1958) and *The Last Blitzkrieg* (1958) are more complex, because they do ask questions. *The Young Lions*, in fact, may be the most elaborate attempt to represent the ordinary German at war in terms of direct comparison with his counterparts on the Allied side. Following the general plan of Irwin Shaw's novel, the story of the German soldier (Marlon Brando) is played against

that of two different Americans (Montgomery Clift and Dean Martin). However, the contrasts and parallels suggested in the book are blurred and erased because the character of the German in the film has been sentimentalized. There is no equivocation about Nazis here—whether in the American Army or among the Germans. Two of the most powerfully realized sequences in the film are those of the battle of the Jewish boy (Clift) against the vicious antisemites in his own company, and of the discovery of a German concentration camp, crowded with decaying wrecks of humanity, during the last days of the war. The gradually brutalized German of the novel, however, becomes a curiously clean romantic, committed to bloodletting as necessary to progress—until he is confronted by the debris of defeat. It is not inappropriate that Brando's characterization amounts to a vulgarized American version of a Teutonic hero, tricked out in a blinding blond coiffure and an impossibly fictitious accent.

The German as Americanized good-guy may be carried even further, as in *The Last Blitzkrieg*. The hero (Van Johnson) mercifully does not speak with an accent. In fact, the whole point is that he can pass for an American—first among G.I.s in a prison stockade, then in a party of Germans infiltrating American lines during the battle of the Bulge. In some vague way, this reluctant enemy turned even more reluctant spy-commando may be supposed to personify the doubts and conflicting loyalties of those Germans who were not involved in the politics of the Nazis, and not party to their perfidies and inhumanities. But the character and situation are imagined on a plane of childish fantasy, culminating in a scene of magic sentimentalism. The hero finally shoots his compatriots, and delivers a dying exhortation to the effect that the good Germans have been misled by evil men, and that they must never shout 'Heil Hitler!' again. He is thus revealed as the perfect enemy for a boys' game of war after school, wherein the bad guys have to turn out eventually to have been on the good side all along, or they won't play.

Of even greater delicacy in the game of reconstructing enemies by recreating them is the problem of the German girl. Of course, there were more immediate fruits of victory in fraternizing with the women of the vanquished than in perpetuating grudges. And German women, representing, after all, only another nationality of universally sacred, innately decent femininity and motherhood, had rarely been depicted in images of villainy—even in the most partisan propaganda productions during the war. In *Fräulein* (1958), the dilemma and travail of the German civilian during and after the war is represented in terms of romantic sex, using some remarkable symbolism—the more significant, without doubt, if it is not deliberate. The girl (Dana Wynter) is plainly a piece of pure, pretty flotsam in a sea of vicissitudes. Having had some old-time decency instilled in her by her father, a professor of Greek, she is able to survive being orphaned and bombed-out, mauled by lascivious Russians, embroiled by profiteers and white slaves, and rejected by her fiancé, an embittered, crippled, totally defeated Nazi. Throughout, it is the Americans who see her for her true inner virtue, and in the end it is they who wave the wands to work her rehabilitation.

A kindly Negro corporal (James Edwards) erases the classification of common prostitute—unquestionably unjust—from her records. An even kinder American major (Mel Ferrer), whom she had saved from capture during the war, is just in time to waft her towards America and an American happy ending. Here and there, some sharp commentary on aspects of German character is interpolated (by director Henry Koster). But the true spirit of the film overflows in vast CinemaScope-Colour shots that frame the heroine's wholesome charms against the story-book Rhineland landscape. As he looks on, the nobly sentimental American major sees what many Americans want to see, so long and long enough after the war a *fräulein* now so purified of politics as to make nostalgia uncomplicated,

against a background of a tourist-poster Germany.

The presentation of wartime Germans in postwar movies surely reaches an apogee in *I Aim At the Stars* (1960), dramatizing the career of Wernher Von Braun. Any film about Von Braun would have to take sides. To make one at all is not an act of impartiality, on issues so perfectly connecting responsibilities for the past, loyalties in the present, and anxieties over the future. To make this one, there had to be some reliance on the familiarity of the figure of the non-political German, working with mixed, but finally faithful feelings for Nazi purposes and victories. There also could be a confident assimilation of elements of traditional movie liturgies, celebrating the dedicated quest after this grail or that: the fastest racing car, the secret of the sound barrier, the unique dance-band sound—all sacred, all offering success and salvation and immortality, with a nubile White Goddess usually nearby to provide earthly emoluments. The Von Braun of this film (Curt Jurgens), for all the futurism of his monomania for space travel, is a familiar figure on screen. A host of movie heroes has made propaganda for the civilized, deadly amorality of his career, first in developing the most indiscriminately destructive of Nazi weapons, and later in serving his relentless ambitions well enough in serving his captors well.

As in so many films of the 1950s, audiences are presented with an archly ambiguous German, whose wartime enmity is shown to have been no more than accidental; plainly, he ought to have been on our side all along—as he is now. The device of introducing one American (James Daly) who is bitterly critical, first as an Army officer and then as a television commentator, actually compounds the ambiguity, adding a falsity the more ominous as it is obviously not intended. This single American critic surely represents many more, to whom the consequences of Von Braun's contributions to science and technology—in Germany and the U.S.—are matters of responsibility not

quite made academic by any fanatic devotion to the cause of scientific progress. But the unfiled fact is that there has been no such open, vociferous debate about Von Braun's character and policies, as is pictured in the film. The figure of the critic, however he may comprise symbolically a multitude of actual and potential objectors, is given prominence and access to the most powerful instruments of public persuasion in a way that has been denied to dissenters, singly or in concert. We might accept the film itself as providing the missing platform, if it did not move so pointedly to exculpate Von Braun.

Any doubts about his activities for the Nazis are finally confronted with the overriding need, in the cold war over missile technology and space exploration, to match the Russians' captured German scientists (paraphrasing an already antique space age joke) with some of our own. Any questions about his aiming at the stars from our side are overwhelmed by the success of the Sputniks from the other side. (The film is honest enough not to offer reassurances that Von Braun would not have worked as hard and happily for the Russians as he has done for the U.S.). After admitting so much that is unforgiveable, the film presents an exigent present and a hopeful future to make it all forgettable. This may be tactically expedient, continuing that part of the publicity campaign for military rocketry and space exploration that has pushed Von Braun to newspaper, magazine, and television celebrity. But in continuing the imagery of the good German of the past as outside politics, and the good scientist of the present as outside responsibility, the film argues for a future of little meaning. The surge of documentary and dramatized rehearsals of the Nazi era—including the Eichmann trial—may be in rebuttal to what was said and left unsaid about the past for the last decade and longer. But *I Aim At the Stars*, in many ways a culmination of its kind, makes plain that more than even the most dreadful past is still at stake.

POETRY

THE POET

For all his wild hair like an aureole,
Stammer at parties, slipping from a tram,
Putting off the mending of a sole,
And putting on a mock heroic *Damn* ,
He notices the spider's intestines
Claim windy harlot and black marketeer,
And in the clicking grin his eye divines
A moody world of artifice and fear.

Above all, this: When a woman turns
Black clouds of hair, with a rhythmic hand
Weaving their silk in the possessive sun,
He sees her common eyes stretch to a land
O lost, lost; as when repentance yearns
For hope, and love, and finds that there is none.

P. LAL

RAIN ON THE POND

(Allegro moderato)

Endless

Beads of rain-drops

Plummet placidly

Pearl-like, pure heaven dew,

Upon the pond's elastic surface,

Patting the water with long liquid fingers,

Expanding to circle-within-circle of little ripples

Like opening water-lilies or lotus flowers blooming,

Multiplying in concentric circles, ever-larger circles

Intersect... spread out... farther... lightly-traced... lace-
like delicate

Like life's ripples... traced... on... time's waters...

Larger... fainter... farther... scarcely perceptible... over...

(Presto)

Slender

Strings of rain-drops

Pat the water with long liquid fingers

With the sound of syncopated pattering of many

pigmy feet

Running *staccato molto allegro vivace* in demisemiquaver
time...

HAIG KHATCHADOURIAN

KRISHNA'S HANDMAIDEN

Resplendent was the garment of the messenger,

His missive bearing unto me at morn:

In splendour he ascended, then too late, alas!

Speechless I woke all trembling and fear-worn.

The day ceaselessly racked me with ordeals of fire,

Though burdened with love's longing and desire.

My peace came when the angelus of praise I heard

As west the sunset's saffron grace declared;

Night came and, black as death, unrolled the sky's dark scroll:

-- Not dark! No! Lit was it with letters of fire

To bid me to his tryst in bride's attire.

(An adaptation of Dadu's 'Fajar Meh Jub Elchi'

by Sudhin Ghose)

SHORT STORY

The Doctor's Fees

By MURLI DAS MELWANI

IT was five days since they had gone out peddling wood, and nothing remained in the shanty but one bundle of wood, four rupees, a little milk, a little rice and a few potatoes. The woman lay on the bed and her daughter crouched over the earthen fireplace in the corner, heating milk. She took the dented mug to her mother and fed her. She saw that her mother's eyes were red; she touched her forehead and found it burning, and she was filled with pity when she heard the pale woman groan.

When her mother had emptied the mug, she said: 'Mother, I'll go and fetch a doctor.'

'What's the use, Deng?' But when she saw her daughter's dismayed expression, she said: 'I'll be all right. I've been sick many times before.'

The same old answer! thought Deng. 'But never so seriously as now.'

'I'm telling you, Deng, I...'

But Deng twirled round and went outside and washed her face and blue-veined arms and split-heeled feet, put her clothes straight, and re-entered the room. She kissed her mother and taking the four rupees ran down the narrow, zigzag path of the sloping hill on to the metalled road. She walked a few yards along the road and then swung down a track that ran through pythonumukhrah hamlet. She kept her eyes off the ramshackle huts with their pigsties, their haystacks and cowsheds, the people bathing and washing clothes and children splashing in the stream below, and the square of ricefields beyond the stream.

She was wondering why her brother should have had to quarrel with her father, six years ago, and leave home, and why her father had had to drink so much,

and illtreat his wife and then die; for it is better to have a father even if he is a drunkard or an invalid rather than none at all. And she remembered how hard her mother and she had to toil to keep alive, and how often her mother used to sit and weep while she thought her daughter was asleep. And when they went calling from house to house, Mother would always carry the bigger bundle though she was not so strong as her twenty-year-old Deng...

Deng reached the brink of the stream, and gathering the looseness of her Mother Hubbard, cautiously stepped over the stones that lay across the stream, then sprang on to the road that ran alongside the Polo Grounds. In the nearest field men were playing cricket amid lengthening shadows; in the farthest one a few labourers were erecting bamboo frames for that evening's Republic Day fireworks. That brought back to her mind the day when her father had taken the family to the firstever fireworks, when India became independent, in the Ward's Lake. She remembered herself as a small girl then, clutching her brother's arm and clinging to her father's finger, and how thrilled she had been and a little frightened. And afterwards the four of them had gone to a small but clean restaurant, decorated for the occasion, where they had devoured three plates each of sweets — white, yellow and red, honey-sweet and luscious — and sucked up tea poured into saucers by Mother. Oh! how happy they had been in those days: always walking together, to the cinema or the church. And although other Khasi children wore better clothes, Deng and her brother did not mind their home-stitched, faded ones because they knew

that a clerk in a library does not get a high salary. And they did not mind that their house was so small with its shabby walls of baked clay and its thatched roof . . .

* * *

She went up the stairs of the doctor's house and sat on the bench in the verandah, beside an old woman who held a handkerchief on her groaning mouth. When Deng saw the number of patients before her she hoped that something would make the doctor attend to her before the others. People went in and came out, and she waited and waited . . . and said a silent prayer and felt a little courage come back to her . . .

She entered the room and the doctor pointed, with an affected gesture, to a chair. Then adjusted his thick-rimmed spectacles, he placed his elbows, on the table intertwined his fingers and resting his chin on his knuckles, leaned forward languidly. Deng explained as best as she could her mother's illness and condition and requested him to come with her immediately.

The doctor leaned back in his chair.

'Do you know my fees?'

'Of course, two rupees.'

'Two rupees for office consultation, and seven if I go to the patient.'

'Doctor sahib, we're poor people. We live by selling firewood. I've only four rupees. That's all the money I have in the world...'

'Do you think I'm a cloth seller in Burra Bazaar? I am a busy man. Many patients are waiting to be attended to. Let me have my fees, please.'

Fury seethed in her soul. She wanted to spit on a two rupee note and fling it at his face, but . . . She placed two rupees on the table. The doctor reached for his pad.

'Without seeing the patient how can you give a prescription?'

'I've been practising for over ten years.'

'Doctor sahib, I don't want that kind of a prescription. Please come and see my mother. Please. I beg you.'

'Unless you pay what I ask, I'm sorry.'

'Doctor sahib, I beg you . . .'

'Oh! don't take up my time. I'm a busy man. I'm sorry,' he said with emphatic finality.

* * *

Outside dusk had fallen. Other doctors would say the same thing. Deng felt there was only one thing to be done: run home, get the bundle of wood, sell it, and then return to this doctor. She walked fast, faster still, and broke into a run, without caring whether people stopped to stare at her.

She was breathless and could no longer force herself to run by the time she had reached the Polo Grounds. Night had blackened out the last traces of evening. People were already congregating. From the rise to her right a confusion of voices floated down. To her left she could discern, along the edge of the road, a hedge of people: a match lit up and revealed three coppery faces bending over the flame, then another and yet another was lit, and a raucous voice started aspirating, 'hot gram for sale, hot gram for sale'; a sweatmeat vendor and his portable stall caught in the glimmer of a candle flame came in sight, and somewhere in the darkness a loud-speaker echoed a metallic song. Then the hedge was no more, and again Deng began to run.

* * *

She hurried to the back of the shack and placed the bundle on a bamboo frame, passed a rattan thong under it, squatted with her back against the bamboo frame, then fastening the thong across her forehead, rose with a jerk. And with the load on her back set out towards the town.

She had only one thought: sell the wood and bring the doctor. She stumbled in the darkness, wetting the hem of her frock in the stream, and heard a detonation split a hundred unseen hills. Then she heard an undulating murmur of approval pursue the detonation and burst into shouts and cheers and clappings and whistles: she saw fountains and jets and sprays of sparks with rockets and coloured shooting stars. A

magnesium glare suddenly lit up a mass of chalk-white upturned faces, then plunged the world into darkness once again. She gazed on all this, but absently, thinking of the carefree people enjoying themselves, and feeling sorry for herself.

She stopped by the first house beyond the grounds and shouted in the Khasi language, in a tone sagging with pain, 'Firwood for sale.' No answer. She called again and again and moved to the house adjacent, then to the next and the next... She saw indistinct figures moving about, and a household alive on a window screen, and obscure forms washing clothes under public taps. But no one listened; occasionally a domesticated pariah dog growled as a matter of duty...

Calling out like this all the way she went down the main road to Burra Bazaar. But the wholesalers had no need of her wood either. She walked along the labyrinthine paths of that market, stopping before each stall and staring with pleading eyes at the vendors. Then she left the market and the road she took was lonely and long and cold, leading to a drearier locality. Her heart was heavy, her throat, parched, her mouth dry, she was sweating and hungry, and felt as she had felt the day when, as a child, she had got lost.

She was amazed to find that she remembered every detail though all these years she had never given the adventure a thought. All four had come to Burra Bazaar one afternoon to make their weekly purchases, and Deng, bored with the haggling, had left them at the grocer's and gone to that part of the market where fish was sold. She was always attracted by the poor dead fish lying on the cement floor with such a look of innocent surprise in their eyes, she loved to shiver with those inexplicable emotions that welled up in her when the fish were sliced for sale. Then as the tears were about to fall, she walked down to where fruit was sold. She stood gaping at the conglomeration of oranges, bananas and pineapples, glowing in the sun. After a while she untied the ten naya paisa bit in her handkerchief and bought two oranges.

As she peeled and champed them she watched the coolies unloading fruit from a public carrier. But soon she realized that her parents would be looking for her. She ran to the grocer, but they were not there, nor could the grocer help her. She ran down all the paths, out of a delicately dying sky, through a brief twilight, into the night. And when she grew tired she walked down the main road, sobbing. She did not stop to gape at the decorated dazzling shop windows, or to watch the farcically dressed man demonstrate the excellence of a certain soap, or to hear a man attempt to sell lottery tickets to the people who had been attracted by his bell, or to stare at the cinema posters. She cried with sobs that shook her whole body. Exhausted, she sat on the footpath against a lamp-post and let the tears glide down her cheeks and soak into her frock. Then a policeman came along and asked her a few questions and took her to the police station where her father was talking to the OC and her mother and brother were weeping in a corner...

And Deng with the burden on her back wanted to crumble down on the pavement and cry and cry till someone would befriend her. But who?...who?...she asked herself. And the power of the wish made her lean against a lamp-post. Again the thought of her mother lying unattended agitated her. By now she ought to have had another mugful of milk. And surely she would be worrying about her daughter...

'Is this wood for sale?'

The grating voice startled her, and her gaze fell on the man's dagger-shaped moustaches and thick lips.

'Yes,' she faltered.

'Price?'

'Five rupees.'

'Agreed. Bring it to my house,' he said and Deng followed. They crossed a slushy bit of ground, guided by the strips of mellow light from squalid huts, and ascending a flight of mildew-edged, wooden steps came to a narrow verandah. Deng went to one corner.

'No, not here. In the kitechen,' said the

man anticipating Deng. She followed him into a room which reeked of tobacco and sweat. The man stood near the door, lit a cigarette, exhaled a cirro-cumulus of smoke, and as Deng entered he indicated a corner and then his slovenly bed. Leisurely he began to pull in the door. Deng guessed his intentions. She pulled out a cudgel and holding it threateningly in her hand, advanced towards the door. The man stared at her, puzzled. She spat near his feet with an exaggerated snap of her lips, and ran down the steps, and stopped only when she was on the road. The road was cold and rough, and her feet hurt...

* * *

'You there, woman!'

She looked back, and the man who had called her, a man in a dhoti, stood outside a tailoring shop folding a betel leaf. Reluctantly she went towards him.

'One price. How much?'

'Five rupees.'

'Father of Fathers, that's too much. I'll pay only three rupees.'

She was exhausted. The deficit was only three rupees. She did not want to waste more time in haggling. She agreed, and dumped the wood in front of the door. She took the crumpled notes, and thanking the man, ran to the doctor's house.

* * *

The doctor, wearing a dressing gown, opened the door himself.

'I've brought the money, doctor sahib,' shouted Deng, unable to conceal her joy.

The doctor scanned her hair and clothes, and when he found that these were not tousled or crushed, the glint of suspicion left his eye.

'Oh, I thought you wouldn't come. Often people get cured when they hear that doctors also take a fee.'

'Come with me immediately,' said Deng attempting to thrust the notes into his hands. He drew away his hands.

'At this hour?'

Deng was dumbfounded.

'You see, I'm a busy man. At eight o'clock, that is,' he looked at his watch with a theatrical gesture, 'just after one hour,

I've got to go to a minister's house. His daughter is ill. So, if you want me to come with you, you must get a taxi.'

'A taxi?'

'Yes, even ministers send their cars to Dr. Ved Prakash.'

'But I have no more money, doctor sahib.'

'Please don't take up my time. I'm a busy man,' he said and shut the door.

* * *

She was panting when she reached the taxi-stand. She ran up to the first taxi in the line. The driver lolling against the body of the car, said: 'What's the hurry, can't your rape-mother client wait?'

'Don't show such eagerness, you'll get a smaller fee,' advised a tough in a beret worn at a rakish angle, perched on the bonnet of the second taxi.

Unmindful of these remarks she addressed the first driver.

'Driver sahib, my mother is seriously ill. We live in Pythonmukhrah, I've only enough to pay the doctor. The doctor has another appointment, and he won't come to my house except in a taxi...'

'So it's a doctor,' interrupted the tough in the beret.

'Keep your trap shut you bastard,' admonished the first driver, and turning to Deng asked: 'Which doctor?'

'Doctor Ved Prakash.'

'But that child of a pig owns a car. I've seen him go around in it.' The tension of sympathy in his jaw slackened.

'I don't know about that. Anyway, please take me to Pythonmukhrah, and I promise to pay you when mother and I can sell wood again. We'll pay even before we buy rice for ourselves. You do me this kindness, and I'll never forget it the whole of my life. I'll...' She did not know what else to say to him. But in speechless speech she said to herself that she would never again allow her mother to carry wood. That way their earnings might fall, but they would learn to be content with that income.

The driver said through a smirk: 'I'll tell you the truth. This is not my car, I've been

cheated by many such promises before. On every occasion I've had my salary cut.'

'I'm promising you. Can't you trust me, I... I won't cheat you. I promise you.'

'They all said the same. I'm sorry, I can't...'

His eyes glistened as a passing car lit up, for a moment, Deng's comeliness.

'Brother Kalu, they want one in Bharat Hotel,' panted a gaunt, barefooted boy in a faded checked shirt, who had come running up to the taxi.

Kalu, the driver, straightening up and adjusting his soiled jacket, said to Deng: 'Listen, I can tell you how to make some rape mother easy money.'

Deng questioned with a look.

'You know, these rape-mother hotels provide what they call "extra comforts" to the rape-mother lodgers. We supply these. At present I have the contract of three hotels.' He spoke as though he was proud of the fact.

'I don't understand.'

Kalu's face twitched with astonishment. Was she pretending? Finally, 'Look', he said and pointed towards two women who were walking towards the taxi-stand, regarding the passers-by with unconcerned interest.

Deng's heart sank.

She shook her head.

'In this rape-mother world you can't get anything without giving something,' he exhorted.

She shook her head again, and leaving Kalu went to the next driver and the next... Some felt sorry for her but said these were the peak hours of business, while others showed even less sympathy than Kalu. She began to walk away slowly. She had hardly gone a few yards when Kalu, and beside him the boy, and behind them the two women, drove past. One of the painted faces reminded Deng of the woman who had slapped her brother, a few months before he left home, because he had pinched her bottom in a cinema hall. Why, her brother! Yes, Yes, her brother. He would certainly help. Surely

he would be moved when he heard of mother's illness.

* * *

Water from an overflowing drain glided, in overlapping festoons, down the narrow, fetid and murky alley, and she moved hopping from one dry patch to another. The rickety door of her brother's hovel was ajar. As she came closer to the door a vague fear seized her. She paused a second outside the door, then nerving herself to a great determination, wriggled into the room. Her brother was sitting on the dank floor, propped against the only bed in the room, and near him was an empty bottle and a glass full of liquor. As she entered, he raised his face and peered through drooping eyelids.

'Is that you, Deng?' he hiccupped.

Deng simulated a smile and nodded.

'What do you want?'

'Mother is seriously ill, and I want some money.'

'Want some money,' he mimicked. 'Do you remember, when I wanted to marry that bitch you see over there—in that corner, there, look there, look, *look* I say—I asked your father for some money. Did he give me one filthy, stinking, dirty naya paisa? No. Why? Because he did not approve of my marrying that bitch. Why? Because she was a low woman. Listen, Deng, I was marrying a low woman.' He paused, and twisting his lips in a frightening contortion, continued, 'But he? he was keeping dozens of them. And do you remember, Deng, when I was kicked out of that driver's job and fell sick, did your bloody father or mother so much as come to see me? And when I sent that damned bitch to get a little money, your father abused her and sent her back empty-handed. And do you... Oh! never mind, and now when your mother falls sick she sends you to me for a little money.' His head fell sideways laughing.

Tears came to Deng's eyes.

'My mother didn't send me. I came on my...'

'Get out, you illegally begotten,' he roared, trying in vain to rise.

'Why do you treat me like this, brother? Do you know when you left home I didn't eat anything for one whole day. And I used to cry whenever I remembered the good times we used to...'

'Huh and yet you never came to see me even once.'

'What could I do brother?'

He took the glass and swallowing the wine, hurled it at Deng. She tried to move aside, but it struck her an excruciating rap. Rubbing her shoulder she scampered outside. She was startled by a gentle tap on her shoulder. She looked round, and it was her sister-in-law who hastened up the alley beckoning to her. Deng followed the plump, short woman, and they halted where the alley opened into the road.

'Deng,' said her sister-in-law, placing both arms on Deng's shoulders, 'let him sober up. Then I'll see what I can do. Since he got that mechanic's job he has got out of hand, even my hand.'

Deng dropped her head on one flabby arm of her sister-in-law.

'You're very kind, but I need some money now.'

'If I had any I'd certainly have given it to you. He doesn't give me anything nowadays. Oh! There, he has started calling and abusing me. I'd better hurry.' And she ran down the alley, splashing.

Deng floundered to a truck standing on the other side of the road and slumped against it. Her mind was in a flurry... Perhaps she should return home. What then of the wasted hours? She could have spent these hours waiting on her mother, cleaning the house, mending clothes... the tailor! She had asked for five rupees and accepted three. Perhaps he would understand.

And clenching this straw of hope, she stumbled through a dying town to the tailor's shop.

The shop was locked.

Despondency returned. And an event witnessed in childhood, in a village, suddenly flashed to her mind. The villagers had driven a wild pony to a bamboo corral. The pony was panting and wet, yet again

and again he had battered the fence. He had bruised himself, and exhausted himself. But again and again he had tried. And when he had sagged to the ground, the villagers had flogged him till he had accepted the halter. Only then had they put fodder before him...

If she went back to the taxi driver that would be a sin. But all other openings had closed. And it was for her mother's sake...

* * *

Another taxi was standing where Kalu's had stood. The waiting now was a long one. She walked slowly, ignoring the whistles and the comments, straining her eyes to distinguish Kalu's taxi. Kalu's was the last one in the line.

'Did you get the money?' asked Kalu.

'How much will I get if I go to a hotel?'

'You'll get about ten rupees. The lodgers of course pay more to the management. Out of that you'll have to pay the taxi driver his middleman fees.'

'How much?'

'Three rupees.'

'I'll come.'

'I'm sorry, I haven't received a call for another rape-sister comfort.'

'What?' There was darkness all round her!

'I mean it.'

Home was the only place to go, and reluctantly, slowly, lingeringly she turned round to go. What would she say to her mother. What? What? she asked herself.

She had gone a few steps only when Kalu drove up to her, and applying the brakes, told her that he had received a 'call'. The boy jerked open the door. Deng stood rooted to the spot, listening to the pounding of her heart.

'Come in,' said Kalu impatiently.

She shut her eyes and got into the car.

* * *

The car stopped a few yards from Bharat Hotel.

'Stay there,' said Kalu, and switching off the engine, pulled out a cigarette and lit it. The boy capered out and frisked up the steps of the hotel. There was silence in the car: Kalu was calmly smoking and looking

straight ahead, Deng was breathing hard and keeping her eyes down. The boy returned, called Deng and accompanied her into the hotel.

The pot-bellied manager conducted them down the narrow corridor between the two rows of cubicles. He stood in front of a door, nudged it open, shoved in Deng and shutting the door, took the boy with him.

In the corner of the cubicle sprawled, with legs apart, on a chair, an ugly man, blowing streamers of smoke: his unbuttoned shirt showed his hairy chest and protruding belly. As soon as she saw him she was filled with terror. She had not imagined that the situation would be so terrible. The man rose, tossed the cigarette over his shoulder, grinned, and maintaining that grin came towards her. Her heart began to thump violently. She could feel her blood, piping-hot, tingling through her veins and burning her finger-tips. Her body began to tremble. The unshaven grin broadened. She fell back and leaned against the wall. The man came nearer, exhaling a cloud of stale breath. She tucked her frock between her legs and pressed her knees together. The grin melted. He flung out of the door and returned after a few tormenting minutes with the manager and Kalu. The manager stood near the door while Kalu whispered in Deng's ear that delay would affect her more than anyone else. Instinctively she sagged on to the bed. Kalu and the manager went out and the unshaven man fastened the door...

* * *

Kalu drove fast. She sat at the back this time; she sat with her eyes down; she sat hoping that she was not late, for surely she had taken over an hour to get money.

The doctor was at home. As he descended the stairs of his house with her, he said to Deng, 'You know, I've done you a great favour.' Then he paused. 'A few minutes after you left, I rang up the minister and told him to send the car immediately. I explained that I had a very serious case

on my hands. 'He took a long breath. 'I reckoned you'd take a long time to get the money and would probably miss me.' They got into the car. 'I came home only a few minutes back.'

Deng was not listening. What difference did it make?

They raced down winding roads, through the empty Polo Grounds, up an unmetalled road and over a bridge till they reached the house.

The door was ajar and the kerosene lantern had not been lit. There was a pull at Deng's heart. Deng led the groping doctor to the bed and installing him on a rattan stool went to a corner to light the lantern.

The doctor took the lantern and held it above Mother's face. Thank God, she is alive, said Deng to herself.

A car screeched to a stop outside, and a minute later Deng's brother staggered into the house and edging close to his sister, whispered: 'How is she now?'

Balancing the lantern on the edge of the bed, the doctor began to examine the woman. After fifteen minutes he wrote out a prescription.

'It's all right. I'll go in the taxi with the doctor and bring the medicine,' Dang's brother whispered to her.

Deng's brother took the prescription from the doctor. The doctor rose, took his bag, extended an open palm, closed it over the soiled notes and thrusting them into his pocket hurried out. Deng's brother followed him.

Deng ran to the side of her mother.

In a weak groan the woman asked: 'You paid the doctor?'

Deng nodded.

'You paid for the taxi?'

Deng nodded.

'There was only one bundle in the house.'

Deng nodded.

They looked at each other, without words, without reproach.

Talking About Books

By SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

VIRGINIA Woolf suffered from a Byron Complex, quite evidently did not think much of him and felt that the centenary of his death was an inopportune time for asking trite questions like his *affaire* with his stepsister. Her viewpoint would not be endorsed to-day, certainly not by a reader of Doris Langley Moore's *The Late Lord Byron* published by Murray. She is a very discriminating biographer and has made excellent use of her access to the Lovelace Papers, which all Byron experts regard as being centrally significant. It is good to know that Thomas Moore tried his belated best to save the Byron Memoirs but even after Mrs. Moore's patient research it is unclear why Augusta and Lady Byron were equally anxious to burn it. If John Murray had had his way, the Memoirs would have been published. The loss is ours. Mrs. Moore also discovers an extra-ordinary secret alliance between Lady Byron and Caroline Lamb. Her essential wisdom is seen as much in her delicate handling of all this tangled skein, as in her just estimate of Stendhal's highly embellished accounts of Byron. Stendhal's acquaintance with Byron had been brief and slight and he has been forced to stretch his material very far to magnify flaws and eccentricities.

Andrew Rutherford's *Byron; a Critical Study* published by Oliver and Boyd might have pleased Virginia Woolf better. Mr. Rutherford is determined to appraise Byron's poetic achievement with as little reference to his curious personal character as possible. But Byron was not even a split personality; he was a multiple personality, and though Mr. Rutherford has no doubts that *The Vision of Judgment* and not Don Juan is his masterpiece, perhaps one may still keep an open mind. Byron's poetic personality and his private existence merged into the same complex pattern. *Childe Harold*, *Manfred* and *Cain* are unintelligible if one does not remember Byron's conviction of guilt, and his feeling of a sinner self-denounced and an exile doomed to restless wandering. And the levities of Byron are rather lost upon Mr. Rutherford

—to the detriment of an excellent book and the embarrassment of the Byron addict.

Sir Walter Scott, like Lord Byron, is having an innings — the clearest indication that the reign of Cambridge (the Cambridge of E. M. Forster and Dr. Leavis) is over. It is particularly satisfying that a stimulating book, *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* published by Routledge should have come from Donald Davie, himself a sophisticated Cambridge Critic. Mr. Davie's main thesis is an elaboration of Hugh MacDiarmid's oft-repeated belief that while English Culture is parochial and insular, Scottish culture is European, even International. His comparison of Scott, Pushkin and Fenimore Cooper (if one makes allowance for a little inflation here) is very stimulating.

It is interesting that somewhat similar conclusions are reached by a book of a very different category. John Buchan's *Sir Walter Scott* published by Cassell is a reprint of the Centenary publication. Readers of *Memory Hold the Door* will be enchanted with the seductive prose for which Buchan is justly famous and the book has been appropriately dedicated to two great admirers of Scott—the late Lord Baldwin and the historian, G. M. Trevelyan whose Clark Lectures contain some lyrical, lapidary passages on Scott. It is hard not to share Mr. Trevelyan's excitement at the famous curse of Meg Merillies in Guy Mannering: 'Ride Your Ways, ride your ways, Laird of Ellangowan'. Lord Tweedsmuir—of course, John Buchan to his friends and admirers—has the same infectious gusto and through him we came to love not the Captains and the Kings and the queens, but Edie Ochiltree the beggar who has no belongings but a blue gown and a wallet, Jeannie Deans the peasant girl and Bessie Maclure the lone widow. He shows that Scott had the Greek quality of *Sophrosyne* which means literally the possession of 'saving thoughts' Walter Scott, points out Buchan is, with Burns, Scotland's great liberator and reconciler, for he saved his land from the narrow rootless gentility and the barren utilitarianism of his times. He gave her confidence by reopening to her the past. His spirit still haunts

well as more embarrassing ones because she was looking for the roots of civilisation. William Sansom's delectable book is a collection of essays on and evocations of Capri, Spain, Cote D'Azur, among other places. He is at his best in his evocations of what I like to think of as the Norman Douglas Country. Neapolitan love songs, southern fiestas, the grace of Forty Winks in Spain touch one of his secret chords. He is the connoisseur of fiestas and siestas. The lingering melodies of Minorca, of the order of *La Palma* are tender in his memory. So are the idyllic beaches and the almond-milk seas greening at twilight. And yet he can be as sentimental about London. On summer nights, he tells us on P. 149, one may yet hear nightingales (though, not one fears, in Berkeley Square). The pear-blossom haunts at Clapham, the ducks quacking at St. James's the winter's evening shop-parade at Sheppards' Bush with a sunset like the world's end flooding the sky, the lavendered innocence of St John's Wood (that is his home, incidentally) stir him to a kind of poetry. Elia revisiting London, one might say, and going all elegiac.

Two recent autobiographies—L. A. G. Strong's *Green Memory* published by Methuen and Derek Patmore's *Private History* published by Jonathan Cape—invite a comparison. Derek Patmore's fascinating evocation of the literary milieu of the Twenties and the Thirties is curiously free from nostalgia. His memory of his public school is quite in keeping with 'such, such were the joys'. He recalls the affectations of the Bright Young People of the Twenties—including Noel Coward and Michael Arlen—with a singular detachment. On the other hand, rebuffs and disappointments—and he had his fair share—did not sour him unduly. He conveys some of the magic of H. G. Wells's conversation but spoils part of the effect by retailing inconsequential remarks. ('How are you getting on, young man? A square peg in a round hole—like so many of the young to-day?'). St James Square, rich with roses, delphiniums and larkspurs in summer, seems to touch one of his secret chords and he is, for once, en rapport with London. His revelation that Winston Churchill had never heard of Coventry Patmore, his great grandfather will not surprise those who know that Churchill is a philistine. His impressions of Anden and Spender are too ecstatic to square with my own.

L. A. G. Strong's *Green Memory*, published by Methuen is much more of a personal testament, a testament mostly of happiness and wayside friendships. He has been accused of not being

sufficiently tart or astringent. The criticism is unjust and must seem specially so to readers familiar with Strong's *Personal Remarks*. His most nostalgic memories are of Ireland, of Oxford in the Twenties, and of the Georgian Literary Scene. He was generous enough not to regard it as a closed shop, and that is why the Meynells rub shoulders with the Lehmann and even Cyril Connolly quite young in those days, is asked to the party. The clique world of Cambridge-Bloomsbury did not make much impression on Strong, though he was too kind to say so. But it is evident: Eliot, E. M. Forster and Virginia Woolf are observed from the outside, evidently undeserving a closer look. W. B. Yeats was different and once more one recalls the beautiful essay on Yeats in *Personal Remarks* 'Reverence chilled and irritated him' he says of Yeats. 'To approach him as the famous poet was to receive as much of the famous poet's performance as he thought fit to give. But to those who approached him as a human being, he was human as any could desire.' Perhaps Yeats was not quite as amiable as all that. It is enough that he received this moving tribute from a kindly, talented man. The memory of Yeats is thus kept as green as Strong's own.

Underdogs edited by Philip Toynbee and published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson is a sad book. Not because it is a symposium of hard-luck stories, but because it might have been so much better. Much fine writing has been spoiled by inept and unimaginative editing. It does seem that Philip Toynbee has no proper conception of the underdog or is really allergic to many of them. His crammer and ghost-writer do not ring true. Neither tells us how he missed the bus. In the case of the ghost-writer, the reference to the 'old school tie, the right club and all the rest of it' sounds like an afterthought. Toynbee's inclusion of two perverts—in spite of his subtle hair-splitting about the pederast and the homosexual—will probably surprise some but the suggestion that a homosexual can be an underdog in 1961 is a huge joke. Probably some top B.B.C. executive putting over a fast one. Curiously enough, in Cataloguing so many chips on so many shoulders, Toynbee never considered the cases of Indians whose English is too good for India and whose skins too dark for England. I know persons who ought to be holding chairs in English Universities but who, alas, are between two worlds.

A Book of English Lyrics edited by Cecil Day Lewis and published by Chatto and Windus is a fine, discriminating anthology. Many years ago, Cecil Day Lewis collaborated with L.A.G. Strong

survey of the Theatre is fairer, partly because the Angry Young Men who write plays—Brendan Behan and John Osborne—are in a higher class than the purveyors of Lucky Jims. There is also a healthy awareness, that a London audience wants a good play and is not primarily interested in issues for or against the Establishment. It is on occasion prepared to stretch a point and swallow extremes of surrealism or unrealism, though no one doubts, that, fundamentally all satisfying drama is Aristotelian. The Eliot-Fry attempt to restore poetic drama failed and Jean Anouilh's Cynicism never made much impression in London. (I am happy at the praise heaped upon Arnold Wesker. I saw his *Roots* and I met him at a P.E.N. Cocktail party. He made a deep impression on me.) There is also some awareness of the reaction against difficult and esoteric poetry, a reaction subsequently known as the 'Movement'. All things considered, British Imagination comes well out of it, though the impression remains that the stock-taking, build-up and display have been alike perfunctory and lackadaisical.

W. B. Yeats, like T. S. Eliot, continues to inspire both good and bad critics. Richard Ellmann's *Yeats: the Man and the Masks* now published as a Faber paperback is certainly an example of the first. Discerning readers realise the folly and futility of overplaying and overemphasising the Irish element in Yeats. Much of it is uncomfortably like stage Irishry. That, more or less, is Richard Ellmann's thesis, ably and brilliantly elaborated. We all know about Maud Gonne and Iseult Gonne, but are we aware that the turning-point in Yeats' poetic career was not so much the Easter rising (when Pearse, Connolly and other Irish leaders were shot) but his marriage with Georgie Hyde the following year. From that time onwards, esoteric Yeatsism becomes almost automatic, for he becomes an integrated person. His unflinching quest of reality was at last over. Armed by his 'Vision' he had acquired an almost miraculous control over reality. Norman Jeffares, in his otherwise excellent *Poetry of W.B. Yeats* published by Edward Arnold (other useful books in the same series are J. B. Broadbent's *'Milton's Comus and Samson Agonistes'* and Cunningham's *Pope*) shows insufficient awareness of this. He thinks—wrongly in my opinion—that Yeats was bowled over by the execution of MacBride in 1916 just as he had been bowled over by Maud Gonne's marriage in 1903. Miss A. G. Stock's *W. B. Yeats: His Poetry and thought* published by Cambridge University Press tries to argue—rather in the teeth of the evidence—that the Irish element was the Central

one in Yeats's poetry. Little need be said about the needless, pointless comparison with Rabindranath Tagore. And considering that she has been extremely candid and honest about her indebtedness to Jeffares, Henn and Hone, there would not be much point in going over very familiar ground.

Messrs Batsford's pre-eminence as producers of lovely books enshrining England's heritage and loveliness is unquestioned. This is particularly true of their three recent books—William Gaunt's *London*; A. H. Dodd's *Life in Elizabethan England* and John Russell's *Shakespeare's Country*. Gaunt's *London* is comparable with Ivor Brown's book, but Eric De Mare's photographs make it incomparably more beautiful. The expertise, especially about the less frequented parts, compels admiration and his evocations of Soho, Chelsea and Bloomsbury are truly memorable. The Chapters on 'Inns and Taverns' and 'Famous Literary landmarks' are enough to make one at once hungry, nostalgic and elegiac. A. H. Dodd's book is in the English Life Series edited by Peter Quennell. One cannot help emphasising the superiority of this book to Dover Wilson's which is backed by the academic Establishment. The connection between the inner unity of the first Elizabethan age and the rich personality of the queen is carefully traced. It is a grand experience to relive the age which created the Shakespearean drama, the Elizabethan madrigal or the Tudor manor house. And if Mr. Dodd takes us to the time, Mr. John Russell takes us to the place or at least the Chief shrine of the glory. His *Shakespeare's Country* is an acknowledged classic on the magic and the legends of Stratford and Warwick.

Two travel-books of exceptionally high quality—unlikely to be rivalled this decade—are Kathleen Nott's *A clean Well-lighted Place* published by Heinemann and William Sanson's *Blue Skies, Brown Studies* published by Hogarth. They reveal what is wrong with the professional 'travellers'—Freya Stark, Robert Liddell or Alan Ross. Ross & Co. stretch their material too far and absolutely lack interior vision. Kathleen Nott's is a private view of Sweden. I remember meeting her in London. She struck me as an extremely acute and level-headed critic. The Swedish landscape, bright and clean with water, sun or snow made a deep impression on her but she is too wise to exaggerate a private view. A country, she knows, is either just a feeling or an artifact. A pertinent question about Sweden is why despite the Welfare State, there are so many suicides, divorces and mental breakdowns. (They are luckier about homosexuals). Miss Nott asked this question as

the forgotten drove-roads in Ettrick, the hill-sides in Dryburgh and when I visited Bemerseyde, I almost expected to see his ruddy face in an autumn gloaming.

Peter Quennell's *Good-bye to the Bombay Bowler* published by Rupert Hart-Davis is a collection of witty, amusing, sophisticated sketches. They just miss being essays which *pace* Mr. Hilary Yorke should read 'The Decline of the Essay' a chapter in 'My English Journey'. It is not enough for the essayist to be a bit of a country gent, a bit of a pedant to remember his classics a bit. If that were all, Mr. Kingsley Martin alone could resurrect the essay. In fact, Mr. Fleming, his club-room manner notwithstanding, goes a great way. Some of his pieces, like 'Praise', 'No more Nicknames' and 'The Back-Bencher' give the impression that he might be an essayist manque, but it is late in the 'day to live down his panache or his strong dash of natural bitters'. Green, he supposes, now grow the rushes, oh. Pity nobody chops them down and makes them into hats. And so long, rather than good-bye to the Bombay bowler. We will all raise the imaginary bowler (or its modern equivalent) in recognition of Mr. Fleming's success in the pursuit of elegance.

A. Alvarez was bang on the target in describing Ronald Firbank as a 'Prancing Aesthete'. I have also a feeling that if Michael Arlen (alas, for these charming people) had belonged to the Literary London of the Twenties, instead of being a rank outsider and had not been a natural story-teller, he might have been another Ronald Firbank. As Sir Harold Nicolson assured me Firbank was a pastiche. He belonged both to the Beardsley period and also to the Sitwell period. The publication of *The Complete Ronald Firbank* by Duckworth will satisfy all kinds of aesthetic cravings. Anthony Powell's introduction is brilliant but one wishes he had acknowledged his indebtedness to Cyril Connolly, the sanest of the contemporary extraacademic critics. (Incidentally Connolly's *Enemies of Promise* published now by Penguins and his *Unquiet Grave* now in the Arrow books contain the finest contemporary prose-neither Mandarin nor Vernacular, but just right—outside George Orwell) Connolly had recognised that Firbank was a dandy and an impressionist. He derived from Beardsley and Apollinaire but could be as serious as Congreve. Like all dandies, he was obsessed with the beauty of the moment. Like all dandies, he hated the eye on the main chance and admired unworldliness. 'It is to Firbank' says Cyril Connolly 'that we owe the conception of

dialogue. A book by Firbank is in the nature of a play where passages of descriptive prose correspond to stage directions'.

Alas! who reads Firbank now? Yet I have many English friends who assure me that when they were up at Oxford in the Thirties, it was not only the correct thing, but quite the thing to sleep with *Valmouth* or *Vain Glory* or *Cardinal Pirelli* under one's pillows Firbank was a homosexual, but could that alone explain his hold? I think not. Firbank was a pedlar of day-dreams, the absolutely uninhibited day-dreams of a shy, lonely, witty, observant, hopelessly insortable man, deeply devoted to the arts but lacking the toughness required by those who practise it successfully. Anthony Powell thinks that his precious, perfectionist style has left its mark on writers so different as Evelyn Waugh, and Miss Ivy Compton-Burnett, perhaps also Ernest Hemingway. And I, for one, entirely agree with Powell that Ronald Firbank's books like his style, were designed to appear in exquisite format; to be read almost at a sitting, almost as a bedside book.

The British Imagination, published by Cassell, consists of essays on contemporary British culture previously published in a special number of the *Times Literary Supplement*. It is an extremely valuable book, though Arthur Crook's introduction is scrappy and compels one to say what a better job his brilliant predecessor, Alan Pryce-Jones would have made of it. One neither expects nor gets evenness, but the level is high, and the points are good, though the tickings-off seem arbitrary, sometimes uncomfortably suggesting a quiet use of the black ball. Thus, in the essay on Autobiography, it is hard to understand the praise heaped on the unreadable Sitwell autobiographies, including brother Sacheverell's *All Summer in a Day* or the to-do about Lehmann's *I am my Brother* or Spender's *World within World*. Christopher Isherwood's *Lions and Shadows*, a far more evocative autobiography than any of these does not get a mention and one takes Gwen Raverat for granted. In the essay on Literary Criticism, the major challenges to the critical Establishment (Leavis, Richards & Co.) are tacitly, expressly and deliberately ignored. (Does the T.L.S. not read Miss Helen Gardner?) The same disproportion is evident in the survey of the novel. Mr. Crook seems to have put his money on that very inferior talent, Kingsley Amis who gets the puffs at the spatial expense of Angus Wilson and Graham Greene. There is little awareness of the work of the great traditional novelists, like Sir Compton Mackenzie or Frank Swinnerton. The

in compiling an anthology of modern verse. His present task is more exacting, because a lyric is an elusive thing. Cecil Day Lewis defines a lyric as a poem meant to be sung and expressing the poet's sentiments with a special immediacy. But pure poetry in Mallarmé's sense of something which aspires to the condition of music is rare in English. Some of Shakespeare's songs, a few poems of Christine Rossetti and *Kubla Khan* are the nearest approximations. If the reader remembers that definition and analysis are marginal activities, he may have some idea of the glory and the rich variety of the English lyric.

Sir Compton Mackenzie's *Greece in My Life* published by Chatto and Windus will outlast both these books. But not because it is a travel book. It is not. It is a chunk of a great Hellenist's autobiography and the story of a lifelong love. There are not many Hellenists in England today, outside the Universities. Rex Warner, Louis Macneice, Peter Green—can one think of anyone else, now that Ronald Knox is dead? Sir Compton Mackenzie's passion for Greece is different from theirs and is reminiscent of Landor and W. J. Cory. Greek has never been a dead language to him; it has been the living voice of a storied past. The foundations of Greece in his life are linked up with a performance, at Oxford, of *The Clouds*. He does not record what he told me at Edinburgh that much pressure was brought on him both at King's and at Oxford to go in for Literae Humaniores but he chose History. The glory that was Greece never had a finer interpreter or a soberer impresario.

I have always compared *The Runnable Stag* with *Hart-leap Well* and thought it a pity that the RSPCA in England did not mobilise the sentiments aroused by either poem. Kingsley Martin will bear me out. *John Davidson: a Selection of his poems* edited by Maurice Lindsay and published by Hutchinson is a timely and important book. It is not just the resurrection of another dim figure of the Nineties. Richard Le Gallienne placed him in the context of the Rhymers' club and yellow Book Set quite a few years ago. It is good to find T. S. Eliot acknowledging his indebtedness to him. Eliot says that Davidson's 'Thirty Bob a Week' showed him how to write poetry in a colloquial idiom. Davidson seems to have come out of the pages of Gissing or Arthur Morrison and may be seen as London Bridge Character from *The Waste Land*. He displayed his atheism a little too often but he was really a man of great pity. His life was grey but his mind was highly coloured. 'If he could have waited two genera-

tions,' says V. S. Pritchett 'Davidson would probably have been in the B.B.C.' Nothing is unlikelier. The Establishment — such as it was in the Edwardian Age—destroyed him. The Establishment spearheaded by the B. B. C. would have destroyed him more effectively if he had lived in 1961.

There are three handy books on 'Humour' in English literature — J. B. Priestley's, originally a Benn publication and no longer obtainable; Stephen Potter's; and Sir Harold Nicolson's. Sir Harold Nicolson's *A Sense of Humour* published by Constable is far and away the most important of these. Sir Harold Nicolson's analysis of humour is percipient and profound. 'Wit possesses an object; it is critical, aggressive and often cruel (and) is a social phenomenon. Humour, on the other hand has no object; it does not seek to wound others, it seeks only to protect the self; it is not a sword but a shield'. There are six other essays in the book. 'The practice of biography' considering Sir Harold Nicolson's special metier is of special interest. In the beautiful essay 'Nature in Greek Poetry' Sir Harold Nicolson emphasises that Greek poetry emphasises the asperities of Nature oftener than her beauties. We must rid ourselves of all sentimental assumptions and recognise that to the Greeks Nature was but rarely beneficent and more often menacing, rancorous and harsh.

Methuens have now firmly established their primacy as publishers of Shakespeare criticism. Whether one considers the excellent New Arden edition now indispensable for all advanced students of Shakespeare or the great works of Wilson Knight and all the best contemporary critics, their supremacy is unquestioned. The publication of Wilson Knight's masterly *Wheel of Fire* as a *University Paperback* will be welcomed throughout the world and will arouse similar hopes about *The Shakespearean Tempest* and *The Imperial Thame*.

Una Ellis-Fernor's *Shakespeare the Dramatist* is naturally published by *Methuen*. Unfortunately, her death interrupted the elaboration of her thesis which is a novel and interesting one. Those acquainted with the writings of Una Ellis-Fernor know that she was uneasy about the frontiers between Tragedy and Religious Drama and tended to regard (no doubt with Gregory Nazianzen in mind) Tragedy as the stepping-stone, the half-way house. The dramatist's main preoccupation is with the life of man acting and suffering. She quotes with approval — for she follows the line — Wilson Knight's famous remark in *The*

Wheel of Fire 'A Shakespearean Tragedy is set spatially as well as temporally in the mind'. Ergo, the perfect dramatist like Shakespeare avoids explicit statements. The meaning emerges from the total experience of his work and his characteristic methods are those of evocation and 'secret impressions'. (The phrase is Maurice Morgann's) A startling thesis has been brilliantly argued but I am a trifle uneasy at the frequent comparisons between Ibsen and Shakespeare. Was Ibsen the right size, I wonder? Professor F. L. Lucas has just completed a book *Ibsen and Strindberg* and I shall eagerly await his opinion. Professor Wolfgang Clemen's *English Tragedy before Shakespeare* also published by Methuen traces the growth in pre-Shakespearean drama of an affective dramatic dialogue. He begins with the basic types of dramatic set speech acknowledged by Renaissance rhetoricians and illustrates their changing use in tragedies from *Gorboduc* to *Edward II*. In *Tamburlaine* the monologue style is part of the nature of the protagonist and in *Faustus* the soliloquy becomes a true expression of self-communing and revelation. But Prof. Clemen lacks the psychological insight of Miss Ellis Fermor.

What is the explanation of the sudden modern revival of Shakespeare? One possible explanation is man's natural longing to escape from tedium and monotony. Modern Western civilisation is

settling down into a stereotype. The great cities of the world are already much of a muchness, and in ten years' time Berlin and Bombay may be equally indistinguishable from Birmingham. The human soul revolts against this and longs for the larger air and rich variety of Shakespeare's world. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* published by *Springs Books*, London is an excellent edition, very modestly priced. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* published by *Collins* is a more ambitious book, containing as it does, a brilliant comprehensive introduction by Professor Peter Alexander. The line-numbering is that of Clark and Wright but all the textual critics — Pollard, Greg, Mackerrow and Duttic have been drawn upon. This should replace the Globe edition.

The unity of E. M. Forster's *Pharos and Pharillon* published by *Hogarth* is provided by an evocation of Alexandria. The shimmering memories of Siwa and the Septuagint can take in both Cotton and C. P. Cadafy but it is not correct to claim that Forster introduced Cavafy to the English-speaking world. That honour must go to Sir C. M. Bowra. Sir C. M. Bowra reminds one of another critic, though of lesser stature — Lionel Trilling. His book, *Liberal Imagination* is now a *Mercury* paperback published by Heinemann. Here are numerous glimpses of man's unconquerable mind. An illuminating book.



BOOKS

MR. GANDHI by Ranjee Shahani (Macmillan, New York, pp. 211 \$4.95)

MR. GANDHI: In the India of 1961, the image conjured up by the title of Mr. Shahani's book is that of a man whose likely next step will be to float a factory for making cheap fertilizers. For the present generation, accustomed to see distinguished visitors in newsreels interrupt their schedules to lay wreaths at the *samadhi* of the Father of the Nation—to hear politicians mouth the magic name in reverent tones, confident that it will impart a suitably high moral and vote-catching sound to their pronouncements, doing away with the necessity of plain reasoning—there is only *Mahatmaj*i or *Mahatma Gandhi* or, at the very least, *Gandhiji*. The man behind the legend, the plain *Mister Gandhi*, has by and large been forgotten, obscured by the very ocean of material written about him. Reading Mr. Shahani's book led me to ask questions, and I was astonished to find that practically none of my friends under thirty seemed to have any idea of what sort of a man *Gandhiji* really was. 'He was a saint', seemed to be the sum total of their knowledge about his personal life. Mr. Shahani is therefore in good time to help shake off some of this respectful ignorance with a study that is vivid, forthright and readable.

A distinguished scholar, Mr. Shahani has known better than to permit himself merely to depend on the mass of written information available about *Gandhiji*. He spent ten years interviewing relatives and co-workers of *Gandhiji* collating 'what the French call *les petits faits vrais*': the result of his pains proves to be a profile in courage, which, while far from deifying his subject, treats from a refreshing angle the trials and errors, the faith and

fearlessness, whereby the clumsy, bungling boy Mohan struggled his way into becoming the remarkable personality that now has become so much a part of the spiritual and political heritage of our age.

In the chapters which describe the early life of *Gandhiji*, Mr. Shahani has tended to somewhat over-dramatize in order to heighten the effect of what is to come later. Unfortunately, in handling the transition of *Gandhiji* from a rather ordinary lawyer into a miracle-worker, Mr. Shahani is too abrupt and leaves the reader with the impression that he has suddenly become a new man: the self-discipline with which *Gandhiji* grew into his new position is skimmed over: it is treated with due importance only *after* *Gandhiji* has already become a figure whose soul-force is creating new dimensions in the life and politics around him. This leaves a gap in the comprehension of the reader in spite of the fact that Mr. Shahani does manage to bring out the streak of fierce honesty in *Gandhiji*'s character even while he is in the process of narrating that period of his life where his wife found it necessary to curb his amorous excesses (he was a father at sixteen) or to control his fury when he felt that she was not giving him the complete obedience that was due to him as her lord and master (she taught him his first lesson in *satyagraha*). It was this honesty which later made *Gandhiji* modify his belief that 'God is Truth' to 'Truth is God'.

Gandhiji's experiments in dietetics and healing are dealt with more fully and make interesting reading. When Kasturbai was in a very serious state not being able to regain her strength after a haemorrhage, *Gandhiji* took her away from the doctors and made her live on nothing but lemon

juice and water: he was not quite sure of the virtues of lemon juice when he administered it to his wife, but, mercifully it proved successful. As Mr. Shahani observes, 'no one except a saint or a charlatan could so risk a precious existence'.

Mr. Shahani is not always complimentary, but he has tried to lay bare the facts impartially, and at the end of the book we have the picture of a man 'who belonged to the choir of heaven, but knew very well where the furniture of earth lay'. A man whose faith allowed him to watch a deadly snake pass over his legs without moving a muscle, but who at the same time could (in the words of Sir Stafford Cripps) 'during a discussion, when he seemed to be losing ground, fake a saintly smile and say that his prayer time had come. Off he would go, call upon his Deity, and then carefully consult the best brains in India. Thus fortified, divinely and humanly, he would return and continue..... he was a saint who was too political and a politician who was too saintly'.

IQBAL LUKMANT

POLITICS, POWER AND PARTIES by
M. N. Roy (*Renaissance Publishers, Calcutta.*
pp. 216, Rs. 7.50)

THE ten years that have passed since M. N. Roy spoke or wrote the speeches and articles which appear in this volume, have only served to emphasize the points he made in them. We are if anything more deeply involved in the system which he so vigorously and with so formidable an array of logic and evidence denounced, and to that extent more acutely in need of 'rescue operations.' This is a plain fact of which even the party in power is acutely aware as the recent conferences on national integration demonstrate.

Mr. Roy's main thesis is that parliamentary democracy has failed to yield satisfactory results and that dictatorships only go to make matters worse. His solution is decentralisation, education of the people to appreciation of their responsibilities and

an appeal to men and women on the plane of reason and morality. If only a hundred people work on this basis, he contends, 'very soon they will multiply themselves to be hundreds and then tens of thousands.'

Mr. Roy's first lectures elaborate the view that ambiguity about the sanction of morality has been the cause of the confusions of today. 'The religious faith in man's moral essence... implies in the last analysis that man as man is not moral and cannot be moral.' The two Western revolts against this were faith in a transcendental moral order and advocacy of utilitarianism—the first (French Revolution) a metaphysical concept, the second (Liberalism) a negation of morality.

Mr. Roy offers his solution in the rationality of human beings as the sanction of morality. 'Man', he says, 'is moral because he is rational—the universe is a moral order governed by laws inherent in itself and man grows out of that background.' He observes, however, that 'the vast bulk of the Indian people live in an atmosphere surcharged with prejudices and superstitions; and these vices are rationalised as virtues with the help of a modern educational system. In such a cultural atmosphere, public life is bound to be corrupted and democracy is not possible.' On universal suffrage under these conditions, he observes 'no use giving people the vote without also giving them some idea of what it is all about.'

Mr. Roy, dealing with existing conditions, presses for education, the personal example of a few who, without the politician's greed for power, will have the best politician's zeal for communicating ideas. As a practical beginning, he calls for support for independent candidates 'who will not be subjected to the whip of the parties whether in power or in opposition.' The assumption that the independent candidate, unlike the party candidate whom he has to fight in the elections, can win by refusing to resort to demagoguery, is a large and wholly unfounded one. He cannot, of course, outbid the party candidate who represents power politics either in fact or in expecta-

tion, in promises but this will only increase his reliance on the prejudices of the electorate. As Mr. Roy himself recognises, much more could be achieved by a hundred picked men who, holding attention by their own integrity, reject every other objective but the one of educating opinion.

Curiously, this proposal of the experienced revolutionary, rationalist and political thinker bears a striking similarity to what Allan Octavian Hume told the graduates of Calcutta University in 1883:

'You are the salt of the earth. If, amongst even you the elite, fifty men cannot be found with sufficient power of self-sacrifice, sufficient love for and pride in their country, sufficient genuine and unselfish heartfelt patriotism to take the initiative, and if needs be, devote the rest of their lives to the Cause—then there is no hope for India... And if even the leaders of thought are all such poor creatures, or so selfishly wedded to personal concerns, that they dare not or will not strike a blow for their country's sake, then justly and rightly are they kept down and trampled under for they deserve nothing better... If you, the picked men, cannot, scorning personal ease and selfish objects, make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves... a more impartial administration, a larger share in the management of your own affairs,... then all hopes of freedom are at an end, and India truly neither lacks nor deserves any better government than she now enjoys.'

A last word. Mr. Roy tells us that both parliamentary democracy and dictatorships have failed to give men and women the fuller and freer life. He even concedes that the democratic form of government is better than the two alternative dictatorships and that 'at least theoretically' the best so far conceived. But what he misses out is that under democracy, parliamentary democracy and party democracy, it is possible to strive for better forms without drawing down the whole machinery of government on one. It is a workable system where the individual can choose to free himself and

free others. That choice is absent under any dictatorship.

S. NATARAJAN

TILL WE REACH THE STARS: by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas (Asia Publishing House, pp. 145 Rs. 8.50)

WE are impressed with Shri Khwaja Ahmad Abbas. Major Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin circled the earth on April 12, 1961. And here is the book on him ending with the words 'Moscow, July 7, 1961: Bombay, August 7, 1961'. We were intrigued by this dateline wondering if Shri Abbas was accusing us in Bombay of being a month behind Moscow. But it was all cleared up by the kind blurb writer who informed us that Shri Abbas flew twice to Moscow to collect the material for this work and that he had talked at length with the spaceman himself to provide 'the intimate personal angle' to the book.

We are not disappointed in the hopes aroused by the kind blurb writer. The book begins with the blare of military bands that welcomed Gagarin to the Vnukova airport. 'At last he was face to face with Khrushchev. Frozen in attention, his hand rigid in military salute, he spoke the words that would echo round the earth, words that implied that the world would never be the same again. To the inheritors of the greatest social revolution in human history which had liberated millions from many kinds of slavery and serfdom, he brought the news that Man was no longer a prisoner of the earth!

'I report to you, Comrade Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, that the order of the Government and the task given to me by the Communist Party has been implemented. The first space flight has been achieved.'

After that, Shri Abbas says that the world was agog and a Cockney taxi-driver in London abandoned his vehicle right in the middle of the road and, looking up to the sky as if hoping to catch a glimpse of the Vostok hurtling through space, kept on

repeating 'Oh, Blimey! Oh, Blimey!' So does Shri Abbas in parts of the book.

Shri Abbas takes us on a dizzy survey of 'the Road to the Stars' with apt quotations from 'Anaximander (500 B.C.)' and 'Yuri Gagarin (1961 A.D.)'. There is even a quotation from 'Svetasvatara Upanished (about 700 B.C.)' which runs

'When men shall roll up space
As it were a piece of leather
Then will there be an end of evil
Apart from knowing God!'

This rather surprised us as till now we had thought that Svetasvatara dealt with meditation. But perhaps the quotation is appropriate (and Shri Abbas in a similar manner may also extend it in a cricket commentary to describe a sixer). This part of the book contains an informative chapter on Tsiolovsky, a Russian precursor of space scientists.

The next part 'the Son of the Earth' begins with a quotation from ancient Maya Inscription and a question from Miss Gina Lollobrigida. There are chapters on Major Gagarin who is effusively described as a 'blue-eyed phaeton' and as 'the son that every mother would like to have, the ideal brother for every sister, the kind of pal a young man wants and, of course, the beau ideal for every Soviet Girl'. In spite of the effusion Major Gagarin emerges as a pleasant, earnest and sensitive young man who won us over when he compared the colours seen from the space ship to the paintings of Nikolai Roerich.

At one stage Shri Abbas takes up issue with Thomas Carlyle. He says that the list of Heroes in Carlyle's 'Heroes and Hero Worship' is outdated and Gagarin has added a new kind of hero: 'Hero as the Common Man'. This would certainly confuse Mr. Carlyle whose whole effort was to draw the distinction in the opposite direction. Perhaps by this intellectual whiff of grapeshot Shri Abbas in a subtle manner demolishes the whole argument of Mr. Carlyle with a single phrase. We must confess that at times Shri Abbas writes a little above our understanding. For instance when we read 'What makes Yuri Gagarin

a Hero and the most significant symbol of our Age, is this quality of his supreme self-confidence synthesized with a social perspective of universal dimensions' we were quite confused about the synthesis. We may also add that some readers may have preferred in place of one of the three photographs of Shri Abbas with Major Gagarin at least one photograph of Miss Lollobrigida with Major Gagarin. But then we have not had the advantage that Shri Abbas had of spending what is termed the 'Gagarin Summer' in Moscow in 'the Khrushchev Era.'

ASHOK DESAI

NEHRU: HIS DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

by Atulananda Chakrabarti (Thackers, Calcutta pp. 438)

AS one of the greatest personalities on the world stage today, our Prime Minister Nehru has been attracting many writers and critics to try their pens on him. In keeping with the tradition of all great men everywhere, Nehru has been misunderstood more by his own countrymen than by others. Atulananda Chakrabarti's book is devoted to a critical appraisal of Nehru and his achievements.

The book is divided into three parts. The first, which traces the concepts of the state and democracy from the ancient Sanskrit classics, takes up more than a third of it. What Gandhiji hoped for and what in fact has happened is the theme of the second part, while the actual X-raying of Nehru's utterances and actions forms the last part. The questions posed and answered are: What was India of Nehru's dreams? What type of India has he been turning out?

Many critics have called Nehru's foreign policy by a variety of names but Atulananda Chakrabarti is original in calling it non-violent non-resistance. He thinks it is 'doubly passive'. It is Nehru's mysticism of appeasement, labelled the 'Munich mentality'. The author is also critical of the attitude of Nehru with regard to *Panch-*

sheel. The difference between Gandhiji's passive resistance and the Buddhist law of *Panchsheel* is clearly shown here. While the one was applicable to politics, the other was meant for individuals. Nehru has been following the two teachings in part to suit his convenience, although spiritual beliefs do not lend themselves to such part acceptances and part rejections. 'The conditions of Buddha and his times do not obtain in Nehru and in his India', (p. 411). Nehru's plans have no plan for preparing the country and for making up the mind of its people (p. 363). Non-resistance has been made India's state policy in foreign affairs (p. 409). These and other expressions set the hyper-critical tone of the book. It is a fully documented argument put forward with originality of expression. But it is not convincing.

It is necessary to remember that Nehru has been put into the office which he has been holding all these years by popular vote. As he is the constitutionally elected Prime Minister, we Indians must learn to have faith in 'my government right or wrong', without which it would be difficult for any government to carry on. Charkabarti all along seems to consider himself aloof from India, aloof from the elected Premier. Just as he himself has declared that spiritual beliefs are to be accepted as a whole and that they cannot be acted up to in parts, the political (or for that matter any leadership) also has to be accepted in its entirety. You cannot have the good points of Nehru and have nothing to do with his short-comings. We accepted him as he is with his great qualities of head and heart, and with his shortcomings. Let us first begin to think that he is *our* Nehru and that we have put him where he belongs.

From another point of view, the rapid strides we have taken towards industrialisation, towards building up a chain of research laboratories and institutes would not have been possible without Nehru. The middle path that we have chalked out for ourselves in our foreign affairs, without committing ourselves to either side, again

is Nehru's contribution to a lessening of world tension. It would have been the easiest job to join either of the two conflicting blocs, as Pakistan for instance, did. It required a firm Nehru to steer clear of the two strong forces, each trying to attract India to its own side, tempting us with powerful baits and rewards.

Admittedly, Nehru was not trained for diplomacy or for that matter any administrative responsibility. As an agitator against British wrongs, under the spiritual guidance of the Mahatma, Nehru in course of time became the uncrowned king of India. With the withdrawal of the British, he at once found himself in the position of the Prime Minister, almost for the first time on any payroll! *Swarajya* descended to us, without ourselves sufficiently raising ourselves to it, when moreover, no Indian nation was born to take the place of the British when their last pro-consul withdrew. Losing sight of these factors, it is not right to find fault with Nehru. Anyone else in his position would have been responsible for a far greater number of mistakes and miscalculations.

The position of India and her place in the Commonwealth have given her most of her political and diplomatic advantages. The personality of our Prime Minister, who is also in charge of the External Affairs has no doubt added its quota. As the moral successor to Gandhiji, he has carried out as much of the Mahatma's teaching as it was practical under the conditions. Even the iron-willed Sardar (Patel) could do no better. If Nehru has brought a new angle and a new direction to what Mahatmaji had chalked out, it is his originality. Surely the Mahatma could not have prescribed for all future occasions and emergencies. The man on the spot has to use his own judgment and that Nehru has used in many cases and to the best of his abilities. The overall shortcomings of the Congress Government under Nehru's leadership need not be attributed to him exclusively.

Obviously there are some spots in every nation's policy which do not bear an X-ray examination. The Indian National Congress

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began taking an interest in foreign affairs only under the guidance of Nehru and Nehru was given charge of the foreign portfolio only fifteen years back. Had he not to begin from scratch? How was it possible to organise a foreign service, to suit the new democratic requirements of our Republic? How many persons has Nehru tried to hold responsible posts and how many were found wanting and had to be dropped on that account? The responsibility of running a Government of a country of India's dimension is no easy job.

When Atulananda Chakrabarti calls this study his honest endeavour to say that Nehru has not devised something good for us, he only overstates his case. More understanding of currents and cross currents of Indian and International politics and more sympathy for Nehru's honest effort, ought to have been shown. Masses at home and abroad flock in their thousands to greet Nehru and he in his turn receives great inspiration from them. Such a popular figure ought to have been shown a little more consideration.

S. R. TIKEKAR

SUNLIGHT ON A BROKEN COLUMN by Attia Hosain. (Chatto and Windus, pp. 318 18sh.)

NOSTALGIA is a favourite mode of the Indian novel in English since Independence. No doubt the end of British rule together with the determination to industrialise marked a decisive break with the past. Furthermore, many of the writers in English, belonging to the classes educated under the previous set-up, come from old Brahmin or landed families and are painfully torn in two directions: back to the age-old pattern (identified with home and mother) or forward to modern independence (identified with university). When the choice of 'foreign' ways has inevitably been made, a cleaving guilt persists which may be expiated either by idealisation of the past or by lip-service to ancient Indian *dharma*. The hero of Balachandra Rajan's

Dark Dancer rediscovers the truth of ancient Indian wisdom. Raja Rao's *Serpent and the Rope* is weighed down with ineffable sadness and fatigue, 'one long song of saintly sorrow.' Rao manages to combine Vedanta (all is illusion, serpent and rope equally unreal, everything is one, Shiva-ham, Shivaham...) with fin-de-siecle weariness (Pater, Wagner...).

The danger in all this is sentimentality. The broken column, especially in sunlight, evokes a lost world of grandeur and porticoes. Forgotten are its miseries, the cringing slaves and overbearing patriarchs: instead—a vision of freedom, grace and cultivation of the arts. The happiest treatment of this theme I know, is a film—Satyajit Ray's *Jalsaghar*: here the contrast between fading magnificence, the life of generosity and music and the upstart vulgarity of Ganguli the contractor is offset by the character of the old lonely *Zamindar*—he cannot be idealised, for even as he is destroyed by the forces we and he despise, he remains imperious, extravagantly foolish and proud. We must take his greatness with his violence, as Yeats said,

Attia Hosain's first novel is a minor contribution to the Indo-Anglian literature of nostalgia. She tells the story of Laila, an orphaned daughter in a distinguished Muslim joint family, who has received a European-style education. The dying grandfather Baba Jan, a formidable patriarch, dominates the opening chapters, but with him the old order is passing away. The women still live in the *zenana* and marry without protest their parents' choice, but Laila revolts against all this: she will not be 'paired off like an animal.' The world at large is also changing: the family had always enjoyed good relations with the British, but young Asad, Laila's cousin, is a revolutionary, beaten up in the streets by the police. Communalism is also growing, and poor Asad is beaten up by the Hindus as well.

After Baba Jan's death the novel ranges more widely to include college life, receptions and garden parties, a cross-section of upper class society reflecting the tensions of

the time—Muslim, Hindu and Anglo-Indian loyalties, traditionalists and modernists, nationalists and supporters of the British. Miss Hosain writes with charm and restraint, but I cannot see that she brings any original significance to these well-tried themes. The novel is too slight to develop any personality or situation in depth, and Miss Hosain's technique of attention to vivid detail only evokes the typical—in fact her most vivid characterisations verge on caricature (Mrs. Martin, Sylvia, Mrs. Lal), while her hero and heroine are the most anodyne. There are too many eye-brows lifted, nostrils quivering, too many self-conscious dialogues on the lines of 'Freedom does not mean a choice between rulers—except to imperialists,' or 'If you had loved him with your heart instead of your mind...'

The trouble is, Miss Hosain is not passionately involved. Her characters do not move her deeply: they are figures in a delicate dream. Nowhere is this more evident than in the climax of the story: Laila's secret affair with a young lecturer whom she subsequently marries follows the pattern of countless 'true-life' romances from the women's magazines—the handsome well-dressed young stranger at the Reception for the Viceroy, his engaging gallantry and subsequent diffident tenderness, his smiling eyes and cap at a gay angle, his idealism (refused a job in government service), the touch of philosophical sadness ('One never knows how much time is lent us'), the family opposition and secret meetings, poverty ('Nothing to offer but my love') and smiling through tears. Similarly, the attempt to convey the passionate sacrifice of Sita, loved by Kemal and loving him, but refusing marriage because he is a Muslim and she realises happiness cannot be independent of public opinion, fails to achieve the conviction of individual suffering—the dilemma is stereotyped.

The novel might have ended with the happy marriage of Laila and Ameer, but that would have been to sacrifice the poignancy which for Miss Hosain is evidently the key to artistic effectiveness. We

have already guessed that Laila with her 'troubled enquiring large eyes', who long before her marriage 'remembered the past and was sad', is not meant for happiness in this world. Part Four reveals what the book has been leading up to: an orgy of nostalgia, Fourteen years have passed, the horrors of partition are over, the family is scattered, Ameer (inevitably) has died—a hero's death of course. Laila pays a last visit to the old house of her childhood, abandoned, peeling, full of dust. No touching detail is overlooked—the fading marble name-plate, the garden unkempt, tennis court overgrown, fountain dry... 'In that chair Uncle Hamid had sat...' 'At this table the family had gathered...' In the kitchen 'empty shelves and cupboards lined the stained walls...'

But Miss Hosain completely lacks the detachment and control with which a Thomas Mann handled a similar return in *Tonio Kröger*—can she even feel the need for it? Her purpose is tears, no more. Last of all Laila goes into her own old room, where she had last been with Ameer after the wedding, and she recalls 'the body's worship, the consummation of passion,' etc. And Ameer's friends were 'poor, often slovenly, always rebels...' No, really! a novel cannot be taken seriously which deals us such outworn counters to rouse admiration and regret. If the Indian novel in English is to achieve any kind of maturity, it must abandon all these tears idle tears and acquire a little more irony and intellect.

DAVID MCCUTCHION

TOO LONG IN THE WEST by Balachandra Rajan (Heinemann pp. 16s. net)

WHY has Mr Rajan's second novel received such serious attention from reviewers in the west? Have they been deceived by its title? Did they perhaps expect social satire? Were reviewer-colleagues on the *Spectator*, the *New Statesman* and others beguiled by the promise of its

blurb and its author's c.v. only to turn away cheated by its 'unreality'?

The corpus of Indo-anglian fiction is still small enough for each new novel to be measured beside its predecessors as a matter of course. This effort with 'Too Long in the West' is unrewarding. Nor does the novel breathe more freely when placed on the scale against current fiction in English as a whole.

The writing flows fluently enough; in fact Mr. Rajan's observation of the South Indian scene and of the temper of its sophistries frequently exhales a bland wit. With this he presents all the ingredients which promise an expose of the typical IAS-oriented values of a provincial culture. However despite the author's racy narration there is no satirical detonation; the plot fizzles out with improbability—deracine by the mystique of the Mango. Mudalur is a no-man's land where Sambasivan, 'the sole source of largesse', lords it over his estate. He has, as the astrologers predicted, attained pre-eminence in his field, that of winning cash prizes from successful entries for crossword-puzzle competitions. The values of the normal world outside Mudalur are constantly invoked through the earthy materialism of Lakshmi, Sambasivan's wife. The main point of interest is focussed through the response there is to Sambasivan's advertisement in the matrimonial columns:

'Vadama girl, educated yet domesticated. Fair of face, ravishing of form. Unprecedented paragon will marry whoever deserves her.'

Lakshmi prophesies her daughter's fate. 'She'll never fit in, She's been too long in the West. . . .' Enter Nalini, the American-educated daughter, paragon of foreign-returned South Indian girlhood. Meanwhile Mudalur has become a pilgrimage for impossible suitors, including by way of *deus ex machina*, her public-health-minded American friend Ernest. The racial crisis is resolved finally by Nalini electing to marry Mudalur's revolutionary and barber, Raman. Mudalur flourishes on, we are told, under their joint manage-

ment—an Indian utopia despite the discovery by Government treasury officials that the people of Mudalur circulate their own printed currency. In fact, to round its improbability off, the nearby Community Development Officer resigns his office to become a resident of Mudalur. With this evaporation the reader is left pondering the tone of the author's clever giggle.

The publication of this novel is perhaps the only example of directionless levitation in the development of Indo-anglian fiction. Visvakarman, one of the novel's unsuccessful suitors, provides (in another context) its appropriate epitaph:

'An unusual combination, provided it is disciplined. I have not seen it in the modern Indian novel.'

FOY NISSEN

MEMOIRS OF A BENGAL CIVILIAN,
by John Beames. (Chatto and Windus pp. 311
30s.)

IN recent years there have been a number of books, many in the shape of memoirs and biographies, about those who administered India on behalf of the East India Company and the British Crown. Thus there have been recent biographies of Sleeman — who as we were taught in school, abolished *thuggee* — and of John Jacob, who founded Jacobabad, to mention but two. And of course there have been the two volumes by Philip Woodruff about the men who ruled India. Now that the independence of India is an established institution and it is possible to read these accounts without bringing the heat of nationalist fervour to bear on them, we can be permitted to find them extraordinarily interesting. History is always most vividly reflected in the lives of individuals, and these lives reveal a period which offered vast opportunities and often found men capable of making the most of them.

One of the most interesting of these recent books is the memoirs of John Beames, an ordinary 'clodhopping collector'. Part of the interest lies in the fact that Beames

was not an outstanding public figure and therefore perhaps more 'typical'. As he himself said, 'If it should be asked why so obscure a person should think it worth his while to write the story of his life at all, I reply that it is precisely because I am an obscure person — an average, ordinary, middle-class Englishman — that I write it.' And part of the interest lies in the direct and fresh manner in which he writes.

The life of an I.C.S. officer was a pleasant and exhilarating one in those spacious days, when a 'D.M.' was a little god, the work varied but not too exacting, the scope and authority for good (and bad) ample, and time evidently available to indulge in private studies and pursuits. Beames produced a learned *Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India*, 'published by Trubner and immediately taken up by Oriental philologists in England and on the Continent'. Little wonder that the overworked, underpaid, harassed I.A.S. officers of our own day sometimes cast longing glances back at the conditions of a hundred years ago.

Beames came out to India just after the Mutiny, being one of the last of the Haileybury men, before the competition system was introduced. His account of the training they received at Haileybury is particularly illuminating. It is in accounts such as this, or in his description of life in Calcutta, or of the power of the indigo planters in Champaran, that one appreciates his keen eye and vivid descriptions.

His account of the introduction of the new police organisation when he was in Purnea not only deals with an interesting question but shows to the full both is perceptiveness as an alien administrator, as well as his descriptive powers. It is therefore perhaps worth quoting rather fully. 'The old Daroghas', he writes, 'were a remarkable class of men, of a type now quite extinct. They ruled as little kings in their own jurisdiction, and reaped a rich harvest of bribes from all classes. Everyone trembled before him for if you offended him he could report to the Magistrate that

you had committed some offence, that he suspected you of harbouring bad characters, or that you had refused him assistance in arresting criminals, and then, woe betide you! The Darogha Sahib could command as many witnesses as he wanted, all of whom would swear to anything he chose to tell them, and unless the Magistrate were uncommonly keen at detecting false evidence, your doom was sealed.' When a crime was committed, 'everyone was interested in keeping the matter quiet, for a visit from the Darogha was a thing to be dreaded. Moreover, the police seldom visited a village without practising a little torture on persons whom they pretended to suspect in order to get money out of them. Undoubtedly a great amount of crime was concealed, innocent men were tried and sentenced on false evidence dexterously got up by the police, while guilty ones got off by paying the same potent body to screen them. On the other hand the Daroghas were often splendid detectives, and they certainly knew all the criminals and suspicious characters, and could lay their hands on them whenever it suited them to do so. Under a strong-willed active Magistrate whom they feared they did excellent work.' If honest, or passably honest — and there were, here and there, some who were so — they kept their Thanas in capital order, and from the powerful personal influence which they wielded, and their profound acquaintance with the people, they were able to do much that their over-drilled and over-regulated successors cannot do, and apparently never will be able to do.'

Another account which has some relevance for us is his description of the visit a high personage 'on tour' and his comments on the value of such visits. While he was stationed in Cuttack in 1874, the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Richard Temple — for whom Beames had the most hearty contempt — made an official visit. After all the immense preparations had been made, the great man arrived. 'The pomp and pageantry, the shouting crowds, the illuminations, arches and processions gratified

his inmost soul. He was so deeply touched that he even thanked me in a few curt words. He must have been moved to do that! And then he goes on: 'People who do not know India well imagine that a great deal of good is done by these State tours of Viceroys, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors. But my own experience leads me to doubt this. It may be that the local authorities succeed now and then in securing sanction for the execution of some work of great importance to their locality by showing the Governor the actual spot and proving to him by actual eyesight its necessity or usefulness. They are thus sometimes able to do, in half-an-hour's walk round a town or river bank, what they have been unable to achieve by months of writing to an unwilling or unintelligent Secretariat. But the idea that by a hurried tour — and all tours in so vast a country as India must be more or less hurried, because there is so much ground to be got over in a limited time — a Governor can make himself really acquainted with a province as big as England is a delusion. The place does not look itself to begin with, because it is dressed up for his reception and looks as unlike itself as a workman in his Sunday clothes. All the natural every-day dirt and misery is bundled out of sight. 'Eyewash' as it is called in India, prevails everywhere, So the great man does not see the real place, and unless he is an exceptionally keensighted man he takes his superficial, hastily-formed impressions for real knowledge, which does more harm than good.

'If also we set against the problematical benefit of the great man's seeing things, or thinking he sees them, with his own eyes, the real and undoubted mischief he does by disorganising the whole administration for a week or more, closing the courts, delaying the disposal of cases, putting a stop to business of all sorts, leading Municipalities and other public bodies to spend more money than they can afford in decorations, fireworks, illuminations and triumphal arches, it will be seen that the net

gain for these tours is infinitesimal, if not absolutely nil.'

It is the author's ability to see through 'eyewash' and humbug that makes his book so fascinating and so useful a picture of an era that has gone for good.

AAMIR ALI

GOD IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY by James Collins (Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 476 40s.)

God in Modern Philosophy is a fine specimen of modern American scholarship. It is one of those scholarly works which is written in an extremely lucid style.

The primary impetus for undertaking this study came from observing the very close union between the modern history of the problem of God and contemporary speculation about Him. It is not that the alert philosopher today will make more progress in the study of God by consulting what his predecessors have thought on the matter, but rather that he cannot make any headway without such consultation.

The purpose of the work is 'to determine the main kinds of philosophical approaches taken towards God during the modern period with emphasis upon those historical tendencies which are still actively moulding our contemporary conceptions of God.' The work begins with Cusanus and ends with the Existentialists. According to Professor Collins, 'there is usually a mutual relationship, in which the general position affects the man's notion of God and is, in turn, decisively influenced by the latter. The continuity and critical interchange in modern philosophy depend in a large measure upon positions taken on the problem of God. This pattern has not been suddenly broken in our own day, but still makes meaningful the diversity among philosophers and permits some common ground of discussion.'

Professor Collin believes that by following some of the main positions on God it is possible to make a few valid generalizations about the course of modern philosophy as a whole. 'The key distinction bet-

ween the functional use of the concept of God by rationalism and its neutralization by empiricism may provide one means of access to a general view of the pre-Kantian period. Similarly, it is hoped that the polarizing conflict between the Hegelian and the neutralistic forms of absolutism will shed some light upon the general movement of thought since the time of Kant including our contemporary situation.'

The narration of the vast theme of modern man's quest for God which involves a consideration of his religious, artistic, literary, scientific, theological and sociopolitical productions is not what Professor Collins aims at. He has confined himself 'to the philosophical paths to God, without tracing out the interrelationships with these other ways.' Within the philosophical order he follows he found it necessary to make selective choices of men and issues. Thinkers, for example, like 'Vico and Comte, Schelling and Bergson, or Weiss and Tillich, who have said some notable things about God' have not been discussed in detail. Professor Collins' aim is not to make an exhaustive report of the various theories of God, but to 'seize upon the essential line of thought and relate it to the ongoing history of the question.' Non-Western views on God have not been taken into account.

Professor Collins has a standpoint of his own. He calls it realistic theism. Some basic metaphysical aspects of this realistic philosophy of God, as Professor Collins himself says, are found in St. Thomas.

The work begins with Cusanus, Calvin and Burno. He follows the course by taking into account the revival of classical scepticism during the Renaissance. The chapter includes an analysis of the views of Montaigne, Charron, Gassendi, Huet and Mersenne. The trends in the Renaissance thought which prepared the soil for a reception of scepticism have been discussed exhaustively. The third chapter, 'God as a Function in Rationalist Systems', includes the views of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz. The rationalist systems were not religious or theocentric in structure. God

was made to serve the purposes of the system itself. 'He becomes a major cog, but still a cog, in the over-all programme of answering scepticism, incorporating the scientific spirit, and building a rational explanation of the real.' (p. 56). In the next chapter Professor Collins discusses the famous British empiricists, Bacon, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. 'The great negative theme of this movement of thought was that a philosophy based on experience can safely dispense with God or at least reduce his role to a minimum.' (p. 90).

The following chapter deals with the complex philosophical movements of the Enlightenment. Professor Collins compares the age with a battlefield, 'with its swirling and interlacing lines of combat'. From the welter of creeds and issues he chooses Bayle, 'a legitimate descendant of Montaigne', Wolff, the leading representative of the Enlightenment in Germany, Voltaire who 'despite his lifelong preoccupation with the problem of God never makes a definitive and systematic formulation of his position.' Holbach, 'the personal enemy of God' — the words are Holbach's own — Diderot and Rousseau. Professor Collins rightly observes that 'the spectacle of the unresolved Enlightenment conflict over the theistic implications of science and the foundations of the moral life raised some perplexing and original afterthoughts in Kant's mind'. (pp. 160 - 161). The next two chapters are devoted to Kant whose synthesis Professor Collins calls 'moral functionalism' and Hegel. Professor Collins believes that the distinction between the absolute spirit and God that Hegel himself drew was forgotten by most of his successors and gave rise to grave and potent misunderstandings concerning man's relation to God. (p. 202) The eighth chapter, 'The Emergence of Atheism', deals with Feuerbach, Marx, Nietzsche and the American naturalists like Woodbridge, Dewey Ernest Nagel, Morris Cohen and Feigl. The ninth chapter deals with three great thinkers, Mill, William James and Whitehead. The tenth chapter, 'The Heart's Way of God' includes Pascal, Kierkegaard, Newman and

a few modern Existentialists like Sartre, Camus, Heidegger and Jaspers. The final chapter contains a splendid summary of the views discussed earlier along with Professor Collins' own suggestions. The chapter deserves careful study.

The detailed Notes take 34 pages while the finely documented bibliography takes 16 pages. The Index is fairly exhaustive.

Nurtured as we are by the philosophical traditions of Britain, we expected at least brief references to thinkers like James Ward, C.C.J. Webb, A.E. Taylor, the Earl of Balfour, Dean Inge and von Hiugel. For a person situated on the other side of the Atlantic the perspective is perhaps different.

A. M. GHOSE

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*Edited by Raghavan Iyer (Chatto & Windus,
pp. 155 18s).*

IT is a collection of five different papers, each dealing with a specific topic relating to a South Asian country. The first paper, entitled 'Utilitarianism and All That' by Raghavan Iyer, is an essay on British rule in India and occupies half of the book; the second, entitled 'The 1958 Revolution in Pakistan' by Guy Wint, is an analysis of the military coup in Pakistan and its prospects; the third paper on 'The Soviet Re-assessment of Mahatma Gandhi' by Kyril Tidmarsh deals with the Soviet attitude towards the Indian leader from about 1921 to 1956; the fourth paper deals with the 'Rise and Secession of the Congress Socialist Party of India', and is written by Hari Kishore Singh; in the last paper Nimalasiri Silva gives a historical analysis 'The Problem of Indian immigration to Ceylon'.

Mr. Iyer starts with an attack on the view that British political theory was good, but that the men who ruled India perverted it. 'It is possible to argue', says Mr. Iyer, 'that if we are justified in condemning Rousseau by Robespierre, Hegel by Hitler and Marx by Stalin, we



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Between Oxus and Jumna

By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. This is Dr Toynbee's account of a journey made in North-west India, West Pakistan, and Afghanistan during the early months of 1960. The rivers Oxus and Jumna formed the limits of his journey.

21s.

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are also entitled to judge Bentham by Bentinck, Burke by Curzon, and the two Mills by those who invoked the notion of Oriental despotism to oppose every demand for political progress in India'. The author then proceeds to study the application of what he considers to be the four main doctrines which were used to justify British rule in India, namely, Burke's doctrine of imperial trusteeship, the Benthamite doctrine of utilitarianism, Plato's doctrine of the rule of the elite, and the Evangelical doctrine of the gospel. But by the application of these very doctrines, the British in India brought about their own downfall, because these were largely responsible for the Indian Renaissance. Even the 'new ruling class' in India uses these doctrines. The author, however, warns us that elements of these doctrines can be found also in traditional Indian political thought, and that, therefore, it would be misleading to regard the political doctrines

of British imperialism 'as the direct cause of the political doctrines of Indian nationalism'.

Mr. Iyer's is a brilliant study of some of the theoretical aspects of British rule in India, and is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the vast literature on the subject. He combines a refreshingly Indian outlook with a somewhat un-Indian scholarship. But his style may not be liked by all. What seems to be mere playing with words at times, and unnecessary references in almost every sentence to eminent authorities, make him often almost unreadable, and suggest a far too facile pen. If it is an imitation of Spengler, it is a poor one.

By contrast, Guy Wint's brief study of 'The 1958 Revolution in Pakistan' is a remarkably lucid, but objective analysis of the political background of the military coup in Pakistan, the nature of the military regime, and the immediate political

hamare bhai ko le jao

It happened some years ago in the steel melting shops at the Jamshedpur works. A large ladle, carrying 75 tons of molten iron, suddenly crashed to the ground with a deafening noise from an overhead crane. The spattering sparks and red-hot metal seriously injured a number of brick-layers working at what seemed to be a safe distance. The air was rent with the frenzied shouts of the men and the hissing of steam.

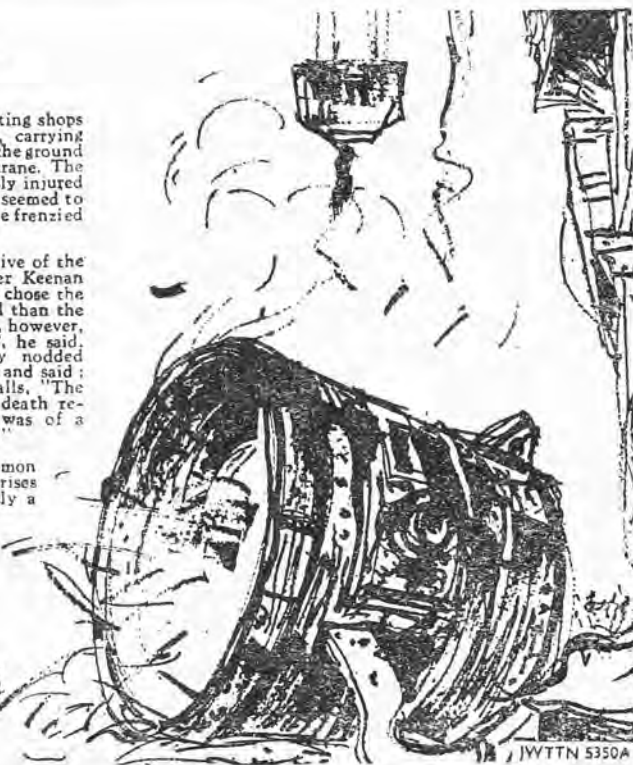
The first ambulance could remove only five of the injured to the hospital. General Manager Keenan could take only three more in his car. He chose the three who had a better chance of survival than the rest. One of these men, a Hindu worker, however, refused to go. "Do not take me away", he said. Disregarding his own agony, he feebly nodded towards a half-burnt Muslim colleague, and said: "Hamare bhai ko le jao." As Keenan recalls, "The Hindu who was in pain and danger of death remembered, not that the Mohammedan was of a different faith, but that he was his brother."

This feeling of comradeship, born of the common bond of labour, is the spirit that characterises Jamshedpur, where industry is not merely a source of livelihood but a way of life.

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prospects of Pakistan. He is, on the whole, sympathetic to the present regime, especially on account of the political instability which preceded the coup, which he ascribes to a number of basic factors rooted in the history of the movement for Pakistan. The author opines that East Pakistan is unlikely to secede, that there is no danger of Communism in West Pakistan, but that things are uncertain in the East on account of underground Communist activities directed from Calcutta. What one finds difficult to understand, in the face of all evidence to the contrary, is the author's opinion that the military regime has endeavoured to retain all the essential ingredients of a liberal society.

Kyril Tidmarsh has collected a whole host of quotations (and little else) to prove the generally known fact that Russia was sympathetic towards Gandhi in the early 20's, opposed to Gandhi from about 1925 onwards, until about the end of 1955 when once more Gandhi became acceptable to the Soviet leaders. The work has undoubtedly involved considerable research, but the value of the results is limited by several factors. For instance, as evidence of the Russian attitude towards Gandhi, the author quotes some passages from the *Communist International* (journal of the Comintern), without mentioning the name of the writer, his nationality or the subject. Now it is well known that as long as Lenin lived, all kinds of viewpoints were allowed to be expressed in various Communist journals, and all of these cannot be taken as representative of the official or general Russian viewpoint. Similarly, while quoting evidence of the Russian attitude in 1929, he persistently refers to the *Communist International* of 1922. Moreover, Soviet attitude towards national leaders of particular countries has historically been invariably tied up with the global strategy of Soviet foreign policy and the corresponding tactics in individual countries. It depends on whether the tactics in a particular country should be that of 'united front from below' or 'united front from above' or of a 'proletarian national libera-

tion movement', in the context of the general global strategy. But the author is completely silent on this subject. One would be more satisfied with fewer quotations, but a little bit of analysis. No, better was expected of Oxford.

The last two papers consist of purely historical narratives of no particular merit. These will be useful only to undergraduates and laymen interested in the subject.

Thus on the whole the book is mixed fare. An article on Nepal, which seems to be the only South Asian country left out from this series, and whose political affairs are of great international significance now-a-days, would have been a welcome addition. The book will be quite useful to students of history, political science and international relations specialising in South Asian affairs. The production is good, but the small print strains the eye.

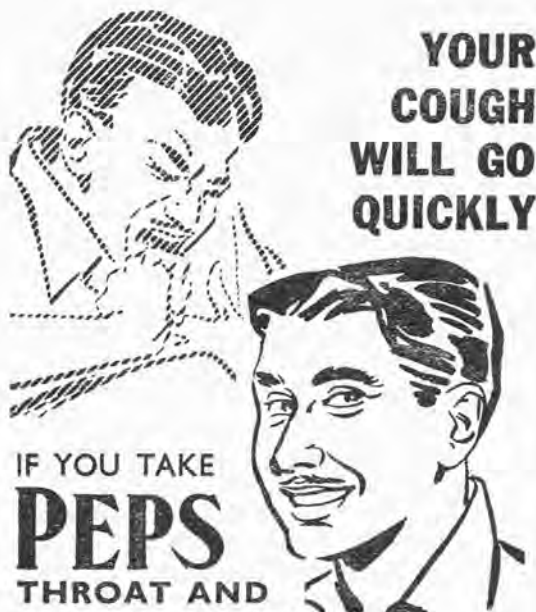
JAYANTANUJA BANDYOPADHYAYA

SHORTER REVIEWS

THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN INDIA by Nabagopal Das (Asia Publishing House, pp. 180 Rs. 11.25)

The Public Sector has become one of the most popular subjects of debate in India. Every political speech and every essay in politics and economics dealing with this country gives it prominence. It is understandable that this should be so, for the Public Sector is the index of the Socialistic Pattern of Society. This is an issue which must be debated thoroughly by all sections of our people. If this Sector grows because of economic reasons, it will be a good thing for our country. If it grows because of political reasons, it will be an unfortunate development. Nabagopal Das, a former Member of the Indian Civil Service and now the Director General of the Employers' Federation of India, should be in a good position to judge the shortcomings as well as the benefits of State enterprise.

The first chapter of his book deals with the historical background of economic policy in India: Conflicts between British industry and business in the U.K. with those in India; the second stage of conflict between Indian private enterprise and



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British Industry in U.K. and the third stage after independence with the new conflict between Indian private enterprise and the State Sector. This is followed by a survey of State enterprise and public corporation in both the Democracies and Totalitarian countries. It is interesting to note the common thread of development everywhere, beginning with dominating ministerial control and ending with the maximum responsibility and freedom for the man on the spot.

The book does not throw any bright light on fundamental problem, but it is a useful catalogue of events. Surprisingly it is in the foot-notes that one comes across the most significant information. For instance, speaking about the Board of Directors of Government Companies, he says: 'A study made of the composition of the Boards of Directors of Government Companies in Sweden shows that at least 43 per cent of the members were drawn from amongst the ranks of business people.' As against this in India there is only a sprinkling of non-officials, one or two business men and sometimes a labour leader. It is also interesting to learn from a foot-note that 'Prof. Galbraith had been invited by the Planning Commission to make a frank appraisal of the performance of State undertakings. He did so, but because his report was not one of unadulterated praise, Government did not release it for a very long time. Though dated 29.4.59 it was laid on the table of the Lok Sabha only on 22.12.60.'

Z.F.

THE LATER POEMS OF TAGORE by
Sirikumar Ghose (Asia Publishing House
pp. 304, 12.50)

These are a series of critical essays on the poems which Tagore wrote in the last ten years of his life. The author is a lecturer in the department of English and Modern European languages at Viswa Bharati, and the present work is the result of a lifetime of study. Dr. Ghose begins the book by discussing Tagore's prose poems, an innovation which would not be accepted as an unqualified success by everyone. He then devotes one chapter to each of the volumes of poems which appeared in the last few years of his life. In a concluding chapter he sums up the light which these last poems, many of them written in sickness and suffering, throw on Tagore's work as a whole.

There are 80 pages of documented notes at the end, while a select bibliography takes up five pages.

REFLECTIONS WISE AND OTHERWISE
Homi Mody (Asia Publishing House pp. 132 Rs. 10)

Presented here in book form is a collection of the speeches and talks which Sir Homi Mody has given at various times and before different groups of people. Most of them are in a light vein, many of them being in the category of the after dinner speech. The occasion of the first speech was a dinner for Lord Irwin in 1927; the last speech is his introduction of Lord Morrison when he came to Bombay last year to deliver the Dorab Tata Memorial lectures.

OUR NEW RULERS by N. Raghunathan
(B. G. Paul & Co. Madras pp. 390 Rs. 5)

Under the pen name of Vigneshwara Mr. Raghunathan wrote for the *Swatantra* a weekly column which he called *Sotto Voce*. A collection of his pieces was published some time ago under the same title and reviewed in *QUEST* (No. 23, Oct-Dec. 1959). This new book is a similar collection of those pieces which appeared between February 1949 and August 1952. This was the period when the Indian Constitution was being framed. In his preface Mr. Raghunathan sets out a list of the sins which the government committed between the hope filled days of the new Constitution when his little articles were first written and now when they appear once more in print.

EMBERS IN CATHAY by Stanley Ghosh
(Doubleday & Co. pp. 231, \$4.50).

Dr. Stanley Ghosh is an Indian who has become a naturalized American. He has remained deeply interested in Asia and is a special-

list in Asian economic and political affairs. The present work is an exposition of the relationship between the Government of Communist China and the 'minorities', the Mongols, Turks, the Chinese Muslims and the Tibetans. These are mostly people of China's Dominions — Inner Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tibet. A short historical survey brings into perspective the connection of these Dominions with China proper. In his introduction Justice William Douglas says 'Free Asia has not yet felt the full impact of Communist Imperialism under Mao Tse Tung's mailed fist. This book... carries warnings for the Soviet Union as well as for the nations of Southeast Asia.'

THE EVOLUTION OF PHYSICS by
Albert Einstein & Leopold Infeld (Cambridge University press pp. 297 13s 6d).

This book was first published in 1938. In thus collaborating with one of his own co-workers, Einstein was able to explain, in language which a layman could understand, the processes of his own creative thinking. The authors emphasize the fact that the book is not meant to be a text book of physics. It is meant to be a history of the thought processes of man in the region of physical phenomena; it is a sketch in broad outline of the 'attempts of the human mind to find a connection between the world of ideas and the world of phenomena.' With Einstein's own contribution to it, the story of physics is brought up to date. Introducing this new edition, Leopold Infeld says that though there have been tremendous developments in physics, there is very little that must be changed in this book, since it deals only with the principal ideas of physics which have remained essentially the same since 1938.

OUR REVIEWERS

DAVID McCUTCHION teaches English literature at Vishwa Bharati University, Santiniketan.

FOY NISSEN works for the British Council, Bombay.

S. NATARAJAN former editor of 'Free Press Journal' and 'Bombay Chronicle.' Author of the 'History of Social Reform' and 'History of the Press', Secretary of Council for Economic Education.

A. M. GHOSE lectures in Philosophy at the Maharaja's College, Jaipur.

IQBAL LUKMANI is a Bombay businessman.

Prof. J. BANDYOPADHYAYA is a professor of International Relations, Jadavpur University.

AAMIR ALI works for the I. L. O. Geneva.

S. R. TIKEKAR is a free lance journalist of Bombay.

CORRESPONDENCE

Aspects of National Integration

Dear Sir,

Tensions on account of religious, linguistic and other group differences have been with us for generations and it was easy to blame over-erst-while rules for them. It is extremely unfortunate that long after we have begun to manage over our affairs, these tensions still persist, if anything in a more accentuated form. The intellectuals have a special responsibility in this regard, having failed to debate among themselves, leave alone try to offer some solutions for the root causes of these tensions.

If one concedes that these tensions are, in the main, the cumulative result of personal frustration projected on the social scene, one of the solutions or rather, palliatives, might lie in offering substitutes or avenues for sublimation of these frustrations. Another might be to try to eliminate from public life whatever causes these frustrations to crystallise along lines of group affiliations.

To take one example. The ideal of a secular state is being propagated by the politicians from platform, press and radio with an intensity and frequency that has reduced it to an incantation so that one begins to doubt whether this is not an unconscious device to assuage the guilt feelings of these politicians who suspect that they themselves have not been able to live up to this ideal or worse, that they have a deep unconscious drive against so doing. Freud taught us to be careful of the man who protesteth too much and Somerset Maugham has given us an excellent portrayal of the missionary who is so obsessed by the sin of a prostitute that he ultimately succumbs to her charms.

Mr. M. R. Masani recently stated that being a secular state did not imply that the state was against any religion but that it favoured all religions equally. If this is accepted how can one justify the use of obviously religious symbols like the deepak and the Kum Kum on state occasions especially when certain sections of the nation have strong feelings on this score?

To go further, just as the sight of animal flesh is anathema to vast sections of our people, so also is the sight of idols, images etc. to some

other sections. To introduce these symbols in textbooks, on whatever pretext, is bound to offend the susceptibilities of many people. To say that the symbols pertaining to these other communities are also contained in these same textbooks does nothing to assuage their outraged feelings.

The lack of opportunities for employment and advancement, often stated before independence and after as the cause of religious tensions does not seem to be as important as the feeling that can be generated over symbols. Man does not live by bread alone.

The question remains what has the Indian intellectual done to debate, if not fight, the introduction of religious symbols into the public life of a secular state. Or are we as emotionally involved and confused as the politician? (or are we being led by the nose by them?)

D. M. BASSA

The Reviews Editor,
QUEST

Dear Sir,

That so sympathetic a critic as Shri S. Natarajan has slightly misunderstood my views on the population problem would suggest that my own writings on the subject must be, at least partly, at fault. Let me, therefore, make it quite clear that I am in favour of family planning in countries like India. To quote from my offending article: "The existing stock of capital is insufficient (in countries like ours) to provide employment to the available labour force, and population growth is adding continuously to the load of unproductively employed and unemployed labour... Education for family planning, properly directed, should be helpful in more ways than one. It should not only relieve pressure of population on limited resources, but be an instrument of cultural change in tradition-oriented countries, inculcating on the people a less fatalistic and more self-reliant outlook." (*ESSAYS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT* pp. 38-9)

Yours sincerely,
Amlan Datta

QUEST

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

GEORGE E. GORDON CATLIN renowned political thinker, has been a distinguished friend of India for a considerable number of years.

ASHIN DAS GUPTA did his doctoral thesis at Cambridge University and now teaches history at Presidency College, Calcutta.

RAM JOSHI teaches at S.I.E.S. College, Bombay, and takes an active interest in politics.

MARTIN S. DWORKIN teaches at Teachers College, Columbia University, and has appeared in print in several languages in many countries.

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA, Spanish writer in exile, philosopher, historian, poet needs little introduction to readers in most parts of the world. He is 75 this year.

JAGANNATH PRASAD DAS holds a doctor's degree from London and teaches psychology at Utkal University.

MURLI DAS MELWANI is in business at Shillong and writes short story in his spare time.

HAROLD A. GOULD a cultural anthropologist, specially interested in Indian history, has been in this country for a number of years now.

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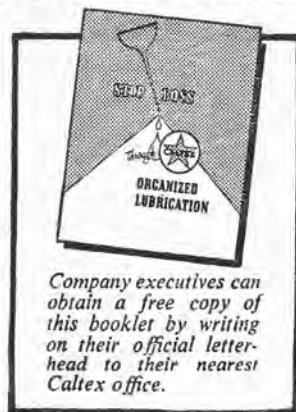
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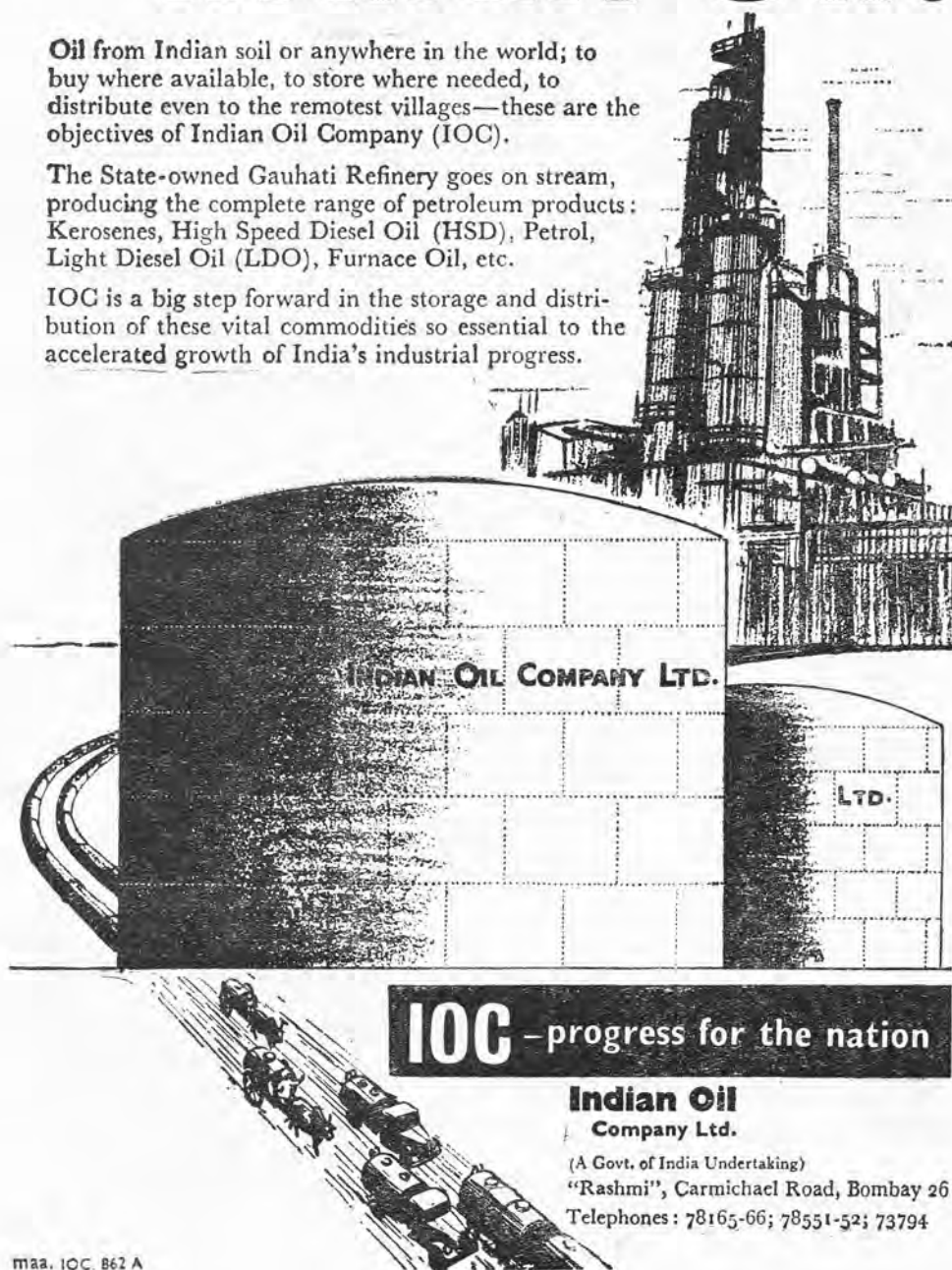
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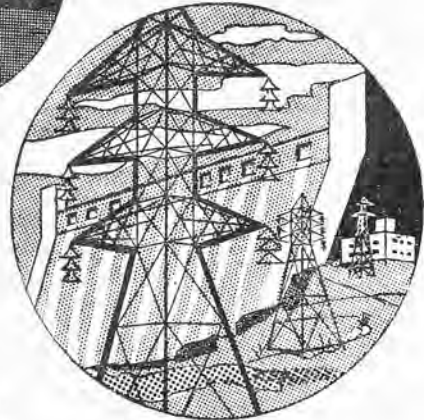
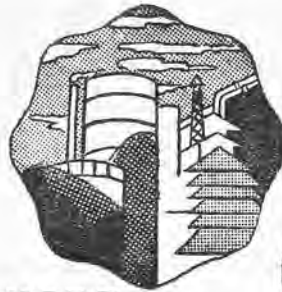


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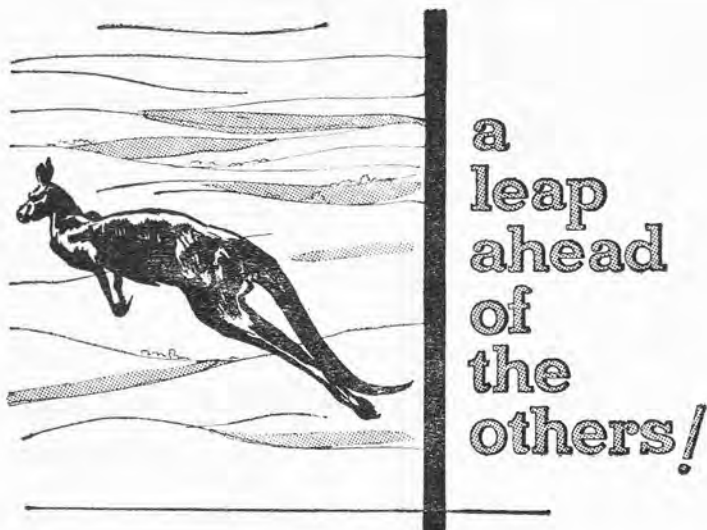
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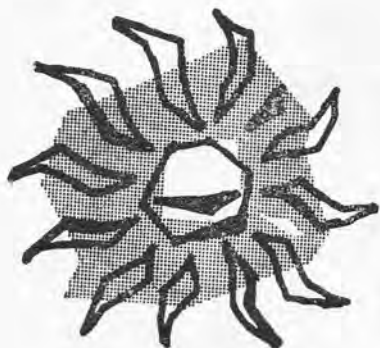
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Encounter

Edited by Stephen Spender and Melvin J. Lasky

Small wonder that ENCOUNTER has been called the finest review of its type in the world! Month after month it brings its readers outstanding new work (60,000 words in each issue) by leading international authors—Bertrand Russell, Lionel Trilling, W. H. Auden, Arthur Koestler, Joseph and Stewart Alsop, Raymond Aron, R. H. S. Crossman, Ignazio Silone, A. J. P. Taylor, to mention only a few.

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Moti of Jamshedpur

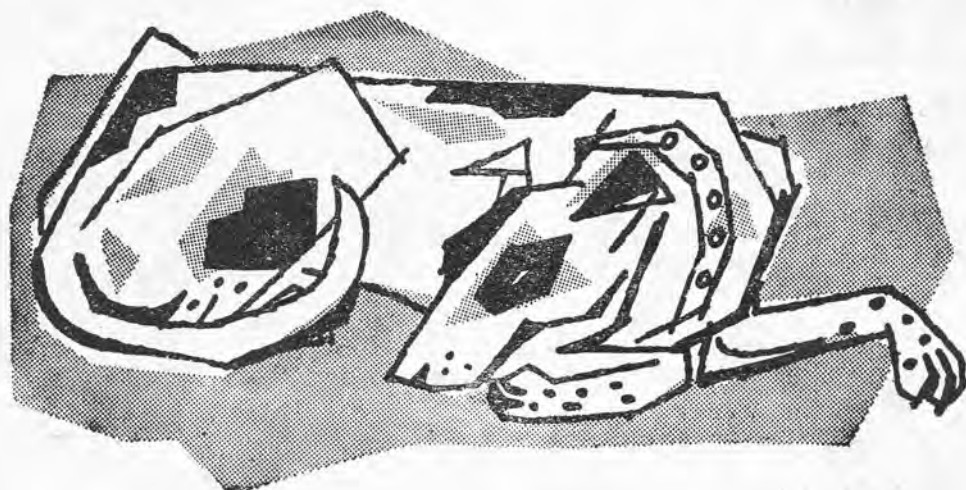
Not a show dog perhaps. But Moti doesn't worry about that. Nor about anything else, as long as he has enough to eat and the sun to bask in. Certainly he neither knows nor cares that he lives in Jamshedpur—a city devoted to producing one of today's most precious metals...steel.

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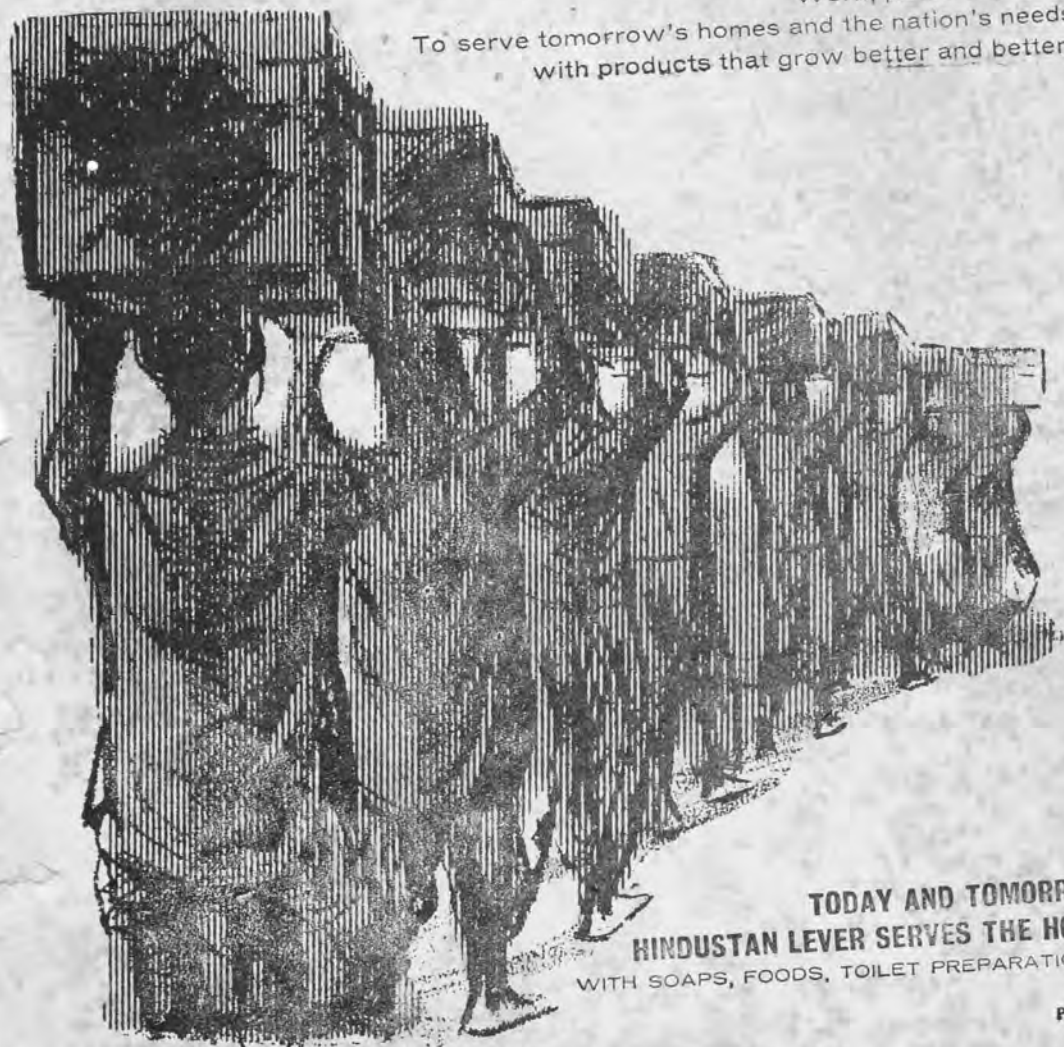
ADDRESS

THE DAY BREAKS BRIGHTER TOMORROW

BEARING TOMORROW'S JOY: the strength
in four hundred million limbs.
Today's work. Today's patience.
Burden borne, feet firmly on the ground.
Tomorrow... a little less of care, a little more of joy.

And for HINDUSTAN LEVER, too,
tomorrow begins today.
In the research laboratory, in the factory and office.
Work, patience, care.

To serve tomorrow's homes and the nation's needs
with products that grow better and better.



TODAY AND TOMORROW...
HINDUSTAN LEVER SERVES THE HOME
WITH SOAPS, FOODS, TOILET PREPARATIONS

PR. 35-X32



Bata

Bata

