

MOTHER INDIA

Managing Editor:
K. R. PODDAR

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

Editor:
K. D. SETHNA

"GREAT IS TRUTH AND IT SHALL PREVAIL"

ALTERNATE SATURDAYS

JULY 22 1950

VOL. II. NO. 12: FOUR ANNAS

CONTENTS

KOREAN QUESTIONS AND THINGS TO COME 1	THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT AND ITS EXPRESSION by the Hon'ble the Chief Justice M. C. Chagla 4
The Military Situation	THE CRIMSON EDGE (Poem) by Norman C. Dowsett 5
Aggression and the U.N.'s Rulings	THE MOTHER ON LOVE by Rishabhchand 6
America's Defence of Formosa	Æ—GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL by Diarmuid Russell 8
China in the U.N.O., Russia's Boycott and Nehru's Peace Move	A BRIEF INQUEST ON COMMUNISM by Chhotanarain 11
The Issue of Unification	LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS by K. G. 12
The Shape of the Future	
OF MICE AND MEN by "Cynic" 3	

KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME

The Military Situation

It would be foolish to underestimate the gravity of the situation in Korea. The story is one of continual falling back by the American forces. But it would be foolish also to consider this withdrawal an irreparable defeat. What else than a withdrawal can we expect when the Americans are outnumbered by 5 to 1 in manpower and 4 to 1 in armour? Whatever advantages in air they possess are greatly diminished by the bad weather. July is the month when Korea receives most of her quota of 40 inches of rain. And the rainfall impedes not only air sorties and accurate bombing but also naval bombardment and the bringing up of troops and tanks from Japan to the frontline which is quite a distance from the coast. Up to August 15 weather conditions will continue to be more or less uncertain and the same period of time may be said to be necessary for America to muster superior armour and manpower. Till then, achievement is to be judged by understanding General MacArthur's special strategy of withdrawal. He has to use every natural or artificial obstacle to slow down the enemy's advance and sell ground as dearly as possible. In the words of a military expert, the defending army's job "is not to defeat the enemy but to stick fast enough in successive positions to compel him to deploy for a full-scale attack. By the time that attack is mounted the main part of the rearguard should be five miles back occupying the next position. It is the hardest manoeuvre in war, for the battalion commander must keep his old positions firm for long enough to compel a full-dress attack and to provide the air force with good targets." The last phrase is important, for the Red troops have to be made to pay for their passage not so much to the ground troops opposite them as to the fighters and medium bombers. This strategy has to be repeated until the last line of resistance is reached round about Pusan, the main port for American landings. Here an area comparable in size to the Normandy beach-head held by General Montgomery six years ago must be kept safe. When this area is reached—most probably in the first week of August—the Northern army should be sufficiently bled and fatigued and enough American troops, tanks, anti-tank weapons and ammunition should be landed. In the meanwhile we have to look at the way MacArthur's strategy has been carried out and the way the Americans have given battle. As far as the weather has permitted, the fighting has been excellent on the whole and, under the circumstances, we may say that all signs point to a decisive turn of the tide in the near future. The falling back which so far has been inevitable is, in view of the various disparities, so little of a débacle that we should be the least inclined to defeatism.

Aggression and the U.N.'s Rulings

Defeatism, however, is not the only folly into which our minds may tend to fall at the moment. Some people are still talking as if any doubt remained on the issue of aggression. The very fact that the South has failed so miserably to stand up to the North's drive into southern territory and that this drive has been so efficient, with all limbs of the army in full activity and perfect co-ordination, and that the Americans have been found so unfortunately unprepared shows unmistakably the side on which aggression was planned and from which it was unleashed. Besides, there is the glaring fact that one-third of the southern army was on leave when the 38th Parallel was crossed at dawn on that fateful Sunday by the North. It is high time the infamy of northern aggression got faced by all of us as it is faced by our Prime Minister who, for all his usual suspicion of western powers and his desire not to offend the Russian bloc, can see no alternative to condemning the Communists in Korea as violators of the U.N. Charter. He is here in accord with 48 members of the U.N. against only two opposing votes. It is high time also we brushed aside Gromyko's contention that the U.N. resolution was illegal in the absence of a permanent member like

Russia. When Article 28 clearly demands that in no circumstance should the U. N.'s functioning either for or against a cause be hampered, it is impossible to see how voluntary absence can be taken as anything except abstention from voting. In point of fact, Russia's voluntary absence is itself a piece of illegality, because this Article definitely implies continual participation by all the members: the only non-participation accepted is by way of abstention from voting. Moreover, there is the stark inconsistency that several measures passed, like the present one, in Russia's voluntary absence were tacitly okayed by her: no charge of illegality was made against them. Illegality cannot suddenly come into being just because the present resolution does not suit the Kremlin.

America's Defence of Formosa

Some voices in India keep piping: "What about General MacArthur rushing to help Korea even before the second resolution of the U. N. called upon the members to give military aid?" Commonsense is surely at a low ebb in certain quarters. Both the U. N. Charter and international law permit military action as a defence measure—especially when, as in the case in question, such action is taken after a call by the U.N. to the aggressor to cease fire has been completely ignored. America's reversal of policy towards Formosa is also nothing to be criticised. Technically speaking, the status of Formosa is such as to leave room for a policy manoeuvre. Morally the island may be said to belong to China: legally it belongs to Japan until a peace treaty is signed with her. The right and the wrong, therefore, of the U.S.A.'s interference is not a matter of clear white or black: action here is to be justified or condemned according to the need of the situation. Every sound observer is aware that North Korea is only a pawn in the hands of Stalin and is part of a plan to carry Communism to the ends of the earth. Hence the situation at the moment does not permit Truman to let any further military move by Communism in East Asia or South-East Asia succeed. The morale of the Asian people would be greatly affected and America would suffer an undeserved slump in their esteem. Moreover, operations in Korea would be made more difficult by Communists in full occupation of a strategic island in the rear—particularly if by any chance Red China got involved in the Korean flare-up. And the British in Hongkong would certainly be rendered more uncomfortable. From every point of view the despatch of the Seventh Fleet to intercept the threatened invasion of Formosa by Mao is beyond blame. And here we have to remember that Truman has tried his best to be just and fair as between Mao and Chiang. He has asked the latter to stop all action against the Chinese mainland. The Nationalist blockade and bombing of Shanghai had as good as paralysed that important coastal city with the result that, as John Strohm remarks, production had been in a tailspin. To hold the balance between the two Chinese groups Truman has also turned down Chiang's offer of sending 33,000 seasoned troops to fight for South Korea and a small but efficient air force to help the American army—an offer whose acceptance would have substantially strengthened the U.S.A.'s hard-pressed front-lines. What Truman has done about Formosa is perfectly legitimate and honourable. Luckily it is most effective as well, for Red China has no sizable navy to speak of and the Seventh Fleet will render Formosa's "liberation" impossible.

China in the U.N.O., Russia's Boycott and Nehru's Peace Move

In connection with the reversal of American policy about this island we may note that it makes little difference to the question of Nationalist China's presence in the U.N.O. Formosa's ambiguous status provides no definite handle of logic to Chiang's enemies. Unfortunately, among these enemies India figures prominently and she is trying very hard to secure a majority vote against Chiang's representative both because she has recognised Mao and because she believes that with the admission of his delegate

KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME

Continued from page 1.

Russia will walk back into the U.N.O. and the prolonged drifting apart of the two blocs will end. But with Communist North Korea on the march, in cynical disregard of this international institution's orders, and the open sympathy by Mao for the aggressor, there is little chance of Mr. B. N. Rau succeeding.

Here it should be said that our delegate is working under a serious misapprehension of fundamentals. There has never been any legal or moral incongruity in the Chinese Nationalist representative sitting and voting in the Security Council. A grave charge is pending against Russia that in various ways she has set at nought all international agreements and violated the territorial integrity of Nationalist China and that as a consequence Mao is now in power. Unless this charge brought by the Nationalist Chinese representative with detail and document* is disproved, Mao can have no legally acceptable basis for his government. Russia has disdained to answer the accusation and neither India nor any other country that has granted recognition to Mao has suggested any line of defence. All this is over and above the moral question whether Mao's regime is not a ruthless dictatorship imposed on the people of China and constituting by its totalitarian politics and its suppression of freedom of mind a dire threat to civilised values in Asia. The prevarication committed by Mao in alliance with Stalin in the matter of Red Korea's aggression should have opened India's eyes to this threat. But a curious myopia persists. And there is added to the delusion about Red China the singular misconception that, if Mao's delegate is in the Security Council and Russia is back, peace in Korea will be in prospect. Russia has explicitly declared that in her eyes the whole process against Red Korea is illegal and that the U.N.O. should order the Americans to withdraw from South Korea instead of hampering the North's armed campaign of forcible unification. Since what she asks for is preposterous and the U.N.O. will never consent, there is at the moment hardly any possibility of peace through Russia's re-entry into the Security Council. Once we get this into our heads we shall assess correctly the ultimate value of Pandit Nehru's peace move.

Stalin's prompt welcome of our Prime Minister's appeal has no genuine meaning. It is due to the very reason for which America has rejected the move. The whole basis of the move is the unseating of Chiang's representative in the Security Council. But the Korean war never started because Mao's delegate had no seat. What sense can there be in mixing up the issue of peace with this utterly irrelevant point? To bring it in is simply to hustle the U.N.O. into embracing Mao's man: the bait of peace could prove so strong that the members might forgo all other considerations, however righteous. No wonder Stalin has blessed the project. But there is not a sign that he authentically wishes to talk peace. His mention of the necessity to hear representatives of the Korean people is obviously tricky. Who are the Korean people now? Half of South Korea is under the North's heel. So, unless the invaders withdraw behind the 38th Parallel, Stalin's puppets will represent three-fourths of Korea. *Tass* the official Soviet news agency, has already reported in a message from Pyongyang that elections to provincial, district and village councils will soon be held in South Korean areas "liberated by the national army." Plebiscites under a reign of terror will show all these areas "enthusiastic" about Communism. The real South will be either dumb or dead. And, as we know that Stalin does not favour the withdrawal on which peace essentially hangs, his reply is a hoax. The hoax is meant not only to waste the U.S.A.'s military effort but also to create everywhere the impression that Russia is eager for peace while America is bent on war. Naturally America has refused to be taken in; and the peace move has left us exactly where we were, with one additional danger—namely, that in the muddled minds of the common people who are anxious to snatch at peace Stalin's stock may shoot up.

The Issue of Unification

Russia will not seriously contemplate coming to terms in the Security Council unless North Korea is beaten in a short time, for then she will be convinced that international mandates cannot be flouted with impunity. Should the war drag on, she would be disposed to trot out the argument for unification in other parts of the world. The argument is pretty shoddy, but it has ensnared some unwary minds—especially in India. Actually the following question has been publicly asked in defence of the North's action: "Does anyone think that the Nehru Government was guilty of aggression when it ordered its troops to march into Hyderabad?" The assumptions behind the query are, first, that a war by any part of a country is valid if it is directed towards unification and, second, that South Korea is like Hyderabad and North Korea like the India of Nehru. Unification can have validity only if by it the wishes of the majority are made to prevail and a government in consonance with these wishes is set up. If 8,000,000 North Korean

Communists invade South Korea to compel 20,000,000 non-Communists to accept a Red Government all over the country, what we have is not a desire for unification but a will to regimentation. Every principle of democracy is violated. And if North Korea is justified, what is to prevent justification of Soviet Azerbaijan staging a *putsch* against Persia and of Bulgarian Macedonia executing a blitzkrieg against Yugoslavia and Greece? To drive the lesson nearer home, we should say that the correct analogy to Kim Il-sung attacking Hyderabad but Kasim Razvi attacking India. What sort of unification would it have been if the Razakars had successfully launched an armed offensive against the Indian Union? Even the question of unification arises only when a minority is acting the thorn in the majority's side. North Korea which is not a majority cannot even talk of attempting unification on its own terms. And the parallel with India's action against Hyderabad does not hold in the least. Nor are the circumstances similar. Hyderabad was tyranny-ridden and the bulk of the people were clamouring for redress: it is a Hindu-majority province whose population was eagerly seeking accession to India and was not only prevented from joining the Union but subjected to fanatical persecution by the Razakar clique which trampled on all constitutional relations with India and indulged in dangerous fire-eating.

The Shape of the Future

To return to our point: if the Korean war drags on and America is heavily committed Russia may engineer attempts at unification elsewhere too. Or if the argument for unification is wanting she may trump up some other plea. In short, she may take the next step in the Communist plan for world-conquest. Indeed her calculations about Korea have ganged agley in a certain sense, for she counted on an easy victory and never dreamt that the U.N. would act so promptly and decisively nor that Truman would go all out in support of the South. But if Truman cannot deal the North a swift crippling blow and somehow a large portion of American manpower is diverted to Korea and American resources strained by a protracted campaign, she may dare to turn the cold war into hot in other places. There are several danger spots at her disposal. Three we have already mentioned—Persia, Yugoslavia and Greece. There are three more—Germany, Austria and Tibet. To guess where the next conflagration may occur in case the Korean hostilities are not swiftly terminated, we must bear in mind one factor. Russia is not exactly ready for world war: she is still not up to the mark in atomic weapons. So she will endeavour to keep herself out and make her satellites do the dirty work. If Soviet Azerbaijan takes any initiative, Russia will be directly involved. If East Germany attempts a *coup* with her 90,000 fully equipped army camouflaged as People's Police, there could be a pretence of Germans fighting it out among themselves, but since Soviet Occupation troops are still in East Germany as American are in the western zone, the face of Stalin will be easily seen through the mask of the *Bereitschaften* and Russia will soon be in the soup. Austria, for several reasons, does not seem at present a likely point of departure. But Yugoslavia could very well be the theatre for the next act. Tito has long been Stalin's special *bête noire* because he spells internal danger to Russian Communism. He is an enemy within the gates, so to speak. His appeal to the nationalist sentiment of the satellite Communist states is most dangerous: the recent purges in eastern Europe are an index to the subtle spread of Titoism everywhere. Then there is Yugoslavia's geographical situation telling against Stalin's security. It is because Yugoslavia blocks the way to Greece that the Communist rebels failed in that country and a new endeavour to swallow it up is improbable. Albania is almost entirely ringed round by Yugoslav territory and depends on economic aid from Tito and therefore must sooner or later defect from Russia. Again, because of Tito, Stalin is baulked of passing beyond the south bank of the Danube to threaten Trieste and dominate the Adriatic. All this is galling in the extreme to the Kremlin. But the satellite states of Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania can easily be used to wreak vengeance on Tito. Reports of extensive preparations and troop-movements by them along the borders are daily streaming in. Yugoslavia, of course, has nearly half a million men under arms and she is one of the five European countries—Britain, Turkey, Greece and Spain are the other four—which have a resolute will to fight and are free from the infection of defeatism. But her armament is rather obsolete and her air force negligible. Although Russia will not gather her like a daisy, she cannot stand for long against a joint attack by her neighbours backed by Stalin's resources. In addition, Stalin knows that Yugoslavia is not a signatory to the Atlantic Pact and there may be some hesitation on the part of the European countries to go to her aid. He may even count on America thinking twice before committing herself with her hands already busy in Korea.

But he will be thoroughly in error. Truman will stand no nonsense. Still valid is the explicit assertion of the U.S.A. on January 5: "It is the policy of the U.S.A. to oppose aggression. That goes for Yugoslavia which is clearly threatened, if we are to listen not only to the words of Soviet propaganda but also to the official statements of high Soviet authorities such as Molotov. America is fully sympathetic to the efforts of Yugoslavia to

Continued on opposite page

* Item 68 of the AGENDA of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY, Fourth Session of the UNITED NATIONS: "Threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of China and to the peace of the Far East, resulting from Soviet violations of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 14 August, 1945 and Soviet violations of the Charter of the United Nations."

of MICE AND MEN

By "Cynic"

THAT UMBRELLA AGAIN

I am in the habit of having the most amazing dreams. On the advice of a friend, I consulted Dr. Freud. When I recounted to him all the dreams I had had lately, he murmured, "Extraordinary. Truth is stranger than fiction, no doubt, but your dream-fiction seems to be even stranger than truth." "Perhaps it is no fiction at all, doctor," I replied, "many a true word can be spoken in dream-jest, you know." He laughed and said, "We'll see. Now, the first thing for you to do is to keep a note-book. As soon as you wake up from sleep, write down in it all that has happened in your dreams, and bring it with you when you come again next week."

Since that time I have started keeping a notebook. I am reproducing below what I wrote in it this morning, because I know that many of my readers are interested in dream phenomena.

This is what I dreamt. I was lying down on the lawn of my garden, thinking of the news I had read in the papers, when suddenly from the sky an umbrella came flying to the ground. Then a figure slowly started coming from behind it. I at once jumped to my feet and greeted him, "Dr. Chamberlain, I presume. My name is Stanley. How do you do?" To my utter amazement the man turned out to be an Indian. He was dressed in white and had a Gandhi cap on. In his hands he held two envelopes which he started waving in the air as soon as he saw some yokels passing. He shouted at them, "PEACE IN OUR TIME, PEACE IN OUR TIME." They shouted back, "Tell it to the marines. We ain't as dumb as we look." I laughed and relaxed on the lawn again. Before I could understand what was happening, a number of children came out from behind the umbrella; obviously, they had been following the first figure. They started dancing and shouting,

"Three cheers for Uncle Joe,
Long live Uncle Mao,
They'll be in the Council now,
They'll be in the Council now."

The sight of these children gladdened my heart. They looked so happy, —and so innocent. I perceived Little Red Riding Hood in the background, getting ready for Uncle Wolfy Joe's repast. Then the children surrounded me and started dancing in a ring formation. To my great consternation I noticed that one child had a three days growth of beard on its face, and another had gone a little gray near the temples. It suddenly dawned on me that these were not really children, nor were they dwarfs; they were ordinary people who had had their physical and psychological development arrested at the age of eleven. No wonder they were singing such twaddle. I felt a great pity for these unfortunate ones. They soon passed away and I started thinking of real children, and of my own childhood days. I recited to myself those lines of Blake's:

"When the voices of children are heard on the green,
And whisperings are in the dale,
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
....."

Before I could finish, I was interrupted by a voice—"Monsieur, Monsieur." I got up at once, and saw a man approaching. He was dressed in clothes of eighteenth century France; behind him was another man, obviously his servant. He was carrying on his back a huge volume. "Monsieur", the man said, "let me introduce myself." "There is no need to," I replied, "you are Monsieur de Voltaire, and that is your famous Philosophical Dictionary." He laughed and said, "You are very sharp, Monsieur." "One has to be—in this cut-throat world," I replied. He came closer to me and said, "I require your help. I have finished my Dictionary, but only one word remains to be defined—Mahatma. You who have knowledge of Indian spiritual philosophy should be able to furnish me with a suitable definition." "Of course," I replied, "anything to oblige a cynic. The word *Mahatma* literally means a *great soul*—it is formed by combining the two words *Maha* and *Atman*. In the old days this word used to stand for a person who after attaining union with the Divine Reality refused to pass out of the world into its Transcendence, who declined to merge his individual divine essence into the Absolute, and instead chose to remain in the world to help his fellow-beings to attain to the divine consummation. Inwardly poised in a spiritual consciousness, he outwardly did the works of the eternal verities, Love, Truth and Righteousness. Of course, the important and basic thing about a Mahatma is his realisation of the Divine Reality, without which he remains just an unregenerate altruist, however good-hearted and noble he may be. But this definition is useless for you; I mean it has only a historical value, for, at present, a Mahatma is supposed to be one who makes long speeches on moral force, and comes out without invitation as a peacemaker when the descendants of Arjun are fighting the descendants of Duryodhan."

"What do you mean?" asked Voltaire.

"I was referring to the progressive and evolutionary forces fighting against the anarchic forces of God-denial which are at present trying to dominate the world."

"Ah! I can see that all Indians are not muddle-headed," chuckled Voltaire. "Thanks for the compliment," I replied, "but one does not have to be a sage to understand things which should be obvious even to a second-rate intelligence." Voltaire was about to reply when the dream faded away.

When I got up it was three in the morning. I switched on my table-lamp, jotted down all that had transpired in the dream for Dr. Freud's inspection, and went to sleep again.

KOREAN QUESTIONS and THINGS TO COME —Continued from opposite page

maintain her independence and freedom. America's determination to oppose aggression would apply even to guerilla tactics or infiltration if assisted from outside."

These brave and humanitarian words come like a clarion, lifting our hearts above dejection and alerting our minds to the greatest menace to human liberty the world has seen. The U.S.A. is ready to undertake the heaviest responsibilities for the sake of civilisation. Nowhere will the challenge of totalitarianism go unanswered. Not only on two fronts but on half a dozen she will fight. And she has the capacity to make the fight victorious. If Stalin imagines that Truman will be reined back from helping Yugoslavia because Korea is engaging his attention or that America will not come out on top everywhere, he will commit the most serious mistake of his life. And his mistake may be all the more perilous for himself because it is questionable whether America will not consider him to be directly involved if satellites so closely geared to Russian purposes put a match to the powder keg.

A diversionary adventure in Tibet by the Chinese Communists is also on the cards as the next move at Russia's inspiration. Eastern Tibet, bordering China, is the Achilles' heel to this northern neighbour of India's. The Panchen Lama who is the head of this part of the country is known to be Mao's henchman. But as long as the rest of Tibet holds out the day will be saved and there will be no danger to India either. The point is: Can the Tibetans resist the Chinese Reds? Ideologically they appear to be strong enough to reject the spurious promises of Marxism. Dr. Gokhale who was recently among them assures us in this matter. But ideological resistance is not everything: the Chinese Reds are not finicky about democratic principles, they care a hoot whether the Tibetan mind wants Communism or no. The only check on their unscrupulous ambition is India's attitude, with the weight of Britain no less than the U.S.A. behind it. India is willing to

concede Chinese suzerainty over Tibet but she insists that Tibet should be perfectly autonomous—that is, autonomous in fact and not merely in name. This insistence runs counter to Mao's designs and if he pays no heed to it he will certainly lose India's friendship. It is to be expected that he will be in no hurry to antagonise Nehru, especially now that the latter is at variance with him over the Korean crisis. But if the American campaign in Korea is long drawn out there will be the temptation to risk India's disfavour. Mao will miscalculate here, for Korea will not keep America from doing her duty by Tibet any more than it will restrain Britain from concretely and effectively expressing her resentment.

However, the miscalculation cannot be as great as it might if "finis" could quickly be written to the Korean story. Communism's original assumption that the U.N. would prove impotent and America would not risk a head-on clash with the invaders has proved wrong. The turn taken by events has sensibly perturbed the military pundits of both Moscow and Peking. The whole plan of swift triumphant thrusts at various key-points all over the old world has received a jolt from which it may never recover. But a patch-up is proposed on the new assumption that America will be occupied with Korea in a long bloody war. If even this assumption can be shattered and the G. I.'s roll back the North Koreans beyond the 38th Parallel within a short time by a massive attack both on land and in the air and ensure conditions that would make a second surprise impossible, then a straight hook will have gone home that will make Communism suddenly see stars and shake in its shoes wherever it catches sight of the star-spangled banner!

Have we grounds for hope that such a virtual K.O. can be connected with the aggressive jaw thrust across South Korea? Most certainly. Those who take at its face-value the bad news pouring in at present from day to day hardly realise the gigantic "crack" Truman will soon have at the drunken war-lord mentality of Stalin's Korean stooge.

THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT AND ITS EXPRESSION

BY THE HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE M. C. CHAGLA

This is the brilliant speech that inaugurated the Spring Lectures' Series at Poona for the present year. Although delivered some months ago it has not been reported everywhere in full. Its complete text is given below for our readers' consideration of views that have lost no part of their relevance at the moment.

It gives me very great pleasure to inaugurate the Spring Lectures' Series for the year 1950. Poona is the home of dialectics. It has produced men of great intellectual stature and it possesses an academic atmosphere in which scholarship can thrive. It is therefore but fit that such a place should hold a lecture series to which contributions have been made by the most distinguished sons and daughters of India. This series was started by Mr. Ranade, one of the greatest Judges our High Court ever had. He was not only a great jurist but he was a social reformer and a man of letters of high repute.

When I was asked to inaugurate this series this year, I realised the honour that was being done to me, but I hesitated a good deal before accepting that honour because I realised that I was unworthy of that honour. But I ultimately agreed because I felt that I might be able to say something useful on a subject which is of fundamental importance to the country and to its future destiny.

Our Constituent Assembly has met, has deliberated and has given to us a constitution. We are now a sovereign democratic republic. We are free from the foreign yoke and it lies entirely with us to mould and shape our future and to achieve whatever lies nearest to our heart's desire. Our country is not only sovereign, it is not only a republic; but most important of all it is a democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government or merely the trapping and an outward symbol, it is a philosophy of life. No mere constitution can make the working of democracy successful. In order to do so what we need is the democratic spirit, and it is only to the extent that our rulers and our people are infused with that spirit that democracy would succeed in our land.

Law-making and Law-abiding

What the democratic spirit considers as of the greatest significance is the importance of the individual. There must be a faith in the uniqueness of personality and there must be a constant readiness to permit everyone to experiment with his own life and to work his own way to salvation. The other equally important thing is the supremacy of the rule of law. From the highest to the lowest, whether he is a high born Brahmin or a Harijan, whether he is a Hindu or Muslim, he is governed by the same law, which makes no distinction between caste or creed, sex or community. The supremacy of the rule of law is only possible provided there is among the people an ingrained respect for law. A democratic people is essentially a law-abiding people. But in order that laws should be respected a great responsibility is cast upon the Legislature carefully to consider the nature and effect of the laws it passes. Our Legislatures, whether in the different States or in the Union are sovereign. Within the ambit of their powers they have full and untrammelled legislative capacity. But ultimately it is the party in power that

makes laws and in whom the final authority rests. It is therefore for that party to place limitations upon its own power and to be neither ruthless nor dictatorial in its exercise. It must see to it that every law that it passes, although it may do so notwithstanding the opposition of the minority on the floor of the Legislature, would have the acquiescence of that minority when it is placed on the statute book. It should only pass laws which are effective and which can be enforced. They should not be in conflict with the opinions so strongly held that they are likely to create a body of conscientious objectors. Nor must they flout the basic principles of human nature, so that disobedience to laws would be easier than obedience. On the other hand, there is an equally great responsibility on the subjects to obey the law. People have every right to criticise a proposed piece of legislation by every means open to them. In the press and on the platform they can agitate against it. They can intimate to the Government how strong the feelings are against it. But once a law is passed it is the bounden duty of the people to respect it and obey it. They have certainly the right to work for its repeal. But so long as that has not been brought about, the dissenting minority in the interest of democracy should be as loyal to the law as the majority which was instrumental in getting it passed.

It must not be overlooked that order and security of the State are based on obedience to the law. Public order would be impossible and security would be completely undermined if it was left to individuals to decide whether they should or should not obey and respect a particular law. I need hardly emphasise how essential order and security are to a nascent State and no country needs order and security more than ours. We have only recently come through the turmoils of partition and the troubles across the frontier are not yet at an end and within our own frontiers we have enemies who are waiting for disorder and disruption in order that they should seize the reins of power. I entirely agree that even in the midst of clash of arms or even where the most dire emergencies threaten the State, the principles of natural justice should not be silenced. Even laws divorced from principles of justice are laws in the technical sense, in the sense that they have received the imprimatur of the Legislature. But these are laws without the moral background which compel respect for them.

It would not be out of place certainly in the context of modern times to sound a note of warning against the danger of emergency legislation. Such legislation has always the tendency of by-passing the ordinary law and the ordinary tribunals of the land and it enables the executive to resort more and more to special and extraordinary powers. There is a further tendency for the emergency never to pass and the emergency legislation which owed its birth to

a temporary necessity becomes a permanent feature of the statute book. The executive can always see clouds on the horizon and every cloud is capable of bringing about a storm.

Checks on Absolute Power

Democracy proceeds on one fundamental axiom, that absolute power is corrupting and it should not be reposed in one body of men. Therefore a democratic system of Government always contains limitations upon absolute power. Politically we find that in a democratic country there is always an opposition which criticises the day to day administration of Government, which puts forward the opposite point of view and which is prepared when the time arrives to carry on the Government. Elections also are another limitation. Even the party in power has to depend for its power upon the votes of the people. The policy it has pursued while in authority has to be justified before the electors and a mandate has to be obtained for a continuation of its authority. Legally the limitations upon absolute power is the declaration of certain fundamental rights which are beyond the power of the legislature to effect and the separation of powers.

In England the Parliament is supreme. There is no law which it cannot enact. There is no right which it cannot destroy or impair. In our country it is our written constitution that is supreme. Any law which violates the fundamental rights is *ultra vires* of the legislature and void. In England every Act passed by Parliament is constitutional. Its constitutionality cannot be challenged; while in India every Act can be so challenged. It is this important feature of our Constitution which gives to the Judiciary its pre-eminent position. Every fundamental right which has been embodied in the Constitution is justiciable. It is for the Judges to say whether an Act is *ultra vires* or not, whether a fundamental right has been violated or not. The Judges are therefore the interpreters of the Constitution and in a sense the makers and moulders of the Constitution. It is by the spirit in which they will perform their task that the Constitution will take its ultimate shape and form.

It has been said that our Constitution gives fundamental rights with one hand and with the other hand takes them away, by circumscribing the rights by innumerable exceptions and provisos. That to my mind is a very facile criticism. Article 19 of our Constitution deals with right to freedom and it enumerates certain rights regarding individual freedom. These rights are freedom of speech and expression, freedom to assemble peaceably and without arms, freedom to form associations or unions, freedom to move freely throughout the territory of India, freedom to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India, freedom to acquire, hold and dispose of property and freedom to practise any profession, or to carry

on any occupation, trade or business. These are important and vital freedoms which lie at the very root of liberty. It is true that in the sub-clauses that follow limitations are placed upon these freedoms. With regard to freedom of speech and expression past and future laws are saved which relate to libel, slander, defamation, contempt of Court or any matter which offends against the decency or morality or which undermines the security of, or tends to overthrow, the State. It will be noticed that these limitations are objective in their nature and it is for the judiciary to decide whether the limitations conform to the objective standard laid down by the Constitution. Similarly the legislature is given the right to impose reasonable restrictions in the interests of public order on the right to assemble peaceably and without arms. Whether a restriction is reasonable or not is not left to the determination of the legislature or the executive but it is again an objective consideration which has got to be determined by the Court of law. Only such a restriction would be reasonable as the Court thinks is reasonable. Similarly the right to form associations or unions may be limited by reasonable restrictions in the interest of public order or morality. The right to move freely throughout the territory of India, to reside and settle in any part of territory of India and to acquire, hold and dispose of property can all be limited by reasonable restrictions in the interests of the general public or for the protection of the interests of any Scheduled Tribe. Similarly, the right to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business, may be cut down by reasonable restrictions in the interests of the general public. It will be realised therefore that the Constitution has not left it to the party in power in the legislature or to the caprice of the executive to limit, control or impair any fundamental right. Any limitation of a fundamental right has to be justified by the legislature before a Court of law. These are indeed wide powers given to the Courts of law under the Constitution.

Similar powers are given to the Supreme Court in America and it is a matter of history that the Supreme Court has used these powers in such a manner as to revolutionise the American Constitution. The American Constitution can only be altered by amendments effected in the manner laid down under the Constitution. The framers of the American Constitution never contemplated any other mode by which the American Constitution could be altered. But the Supreme Court by the manner in which it has interpreted the Constitution has brought about radical changes in the Constitution. It has brought about what has been termed nationalization, by transferring power from the States to the Congress and it has practically made the President of the American Republic the supreme authority in the land, a consummation which was never dreamt of by

THE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT AND ITS EXPRESSION—Continued from opposite page.

the men who drafted the American Constitution. It has also given the widest interpretation to the famous clause in the fifth amendment that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law. This interpretation has given the right to the Supreme Court to test the validity of every law passed and to declare it to be *ultra vires* if in its opinion the law is unreasonable or arbitrary. The framers of our Constitution advisedly did not incorporate a similar provision in our Constitution. What article 21 says is that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. What the difference is between "due process of law" and "according to procedure established by law" our own Supreme Court is busy considering and it is not for me to hazard an opinion.* The powers of the American Supreme Court are so wide and immense that one famous Judge observed that there is no restraint upon the Supreme Court except self restraint.

I do not suggest for a moment that our Supreme Court will follow on the same lines as its counterpart in the United States. We have always taken the view that Judges are not the makers of policy and they have no concern with policy. Nor have the Judges arrogated to themselves the rights of a third chamber which would veto legislation passed by a duly constituted legislature of the country. The duty of the judges is loyally to interpret the Constitution. But however loyal the Judges may be to the written word of the Constitution, judicial interpretation must play a very big part in every democratic constitution, and it must necessarily act as a corrective to the legislature and the executive.

The other check on absolute power is the separation of the functions and powers of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. The legislature makes the law, the executive carries it out and the judiciary interprets it. It is absolutely essential to keep this separation intact, and to keep the line that demarcates it clear and distinct. The tendency in the modern State is to make the executive all supreme. It trespasses both upon the power of the legislature and of the judiciary. Human affairs are becoming so complex that the legislature more and more merely enunciates the general principle as embodied in the law that it passes and leaves the details to be filled in by the executive by notifications, rules, orders etc. The average and uninitiated person does not realise to what a large extent Government makes law and performs the function of the legislature. To a certain extent it may be necessary that Government officers should perform this function, but it is equally essential that the legislature should keep a vigilant eye on these essays of the executive in law making.

Executive Officers and Judicial Functions

The more dangerous tendency of our times is to vest the executive officers with judicial functions. The separation of powers to which I have referred makes it incumbent that rights should be determined and liabilities imposed by the judiciary on a proper interpretation of the

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The decision has now been given.

laws. If it was left to the executive to interpret the laws which they have to carry out, the most important democratic corrective to the power of the executive would be lost. The best of executive officers is the instrument of a policy. He has to administer the country in pursuance of that policy and if he sits as a judicial officer to determine the rights of the subject under the law, it is impossible to believe that his decision would be completely divorced from that policy. On the other hand the Judge has no policy to carry out. He is only concerned with the law as he finds it and his business is to interpret it and to give effect to it. The dangerous tendency I speak of can be seen from the powers given to revenue tribunals to decide important questions and oust the jurisdiction of the Courts. Even where such bodies have to be set up, it is necessary that a final right of appeal should be given to the Civil Court so that ultimately the subject can obtain a judicial decision. It has often been said that there are administrative tribunals in France and they have worked very well. But as has been pointed out by well-known authorities in England, especially by Allen in his *Bureaucracy Triumphant*, the constitution of administrative tribunals without there being a proper administrative law undermines the rule of law which is the very foundation of a democratic Government. In France administrative law has grown with the centuries and administrative tribunals function on the principle that the State is an honest man and administrative law is administered more for the benefit of the subject than of the State. I need hardly point out that there is no such thing as administrative law in this country. Therefore, a situation is developing here by which Civil Courts are being deprived of their powers and the subject is left at the mercy of administrative tribunals without there being any special body of law to help him if he wants to assert his rights against the State.

The Line Between Law and Liberty

One of the most difficult aspects of the subject is the line that must be drawn between law and liberty. Man prizes his liberty more than anything else in the world. Every man is unique, unique in his individuality and personality and he wants scope for the development of that unique individuality and personality. He wants to think his own thoughts, dream his own dreams and tread his own path. The main function of a democratic form of Government is to safeguard liberty. But there is an age-old conflict between the State and the Individual, between law and liberty, between security and freedom. Where is the line to be drawn? To what extent is the State justified in controlling or curtailing individual liberty?

The basic principle I would suggest is that the State is not concerned with individual morals or sin. These are matters of individual conscience and they must be settled and determined between the individual and his creator. Every man must make his own peace with his God in his own way. But the State is concerned with the good of society. It is interested in the difference between what is social and what is anti-social. Liberty must be controlled in the interest of so-

ciety, but the social interest must be overpowering which would justify the impairment of individual liberty. Social interests are not the interests or prejudices of the majority, for even the liberty of a single individual is precious and must be safeguarded against the violent opposition of an overpowering majority. The burden must always be upon those who make encroachments upon liberty to justify them. Liberty can never be on the defensive; it is authority that must always be prepared to be challenged.

It may be said that the final objective of law is to make society perfect and to bring about social happiness. Men must be prepared to sacrifice their individual liberty for these glorious ends. But for nothing short of this, for no other consideration can liberty be called upon to make a sacrifice.

I am not suggesting a policy of *laissez faire* on the part of the State. That doctrine has become archaic and must be consigned to the limbo of worn-out ideas. Our State must not merely be a Police State; it must be a Welfare State. It must actively work for the welfare and betterment of the citizens. But the permanent welfare of the citizen can never be advanced by denying to him a choice of the path he will follow in the pursuit of happiness. The quality that there is in individual choice and personal experience is completely absent in a decision that is superimposed from above. The welfare of society as a whole that the State must aim at must not be brought about by a denial of individual liberty. Liberty must only be controlled to the extent that its exercise becomes anti-social or undermines the security of the State.

Scope for the Critical Spirit

The right to express opinion, however critical it may be of government or of society as constituted, is one of the most fundamental rights of the individual in a democratic form of government. This right may take the shape of the spoken or the written word and it may be expressed individually or in association. Democracy can only truly function when there is full scope for the critical spirit, because a Democratic Government never acts unless it has understood and appreciated the different aspects of a question or a problem. A facile concurrence with the policy of the rulers is not necessarily a sign of patriotism or loyalty. It more often betrays a lack of independence of thought and expression and thus the drying up of the very springs

which should perpetually supply vigour and force to democracy and keep it healthy and strong. The question as to how far independence of opinion should be tolerated is by no means easy to decide. If security of the State is of paramount consideration, then opinion which is subversive or likely to undermine the safety of the state may not be permitted a free and unrestricted circulation. But law-makers should always remember that suppression of opinion is not necessarily its disappearance. Such opinion has a tendency to go underground and to be held more fanatically and in larger numbers. To Rome, Christian opinion was highly dangerous to the might and majesty of the Empire. Its attempted suppression only resulted in Christianity becoming a world religion. It may be said that this was so because Christianity represented the truth. But who shall say among the opinions current today which possesses the genuine and authentic hallmark and which is merely spurious and a snare for the unwary? It is only the verdict of history that finally settles the issue and it would be audacious if not impertinent to anticipate that verdict.*

There are two real safeguards that liberty has. One lies in the fact that the validity of an executive act can be challenged in a Court of law. The other must lie in the eternal vigilance that the public must show in preventing executive or legislative encroachment upon liberty. It is a mistake to think that if the liberty of an individual or of a section of the people is sacrificed the majority is unaffected. Every time there is a trespass upon the citadel of freedom its very foundation is weakened and more and more such trespasses are tolerated the weaker becomes the whole edifice till one day it collapses giving place to dictatorship or fascism and democracy lies in ruins.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: It may be remarked that if democracy with its insistence on the liberty and importance of the individual is eminently desirable, then the opinion which denies this liberty and importance and which puts in its place a totalitarian collectivist State functioning under an absolute dictatorship cannot be considered likely to bear "the genuine and authentic hall-mark." For, such an opinion would oppose the Government never for the sake of the individual's liberty and importance but only for the overthrow of the very essence of the democratic ideal. In that case, we do not have to wait for the verdict of history: even now we should know that this kind of State would be anti-progressive.

The Crimson Edge

A hand lies on the crimson edge of mind
Like a dark blue and overarching sky,
Across which streams the cloud-wrack of the blind
Mass of humanity—who live to die.
No yearned-for circumstance or purpose gleams
In the dull ignorance of their vapid lives.
No beauty finds response—they dream no dreams
For which the higher mortal ever strives;
And yet have claim to human heritage:
For all do bear within a jewel seed,
The passport which allows, from age to age,
Each soul to journey to its farthest need.
Upon the crimson edge a moment-light
Flickers and flames, and then, is lost to sight.

NORMAN C. DOWSETT

THE MOTHER

By RISHA

There is nothing in the art and literature of the world so moving, so inspiring and so exalting as the expression of man's love for the Divine. The soul's beauty and sweetness are, as it were, distilled into the love-lyrics of the mystics, and no human relation has ever reached the depth, the amplitude, the consuming intensity of passion which characterise the relation between the human soul and its eternal Beloved. Life becomes a Paradise, and even its crosses are transmuted into crowns by the magic of this love. Poverty, starvation, suffering, slander, persecution, all tend but to feed the soul's sacred fire of love which burns brighter and brighter as it leaps up towards its sempiternal source. The incredible sacrifices that love makes with a beaming smile of unstinted joy, the unflinching and clear-sighted faith and trust that it exhibits in the midst of defeat and desolation should be evidence enough even to a sceptic and a materialist of the reality of its passion and the truth of its spiritual vision. Even a half-awakening of this love elicits the divine qualities of tenderness, compassion, forgiveness and forbearance, patience and endurance, equality and selflessness which nothing else in life can inspire and induce to an equal extent. No materialist creed can ever hope to make out of common clay a St. Paul or a St. Francis, a Tulsidas or a Suso. The power that produces this miracle is no illusion or fiction; rather it is a pitiable self-delusion in the modern man, enclosed in the dim cell of his reason, to deny the eternal Fount above and swear by the temporal waters on which he so helplessly floats.

Psychic Love

The most sincere and poignant expression of love for the Divine is essentially psychic. It is the soul in man that alone can pierce through the veil of appearances and deliver itself to the Divine with the unreserved self-abandon of an absolute love. Neither the mind nor the surface heart of fugitive emotions can have that passionate seeking and aspiration, that self-effacing surrender which we find in a Mirabai or a St. Catherine of Genoa. The hungering physical, the craving vital, the straining and clinging emotional and the groping mental being of man are constitutionally incapable of concentrating on the Divine and making Him the sole object of their pursuit, unless the soul has awakened and infused its fire-passion into them. The soul is made of love and joy, and it is not by any effort or outer influence, but by an innate, spontaneous urge that it turns to the Divine and offers itself to Him. It is the central being in man, embodying the central truth and purpose of his existence—the union with and the manifestation of the Divine in Matter. But this truth and purpose are realised by love and by nothing else—love which is, in Dante's words,

*The increate perpetual thirst that draws
Towards the realms of God's own form . . .*
(Paradiso, Canto 1)

In some of the Prayers and Meditations of the Mother this psychic love finds an exquisitely sweet and melting expression:

"Like a flame that burns in silence, like a perfume that rises straight upward without wavering, my love goes to Thee; and like the child who does not reason and has no care, I trust myself to Thee that Thy Will may be done, that Thy Light may manifest, Thy Peace radiate, Thy Love cover the world. When Thou wilt I shall be in Thee, Thyself, and there shall be no more any distinction; I await that blessed hour without impatience of any kind, letting myself flow irresistibly toward it as a peaceful stream flows toward the boundless ocean."
(Prayers & Meditations—P. 8)

"O my divine Master, my love aspires after Thee more intensely than ever; let me be Thy Living Love in the world and nothing but that! May all egoism, all limitations, all obscurity disappear; may my consciousness be identified with Thy consciousness, so that Thou alone mayst be the will acting through this fragile and transient instrument.

"O my sweet Master, with what an ardour my love aspires for Thee!

"Grant that I may be only Thy divine Love, and that in everything this Love may awake powerful and victorious.

"Let me be like an immense mantle of love enveloping the whole earth, penetrating all hearts, murmuring to every ear Thy divine message of hope and peace . . ."
(Ibid. P. 106)

Though we have cited these two Prayers as an illustration of the psychic love, we can already discern in them something transcending it, some wider, mightier, sovereign Love occupying the Mother's consciousness,

shaping, stimulating and transmuting her psychic love into its own image and pouring out upon the world to redeem and illumine it. Let us quote another Prayer in which this process of dynamic union between the psychic love and the Divine's Love is more elaborately depicted:—

"O Lord, Thou of whom I would be constantly conscious and whom I would realise in the smallest cells of my being, Thou whom I would know as myself and see manifested in all things, Thou who art the sole reality, the sole reason and the sole aim of existence, grant that my love for Thee may go on increasing incessantly, so that I may become all love, Thy very Love, and that being Thy Love, I may unite integrally with Thee. May this love become more and more intense, complete, luminous, powerful; may this love be an irresistible élan towards Thee, an invincible means to manifest Thee. May all in this being become pure love profound, disinterested, divine from the unfathomable depths to the outermost substance. May the God in form who is manifesting in this aggregate be wholly moulded of Thy complete and sublime Love, that Love which is at once the source and the realisation of all knowledge; may the thought be clarified, classified, enlightened, transformed by Thy Love; may all the forces of my life, solely penetrated and moulded by Thy Love, become irresistible purity and constant energy, power and rectitude, . . . and may this body, becoming a burning brazier, radiate Thy divine, impersonal, sublime and calm Love through all its pores. . . . May the brain be reconstituted by Thy Love. Finally, may Thy Love overflow, inundate, penetrate, transfigure, regenerate, animate everything with the power, splendour, sweetness and force which are its very nature. In Thy Love is peace, in Thy Love is joy, in Thy Love is the sovereign lever of work for Thy servitor.

"Thy Love is vaster than the universe and more enduring than the ages; it is infinite and eternal, it is Thyself. And it is Thyself that I would be and that I am, since such is Thy Law and such Thy Will."

(Ibid. Pp. 119/120)

This important Prayer foreshadows in some detail the working of the divine Love in the Mother's being for enlightening and transforming her thought, reconstituting her brain, moulding her life-forces and making her body radiate "Thy divine, impersonal, sublime and calm Love through all its pores." The working continues, the transition is effected and the Sun of the divine Love blazes forth at last against a throbbing, incandescent background of a pure psychic consciousness. This rapturous union of the two loves, the psychic and the divine, is beautifully brought out in the Prayer of 31st May, 1914 (P. 127).

"If it is a sweetness to be Thy divine Love at work in the world, it is as great a sweetness to be the aspiration which rises towards that Love. And to be able to change thus, to be successively, almost simultaneously, that which receives and that which gives, that which transfigures and that which is transfigured, to be identified with the sorrowful darkness as with the all-powerful splendour, and, in this double identification, to discover the secret of Thy sovereign oneness, is it not a way of expressing, of fulfilling Thy supreme Will?"

Divine Love

What is Divine Love? What is it in essence and in manifestation? Can a human being incarnate it in its purity and radiate it on the world? Does it consist only of delight and sweetness, or is it also a Force? What is its proper function in the material world?

Describing Divine Love, the Mother says, "Love is a supreme force which the Eternal Consciousness sent down from itself into an obscure and darkened world that it might bring back that world and its beings to the Divine. The material world in its darkness and ignorance had forgotten the Divine. Love came into the darkness; it awakened all that lay there asleep; it whispered, opening the ears that were sealed, 'There is something that is worth waking to, worth living for, and it is love!' And with the awakening to love there entered into the world the possibility of coming back to the Divine. The creation moves upward through love towards the Divine and in answer there leans downward to meet the creation the Divine Love and Grace. Love cannot exist in its pure beauty, love cannot put on its native power and intense joy of fullness until there is this interchange, this fusion of Love from the Divine to the creation and from the creation to the Divine. This world was a world of dead matter, till Divine Love descended into it and awakened it to life. Ever since it has gone in search of this divine source of life, but it has taken in its search every kind of wrong turn and mistaken way, it has wandered hither and thither in the dark. The mass of this creation has moved on its road like the blind seeking for the unknown, seeking but ignorant of what it sought.

R O N L O V E

BHCHAND

The maximum it has reached is what seems to human beings love in its highest form, its purest and most disinterested kind, like the love of the mother for the child. This human movement of love is secretly seeking for something else than what it has yet found; but it does not know where to find it, it does not even know what it is. The moment man's consciousness awakens to the divine Love, pure, independent of all manifestation in human forms, he knows for what his heart has all the time been truly longing. That is the beginning of the soul's aspiration, that brings the awakening of the consciousness and its yearning for union with the Divine. All the forms that are of the ignorance, all the deformations it has imposed must from that moment fade and disappear and give place to one single movement of the creation answering to the Divine Love by its love for the Divine. Once the creation is conscious, awakened, opened to love for the Divine, the Divine Love pours itself without limit back into the creation. The circle of the movement turns back upon itself and the ends meet; there is the joining of the extremes, supreme Spirit and manifesting Matter, and their divine union becomes constant and complete."

(*Words of the Mother—P. 111-113*)

This long paragraph—is it not rather short, considering the great delivering knowledge it imparts in its pregnant words?—answers almost all the questions we have put to ourselves. Love is not only joy and sweetness, but a supreme, probably the supreme, Force of the eternal Consciousness. Its function is to release the submerged Spirit in Matter and carry it back to its infinity, not for extinction or immersion, but for a revelation of divine splendours in creation. We shall understand this better if we go a little deeper to glimpse the origin and essence of love. The primal principle of creation is delight, Ananda, from which everything in creation is derived. Ananda is the first sheath, *kosha*, in which the Spirit clothes itself for individual manifestation. It is at once the womb of the universe and its eternal sap and sustenance. Out of this essential delight of the eternal Existent, Love emerges, the first-born of the delight. It is the delight itself, but with a significant qualification: it is a seeking and uniting delight. It seeks, discovers and unites God's multiple self-representations; it is the one principle that makes for the infinite interrelations of the universe. A beatific blossom of essential identity, it is the one all-pervading cohesive principle in the midst of the teeming diversities and discords of the universal forms. But for Love the world would have gone to pieces, its relativities clashing and colliding and its magnificent planetary systems, marvels of harmony and rhythm, disintegrating in a dance macabre. Speaking on this cohesive aspect of Love, the Mother says:

"Love is nothing else than the tie which unites and holds together all the flowers of Thy divine bouquet. It is a role unobtrusive, modest, not recognised; a role essentially unselfish, which, only in this impersonality, can find all its utility.

"It is because I become more and more this tie, this link, assembling the scattered fragments of Thy consciousness and enabling those fragments, by grouping them, to reconstitute better and better Thy consciousness, at once single and multiple, that it has been possible for me to see clearly what love is in the play of the universal forces, what is its place and its mission. It is not an end in itself, but a supreme means. Active everywhere and between everything, everywhere it is veiled by that very thing which it unites, and which, while undergoing its effects, sometimes does not even know of its presence."

(*Prayers & Meditations—P. 270*)

If we can step aside in consciousness, be it even for a moment, from the stupendous whirl of the cosmic forces, we shall be able all the better to study the role Love plays in the world of multiplicity. A conscious, eternal, universal Force, it moves amongst the divisions, differences and disparities of life, combining, co-ordinating, harmonising the conflicting elements, seeking for the beings who are ready to receive it into themselves, upholding the world from disintegration and destruction and leading the march of Time to the Timeless. "Love does not manifest in human beings alone; it is everywhere. Its movement is there in plants, perhaps in the very stones; in the animals it is easy to detect its presence. All the deformations of this great and divine Power come from the obscurity and ignorance and selfishness of the limited instruments. Love, the eternal Force, has no clinging, no desire, no hunger for possession, no self-regarding attachment; it is, in its pure movement, the seeking for union of the self with the Divine, a seeking absolute and regardless of all other things. Love divine gives itself and asks for nothing."

(*Words of the Mother 4th Edit. P. 105*).

Divine Love can be incarnated in a human being if psychic love has cleared the whole consciousness and nature of all selfish distortions and the individual has opened wide—receptively wide—to its mighty influx. Often it is seen partially and temporarily occupying the being of an indi-

vidual and working through it; it retires as soon as egoism or the unredeemed obscurities of the nature re-assert themselves. Except in a few extremely rare cases, it has not been possible to house this "guest of the marvellous hour" permanently in a human body. Even a most developed psychic love leading a purified heart and mind may not be able to incarnate divine Love so long as the body and the general physical consciousness have not been radically converted by the conquest and illumination of the sub-conscious which exerts such a fundamental sway over them. It is only a completely psychocised human nature upon which divine Love can take its stand and base its operations in the material world.

Human Love

A derivative of divine Love, human love is dwarfed and distorted in the ignorance of man's nature. It is infected with desire, clouded by mental ideas and darkened and weighted down by the dross of the physical being. It has become an inconstant, hectic hunger, clamouring for possession and exclusive enjoyment; giving, but only to receive; insisting on its demands and receding if there is no requital. It has degenerated into a barter, an unabashed shop-keeping and bears little trace of its universal origin. Even at its best, it has a short-lived or intermittent intensity, is crossed or thwarted by the contrary elements of nature and nipped by the frosts of life. But whenever it survives these assaults and grows into its full stature, it betrays something of its divine birth and shines like a star over the grey fields of earthly existence. However brief it may be, it is one of the most beautiful movements of life. But "if the movement does not last, it is because it is not conscious of its own aim and seeking; it has not the knowledge that it is not the union of one being with another that it is seeking after, but the union of all beings with the Divine."

The Mother thus indicates the issue out of the cramping intensity of human love, the point of release. Love has not to be killed: a loveless life is a dreary desert, arid and infertile. Love has to cure itself of desire and soar above attachment; it should be a bond of union between the individual and the Divine, and through the Divine between the individual and all beings. It has to transcend all personal limits and widen itself into infinity and impersonality. What it has really been seeking after is not any particular finite form of a fugitive duration, a sparkling bubble on the moving ocean of Time, but the Timeless in time, the Archetype of all forms, the eternal and transcendent one who beams and beckons in and through all forms. He is everywhere, embodied in all things and all beings, and to be united with Him in them all, not abolishing the awareness of but embracing and enjoying Him in all phenomenal distinctions, is the inmost urge of love. The discontent and the persistent sense of insecurity, disappointment and disillusion only point to the intrinsic infinity of its seeking which no finite, perishable form can ever fulfil. It is only the Infinite that can fulfil it and it is the Infinite, the infinite Being or Purusha whom love has been seeking in the ignorance of the terrestrial nature. The awakening of man's consciousness to this truth of love is the end of the night of his ignorant quest and the dawn of a new life of growing light, happiness and harmony.

Love the Victor

The sole business of human life is to strive to rise superior to the witchery of the sense and the importunities of desires and evolve the psychic love to such an extent that it pervades and possesses the whole being and makes it a single consecration and appeal to the Love of the Divine. This appeal is echoed in the Mother's Prayer of 27th August, 1914:

"To be the divine Love, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being—it is for this I cry to Thee, O Lord. Let me be consumed with this Love divine, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being! Transmute me into that burning brazier, so that all the atmosphere of the earth may be purified with its flame.

"O, to be Thy Love infinitely!"

When the entire being has become one psychic flame, pure and intense, the divine Love descends and unites with it and carries on with a victorious might its work of the transfiguration of the earth-consciousness. It is a long and extremely difficult work involving a dive into the sub-terrestrial bases of life and a deadly fight with the ageless forces of ignorance and inconscience. But the Force that has released the Spirit from the cavern of "supreme obscurity" can and will transform that cavern into an illuminated temple and instal the Spirit there as the undisputed sovereign of the material world. Love the initiator of evolution will consummate its mission of divine manifestation in Matter as Love the Victor.

Æ — GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

By DIARMUID RUSSELL

A man like Æ does not happen frequently anywhere: much more is he a rarity in the modern west. On the 17th of this month falls the fifteenth anniversary of his death. Most appropriate to the occasion is the intimate and vivid sketch below of the man and his all-round development with its centre in practical mysticism. The author is Æ's own son and the reminiscences first appeared some years ago in America in an issue of "Modern Reading," to which our acknowledgements are due.

In his home life Æ was not what one would call a domestic man. Because of his many activities, we tactfully understood that he was not to be bothered with domestic details. One of the family stories about my early days relates how I once answered the door. When a visitor inquired for "Mr. Russell, your father?" I first looked puzzled and then brightened up to say, "Oh! You mean George. He's not my father. He just lives here."

This might suggest that I suffered from lack of attention, but in fact I had a happier life than most children. My father and I were each glad to be allowed to go our separate ways, and our relations were confined to his dispensing my allowance and to my cleaning his palettes for a small sum and fetching his Sunday papers. So for most of my childhood he was little more than a benign, bearded figure, kindly but rather remote. Children, I think, take parents for granted; and though I had vaguely gathered that my father was a little out of the usual run of parents, I had put this fact down to his beard. At that time not many men had beards, and though there might have been other things to distinguish him from other men, a beard was a noticeable fact and a difference that a child could understand.

Later on in life, for a period of three years, I acted as his assistant on the *Irish Statesman*, of which he was editor. The office of the *Statesman* was a pleasant place, a large airy room in one of those high-ceilinged Georgian houses which surround so many Dublin squares. The walls were covered with what looked like brown wrapping paper, and on these walls Father had painted scenes of trees and glades with human beings and fairies. It was, indeed, the way he saw life, the way he was himself, a mixture of realistic hardheadedness and mysticism that must have puzzled many people. Incidentally his pen name "Æ" came about because of his illegible handwriting; a printer could not make out the pen name "Æon" attached to an article, and printed as much as he could make out—the first two letters.

In this room was a desk so covered with piles of old letters and other documents that, in order to see Æ, visitors had to circle around to the side. I myself was quietly obscured by an ancient roll-top desk, and from this niche was able to listen to conversations and to become acquainted with the innumerable sides of Father's character as represented by the varied people who came to see him—farmers, clergymen, economists, artists, writers, Hindu mystics, young poets with their first verses. It was surprising that he managed to do any work, and it was only his remarkable powers of concentration that allowed him to bear the many interruptions patiently. Often an editorial might be interrupted half a dozen times, and after each interruption he would turn to writing again without hesitation, his mind having completely switched away from the subjects he might have been discussing—co-operation, poetry, painting, or mysticism, in all of which he had a wide knowledge.

It is not because he was my father or because of his activities that I think of him as being more memorable than anyone else I have known. But he possessed, more than any other person I have met, an air of spiritual power, an emanation of sweetness and tenderness that was almost as perceptible as the light from a lamp—and as hard to describe. Our language is ill-equipped to say what the essence of a man is, rather than what he does or looks like. But all who met him were affected by it. Although Father's views on religion would not have been accepted by any of the churches, it was a good Catholic who remarked of him, "The peace of God which passeth understanding lies all about him," and this is perhaps as good a way as any to describe his personality.

Neither his education nor his parents were responsible for his character. He was himself as much his own creation as his poems or his paintings. He was always saying, "You become what you contemplate," or in another form, "you become nobly like what you love and ignobly like what you hate." As he himself spent much of his time studying the religious literatures of the world, and as these, above all writings, exalt what is noblest and best in man, it is perhaps natural he should have taken on some of these characteristics. Whether by act of will or unconsciously, he became like what he admired.

Spiritually-minded people are often thought of as being unfit for the grim struggle of life, as if there were no possibility of reconciling practical affairs with spiritual thoughts. Father seemed to find no difficulty in reconciling these two aspects of existence. For some years he held a dull job in a dry goods store, and I am told he was so efficient that he could have had a career there if he had so wished. But he moved on to the co-operative movement through the agency of his friend, the poet Yeats.

For a number of years he acted as an organiser, travelling all over Ireland, by train, by jaunting car, and on a bicycle. It can't have been an easy job, for even in his later years, when time had mellowed details, he would speak to me of the wretchedly long journeys involved and the miserable

rawness of the weather. But it must have had its romantic moments, for he wrote to one friend about being met in the middle of nowhere late at night by a small child who led him over mountainy paths to where a meeting was to be held; and when the meeting was over, the same small hand was waiting to lead him back. But the experience of organiser, if strenuous, gave him the firsthand knowledge of farmers and their problems which he displayed when he became editor of the *Irish Homestead*—later the *Irish Statesman*. It was not the kind of life for an impractical person—or a lazy one—for added to his editorial duties were the tasks of testifying before government commissions and drawing up bills to be put through Parliament; and on the outside he still found time to see his innumerable friends, to paint pictures; and to write books. On occasions he would precipitate himself into more public affairs, such as his defence of the workers in a protracted transport strike in Dublin and his speech in Albert Hall in London during the last war, made at the request of the English Labour Party.

The versatility of these activities can be set down to his strong belief that a man can always do what he wants to do. A friend remembers walking with him when Æ was in middle age. While they were resting on a wall, the friend remarked that a branch of a nearby tree was a good long jump away. "You could make it," said Father. "I could not," said the friend, who was sensibly aware of the effects of age on energy. "Well, I can," the friend was astonished to hear him say, and with that he made the leap.

Although he was born in and worked in Ireland all his life, he was in many respects curiously American in his principles. Perhaps for this reason he found so much to like in this country when, in later life, he came over here. I remember his attacking with some fury an eminent man who had been lecturing here and who had returned with nothing but adverse comments in his mind.

Father had no use for any kind of aristocracy save that of character and merit. He might well have thought otherwise, for the Ireland in which he had spent his youth more often than not sacrificed efficiency for friendship. Nor had he any use for the hampering hand of tradition, which lay heavily on his country. An exasperated appeal to the younger generation to dismiss the past and the idea of doing things as they had been done before was the motive behind the poem which ended:

*We would no Irish sign efface,
But yet our lips would gladlier hail
The firstborn of the coming Race
Than the last splendour of the Gael.
No blazoned banner we unfold—
One charge alone we give to youth,
Against the sceptred myth to hold
The golden heresy of truth.*

He always had hopes and liking for young people and they in turn liked him. Around him, at one time or another, gathered most of the young Irish writers: James Stephens, Fred Higgins, Frank O'Connor, Sean O'Faolain, Liam O'Flaherty, and many others, to all of whom he gave what aid and encouragement he could. It might easily have been a temptation to him to inculcate in them his own ideas. He was noticeably free from this tendency, and I can remember his delight when one of the younger writers in effect called him a has-been. I resented the statement myself, but he said, "No young man should really respect his elders. In other countries people respect a name. In Ireland, if you stick your head up, someone will throw a stone at it, and it stops you from getting a swelled head."

His combination of hardheadedness and mysticism was rather like Emerson, an author he much admired. He discerned the spiritual basis in the qualities of independence and self-reliance. He was, in his way, a determined individualist who wanted all people to stand on their own feet. The co-operative movement did not appeal to him so much because it brought economic gains to the Irish farmer as because it showed the farmer how to prosper by his own efforts. He had a contempt for the spineless apathy of the man without will power or energy who was always crying for help. It was not that Æ was unaware of social injustices, but he thought that gifts of money were only temporary help and that real aid should arouse the spirit of independence.

On one occasion, indeed, he spoke against the acceptance of a government grant for farmers, partially because he thought the farmer would fall too easily into the habit of dipping into the government pocket, but also, I think, because he had a deep-seated dislike of the growth of government power. He once remarked, "The worse our habits, the more we have what is called good government. When there are good habits in a country the business of the State dwindles." He was, however, aware of the growing power of the State; in an essay written in 1915 he remarked

Æ — GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL—Continued from page 8

prophetically that in twenty-five years the State would be the single most important influence in people's lives, and that its actions and power would reach into the lives of the most obscure and humble persons.

Of his reputation as a mystic I write with some hesitation. Mystical experiences cannot be disproved or proved. He did believe that faculties of a higher order than those normally exercised lay latent in all human beings and could be aroused and controlled by certain means, mainly exercises in meditation and concentration. It is a belief that has been held by many people in many countries over a long period of time. He told me it was many years before he could concentrate for as little a time as five minutes. I tried myself for some six months the exercise he told me he had used when in bed at night: he would close his eyes and imagine a white triangle, and then try to hold it in the imagination steadily. I can testify that it is not an easy exercise, for the mind is a natural rebel against discipline.

Of what particular value this and similar exercises may have proved, no outside person can assess. There were a sufficient number of incidents to suggest that he had powers of an unusual kind. On several occasions he told people facts about themselves he could not possibly have known. One friend remembers walking with him all day and suddenly wondering what the time was. He started to reach for his watch and was interrupted by Father, who said, "Let me tell you what the time is." Father knit his brows for a moment and then said, "It is twenty-three minutes past five," which was the time the watch showed. During the first performance of his only play, *Deirdre*, the impulse took him to try to suggest to the audience the idea of water at a certain point in the play. Many people the next day spoke about the queer illusion they had of water pouring out over them from the stage.

Out of my own knowledge I can only recall one incident. A childhood friend of Father, living many thousands of miles away, wrote a letter which said he was engaged in translating some old Greek manuscripts. He added that he had attempted to give to the paper of the letter a certain impression and he wondered if Father could receive it. As a result of this, Father painted a picture of a distinctive head which lacked all hair, even eyebrows and eyelashes. Later came a letter, enclosing the translation, which spoke of a Roman general who had lost all his hair as a result of a fever.

But incidents like these can be regarded as mere curiosities and Father disliked having attention called to them. He has written about this side of his life in his book *The Candle of Vision*. The exercises themselves may indirectly have had something to do with his character. In speaking to me about them he continually stressed the fact that, for one step forward in knowledge, three must be taken in self-perfection. All knowledge, of course, is a form of power, and the world would be saved many a trouble if those who had power could free themselves from the baser thoughts and emotions.

He also had a most amazing memory, partly natural I suspect, but I think also aided by his exercises in concentration. He could repeat poems from any poet one could name. On one occasion, out of curiosity and with a faintly impish desire to see him break down I tested him. He had commented on the book which I was reading, referring to the beauty of a particular passage. As it happened, that book, borrowed fifteen years before by an anonymous friend, had that day been returned equally anonymously. The book itself was out of print and I felt sure he could not have read it since the time it had been borrowed. I asked him if he would mind saying the passage he referred to and he repeated five pages of prose with not more than two or three minor slips—this after fifteen years and in a prose work with none of the aids to memory that poetry gives.

His beliefs certainly made his life free from the doubts, perplexities, and compromises that harass most people. I don't mean that he was immune to the small accidents of living. When, in quick succession, he had burned out the pockets of two suits by putting lighted pipes in them, he could do no more than stand before Mother like a penitent apostle, waving his hands gently and helplessly before her reproaches.

What he was free from were all questions of what was right and proper for him to do, and he was never troubled by the emotions of greed or envy or hatred. His life was so faultless that George Moore could only complain that he didn't know the difference between turbot and halibut. Another critic, in a mildly exasperated way, referred to his flawless moral nature. In writing, as in gossip, the bad is more exciting than the good, and the only weaknesses in Father's nature were some small vanities, so innocent and childlike as to be more lovable than anything else. He would, for example, assert the superiority of his own smoking mixture, made by adulterating his tobacco with the herb coltsfoot. And he used to argue with me, occasionally with some asperity, about the merits of billiards and cricket players, although neither of us knew anything about either subject.

Contrary to popular thought about mystics, he was not at all an ascetic-looking person. He was large, healthy, bulky, and bearded and usually had a pipe in his mouth. Someone remarked that he looked as if an angel had come to earth and seized the first human body it had come across. New suits wrinkled in a day and his overcoat looked—as James Stephens remarked in a novel—as if it had been put on with a shovel. He was just as indifferent to food as he was to dress, stoking his body with fuel as a boiler is fed with coal. He was, in fact, without worldly sophistication, and had none of the vanities that go with that quality.

Although he was an efficient and practical person in business, he was

far from being materialistic. He never wanted, or tried to get, more money than would take care of the essential needs—food, clothing, housing, and an education for his children. These taken care of, he thought further money was not only a nuisance but also a hindrance to freedom. On numerous occasions he turned down offers that would have brought him in as much money for a week's work as he normally earned in a year. To anxious friends who reproached him he would say, "Let the joy be in the doing and not in the end." He was doing the work he wished to do, which he thought helped his country and the people in it, and in which he found pleasure. I believe he thought no man's work was worth more than some small amount to take care of the necessities of existence. I learned that he had once refused a position at a thousand pounds a year—but had said he would do the work for two hundred.

As he grew older and his reputation spread, many people came to call on him, and to all—young and unknown writer, or visiting celebrity—he was the same, always giving of his best. I have seen enough of well-known people to realise that this side of Father was particularly charming—and also rather instructive. There are many moments when, through boredom or with the feeling that what we have to say will be wasted, all of us lapse into a kind of superior apathy. It would never have occurred to Father to give less than his best—and more important, he would never have thought so badly about people as to think anyone could deserve less than the best.

Father was a good conversationalist and could talk with equal interest and wisdom about good butter, the soul, or international politics. William Lyon Phelps recalls with delight a visit Father paid him in which Æ talked for ten hours more or less continuously. But the many friends he accumulated did not gather around him just for the delights of a good conversation. His presence was as warming as a fire, and people not only felt better to be with him but were better. "He is a tribunal before whom the ignoble dwindles," a friend declared.

His help to people was not only that of his presence; it could, on occasion, be practical. Only a few months ago a friend revealed to me that she had once visited him, obviously ill and needing a course of expensive treatments beyond her resources, and he had pressed on her the not inconsiderable sum required. He had never sought wealth and so could not have had much to give away, but I think he must have given when he could, and more than his family knew about. Another friend records with gratitude, and some astonishment, his competence in taking over affairs after the sudden death of her husband. In a somewhat lighter vein a friend told me how he was incompetently trying to get a meal, having arrived home unexpectedly, when Father called. "Man," he said, "you don't need all that grease in the pan. Give me a bowl; I must pour off three-quarters of it. You slice the potatoes while I cook the cutlets." And so the astonished friend stood aside to let the mystic prepare the meal.

For people in general he had nothing but a vast understanding and toleration, for he seemed to know intuitively why people acted, what moods or emotions dominated them. His lifelong friend, the poet, Yeats, said of him: "He has the capacity, beyond any man I have seen, to put with entire justice not only the thoughts but emotions of the most opposite parties and personalities—and men who hated each other must sometimes have been reconciled because each heard his enemy's arguments put into better words than his own."

It is difficult to talk or write of Father, for in a sense his chief work was himself, and the things for which he was known seemed a by-product. His poetry contains his thought in a concentrated and somewhat difficult verse, but there are many instances of people who found in it great spiritual solace. In the first world war many soldiers wrote to him that reading his poetry was the one thing that kept them sane during the horrors of war. The Municipal Art Gallery in Dublin has paintings by Watts, the English painter, sent by him because his wife, in an illness in which her life was despaired of, murmured some of Æ's poetry to herself and felt that it carried her through to health. Two viceroys of India, the Earl of Lytton and Lord Curzon, also found solace in his poems when dying.

In America he was touched—and surprised—when two reporters who had come to interview him burst into tears when he recited some of his poems at their request. What can be found in the poems could be found in the man himself; the recognition that here, at least, was one man who had been able to replace all the emotions that make life a turmoil by a vast compassion for all men. Perhaps, as Olive Schreiner says in *The Story of an African Farm*, "to be holy is to have great compassion."

It was inevitable that Æ's poetry and that of Yeats should have been compared, not only privately but publicly, because the two were at the time by general recognition the two leading poets in Ireland. They had been friends since boyhood, and I once asked him if the situation had never been a source of embarrassment. He only laughed and said, "Willie is a much better poet than I am. He is a great poet. He devotes all his time to his art and can spend days reworking a line or a verse till it has reached his ultimate in perfection. I, on the other hand, have to do many, many things, some by desire and some by compulsion." He went on to explain that what merit his own poems had was in the truth of the subject and less in the imagery. I got the feeling, though it was never openly stated, that he thought Yeats with his marvellous technique and command of language sometimes used his art on poor subjects. His remarkable memory made it easy for him to recall any poem he had written, and he would say, with perhaps a slight touch of vanity, that if all his books were burned, he would

Æ — GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL—Continued from page 9

be able to rewrite all of them without difficulty. Yeats's memory, I gather, must have been more defective, for Father used to chuckle over the fact that once, when Yeats had been rather scorning his own early poems, he had recited a number of them to him. Yeats was excited and pleased over the poems and asked who wrote them—and was displeased when he was informed that he himself was the author.

I suppose Father had favourites among his own poems, but I would not know what they were; for if asked to recite he would ask what poems were wanted. Perhaps here again his faint vanity about his memory was responsible, as if he wanted to show that nothing he had written had been forgotten. I know he was pleased with Yeats's liking for the poem which began:—

*Dusk wraps the village in its dim caress;
Each chimney's vapour, like a thin grey rod,
Mounting aloft through miles of quietness,
Pillars the skies of God.*

Whether he agreed with Yeats's liking, I don't know. I myself think the verse entitled "Promise" are as lovely as anything he ever wrote:—

*Be not so desolate
Because thy dreams have flown
And the hall of the heart is empty
And silent as stone,
As age left by children
Sad and alone.*

*Those delicate children
Thy dreams, still endure;
All pure and lovely things
Wend to the Pure.*

*Sigh not: unto the fold
Their way was sure.*

*Thy gentlest dreams, thy frailest,
Even those that were
Born and lost in a heart-beat,
Shall meet thee there.
They are become immortal
In shining air.*

*The unattainable beauty
The thought of which was pain,
That flickered in eyes and on lips
And vanished again;
That fugitive beauty
Thou shalt attain.*

*The lights innumerable
That led thee on and on,
The Masque of Time ended,
Shall glow into one.
It shall be with thee for ever
Thy travel done.*

What merit there is in his poems, as well as the faults, probably comes from their origin. He told me poems came into his head and were usually

written down quickly, needing few changes, and that they arose from a process of subconscious meditation. Sometimes one verse would come and he might have to wait a few days or a week before the other verses would spring into his mind—in one case there was a gap of thirty years between first and succeeding verses.

I don't think it would be wrong to say that what he would have liked most to do would have been to paint. Summer after summer he would depart for Donegal to bring back twenty or thirty canvases sufficiently finished so that he could work on them during the winter at his leisure. He told me at one time the urge to paint was so strong that he had contemplated doing nothing else, but had been restrained by some feeling that a single pursuit would be bad for him; in a similar fashion, years before, he had been obsessed by mysticism and the same austerity had made him relegate that to being just a part of his life.

He must have had considerable strength of will to relegate painting to being just a hobby, for he not only found great pleasure in painting but competent people thought he could have been a great painter. A former director of the National Gallery in Ireland remarked that if Father had ever taken lessons he would have become one of the foremost painters of his time; and an old friend, a Dublin art dealer, on my last visit, offered it as his opinion that Æ would be remembered as an artist long after his poems were forgotten.

His prices for paintings must have infuriated other artists, for Father felt he had no right to make money out of a hobby, and so had calculated carefully the cost of the materials—canvases and paint and oils and brushes. Adding a small charge for his time—which couldn't have amounted to fifty cents an hour—he had arrived at the figure of five pounds for a small canvas and ten pounds for a large one. This figure was revised upwards a little as costs increased over the years, but other Irish artists may have felt aggrieved at the unfair competition. Maybe Father felt there was something in this for he stopped showing his pictures and kept them in the house, where only friends could see them.

These numerous interests—co-operation, painting, poetry, mysticism, the editing of a weekly journal—were all kept going by a gigantic energy which left little time for relaxation. The latter usually took the form of mystery stories, of which he read from six to ten a week, and it was one of my household duties to see that a constant supply was at hand at all times. If the output of mystery stories—as sometimes happened—didn't equal his capacity for reading them, he would prow! unhappily about the house, hoping that somewhere or other one would materialise.

I might have wondered why, in an age of specialisation, he had not chosen to become a master of one talent, if he had not once used an illuminating phrase in discussing with me a famous scientist. "He is not really intelligent," he said, "for his mind embraces little outside his profession. A candle does not shine light only in one direction." It was a revealing sentence, for it made me see that his real preoccupation had nothing to do with worldly success, but was with the completion of his own character. It was the kind of pursuit of self-perfection which mystics through the ages have been intent upon, and in Father's case it produced a kind of warm serenity, a saintliness of character so moving and so lovable that when he was dying, as a friend wrote, "even the surgeon, whose skill must defend itself against sentimentality, turned away for a moment in tears."

CONSULT

MADRAS PENCIL FACTORY

(Premier Factory in South India)

Manufacturers of STAR OF INDIA PENCILS of Different Varieties



HOE & COMPANY

COLOUR, ART OF QUALITY, PRINTERS & LITHOGRAPHERS



V. Perumall Chetty & Sons

PREMIER, HIGH CLASS & BIGGEST STATIONERS IN S. INDIA.

Phone:
3 7 1 2

No. 5, Stringers Street

G. T. MADRAS.

Phone:
3 7 1 3

A BRIEF INQUEST ON COMMUNISM

Continued from opposite page

that have occurred were undoubtedly caused by some perverse sense of religiosity, or hatred, distrust and folly masquerading as religion. In our own times have we not seen wars fought for unification's sake and exploitations of the weaker peoples by the stronger ones justified in the name of good government

and justice? But who can say for that matter that unification and good government and justice are very bad things.

An examination of Communism reveals to us the fact that the philosophic cover it takes is a thin and very faulty one and the appeal it makes to humanity is not only weak and unreasonable but even dangerous and threatens to destroy some of the finest values in human life. It seeks to reduce human individuals to mere automatons working insecurely under some mechanical cooperative scheme. It denies the possibility of some nobler hand closely uniting human beings under a disciplined order of living. It magnifies economics beyond all forces and makes dialectical forces appear as the supreme author of the universal drama. Guided by a purely mental, and even at that a superficially mental, approach to life and its problems as Communism is, it is apparently insufficient and too wooden to be adopted as a technique in collective life to suit the complex and profound purposes of the fast evolving humanity of the present day.

JEWEL CREATIONS

BY

TEL. 30321.

CHIMANLAL MANCHAND
& CO.
NEW QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY.

A BRIEF INQUEST ON COMMUNISM

BY CHHOTANARAIN

In a world full of bitter conflicts and disappointments coming as essential consequences of the existing mode of life, one would like to examine Communism, proposed and calculated to be the next step in the forward movement of life, a little thoroughly. Communism is said to have come as an essential step after democracy. We established and examined democratic institutions; we organised our political life on the lines of democracy and, after finding this technique (which had emerged out of the mediaeval way of life) something not sufficient to suit the altered conditions in human life, have begun to look for some other technique. Communism is alleged to be seen emerging as the immediate possibility.

However, we must examine it before we accept it. For an off-hand acceptance of Communism on the simple pretext that human life is evolving and any suggested step forward is not only desirable and opportune but essential would be a blunder, of the worst type. Communism is not only an experiment, as yet an untranslated technique in political and social life seeking to touch and alter the conditions of life in the corresponding fields of politics and society, but it is something more ambitious: it posits a philosophy of its own. It seeks to touch and examine the fundamentals of human life and in that respect it is not simply offered as a step forward in the outward movement of life. It poses as something deeper and more profound.

A step in the evolving life of man is not characterised by and is not a result of purely mental deliberation. It has its motive in the stresses through which human life is passing. The insufficiency of the contemporary institutions and techniques to suit the altered conditions in life has driven mankind to new experiments and adaptations. And for that matter to examine Communism, it would be better to take stock, of course briefly, of the stresses through which human life is passing today—the conditions that prevail now upon the earth.

Democracy and Communism

It is a fact that the evolving individualities—the component units of the complex human society—could not acknowledge the time-honoured authority of a man or a monarch in mechanical obedience to some fixed laws and a step forward towards democracy was necessitated. In its turn democracy gave at least a flattering sense of respect to every individual, who felt at least theoretically that he was being ruled by himself. So far as the dignity of the individual is concerned it advanced it beyond doubt. But again the sense of dignity is not the be-all and the end-all of human life. There are the other necessities too. Food, security and mental culture are also some of the most important and necessary requirements in human life. And for a better reorganisation of life we changed our political outlook, modified the administrative technique and where required recast and remoulded our social institutions. And in spite of all this we find human life filled with intense suffering and burdened with immense hardships. Conditions have been created necessitating wars and already we have fought two of the deadliest in human history and perhaps a third will fan out from Korea. We are led to feel that even democracy is insufficient; anything that seeks to touch, modify or alter life outwardly is not enough. We are passing through a phase in collective life toiling under an overshadowing despair and seem forced to believe almost in the failure of democracy. Then

what is to be the next step? Communism which claims to have considered life thoroughly emerges before our vision. Now let us scrutinise it before we allow its claims for acceptance.

Communism differs from democracy in two major ways. Firstly, it ambitiously claims to have examined human life thoroughly. Its findings are posited as the truth—the only truth—about life and the outer world. The plan it advances to organise our life in the social and political fields is pushed forward as duly considered and calculated to suit and help the major purposes and aspirations of mankind. Secondly, it seeks to lift people from the sense of theoretical equality to a more palpable sense of economic and social equality, where the individual is not only in theory the ruler of himself but in practice—it is claimed—the sole monarch of his affairs. All sense of undesirable superiority is gone, all inequalities demolished. And the human society then would be characterised by the voluntary associations of individuals with the tie binding them together as thin and rarefied as the ether or the sky itself. But can the ether or the sky bind two perfectly independent units together? The answer cannot be, perhaps, a blunt 'no'. For there may be a still subtler mental or spiritual tie and outwardly one may content oneself with the thought that the etheric tie is effective enough. But what again if there is a mental or spiritual discord or a conflict of interests? For this is the burning problem of the day. The two recent wars have left humanity gasping and mentally wounded and suspicious of what had been enthusiastically planned and done. It is these wars that have, more than anything else, driven men to find out a better substitute for their present way of life. And one cannot afford to escape the question as to what would be if again there is a mental or a moral discord, or a clash of interests in the other fields of life. Perhaps Communism, magnifying the economic aspect of life immeasurably and content to solve economic problems, blandly overlooks the possibility of other conflicts. But who can deny the existence of other types of conflicts? And in case such conflicts do arise Communism will leave people in a worse state than before. We cannot accept Communism because of the assertion that in Russia crimes have decreased and no one begs there. Maybe it is so. But whether or not Communism is calculated to bring about a complete harmony and peace amongst human beings cannot be decided on the gossip-tales of what is going on within the Russian boundaries. For it we should like to probe into the Communist formula itself.

The Communist Philosophy

Communism has an atheistic philosophy behind it. God, it is said, is a chimera cunningly con-

structed by intelligent yet vicious people and thrust upon simple-minded humanity to facilitate its exploitation by them and keep their own authority intact. And the plain fact that God did not appear through the press or on the air to contradict such a stricture upon His very right of being, is taken as convincing enough a proof in favour of the proposition. But is the proof quite sound? It is a fact that God never appeared to contradict a person who denied His existence. This is His continued habit, for history is full of the tales of atheists and of God never appearing to contradict them, much less filing suits against them. And yet people have gone in for Him, seeking God-realisation as the sole aim of their life. Not only that, but even institutions have developed and life organised, accepting the common bond of the spiritual unity of mankind. This has also given men a sure and palpable basis for love and toleration amongst them. It is true that people have fought in the name of religion and God and more in the name of religion than in the name of God, but it is also equally true that people like Christ and others have shed their blood for their faith and that too at times when they could have easily escaped the sacrifice. As to the sense of substantiality in this faith, did not Ramkrishna reply to the questioning Vivekananda that not only he saw God but he saw Him more clearly than anything else?

However, we have digressed. But we are left with the feeling of a big vacuum behind the Communist Philosophy. The theory of a perpetual war without basis, as the sole cause upholding the procession of universal life, is too pale and untenable a thing to be accepted. Similarly we cannot accept economics as the rule of human life. It is a fact that social and economic considerations play an important part, but they surely do not and cannot occupy the whole consciousness of man. With reference to such a philosophy it is very difficult to explain the renunciation of prince Siddhartha (afterwards Lord Buddha) of his opulent kingdom and a beautiful wife and a new-born son. We cannot dispose of him as a maniac, for he had a mission in life which a maniac never has. He felt concretely the urge of a higher call in life, he felt also satisfied after the fulfilment of that urge, he felt he was enlightened. Moreover, we cannot dispose of him as a solitary example of wayward individuality, for an individual who powerfully draws so many countries and puts his stamp on ages and ages, founding institutions and inspiring men into the acceptance of a common brotherhood of a certain order, is unquestionably not less important than the mechanically moving millions who live and die and leave no trace behind them. Nor does Buddhism bringing and uniting people within its order and inspiring them to gigantic efforts and sacrifices and establishing wide toleration look pale before the etheric bond of uninspired comradeship promised by the much talked-of Communist formula of our day. The existing unity and cohesion amongst the Communists as manifested in Soviet Russia, is, as we shall presently see, more due to other reasons than the economic equality, if any, of its in-

habitants. The Communists of Russia have formed themselves into a bloc ever suspecting and fearing the other peoples of the world. Never since the establishment of a Socialist state in Russia have the Russians had a chance of entering into a free give-and-take relation with the outside world. Never have they worked also in a state of perfect security. And is not the very sense of common insecurity a strong tie to bind people together? Did we not see the mutually opposed sections of the British populace combine together to fight the common enemy Hitler during the last war? The second important thing about the people of Russia is that they are still experimenting in the new technique. They have been working hard under a strong government to consolidate and stabilize their economic and social position. The measure of freedom a Russian citizen enjoys is much less than the freedom enjoyed by the citizen of many other non-Communist countries.

Thus we see that the idea that animates Communism is too thin and feeble to bring men together at a time when their interests clash or they are working under certain differences. The Communist philosophy also seeks to overlook and deny certain basic aspirations of mankind which have not only survived all exigencies in human history but have aroused the noblest sentiments and lain at the basis of many worthy institutions. The state of utter insecurity through which human life is passing today calls for a more solid basis for unity and a nobler, a profounder idealism to inspire life. The economic life reorganised on the basis of the principle of 'each according to his need' would be an ideal condition. But this condition cannot be created unless there is a change in the consciousness of people enabling them to forsake a number of petty demands in life. For this they have to be combined under a deeper realisation of their original unity, they have to be charged with a deeper vision of the supreme Reality. No outward makeshifts and alterations in human life can bring about an improvement worth the name, in the prevailing circumstances. Any state of balanced economic adjustments essentially needs to be inspired by some common high idealism, for such a condition in human life is not the direct result of some efficient planning, or the result of a purely mental preparedness for the acceptance of a free system of give-and-take relations purely mechanical in nature, but it entails, presupposes and demands great self-sacrifice on the part of individuals and immense compassion and fairness on the part of the prevailing authority. Communism, as we have noted, is totally unable to inspire and sustain such a condition.

The gravest fallacy behind the Communist philosophy is its brusque rejection and distrust of any spiritual basis of human existence and any tie that could bring men together in a spiritual brotherhood. The contention of Communists that religion has been at the root of all iniquities in human history is apparently a most biased view. The iniquities that have arisen in the name of religions or the oppressions

LIGHTS ON LIFE-PROBLEMS

(34)

One of our chief aims will be to provide authentic guidance in regard to the many important questions which arise in the minds of thoughtful persons all over the world. This cannot be better done than by considering these questions in the light of Sri Aurobindo's writings, because Sri Aurobindo is not only a Master of Yoga in possession of the Eternal Spiritual Truths, but also a Guide and Helper of mankind in various spheres of life and thought. To bring home the light of this guidance and to make it directly applicable to the problems that present themselves to an observing intelligence, a series of questions of common interest along with precise answers directly taken from Sri Aurobindo's writings will regularly appear in these columns.

Q. 1: The growth of democratic and socialistic tendencies in recent years has everywhere raised the demand of bringing down art and poetry which had previously remained confined to the cultured few, to the general mass of humanity, to the common man or 'the man in the street' as he is called. Only that art and poetry is considered valuable which appeals to the taste of the common man and can be easily understood by him; all the rest which it is difficult for him to appreciate without special training or which does not appeal to his uncultivated tastes is dismissed as meaningless moonshine or an useless extravagance. How far is this demand justifiable?

A: "I do not know why so much value is put on general understanding and acceptance. Really it is only the few that can be trusted to discern the true value of things in poetry and art and if the 'general' run accept, it is usually because acceptance is sooner or later imposed or induced in their minds by the authority of the few and afterwards by the verdict of Time. There are exceptions, of course, of a wide spontaneous acceptance because something that is really good happens to suit a taste or a demand in the general mind of the moment. Poetic and artistic value does not necessarily command mass understanding and acceptance". Moreover, the majority of minds "do not respond to 'artistic' beauty at all—something inartistic appeals much more to what sense of beauty they have or else they are not seeking beauty, but only vital pleasure."

Q. 2: Why is the work of a poet or an artist differently estimated by different critics? The same poet or artist is sometimes praised in the highest terms by some eminent critics but is condemned outright by other equally eminent critics. What is the explanation for this?

A: "All criticism of poetry is bound to have a strong subjective element and that is the source of the violent differences in the appreciation of any given author by equally 'eminent' critics. All is relative here, Art and Beauty also, and our view of things and our appreciation of them depends on the consciousness which views and appreciates. Some critics recognise this and go in frankly for a purely subjective criticism—'this is why I like this and disapprove of that, I give my own values'. Most, however, want to fit their personal likes and dislikes to some standard of criticism which they conceive to be objective; this need of objectivity, of the support of some impersonal truth independent of our personality, is the main source of theories, canons, standards of art. But the theories, canons, standards themselves vary and are set up in one age only to be broken in another."

Q. 3: Does this mean that there is no objective beauty of art independent of the differing temperaments of the observers? Is our experience of beauty a construction or a creation of our minds but not having any objective existence otherwise?

A: "In that case Beauty is non-existent in Nature, it is put upon Nature by our minds through *adhyaropa*. But this contradicts the fact that it is in response to an object and not independently of it that the idea of beautiful or not beautiful originally rises within us. Beauty does

exist in what we see, but there are two aspects of it, essential beauty and the form it takes. 'Eternal beauty wandering on her way' does that wandering by a multitudinous variation of forms appealing to a multitudinous variation of consciousness. There comes in the difficulty. Each individual consciousness tries to seize the eternal beauty expressed in a form (here a particular poem or work of art), but is either assisted by the form or repelled by it, wholly attracted or wholly repelled, or partially attracted and partially repelled. There may be errors in the poet's or artist's transcription of beauty which mar the reception, but even these have different effects on different people. But the more radical divergences arise from the variation in the constitution of the mind and its difference of response."

Q. 4: But is it not possible for a catholic critic of art to overcome these limitations?

A: "A critic cannot escape altogether from these limitations. He can try to make himself catholic and objective and find the merit or special character of all he reads or sees in poetry and art, even when they do not evoke his strongest sympathy or deepest response. I have little temperamental sympathy for much of the work of Pope and Dryden, but I can see their extraordinary perfection or force in their own field, the masterly conciseness, energy, point, metallic precision into which they cut their thought or their verse, and I can see too how that can with a little infusion of another quality be the basis of a really great poetic style, as Dryden himself has shown in his best work. But there my appreciation stops; I cannot rise to the heights of admiration of those who put them on a level with or on a higher level than Wordsworth, Keats or Shelley—I cannot escape from the feeling that their work, even though more consistently perfect within their limits and in their own manner (at least Pope's), was less great in poetic quality. These divergences rise from a conception of beauty and a feeling for beauty which belongs to the temperament. So too Housman's exaltation of Blake results directly from his feeling and peculiar conception of poetic beauty as an appeal to an inner sensation, an appeal marred and a beauty deflowered by bringing in a sharp coating or content of intellectual thought."

Q. 5: Does this mean that a critic cannot render any real help to others in the appreciation of beauty?

A: "The critic can help to open the mind to the kinds of beauty he himself sees and not only to discover but to appreciate at their full value certain elements that make them beautiful or give them what is most characteristic or unique in their peculiar beauty. Housman, for instance, may help many minds to see in Blake something which they did not see before. They may not agree with him in his comparison of Blake and Shakespeare, but they can follow him to a certain extent and seize better that element in poetic beauty which he over-stresses but makes at the same time more vividly visible."

K. G.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The next issue of "Mother India" will be a Special August 15 Number and will come out on the 12th instead of the 5th. The issue after it will be on the 19th.

There will be important contributions by writers foreign as well as Indian. Among the Special Features will be some unpublished Talks of the Mother and Essays by Sri Aurobindo.