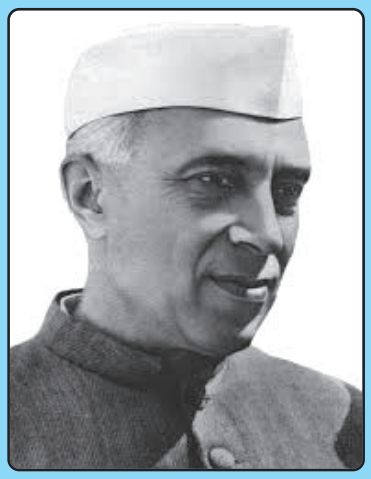
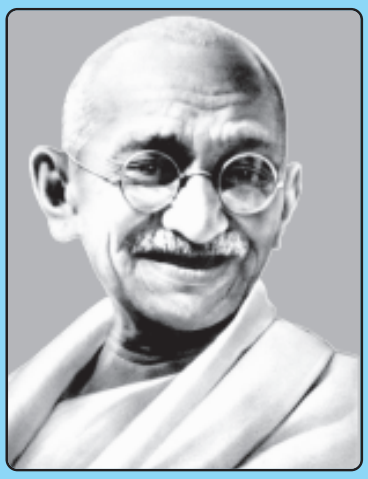
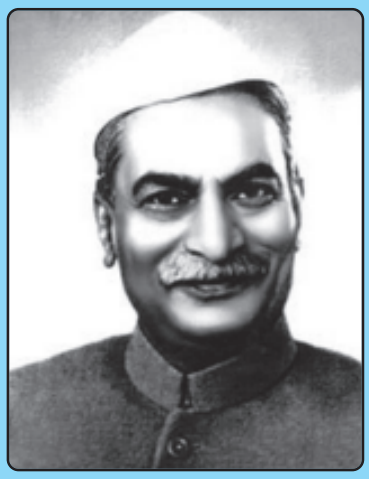
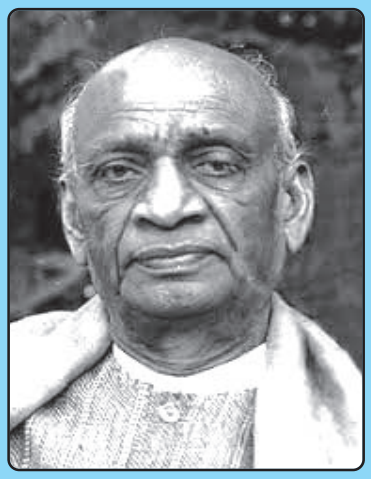
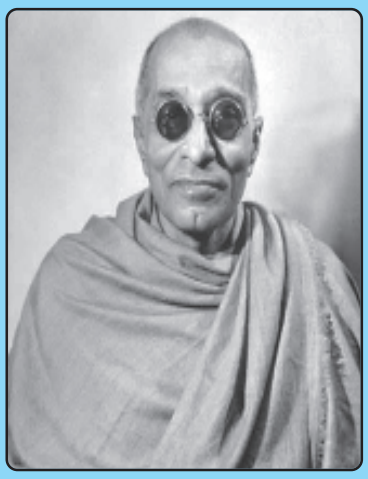
# MY PORTRAIT GALLERY


ISWARA DUTT

**K. ISWARA DUTT**

**September 27, 1898 – June 9, 1968**

## PUBLISHED BOOKS

- Sparks and Fumes, April 1929 - (Publisher Triveni)
- And All That, 1946 (second edition - Publisher Kitab Kutir)
- Street of Ink May, 1956 (Triveni)
- My Portrait Gallery, November 1957 (Triveni)
- Middles, December 1959 (Triveni)
- Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, September 1966 (Popular)
- Congress Cyclopedia, pre-Gandhi era (1885-1920), 1967
  As a journalist worked in *Swarajya, The Hindu, The Hindustan Times,* Editor *People's Voice,* Chief Editor *The Leader.*

# My Portrait Gallery by K. ISWARA DUTT

**TO MY WIFE**

TRIVENI PUBLISHERS
MASULIPATAM
ANDHRA PRADESH
1957

# Acknowledgements

*'My Portrait Gallery'* was published in 1957 by Triveni Publishers, Masulipatam headed by Shri Bhavaraju Narasimha Rao an ardent lover of books and journals and a respected publisher. It was he who stood by Shri K. Ramakotiswara Rau, the well known self-effacing founder-editor of *Triveni* a journal of high repute, in the evening of his life. Shri Narasimha Rao not only supported the prestigious journal but also published a number of books in Telugu and English including some of Iswara Dutt's books.

Thanks are due to the members of Iswara Dutt's family, particularly, his grandsons Shri K. Iswara Dutt and Shri K.V.Prasad and nephew Shri K. Jagannadha Rao, for welcoming the idea of republishing '*My Portrait Gallery.'*

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A. Prasanna Kumar

# *Grateful thanks*

Members of late K. Iswara Dutt's family join me in conveying grateful thanks to Sri B.Srikrishnamurthy, Chairman, Bommidala Srikrishnamurthy Foundation for graciously sponsoring the republication of this book.

A. Prasanna Kumar

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# Iswara Dutt *the journalist and the man*

"If journalism has a Muse, it must have presided at his birth" wrote Hiren Mukherjee, the brilliant leftist leader and intellectual adding that "Iswara Dutt has breathed, almost from adolescence, the air of journalism and since then, setbacks notwithstanding he has lived, moved and had his being in no other climate even in his anguish, he has not weakened in his passion," As late Shri Justice Koka Subba Rao, former Chief Justice of India recalled: "My mind goes back to the days when both of us were students at Rajahmundry. We are as it were hereditary friends, for our fathers were also good friends. Rarely we come across a distinguished person in whose case the seeds of greatness were designedly sown and the plant diligently nurtured during his boyhood. As a student he was more keen on general reading than textbooks prescribed. I have watched his career from a distance and have seen him slowly but inevitably blossoming into a first-grade journalist with fame and name."

Iswara Dutt, as a student, was different from others. His classmate at school in Rajahmundry, K. Rama Rao who rose to become the Editor of the National Herald, explained the early influence on their lives: "Both of us were the students of Dutt's father, Kunduri Venkata Ratnam Pantulu who was an able teacher in every way. He was a man of highest probity and rectitude and never had he compromised with truth or honour. He indoctrinated us with a liberal social outlook being one of the lieutenants of the great Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu." Kandukuri Veeresalingam, described by Dr C.R.Reddy as the 'greatest modern Andhra', was a source of inspiration to several Andhra journalists like, C.Y. Chintamani, Khasa

Subba Rau, G.V. Krupanaidhi, K.Ramakotiswara Rau, K.Rama Rao, K.Iswara Dutt and M. Chalapathi Rau who rose to become doughty and selfless champions of the freedom of the press during British rule and later in independent India. Journalism in English and vernacular languages enriched India's political culture and the fourth estate deservedly came to be recognized as an important carrier of values and upholder of the torch of freedom.

Iswara Dutt began his journalistic career in 1928 when he joined T. Prakasam's *Swarajya*, where G.V. Krupanidhi and Khasa Subba Rau were his colleagues along with his close friend K. Rama Rao. His weekly column in *Swarajya* became highly popular and a collection of the articles was brought out as a small book titled *Sparks and Fumes* which became an instant success. 'The golden gates of *The Hindu'* as Dutt put it, were thrown open to him and he joined *The Hindu* as a sub-editor, thanks to its editor A. Rangaswami Iyengar. Later when he left *The Hindu* in search of greener pastures Editor Rangaswami Iyengar wrote a generous letter which so overwhelmed Iswara Dutt that he published it in his autobiography *The Street of Ink.*

*My dear Iswara Dutt,*

*In wishing you farewell today, you will allow me to say on behalf of the proprietors and myself how sorry we are that you are leaving us and how during the short period of your service in the "Hindu", you have maintained your reputation for high literary capacity, loyal devotion to work and excellent character and integrity. You have our best wishes for a bright and prosperous future for you.*

*Yours very truly,*
*A.Rangaswami Iyengar,*
*Editor, The Hindu, Madras*
*25 November 1930*

As K. Rama Rao wrote, Iswara Dutt 'wriggled himself into the bosoms' of many eminent men. Dutt was close to both Prakasam and Pattabhi, arch rivals in Madras provincial politics for a long time. Rajaji always treated Dutt with affection. The high point in Iswara Dutt's journalistic career was his stewardship of "that remarkable monthly *Twentieth Century* (to use K.M.Panikkar's words) for which some of the outstanding men of those times were regular contributors." C.P.Ramaswami Iyer described it as "one of the best conducted magazines of its type." V.S.Srinivasa Sastri gave it a place among 'the organs of true education in public affairs'. *The Twentieth Century* was quoted by Sir Samuel Hoare in a speech at Oxford, and also in the debates of the House of Commons and by *The Times*. In September 1949, on Rajaji's advice, Iswara Dutt joined *The Hindustan Times* of which Devdas Gandhi was the managing editor. It was the formidable editorial team comprising, among others, Durga Das, G.V. Krupanidhi, S.Mulgaokar, Iswara Dutt, P.Abraham and cartoonist E.Ahmed that enhanced the stature and popularity of *The Hindustan Times.* Iswara Dutt's column in *The Hindustan Times's* eveninger under the title 'Round the Metropolis' by 'Right Angle' was well received in the capital of India, like his other column 'I.D's Literary Miscellany'. In 1953 Iswara Dutt was elected President of the Delhi Union of Journalists. He defined journalist as a person who fought battles other than his own. When someone advised Iswara Dutt not to allow the union to fall into the hands of the Communists, he retorted that he would not let it fall into the hands of the Congress either.

Iswara Dutt rose to become the Chief Editor of *The Leader* and that was a moment he cherished most. For, he stepped into the shoes of his former chief Sir C.Y.Chintamani. However it was for Dutt a brief tenure and he resigned the post, as he had left similar high positions, refusing to compromise his ideals. The rebellious spirit that made him famous with the publication of his *Sparks and Fumes* in 1930 glowed throughout his

life. He spent all his earnings on books and possessed an excellent personal library, generously entertaining friends and guests. He was proud that M.Chalapathi Rau was his 'discovery.' MC in his last years used to say that he owed his mentor a tribute. P. Vaman Rao, son-in-law of Khasa Subba Rau and a journalist in his own right founded and edited till his last breath The *New Swatantra Times* in which he lavished high praise on Iswara Dutt his 'mentor and moulder'. Iswara Dutt had no house of his own; nor a piece of land anywhere which he did not reveal even to his friend and regular visitor to his house, union minister R. Jagannadha Rao. But Dutt's residence in Karol Bagh, Delhi was a popular venue for journalists and men of letters for their evening get-togethers. As K. Rama Rao used to say 'half the Andhras that come to Delhi make a beeline to his residence.' Despite being terminally ill, Iswara Dutt remained busy editing and publishing the weekly *New India,* his last publication. Ultimately, as Prof. K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar summed up "his success as a journalist and as a writer can be attributed to a simple self-sufficient circumstance; his love of literature and life, his feeling for words and human relationships. That is why, also we admire the writer and love the man."

A.Prasanna Kumar

Visakhapatnam
March 28, 2019

# GOD'S SECRET WEAPON

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO MAHATMA GANDHI*

Across the centuries lights flicker in gloom and fog, and if some lights there are which direct man's footsteps to a better world where principles and ideals triumph over cosmic forces, and moral laws and ethical values gain ascendancy over man-made decrees and governmental ordinances, we owe it to those prophetic souls of the ages that lift us above all that is merely earthy and evanescent. But for such 'prophetic souls dreaming of things to come', where would we be?

**As Matthew Arnold says:**

Most men eddy about
Here and there – eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die-
Perish! and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment and gone.

**But there are also, however sparsely, as the same poet says:**

Souls temper'd with fire,

Fervent, heroic and good,

Helpers and friends of mankind.

*Text of a Broadcast Talk from the Hyderabad Broadcasting Station on Wednesday, 11th February, 1948.

It is one of such heroic spirits, one of such immortal souls, that the whole world has saluted in reverence, ere it has recovered from the fatal blow that has made it reel with paroxysm of grief and frenzy of despair. With Gandhi the Mahatma laid low by an assassin's bullet, there has disappeared the tallest- and the grandest – peak from the human landscape. One, everyone, felt stunned to find that, literally in a trice, India was orphaned and humanity dwarfed. 'Breathes there the man with soul so dead' who was not stirred by the huge, immense void created by the all too sudden disappearance of the Moral Colossus whose feet covered the whole earth and whose head touched the very heavens. Myriads of hearts melted in agony, and myriads of eyes were filled in tears; and too, there were tears in voices that were raised to express their sense of anguish. Rulers and ministers of states, statesmen and generals, leaders of thought and culture, men and women in all countries and climes, joined together, and vied with each other, in paying their homage to the Mahatma; they ransacked language for suitable words to express their mingled feelings of grief and reverence for the martyr.

His greatness is so much unlike any other greatness that we have known within living memory. But what is a great man? Disraeli reflected thus:

What is a great man? Is it a Minister of State? Is it a victorious general? A gentleman in the Windsor uniform? Is it a Field-Marshal covered with stars? Is it a Prelate or Prince? A King or an Emperor? He may be all these.

Yet these are not necessarily great men. Great man is one who affects the mind of his generation.

Gandhiji is great in having affected the mind of his generation, greater still in having so influenced world thought as to affect the mind of generations to come, and the greatest of all in contemporary annals in having made 'heroes out of clay', led India from slavery to independence, 'translated us from oblivion into history', fought for the rights of man to whatever country he belonged, swayed the world with an idea – the idea of facing the world without weapons and facing weapons without fear – and lived and died for the loftiest principles and the noblest ideals.

Approach the Mahatma from any angle – and a most unusual man is he. The combination of his qualities was so remarkable that he stood on a pedestal of his own; the blend of his traits was so subtle that he was incalculable. He was, indeed, so complex and so simple, so rigid and so soft, so easy to understand and so difficult to follow, so consistent in his philosophy and so seemingly inconsistent in his utterances and actions, that his personality baffled speculation and defied analysis. And yet who was not deeply impressed, struck dumb, moved to the core of his being, by the Mahatma's 'marvellous victories over the grossness and brutalities of man?' Never had he deviated by a hair's-breadth from the twin paths of Truth and Non-violence. Fear – he knew not what it was; hatred – it had no place in his heart; failure – the word did not figure in his vocabulary.

Physically, a frail, spare being, morally he was a giant. After gradual sartorial reduction he took to the loin-cloth- and the lowly and the lost recognised in him their friend. He believed in varnashrama Dharma – and yet the Harijan gained admittance to temples under his auspices. He plied the Charkha – and Birmingham and Lancashire at one time found their occupation gone. He defied objectionable laws – and an embattled power got out of gear. He initiated passive resistance – and the British found themselves in a world 'as unfamiliar as magic'. He retired to an Ashram in

an obscure hamlet – and it became the hub of the universe. He walked to Dandi for making salt – and a revolution sprang in his footsteps. He raised the 'Quit India' slogan – and an empire was shaken to its foundations. He wended his weary way through riot-torn East Bengal – and a nation's conscience was stirred. He occasionally fasted – and a nation's destiny was moulded. He was born in a slave country – and ere he died he found it free - indeed, he made it free. He lived for truth; aye, he lived truth. He died for communal concord, and he died a martyr. His name, in his own life-time, became a legend; today it is a battle-cry. And it has even become a synonym for India.

Where in all the world do we find the like of him? In him the faith of a Tolstoy was allied to the fire of a Mazzini, and he stood alone on a peak. He was like a lone star pointing the path to a new world where Truth prevails, Non-violence reigns supreme, and Dharma has its sovereign sway, where no lawyer handles a brief and no policeman raises a baton, where wine does not flow and woman does not paint her face, where one wears the clothes one weaves and eats the food one grows, where all practise simple living and high thinking, and where the lion and the lamb drink out of the same spring. This is truly idyllic picture no doubt, but none too idyllic for the man who realised in his own way that 'The steps of Faith fall on the seeming void, And find the Rock beneath'. I once asked: 'Who knows if he is God's secret weapon in a wicked world?' and today the world is asked to choose between Gandhi and the Atom Bomb. There is a world-wide belief that no gale that blows, however fierce, can ever extinguish the fire of his abiding virtues.

One shudders to think that Gandhiji is no more. In a far greater sense than an essayist said of England without Shakespeare, we can say thus India in relation to Gandhi:

He is the greatest thing we have done. He is our challenger in the lists of the world, and there is none to cross swords with him. Like Sirius, he

was a magnitude of his own. Take him away from our heavens – and the imaginative wealth of life shrinks to a lower plane, and we are left, in Iago's phrase, a poor thing.

And today India, robbed of her Mahatma, is a poor thing, indeed. But need India despair? India which produced a Gandhi, India which a Gandhi moulded. If only now onwards all those millions of men and women who shed their tears for him, dedicate themselves to the supreme task of erecting in this country the Temple of Peace of which the first stone was laid by the Mahatma we shall have achieved what he desired us to achieve, and proved ourselves, however belatedly, worthy of him and his imperishable legacy. The establishment of perfect and lasting communal concord in this woe-begone land is Gandhism in one sense, and in a real sense. Let us all cultivate the faith that we can succeed though Gandhiji is not with us in flesh and blood – for succeed we must, if we are not to perish, or roll down the abyss.

"Great causes", as Harcourt said, "do not perish when leaders fall. The armies of England did not fall when Nelson fell at Trafalgar, and Wolfe upon the heights of Abraham. Catholic emancipation triumphed after Canning died". A great man, and one so indisputably great as Gandhiji, is like a planter. "He plants the acorn; it sends the roots deep into the soil; it stretches its branches into the sky long after the planter is in the dust." May it be said that not long after Gandhiji laid down his life, out of the seeds sown by him and watered by his own tears and blood, there has sprung the mightiest of oaks, sheltering beneath its far-flung boughs, the vast Indian family, 'In brotherhood of diverse creeds, and harmony of diverse races.' And may the Mahatma whose heart embraced the whole human race, whose mind was as pure as the Ganges and whose faith had all the majestic immensity of the Himalayas, be to us as much a source of everlasting inspiration as a source of everlasing pride!

# SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

(From *The Indian Express*, Dec. 15, 1955.)

Is it already five years since India's heroic Sardar died – or the new Republic's 'stately column broke'? There was nothing sentimental in the tributes paid to him at his graveside for, here was a man who had passed into history in the footsteps of his master. Mr. Nehru knew what he said when he claimed that 'History will record Sardar Patel's story in many pages'; so did Mr. Attlee in holding that 'his name will have a permanent place in the annals of India'. Time which sometimes ruthlessly reverses contemporary verdicts is hardly likely, in the case of the Sardar, to wipe out a single memory of the man who in his day rose to superb heights both as a destroyer and a creator in successive stages and played not only a dominating but a decisive role in transforming the Indian scene and changing the very course of history.

His was a truly wonderful life. Till he was forty he was, so to say, lost in comparative provincial obscurity. From 1916 till death separated them, he was Gandhiji's main lieutenant. From 1946 till his last breath he was Mr. Nehru's principal colleague or mainstay. There were three distinct phases in his life's journey.

The first held him in Gujarat where he was born and bred and where he grew to be a lawyer, busy with his briefs (against a background of the Inns in London, out of which he emerged as 'a smart young man, dressed in a well-cut suit, with a felt hat worn slightly at an angle') and not less active in the Clubs and, of all places, at the card-table. There was then not the remotest hint that such a man would, in spite of his cynicism and much against his own inclinations, liberate himself from the prosperous thraldom of the law courts and accept the leadership of one who promised to him, as to others, no more than wilderness, incarceration and sacrifice of all worldly interests.

The second phase in Vallabhbhai Patel's life began rather unobstrusively. It was at the time of the labour trouble in the city of Ahmedabad that Gandhiji and he met for the first time but they parted without any premonition of future colleagueship on an enduring basis. In Kaira, however, when there was a stir among the peasants and where Vallabhbhai Patel 'found himself', they came closer to each other. Later, when in Gandhiji's own Ashram he happened to be one of the very first to sign the Satyagraha pledge as a protest against the Rowlatt Bills, the peasant-barrister of Kaira silently surrendered himself to the Mahatma. Since that day, whenever Gandhiji desired to lean on someone in Gujarat, whether it be for flood relief in East Kathiawad or civic service in Ahmedabad, or Satyagraha in Bardoli or Borsad, he instinctively turned to Vallabhbhai Patel. Indeed, Gandhiji hailed him as 'our leader in Guajarat' – and went to the extent of publicly avowing that he, even he, must bow down to Vallabhbhai's rulings.

Vallabhbhai Patel's real chance in those days came when Satyagraha touched new heights in Gujarat and when Bardoli became a battle-cry and was to India what, in as unique a context much earlier, Boston was to America. By then Patel presented a monastic appearance though he preserved a militant mien. The country was fast becoming familiar with the presence of Vallabhbhai- 'the brooding eyes and long, Gaulish moustachios of Flaubert', (as George Slocombe vividly described him) 'the man of the hills and forests, burnt by the sun, muscular, hard and sinewy, an Indian Wat Tyler'.

It was no less a man than Srinivasa Sastri who wrote thus to Gandhiji at the end of the Bardoli affair (Sept.1928):

Vallabhbhai Patel has risen to the highest rank. I bow to him in reverence.

It was out of Bardoli that he emerged as our 'Sardar'. He had his reward when he was the very first upon whom the British Government pounced, on the eve of the first civil disobedience movement.

While Gandhiji was yet making preparations, Government (wrote the Congress historian) saw in Vallabhbhai John the Baptist that was the forerunner of Jesus1900 years ago, and forthwith laid their hands on.

From then till the 'Quit India' movement came to a sensational end, he was again and again behind prison bars but never was he happier than when the struggle was at its grimmest and he in the 'firing line'. The British knew to their cost what it was to have to reckon with one so stern, so resolute and so implacable as the Sardar.

During the Gandhian era, and more particularly since he presided over the Karachi session in 1931, the congress had not known a greater Titan than Sardar Patel. Even Pherozeshah Mehta's personal ascendency over the organisation in earlier years was nothing comparable to the Sardar's either in extent or degree. Bending his bow with the strength and skill of an Ulysses, he held the party in awe and controlled the party machine with a ruthlessness that singled him out as 'the supreme boss'; indeed, it became a fashion to describe him as the Feuhrer of the Congress. Unmindful of the jibe that he was 'eager for power and intolerant of opposition', he asked for absolute obedience of partymen to the behests of the High Command and perhaps even commanded a loyalty 'intensely personal, wholly unquestioning and entirely trustful'. Those inside the Congress who dared to cross his path could not help learning what 'amputation of diseased limbs' meant. If the Congress remained in tact, presented a united front and put up a brave fight in freedom's struggle, it was not a little due to the general fear of the Sardar as a Man of Steel who relentlessly imposed his will and stood no nonsense.

If by the time the Congress was called upon to administer the country, in the wake of Independence at the expense of Partition, Sardar Patel had already established himself as one of the major architects of Indian Freedom, it was not only in its effulgence that the world could take the full measure of the man and have an idea of his real stature. Seldom had the transformation of a rebel into an administrator or a fighter into a statesman proved so decisive a factor in the re-orientation of a national scene. With

Mr. Nehru as the Prime Minister assuming over-all responsibility for Government's policies and for the good name of India in the international setting, Sardar Patel was obviously the one man for guarding the entire home-front and bringing to it a measure of security and stability that guaranteed national advance in all directions. Government policies and for the good name of India in the international setting, Sardar Patel was obviously the one man for guarding the entire home- front and bringing to it a measure of security and stability that guaranteed national advance in all directions.

His pre-eminence in the Congress and personal prestige invested him with an authority that he could share only with Mr. Nehru as Deputy Prime Minister. He was in charge of Home: he was also in charge of the States, the 500 and odd Ulsters, big and small, more or less ulcers in the body politic, which called for the expert surgeon's knife. The Sardar gave new proof of his political acumen and an amazing capacity to create, so to say, cosmos out of chaos. By his expert handling of the administrative machinery, tact, firmness and iron will, he performed one of the greatest surgical operations in history and took his place beside the German Bismarck. Rest came to him only with death. But he died as India's consolidator, having achieved what was only attempted by Asoka and Akbar – and no man in his life –time could possibly have done more.

No ordinary man could have politically grown under the wings of the Mahatma and worked in close juxtaposition to Mr. Nehru without being overshadowed but, in his own right, the Sardar was a giant. Yet nothing distinguished him more as a true patriot than his devotion to his Master and loyalty to his chief. It was typical of the man that, whether he agreed with Gandhiji and Mr. Nehru the Prime Minister or not, they could always rely on him.

Sardar Patel had certain obvious limitations which proved to be the more striking in the company of the great. He had none of the erudition of Maulana Azad or the intellectual incandescence of Rajaji; he had little of Rajendra Babu's gentle perseverance and less of Mr. Nehru's revolutionary

spirit. He was no gadfly like his own distinguished brother, Vithalbhai. He was a complete stranger to metaphysical speculation and ideological exuberance. He was no orator who could weave a spell though his speeches were 'brightened by sparkling wit and scintillating humour, by anecdote and epigram, by fable and parable'. In private, he was a man of few words – and he looked too stern in public.

He was, however, a man of latent virtues and hidden depths. 'His stern, rugged and grave exterior', in the expressive phraseology of Mrs. Naidu, was 'like an iron casket that holds rare and hidden gems of devotion, sweetness and charm.' Gandhi, indeed, bore testimony to the Sardar's 'motherly qualities'. But as an enemy or an opponent he was ruthless. A man of tremendous common sense, he was a supreme realist. When once he made up his mind, he knew not what it was to falter –or fail. And in the achievement of his objective, he was as hard as granite and as impregnable as a rock.

He was one of history's strong men. His strength lay in his resoluteness of spirit and relentlessness in action. Mr. Munshi who knew his Sardar sized him up best when he spoke of him as having 'stepped out of Plutarch's gallery of indomitable men, made of the stuff of Prithviraj and Pratap of immortal glory.' He reminds me of another P – and an alien one too – of Parnell, of whom Churchill gives this memorable description:

> Here was a man, stern, grave, reserved, no orator, no ideologue, no spinner of words and phrases, but a being who seemed to exercise unconsciously an indefinable sense of power in repose – of command awaiting the hour.

'An indefinable sense of power in repose' – that was Sardar Patel in a phrase and in a flash.

# Mr. MOHAMMED ALI JINNAH

(From *Free India,* Aug. 12, 1945)

"Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look,
He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.

Shakespeare

Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah has the lean and hungry look of Cassius, and he thinks too much – of himself. A world which is taught to exclaim 'frailty, thy name is woman' can reasonably exclaim: 'vanity, thy name is Jinnah'. He is nothing if not two things in particular – he is nothing if not ambitious and if not theatrical. Montagu said that the roots of his personality lie in ambition. A distinguished co-religionist of his, privately described him as the Douglas Fairbanks of Indian politics. Mr. Jinnah is, indeed an incomparable artist on our political stage. And he is, both on and off the stage, with true histrionic talent, always acting.

He looks so much unlike himself when he slips himself into *chudidar pyjama* and *sherwani* on the few ceremonial occasions that political exigency invents, but he plays his part nevertheless, as if he alone counts. Ordinarily he is occidental in his apparel and appearance. He wears his collar, as Joseph Chamberlain did his eyeglass, 'like a gentleman'. He is immaculately dressed; his sartorial smartness is suggestive of West End. I once heard a distinguished journalist ascribing Mr. Jinnah's ascendancy in the Assembly to his stiff white collar. His presence is as magnetic as his manner imperious.

Khoja-born in Karachi, Mr. Jinnah was supposed to be 'Hindu by race and Muslim by religion', his marriage to a daughter of Sir Dinshaw Petit, a Parsi magnate, promised a more cosmopolitan outlook in the man; his early associations and influences tended to emphasise his nationalist

leanings. The venerable Dadabhai Naoroji was his Nestor; the impeccable Gopal Krishna Gokhale was his model; the sturdy Surendranath Banerjea was the man at whose feet he had learnt his first lessons in politics; the dazzling Chitta Ranjan Das was a personal of friend of his. In the year 1906 he made his first appearance on the Congress platform the year when he acted as secretary to Dadabai Naoroji who presided over the Congress for the third time and preached the gospel of 'Swaraj'. From 1906 till 1916 when he was a central figure at the United Congress in Lucknow, Mr. Jinnah was an unbending Nationalist. 'In unity lies salvation'- was the cardinal note struck by the man who promised to lead the Muslims as well as the Hindus; He was hailed as 'the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity', fondly described as 'the Muslim Gokhale' – and even elevated to the level of a 'Muslim Mazzini'. When in 1913 he left for England in Gokhale's company, Mrs. Sarojini's poetic fancy was stirred to its very depths: 'the Arabian stars and the Egyptian waters' were cited as witness to 'their mutual hopes and dreams for the country of their devoted service.' Those were years when his voice did not falter at all.

Hindus and Mahomedans, united and firm, the voice of the three hundred millions of people vibrating throughout the length and breadth of the country will produce a force which no power on earth can resist.

Such were his perorations! He spoke of 'the straight road' and 'the onward march', with 'wisdom and caution' as watchwords.

Though he joined the Muslim League in 1913, he worked for co-operation between the Congress and the League and was partly instrumental in their joint sessions at Bombay and Lucknow in 1915 and 1916 respectively: he was also partly responsible for the Congress –League scheme. A member of the Imperial Legislative Council from the very beginning, he was one of the nineteen who submitted the famous Memorandum on the Reforms; he gave evidence before the Joint

Committee; he joined the Home Rule League; he supported Pandit Motilal Nehru in the Assembly for the grant of full self-governing Dominion Status for India; he signed the Minority Report of the Reforms Enquiry committee with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru; he protested against the Lee Report; he opposed the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

For a time Nationalist India had few more arresting figures than Mr.Jinnah. But politics has its revenges. The uniting link between the two communities became the dividing hyphen. He flung his eleven points as the champion of the Muslim League with the fatal facility with which Woodrow Wilson flung his fourteen. The more his opponents yielded, the more he wanted them to yield till breaking point was reached. He became the permanent president of the League, and has since become its virtual dictator. This astutest of politicians has taken advantage of every mistake the Congress committed, and exploited to the benefit of his community each new situation created by the Congress and the bureaucracy. And when the Congress ultimately put forward the demand for a Constituent Assembly, he retaliated and demanded the partition of India. He has no regrets.

Mr. Jinnah's obstructive role in the politics of the day, however much it may be regretted, or even resented, offers no excuse to anyone to underestimate his undoubted gifts and manly virtues. He is honourable, independent and fearless; he is selfless in the sense that he wants nothing for himself; he is incorruptible. If there is one man who can never be purchased or bent, it is Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah. He is one of the outstanding men who have ever sat in our legislatures; as a speaker he is pointed and forcible in spite of his incomplete sentences and bad grammar; as a debater he is easily the greatest. He excels in strategy. He can reduce majorities to a state of impotence. He knows how to make himself the deciding factor in important transactions, and how to keep both the government and the Congress guessing and in suspense. In the Central

Legislature, he used to walk into the Government lobby if he wanted to make the Congress feel helpless and into the Congress lobby if he wanted to teach the Government a lesson. Outside the Legislature, he is accustomed to exasperate both.

Mr Jinnah has no political philosophy of his own to sustain him or elevate his demand to the level of a crusade. His political knowledge is almost confined to the Government of India Act. He is not a man of learning; he cannot even be treated seriously as a representative of Muslim culture. Yet, this most secular-minded of politicians is today the undisputed leader of the most fanatical of groups – it is, indeed an irony of the times. Though he professes to lead the multitude, he has no mass sympathies. It was Maulana Mahomed Ali that once twitted him as the Bombay barrister with bulging briefs, who never condescended to descend the Malabar Hill and share the sweat and suffering of the people toiling below. He has no vision, in fact, no constructive statesmanship. Mr. Jinnah's whole mode of operations is destructive; his present-day tendencies are disruptive. He finds it hard to overcome his instinct for truculence and intransigence which in unusual circumstances have yielded to him something of a harvest. Pakistan, whatever be the original impulse behind its emergence as the Muslim demand, has now become an obsession with him, and he has made it an impregnable rock on which any political move from quarters other than its own must be split.

What exasperates the public more than Mr. Jinnah's impossible demand is his hauteur. He has developed to perfection the art of offending men, however high, by his rude manner of which there is impressive documentary evidence since the days of Sir William Vincent who was reported to have asked a friend to 'point to a single I.C.S. officer who could approach Mr. Jinnah in arrogance, offensiveness and insulting treatment of others'. Age has not mellowed him, and on the brink of the

seventy he has not ceased to be a high explosive. For amazing success at the Bar and brilliant parliamentary form, as well as for effrontery and 'calculated insolence', Mr. Jinnah is our Earl of Birkenhead.

Mr. Jinnah's latest triumph – what a triumph indeed – is a tribute to his vanity and not to his judgement. It may butter up his sense of vanity that he has torpedoed the Simla Conference but he has not risen in the world's esteem. He recalls to one's mind Victor Hugo's analogy of the broken cart in the street which neither moves nor allows other carts to move. The road to India's freedom will be cleared of the debris. Nor for long can be the Colossus of Pakistan shake the earth with his feet of clay, Beverley Nichols called Mr. Jinnah 'the most important man in Asia', not realising that it was British policy which "made him but greater seem, not greater grow". It is most unfortunate that Mr. Jinnah refused to grow greater; indeed, as Chintamani said:

Of the many tragedies which we have witnessed in the public life of India during the last forty years, there has scarcely been a tragedy more tragic than Mr.Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

He could have vied with the Mahatma and figured in history as his fellow-architect of a Free United India, but having worked himself up into the Grand Moghul of Indian politics, he has chosen to stake his all on a venture for which (in the expressive phraseology of Asquith) "there is certainly reserved the inexorable sentence which history shows must fall on every form of political imposture".

I cannot help recalling what A.G.G. said of Carson of Ulster fame when the final verdict is to be pronounced on Mr. Jinnah- and here it is:

His figure emerges from the battle with a certain sinister distinction and loneliness. He is fighting for a bad cause that is in full fight, but he is fighting as men fight who count nothing of the cost. The dawn is up- but he will not yield to it. He prefers to go down with the darkness.

# PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

(*Swatantra* Nov.16, 1946)

With the disappearance of the venerable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya from the Indian scene, the world misses a celebrity who made a visible difference to his age. India has lost an 'avatar' who enriched her public life with something unique and of a truly epic quality. With the solitary and inevitable exception of Mahatma Gandhi, there is none in our annals comparable to Malviyaji for the same range of public service or for an equal record of selfless dedication. Immersed in the day-to-day affairs of a mundane world, he had yet brought to his work the breath of an ampler ether, and stood the rare test of having "done nothing contrary to honour" – "nay, nor thought it". Among our public men he was, even more than the Mahatma, an example of all that is best in Hindu culture and the very pattern of Hindu *Dharma,* so much so that the late Chintamani who yielded to none in reverence to the Mahatma, called Malaviyaji a *Dharmatma*.

For over sixty years had Malaviyaji borne on his shoulders the burdens of the most active participation in high – in the very highest – national transactions. What a range of beneficent activity and what a record of brilliant achievement ! Here was a man who, in the early twenties attracted attention at the second session of the Congress, in his thirties distinguished himself in the triple role of teacher, lawyer and journalist, in his forties dominated the legislatures and rose to the Presidentship of the Congress, in his fifties built single handed the Hindu University at Benares and presided over the Congress for the second time, in his sixties, on the one hand, organised the Hindu community and, on the other, faced the rigours of incarceration, in his seventies ventured abroad to uphold the cause of the Motherland at the Round table Conference, and within recent years,

bent by advancing age but not broken by disappointments, retained the optimism of youth. No Hindu spoke with a more authentic voice in our legislatures; no Congressman moved with greater alacrity in a crisis with the live branch of peace in his hand. Of Pandit Malaviya it can be said, more than of any other Indian, what Gardiner said of Morley:

> He is the conscience of the political world-
> the barometer of our corporate soul.
> Tap him and we shall see whether
> We are set at 'foul' or 'fair'.
> He had often been on the losing side;
> sometimes perhaps on the wrong side,
> but never on the side of wrong.

His short figure was reminiscent of Dadabhai's. One never saw him except in immaculate white, and with the 'tilak' on his forehead beaming with Brahminic intelligence. Intellectually he was no giant, though learned he certainly was. His eloquence was, however, of a high order. When he spoke, be it in English or Hindi, his language had the flow and his diction the purity of the Ganga on whose banks, whether at Prayag in the early years, or at Kashi in the later, he loved to live and lived to serve. There was the hand of Providence in his migration to Benares from Allahabad-"Benares, the holy city older than Babylon and Ninevh, the centre of Hindu civilisation and culture for untold centuries, the heart of Hinduism, the nursery of ancient philosophy, of the *Vedas and Vedantas*." It was he more than anyone who endeavoured to revive the glory of Benares by raising a temple of learning and drawing thither the greatest living exponent of Hinduism-our own Radhakrishnan.

Pandit Malaviya, notwithstanding his personal orthodoxy and innate conservatism, was held in the highest esteem by men of all communities.

While the Hindus adored him, Englishmen including Cabinet Members loved him and Muslim noblemen from His Exalted Highness the Nizam downwards, respected him and gave the most liberal endowments to the Hindu University which was his own imperishable monument. Malaviyaji set up a record for collecting funds – and making long speeches. Nobody, to touch the lighter side of life, missed a larger number of trains!

Now that he is gone, leaving behind him a legacy that is incalculable and a memory that will never die, let us pay him our tribute in a spirit of utter reverence. I can think of none nobler or more appropriate than the one which Gopala Krishna Gokhale paid to Dadabhai Naoroji:

'What a life it has been! Its sweet purity, its gentle forbearance, its noble self-denial, its lofty patriotism, its abounding love, its strenuous pursuit of high aims-as one contemplates that, one feels as though one stood in a higher presence'.

And too, his whole life is a sermon on "the promise of a future that will match the past."

# Mrs. SAROJINI NAIDU

(From *The Hindustan Times*, March 3, 1949)

The last moments of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu call to our mind the opening lines of one of her poems:

Death stroked my hair,

And whispered tenderly,

Poor child, shall I redeem

Thee from thy pain?

Though she was ailing for some time, yesterday in the early hours of the morning, Death came to her and she died in harness at the government house in Lucknow. Wrapped in a golden-embroidered shawl and covered with floral wreaths, her body was carried to the banks of the *Gomti* where the funeral was attended, among others, by the Governor-General and the Prime Minister, the whole setting being in complete harmony with the colourful personality whose loss India mourns.

Mrs. Naidu's life could well be described as a song of service to the motherland for, there was a truly poetic quality in her patriotism and sense of devotion to the causes that moved her. And if the song was rapturous, as it certainly was, it was because of her vivacious nature and emotional exuberance, which were peculiarly characteristic of her own Bengal. The genius of the soil and the influence of heredity bore their impress on her even at the tender age of 11 when she broke into song while sighing over figures. Three years of study in England and fruitful literary contacts enabled her to escape from alien influences and traditional fetters and grow, in course of time, into a lyricist whose intensity of feeling and freshness of approach enriched English verse.

On her place as a poetess it is for the literary critics to dilate, but of her place a as leader of Indian womanhood and as a life-long votary at the altar of Indian Freedom, there is, and can be, hardly any dispute or doubt.

A rebel at heart, by her marriage with Dr. M. Govindarajulu Naidu she broke the bonds of caste while, by her mission in life, she tore away the bondage of slavery. Her impassioned eloquence in the cause of her backward sisters was a trumpet-call to their finer emotions.

To four men she was more closely drawn in life than to others. She fascinated Gokhale; she befriended Jinnah; she influenced Jawaharlal; she served Gandhiji. From Mr. Gokhale she learnt the secret of 'national righteousness'; by the side of Mr. Jinnah she stood in happier times as an apostle of Indian unity; with Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru she dreamed dreams of a great future; and to Gandhiji she dedicated herself in the cause of India's Freedom.

Despite broken health, Mrs. Naidu gladly suffered repeated incarceration. The playfulness of mood and gaiety of spirit which were hers in abundance, never deserted her ever in dismal prison cells. Essentially meant for the salons, she was at her best in the drawing room, while releasing her shafts with an exasperating impartiality. As a hostess she was lavish, and in the cosmopolitan groups that surrounded her, on her invitation on their own, hers was invariably the first joke-and the last word. But on the more formal occasions when she made her appearance in public she was the very spirit of the Indian incarnate, and her oratorical performances were spell-binding. Indeed, on such occasions she instantly transported herself from the mundane world to the sublime and similarly uplifted her audience.

The first Indian woman to preside over the Indian National Congress and over an international gathering like the Asian Relations Conference, she was aptly the first among our women to stand on 'the golden threshold' of a Free India as Governor of Uttar Pradesh. Yet no governorship could add to her greatness. Her death removes from the contemporary scene a world personality. A rare blossom and a radiant spirit, she leaves behind her a deathless memory, the memory of a 'wandering minstrel' and an 'angel of grace' who fulfilled her mission and bequeathed the legacy of a noble example.

# C. R. DAS

It is thirty-one years now since Chitta Ranjan Das died-and he was but fifty-five when he died. In him the country lost one of the most outstanding political leaders of his generation – and his own Bengal (the undivided Bengal that was) 'the kingliest of dreamers'. Even the haughty Earl of Birkenhead, the then Secretary of State for India but no friend of hers, joined us in mourning 'the extinction of a vivid, arresting and versatile personality' while, at this end, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, from the Congress presidential chair at Kanpur, paid a thundering tribute to the man 'whose whole being was a Vaishnavite rhapsody of incomparable passion for the liberty of his Motherland.'

It was when Bengal rose to new heights of emotional idealism on the high tide of the Swadeshi movement, in direct challenge to the Curzonian gospel of partition, that Das, till then a struggling barrister and a second-rate lyricist, came into his own. It was the famous Alipore conspiracy case of 1908 in which Sri Aurobindo Ghose was involved that gave him a chance to distinguish himself alike as a legal luminary and a patron of political works. His 'celebrated, poetically inspired, and romantic peroration' in the trail of Aurobindo made Mr. Das's name a household word in the province which had no dearth of celebrities. Eight years later, he presided over the Bengal Provincial Conference and definitely arrived in public life. In the Congress of 1917 held at Calcutta – he had a hand in the election of Mrs. Besant as the president – he raised his powerful voice in supporting the resolution on self-government and in championing the cause of the Ali Brothers who were then interned in Chindwara.

It was the Punjab tragedy in 1919 that, however, discovered Mr. Das (and Pandit Motilal Nehru). When he went to the Punjab for enquiry on behalf of the Congress, he not only paid his own expenses but was supposed

to have spent during his stay there Rs. 50,000. "This large-heartedness", as the Mahatma said "towards all who sought his help made him the undisputed ruler of young hearts." At the Amritsar session of the Congress that year (1919) which was held under Motilal Nehru's presidentship, Gandhi, Tilak and Das were the three leading personalities. Each, a host in himself, pressed his own point of view in regard to the Reforms resolution; Mr. Das was for the non-co-operation from within the councils or plain and downright obstruction. A split in the congress seemed imminent but the Lokamanya effected a compromise by exhorting the Congress to adopt 'Responsive co-operation' – a phrase by which the Maharatta politicians for long swore.

A few months later, the Khilafat problem, and the Hunter Committee Report created a grave situation in the country and a special session of the congress was held at Calcutta in September 1920, with Lala Lajpat Rai as the president. Gandhiji who was then beginning to hold an unprecedented sway over his countrymen declared his intention of launching the N.C.O. Movement while Mr. Das valiantly, and consistently with his stand at Amritsar, moved a resolution to the effect that the nationalists would not accept any ministry or any post of responsibility under the Government, that if the nationalists were in a minority they would obstruct, good, bad and indifferent measures alike, that if they were in a majority they would resign and seek re-election and again resign. In the full effulgence of his spiritual glow, the Mahatma dominated the session and scored a victory. Though he withdrew his candidature and made his colleagues withdraw theirs from the legislatures as a result of the Calcutta mandate, Mr. Das faced the Mahatma again at Nagpur in 1920. The working of these two, yet opposing forces, was thus felicitously described by their colleague, Mr. Jayakar:

Vigorous, forceful, constitutional, law-abiding the doyen of the bar, Das was

a mighty contrast, with his fine physique and tall figure to the feeble, humble, gentle, and apologetic Mahatmaji. In every discussion that took place, one could observe these two great men working towards a common end but with different mentalities. Das was like a great sledge-hammer beating his objects into shape as he wanted. Yet Gandhiji was like a fine chisel cutting through steel without any noise. Invariably Gandhiji prevailed by the superior force of truth and logic.

Mr. Das, however, left his impress on the Nagpur session and the resolution relating to the councils had to be considerably modified to meet his view point.

Mr. Das had fundamental differences with the Mahatma. Yet there was not the least doubt that he came under the saint's influence. In January 1921, he flung away the fortunes of a roaring practice at the bar and by that rare act of renunciation he at once became the idol of the young Bengal and (*Desabandhu*) friend of the country. Stunned and puzzled at his marvellous influence, the Government of Bengal decided to keep on the Statute Book the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditous Meetings Act. The inability of the Bengal Government to stem the rising tide of the volunteers' rush to the jails in response to Mr. Das's clarion call and the failure of Lord Ronaldshay to arrive at a settlement with him led to his arrest which sent a wave of indignation throughout the country. Mr. Das was tried and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment in February 1922, when his countrymen bowed to him in utter admiration of not alone the courage with which he courted the rigours of jail life but of the example he had set.

The speeches and statements made by him after his release disclosed a change in his outlook. He pressed for a return to the councils and an attack on the citadels of authority through them. He would not shrink from expressing to the public what he felt or from practising what he preached. The fateful retreat at Bardoli, the incarceration of the Mahatma and the

consequential depression in the country, the purposeless peregrinations of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, the faith of several Congressmen in the council programme, gave an impetus to Mr. Das to raise his own standard at Gaya where he presided over the Congress. At Gaya, a battle royal was fought between the two wings of the Congress. But the one led by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari scored. It was too much for a man of the fiery impulses and the imperious will of Mr. Das.

On January 1, 1923, he resigned his presidentship of the All India Congress Committee and founded his own party. Several Congress leaders rallied round his banner, the foremost among them being the elder Pandit of Allahabad. There was a new stir in the country. He thundered that, within six months, he would convert the minority into a majority. From that day until sometime after the release of the Mahatma, the career of Mr. Das was one tumultuous gallop, punctuated with the clash of swords, and the hint of battles. Neither did he ask for nor did he give quarter. He took no rest and gave no rest. He swept the land like a tornado. They said that he was out to occupy the throne rendered vacant by the Mahatma. He had no patience with opponents and detractors. A challenge was music to his ears. The more fierce the challenge the more formidable he grew. The Swarajya Party soon gathered strength and became as powerful as popular, now offering battle to the No-changers, now inflicting severe losses on the bureaucracy.

The rise of the Swarajya Party (which led to internal differences and internecine squabbles in the Congress and to general depression in the country as well as the Hindu-Muslim riots) gave a tremendous set-back to the non-co-operation movement. It was at this juncture that a strong 'Centre Party', standing for unity and co-operation in Congress ranks, came into existence, chiefly through the efforts of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, and passed at the All India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay in the last week of May 1923, a compromise resolution, suspending all propaganda against

council entry. But the resolution brought no peace to the land. It even raised a furious controversy about the power of the A. I. C. C. to suspend a resolution of the congress. The initial split not only gave rise to party conflicts but created confusion. It was the special congress that met at Delhi during the third week of September 1923, with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as president, that succeeded in averting an immediate crisis in the congress by passing at the instance of Maulana Mahomed Ali who produced the Mahatma's message from the jail, a resolution ratifying the Bombay compromise and permitting Congressmen to contest elections and vote there in. This decision for a time set at rest all controversies and substantially helped the Swarajya Party to sweep the polls in the elections to the councils.

When Mr. Das who deliberately stuck to his own province to make the experiment of council-wrecking, stood at the helm of the largest single party in the Bengal Legislative Council, Lord Lytton (the then Governor of Bengal) invited him on December 11, 1923 to form the Ministry but five days later, Mr. Das rejected Lord Lytton's invitation as his conditions were not accepted. Then came the Cocanada Congress which sprang yet another surprise on the Indian public. The arch-rebels at Gaya representing the two wings of Congress, Mr. Das and Mr. Rajagopalachari joined hands. A resolution was passed ratifying that one carried at Delhi. At the Cocanada session Mr. Das had come in for severe criticism, for having hastily entered into a pact with the Bengal Muslims. He made an impassioned speech removing all misapprehensions. The pact, as a principle colleague of his in Bombay pointed out, was 'not the outcome of low sense of expediency but of a broadminded vision which saw the necessity of placating the Mahomedans as brethren'.

Following his unique success in capturing the Bengal Legislative Council, he annexed the Calcutta Corporation for mere whistling. The position he acquired in the Corporation of the second largest city in the British Empire was an eye-sore to the Anglo-Indian world. Indeed, the

*Statesman* caustically described the civic body as 'the Corporation nominated by Mr. C. R. Das'.

In May 1924, his presence at the Serajganj conference was a subject of a heated controversy in the press in view of his support, be it silent, to the resolution on Gopinath Saha. It may be recalled that 'while adhering to the policy of non-violence', the conference paid 'its respectful homage' to Gopinath Saha who suffered capital punishment in connection with Mr. Dey's murder. The reptile section of the press and panic-stricken politicians alike demanded Mr. Das's head on a charger while the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at its meeting in Ahmedabad at the initiative of no less a man than Gandhiji, made his position risky and unenviable. But Mr. Das was undaunted. He faced the situation with indomitable courage and led his party from victory to victory so that, when the Swarajists held their first conference in Calcutta, in the first week of September 1924, they were hailed as the most popular and powerful political party in the country.

And what was the result of the Swarajists' hold on the people? The government were determined to crush the new party. They resorted to repression, passed the Bengal Ordinance, and arrested over seventy men, mostly belonging to the Swarajya party. There were persistent rumours of the Government's intention to strike down the tallest in the field, if there was but the slightest indication of a widening rift in the Congress lute. But the situation was saved by the Mahatma who, sensing danger, entered into a pact with Mr. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru in spite of his differences with them. Criticising the pact, a keen-witted non-co-operator said: "Compromise implied give and take. But all the giving must be by Gandhi while all the taking by Mr. Das." And at the Belgaum Congress, which was presided over by the Mahatma, attempts were made to bring the two wings of Congress nearer to each other.

A few months after the Belgaum session, his health having been shattered, Mr. Das hastened to Patna to recuperate it but by the middle of

March he was again required in Calcutta in the Council meeting. Mr. Das had to go to the Council on a stretcher. His presence foiled the plans of the government for giving a fresh lease of life to dyarchy.

After burying dyarchy full five fathoms deep, Mr. Das, with laurels on his brow, went back to Patna. The failure of dyarchy in several provinces and its complete collapse in C. P., the minority report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee, the clamour of Europeans in India for better understanding with the Swarajists, the gestures of Lord Birkenhead and his own convictions, wrought a change in Mr. Das's mind. He hurled a surprise at the world by speaking from the presidential chair of the Faridpur conference, of his desire for co-operation on 'honourable terms' and of his love for village reconstruction. His Faridpur address had since come to be regarded as his last political testament. He left Faridpur for Darjeeling, and the fatal end to his life came too suddenly when he was looking for a united Congress and dreaming of Swaraj.

Warm sentiments and generous impulses, forensic abilities and remarkable powers of eloquence, dauntless courage and dynamic energy, untiring advocacy of a cause and unflagging devotion to the motherland, gift for organisation and consummate ability in the management of men, nearness to the heart of the poor and a touch of imagination 'that gives wings to one's purposes and range to one's vision', and above all, his unrivalled sacrifices had raised Mr. Das to a pedestal next only to the Mahatma's in the affections of his countrymen. His was an imposing figure, slightly suggestive of Napolean like whom he too met his Waterloos but remained proud. Chittaranjan was really 'one of those men whose vision covered the whole horizon and whose feet filled the whole earth'. There was no niggardliness in his composition. He did not know what it was to be economical or calculating. "When he earned he would give, when he ceased to earn he would borrow". His charities were as varied as they were numerous; he indeed delighted in getting rid of money. In his case,

magnanimity bordered on weakness. Did he not pay his barber on the railway journey ten rupees for a shave and, when asked why he committed such an indiscretion, did he not make the characteristic observation that it was a trifle to him but a fortune to the barber?

This kind of extravagance often involved him in scrapes. But he always dared and never grudged the throe. He found joy in facing opposition rather than in overcoming it. He was a born fighter, if there was ever one. And to him what really mattered was the end not the means. If he was a terror to his opponents, he was no less a terror to his friends and partymen. As the leader of the Swarajya party, he was an autocrat. Constitutional procedure was for the common folk, not for him and Motilal! His habitual generosity forsook him in conflict and if anyone stood in his way he merely smashed him. And yet in his last days there was in him a certain mellowness which responded to the secret melodies of an unknown '*maya*'.

If he lived longer, the story of Bengal would have been possibly different. And though he died comparatively early in his middle fifties, he left behind him the unfading memory of a patriot who completely effaced himself in the pursuit of his country's freedom and his own life's mission. There was in him an extraordinary combination of the revolutionary's reckless disregard of consequences, of something of the Lokamanya's political acumen and strategy and not a little of the Mahatma's idealism and spirit of renunciation.

'If Gokhale set the example of selfless service for the sake of the Motherland, if Gandhiji gave a new orientation to the philosophy of patriotism and raised it to the level of religion, Mr. Das bequeathed to the land an example of sacrifice which never wilts from human memory.' And there was indeed something distinctive in his contribution to India's evolution as a nation: he was the link and linchpin between Aurobindo, the prophet of Nationalism and Gandhi, the Apostle of Freedom.

# MOTILAL NEHRU

(*The Indian Express* – May 7, 1956)

If Motilal Nehru were alive, he would have been 95yesterday (May 6). But it was not to be. It is a trifle staggering to think that it is now a full quarter of a century since he passed away. He died at the age of 70 – and he died at the very height of his fame and glory.

If he did not live to see the emergence of India into full-orbed freedom, he lived to foresee it. For, unforgettable were his last words to Gandhiji "I am going soon. And I shall not be here to see Swaraj. But I know that you have won it." He knew it – in all his greatness. But there was one thing he had perhaps not foreseen (to have a sense of fulfilment of his joy) – that in the fullness of time, on the high tide of freedom his only beloved son was to be the pivot as well as the pilot of the nation.

Irrespective of what he saw or did not live to see, and irrespective, too, of what he foresaw or failed to foresee, when the full measure of the man was taken, there was little doubt that, in his own right, he was an Olympion, standing on a peak of his own and waving to his countrymen from a somewhat isolated eminence.

No decade in our annals was more markedly the prolific parent of a succession of giants in India than the sixth of the nineteenth century or the eighteen-hundred sixties. It was the beginning of the post-Mutiny period when high above the smouldering embers of the Mughal empire the trident of Queen Victoria dominated the Imperial scene. Not the least illustrious of the chosen band cradled in that decade of destiny, was Motilal Nehru. It was, indeed, one of history's most startling coincidences that Rabindranath Tagore and Motilal Nehru – or the Bard and the Baron (of India) – were born, not only in the same year and even in the same month, but on the same day – the memorable sixth of May 1861. What a day it was which

gave India two such rare being as Maharshi Devendranath's son and Jawaharlal's father – a day, indeed, it was when the Angels of Grace blessed the Motherland with an unknown opulence!

Scion of a proud and prosperous Kashimiri stock that moved on, through the vicissitudes of history from Srinagar to Delhi and from Delhi to Agra, Motilal was born a three month posthumous child. If Motilal the boy missed the father but for the blood in his veins, he inherited from his mother, according to authentic reports, a tremendous will and the power to dominate. Those qualities manifested themselves both in his 'adventures and misadventures'. His schooling helped him to pick up English, besides Oriental languages – Persian and Arabic, Finally, he emerged as a gold medalist in the High Court Vakil examination.

Motilal started his career at the bar under the fostering care and homely auspices of his elder brother whose demise, three years later, changed the course of his life. From the professional point of view, he was no loser (for he got his brother's briefs, having settled down to serious work) while on the domestic front, his responsibilities multiplied. A man of strong determination and iron will, he persisted and persevered till he rose to be a leader of the bar.

Motilal's lucrative practice led to his transformation into one of the Moghuls of our social life. Before the nineteenth century reached its end, he established himself in Anand Bhawan which came to be likened to "the ancestral house of a class in the Highlands of Scotland", or one of the stately country houses in England owned by the Whig aristocracy. There Motilal presided with a patrician dignity, and around him, there was everything which money could purchase or cultivated taste dictate. And there came a time too when his children moved amidst English governesses, before the eldest – the boy Jawaharlal – could have a dash to distant Horrow. Nor were Europeon tours for the whole family unknown. From the Indian view point, it was a life of affluence and expensive taste - indeed of the West End pattern.

Motilal's political opinions were in conformity with his social comfort – and not only unreconciled to, but in sharp conflict with, later-day conversion. As every other political being of his day, he was a Congressman, and one of the Right Wing, then labelled Moderate. He happened to attend the stormy Surat session, but had no truck with the extremists. Not even the earlier convulsions in Bengal had stirred him deeply though he happened to protest against the more truculent pronouncements of the Tory Viceroy. It was widely believed that he had a horror of the religious back-ground of Indian nationalism and of the revival of India's ancient times. He was President of the U.P. Provincial Committee, without prejudice to his Liberal leanings or Moderate methods.

Life dragged on with a dreary placidity till the guns boomed on the Western Front and a blundering bureaucracy in India found itself confronted with a woman rebel. The internment of Mrs. Besant made a difference to the attitude to the British Government in India. There was a departure from orthodox submission to Viceregal vagaries. But he was yet far removed from the days of open revolt against alien tyranny. He saw hope for Indian advance only on the basis of Hindu-Muslim concord, he worked for communal understanding and collaboration; he was happy that the famous Congress-League Scheme was adumbrated at Anand Bhawan.

Those were days when he was yet politically in the company of Sapru and Chintamani, before Montagu arrived in India and drove a wedge in.

Since the first Great War ended and India was in "a state of suppressed excitement", things had not remained the same for him, whether on the home scene or on the political front. Jawaharlal who had, earlier from Harrow, through the epistolary medium, happened to disturb Motilal's political equanimity, was growing visibly restive. Contrary to the father's wishes, if not against his will, young Jawaharlal joined the Satyagraha launched by the Mahatma as a protest against the Rowlatt Act. Considerably

apprehensive of the new drift, Motilal invited Gandhiji to Anand Bhawan, where after a short stay, the Mahatma counselled patience to Jawaharlal. But that was all in vain for, in the volume and momentum that the nationalist movement gained under the dark shadows of the Punjab tragedy, all the three alike found themselves plunged headlong into the turbulent streams that lashed against the citadels of British Imperialism and made breaches into bureaucratic fort-walls.

The year 1919 was an epoch-making year in the annals of Indian history. It made the cleavage in political ranks sharper; it widened the gulfs between Great Britain and India or between the British and the Indians; it brought Gandhiji to the forefront of Freedom's struggle: among other things it found Motilal under Ganhiji's banner. And that was but the beginning of a phase.

The presence of Motilal – and of Motilal alone among the veterans – by the side of Gandhiji at the Special Session of the Congress in Calcutta (September 1920) was a decisive factor in the evolution of his personality. The Mahatma's annexation of Anand Bhawan, was doubtless a major event in Indian politics – indeed, an event with far-flung repercussions on the course of contemporary history.

Questions often arose whether Motilal's allegiance to the Mahatma was accidental or deliberate – and if deliberate, whether it was due to self-propulsion or to filial pressure. It was idle speculation. Those of Motilal's friends and former colleagues who were thoroughly unreconciled to the development were not found wanting in political charity for there came to their quivering lips the easy gibe that it was a case of the son leading the father.

One apocryphal story I heard in those days was that my old Chief, Chintamani, who revelled in antithetical style, once accosted Jawaharlal as 'physical son and political father of Motilal'. It would be untrue to suggest that Jawaharlal's unrestrained commitments to the new Messiah

had no influence whatsoever on the aged father of an only son who was so much the promise and prop of the house. But it would be equally wicked to suggest that the lion-hearted Motilal had lost all his courage and become a bit of wax in the hands of either a young rebel or an old seer.

A man of noble pride and strong prejudices, Motilal, as an Indian, felt hurt by British obduracy or Imperial insolence. Angered, he could be ruthless – and dauntless too. It was manifestly a case of the old lion shaking his manes. Motilal was always Motilal : he never lacked a will of his own though he found it hard to conform to any type of approved pattern and harder to resist the combined effect on him of the Mahatma's mystic influence and Jawaharlal's ideological obsessions. Never had he blindly- or meekly – toed the line. When the battle was raised inside the Congress for a return to Parliamentary methods of political warfare and to "Parnellism" as a mode of action, he joined hands with his fellow –Titan from Bengal, C.R.Das. It was a fashion in those days to say that Motilal was, if idealistically by the side of Gandhiji, psychologically by the side of Chitta Ranjan.

It was perhaps as the head of the Swarajists and as the leader of opposition in the old Central Legislature, that Motilal was in his element and at his best, as the astutest politician living in India and a Parliamentary gladiator of the first order. In political acumen, in forensic eloquence, in Parliamentary prowess and above all in personality, head and shoulders above his colleagues in the Congress (Swarajist wing) who constituted the most solid and scintillating phalanx that had ever stormed our councils, mighty Motilal singled himself out – to quote Mr. Arnold Ward of the Spectator - as "The future Prime Minister – of India" . Alas that was not to be, Destiny having played strange tricks.

But there was spiritual compensation for the omission in history as Motilal who sowed "the seeds of a larger growth", was to Jawaharlal who has since ascended the summit, what Chatham was to Pitt.

Motilal who, according to Sapru, had a rare gift for constructing legal theories, made a gallant and desperate effort to create constitutional cosmos out of the political chaos that confronted him. The All-Parties' Conference where he played a dominating part, the Report – that splendid essay in constitution-making –which was associated with his name and was his handiwork in part collaboration with Sapru, and the Round Table Conference in making which a reality he stood, though behind the scenes, solidly behind Sapru, were all intended to create the atmosphere in which his constructive statesmanship could be harnessed to a larger good.

Once again, in Calcutta, where seven years earlier he had taken up the cross, he raised his powerful voice from the Congress *gaddi* half in hope, half in despair. By that time Jawaharlal had drifted a trifle farther from him, with the excuse that he later stood vindicated. A new mood had, however, seized the old stalwart. He rose to superb heights of renunciation when he parted with his legendary private residence - Anand Bhawan – and willed it away to the Congress which had a little later, and a little imperceptibly, passed into the hands of the son, who was marked out as the architect of the new order (though few knew the shape of things to come). In what proved to be the last lap of his life, Motilal was war-weary and the hapless victim of a strange oppression and unrelieved restlessness. Physically, he was shattered. How unaccountable it was that he was more than once behind the prison bars, put there by alien "Dogberries, dressed in brief little authority" who had once deemed it a privilege to be entertained in Anand Bhavan when wine sparkled if not flowed, and fashion was in its swim as much in the bathing pools inside as on the luscious lawns outside.

Motilal, in his declining years, seemed to typify in himself the spirit of a wounded lion; if wounded he lay, a lion he remained till the end. There was always in him an innate majesty that held people in awe and compelled their instantaneous recognition; the nation accepted his leonine domination with a readiness that was unmistakable. A man of high spirits, he was known as much for his loud laughter as for his violent explosions, and as

much for his wit and humour as for 'bouts of merriment'. He had always loved life since, as a student of the College at Allahabad, (if I may unearth something forgotten) he addressed the following poem to a class-fellow:

A WASHERMAN AT HOME

"Budhu, thou are good and mild,
Ugly as thy donkey wild;
Thou wasn't made for usefulness,
Washing muslin, silk and dress,
Pity 'tis thou dost not bleach,
Thou, star of thy profession high,
Who never dost thy clothing buy;
For all the people, high and low,
Give thee their clothes and quietly go;
How pleasant 'tis when thou dost sit
Arrayed in silk on the dirty pit;
In heap the dresses round thee lie,
Thy washing kit is also by:
There's the soap that washes white
All but thee, O! ugly sight;
As on the pit thou smiling sit'st,
Thy better half admires thy wits."

No mean representative of an outstanding generation, Motilal Nehu stood on a pedestal of his own, with few near him and hardly anyone above him. His noble bearing, his princely profile and his Roman appearance, invested his presence alike with a charm and an awe that belonged more to other days and other climes. As Balfour said of Harcourt: 'Whether he spoke or was silent, no one could forget for a moment that he was present! A man of the highest intellectual gifts, his mind seldom swayed

by primal emotions and little given to hark back to an earlier time but always governed by an outlook, decisively secular and wholly temporal. Nobody had more manfully struggled to reconcile conservative instinct to radical sentiment or had hewn his way through the rough-and-tumble of the times with an equal joy of battle or a readier sense of enjoyment of life. Of an illustrious Victorian statesman it was said:

There was about him that sense of abundance which is one of the chief characteristics of greatness. He was not a pool of still waters, but a roaring torrent of a man, fed by inexhaustible springs of energy and overwhelming its banks with careless profusion. All the forces of his great vitality flowed into the channels of the mind....'

How largely was this true of our own Motilal Nehru! His life, in a way fell short of full achievement. It was given to him to taste alike "the intoxicating flavour of the wine of victory and the bitterness of deep draughts from the cup of defeat". He bore his lot, and played his part, in the style of the great heroes of history. No office was too high to be within his reach but no office could have added to his greatness. By his intellectual gifts and political courage, by his highly cultivated love of the good things of life and an equally highly disciplined will to sacrifice (all that he held dear to larger good), and by the power of his personality – a personality as fascinating as formidable - he passed into history.

And his memory is doubly cherished by – and deeply enshrined in the hearts of – the people for his greatest legacy, to the nation he has so dearly loved and so conspicuously served – a son who has ensured the continuity of the Nehru tradition and made his name "the theme of honour's tongue."

# Dr. SACHIDANANDA SINHA

(From '*Free India', March 4, 1945*)

I count myself in nothing else so happy,
As in a soul remembering my good friends.

-Shakespeare

There is a type of man who is everybody's uncle by a kind of Divine decree. And he becomes a national institution when he is fondly described by men of different nationalities or religious faiths as 'Good Old Uncle'. Lansbury was one such in British public life. In India we have Dr. Sachidananda Sinha who never gets tired of the ever-multiplying number of his nephews and nieces.

Dr. Sinha is a septuagenarian – he will be, before the end of the year, seventy-five, though it is difficult to believe it. His whole life is one long and sustained revolt against the stupid tendency of growing old- especially growing oldish. If Dr. Sinha likes to start the day, so to say, with a white lie by freely resorting to the black dye, and to keep his aggressive moustache in perfect trim, it is with a set purpose. He is out to defy the laws of Nature and fight the very idea of aging – and all that it means. If a woman is as old as she looks and a man is as old as he feels, his is the indomitable spirit that makes him feel young. Dr.Johnson insisted that he was 'a young fellow'; Holmes maintained he was eighty three years young; Dr. Sinha belongs to the same heroic breed.

One of the most remarkable contemporary personalities in India, he is, in Dr. C.R. Reddy's words, 'a big man in every way, big in body, bigger in mind, and biggest of all in heart'. I should be sorry for the young journalist who has not known Dr. Sinha, and sorrier for the young journalist who has not attracted his notice, for the simple reason that Dr. Sinha has been in no other respect more enthusiastic than in encouraging rising talent or in more generous in rushing to the rescue of journalists thrown out of harness or flung into cold streets. Nobody in India has read more journals or read

them with greater care; nor has any turned to journalists with a greater concern for their well-being.

Whatever else he was or was not, he has been a journalist, though he is so much unlike journalists in many ways. His active connection with journalism began in the last year of the last century when he founded the *Kayashta Samachar* – the fore-runner of *Hindustan Review* – which is now in its 42nd year of publication. He was in a sense the inspirer of the *Modern Review* which was founded at Allahabad by Babu Ramananda Chatterji. He also founded the Indian people, which was later incorporated in the *Leader* and which gave Chintamani his first foothold in the North. Periodical journalism owes much to him – perhaps more to him than to anybody else. If the *Hindustan Review* has been to him a labour of love, it has been to generations of readers a valuable guide to the study of public affairs. The earlier numbers of that periodical are among the most treasured possessions that a serious student of Indian politics could lay hands on.

In his own province of Bihar Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha is a man without a second with the solitary exception of that jewel of the Indian Nation, Babu Rajendra Prasad, who was the first to acknowledge Dr. Sinha's unparalleled services in the creation of Bihar as a separate Province. An old member of the Imperial Council and its first Deputy Speaker, he rose to be a Finance Member in Bihar and he was the first Indian to occupy that exalted position. He was the Vice-Chancellor of the Patna University for three consecutive terms. A barrister by profession, Dr. Sinha completed more than half a century at the Bar; nevertheless his heart is in politics and journalism – the two poles to the ladder of fame. He belonged to the generation which found legal eminence a profitable investment in politics, took place among the dignitaries of the Congress in its earlier years when tail coats and top hats dominated the scene. The additional role of a publicist and the sovereign boon of affluence reinforced his rise in the larger arena of public life. Wherever he lived, at Allahabad or at Patna, his home at once became the ready rendezvous of the intellectuals. Till the Montford era, he was an active Congressman; since then he has studiously kept aloof from the currents of party politics and functioned as an Independent, owing

allegiance to none and critical of all, but in the friendliest spirit. Decades have passed by registering mighty changes in the Indian scene. Yet Dr. Sinha remains the same old genial soul, a sympathetic, if a trifle detached, observer of life's pageant and peep-show.

An extremely well-read man, the core of his thought and the style of his speaking and writing are mid-Victorian; sentences are long and ponderous; his mannerisms have an antique flavour. His delivery is dignified and his diction copious. In his speeches and writings there is solid thought - and a plethora of apt quotation. He is at his best in select company and in convivial atmosphere, and he can, by his fund of anecdote and natural wit, entertain his hearers for hours. His presence is an antidote to one's depression, his talk is one continuous stream of good humour.

It is difficult to picture Dr.Sinha without his books which go on multiplying, week by week. They cover every aspect of life and constitute a mighty arsenal of knowledge. As each book passes from his hand to the magnificent library which is his priceless gift to Patna, it bears the well-thumbed marks of a voracious reader. Of all things in life, nothing is more difficult than keeping one's books, for in the matter of books, one's best friends are one's worst enemies. It is one of Dr. Sinha's witty dicta that he is a fool who lends a book, and a greater fool is he who returns it while he himself refuses to be fooled.

It is a wonder how amidst all his multifarious activities, Dr. Sinha manages to cope with his voluminous correspondence. For preserving files and papers and disposing of letters, there are few men in the country who could beat his record. He has evolved a system of his own and retained the habit of a life-time which exasperates his friends. His promptitude and thoroughness are amazing – and he writes with equal zest to the oldest of friends and to the latest of acquaintances.

Dr. Sinha is one of the few surviving giants of an India that is fast vanishing. Everything came to him easily as to Rosebery – 'honours, money, phrases, opinions, positions'. A friend of mine tells me often, much to my own comfort, that even fine writing comes next to fine living. Ah! That is a phrase. Fine living – that is Dr. Sinha's greatest blessing as well as most

inspiring example. “I know few men”, says Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, “who know so many men worth knowing in all parts of the world” as Dr. Sinha, with a happy gift for earning the enduring regard of the most diverse types of men and women. A splendid host, he has always been able to gather under his hospitable roof, men of all races, ranks, religions, “in harmonious intercourse, irrespective of the most startling and bitter divergences of personal and political views on vital problems.” A delightful guest, he is a class apart as a host. His dinner table has always attracted ‘an international fraternity’, his residence, his papers, his books, his dinners, and his riotous talk – they have, indeed a fullness that one can hardly come across.

A journalist who knew not the pinch of hunger. A politician who roused no hostility, a Vice-Chancellor who accepted no salary, a sometime member of an Executive Council who escaped the infection of titular distinction, a man who made no enemies, Dr. Sinha is a rare personage. There is about him a baronial style. He has much of the charm of a typical country-squire and all the expansiveness of a peer. Nature has cast him in the mould of a Duke. Of Lord Rhondda (a member of the British Cabinet in the last Great War), a miners’ leader was reported to have said to Mr. Harold Begbie :

Rhondda has the income of a duke and the tastes of a peasant, whereas I have the income of a peasant and the tastes of a duke.

Dr. Sinha has both the income and the tastes of a duke. If he were born in England, he would have been tipped for the Indian Viceroyalty. His sense of happiness, however, lies not in the realisation of vaulting ambition, but in making the best use of his opportunities. What the Earl of Birkhenhead says of the Earl of Lonsdale suits him admirably:

“His fame does not, and will not, depend upon any particular achievement. It depends rather upon the whole geniality and personality of the man.”

It is impossible not to love this genial old man; this consummate entertainer: this ‘king of good company’.

# MEN AND MEMORIES

*(*From *Swatantra Annual, 1951)*

"The real interest of one's early life," writes George W. E. Russell, the prince of *raconteurs* who had kept a diary since he was twelve, "is in its Links with the past through the old people whom one has known." Having never gone beyond a fitful attempt or two in keeping a diary though I had before me the example of my father, who for no ostensible reason, maintained one for 40 years till his last breath, I can only summon memory to my aid in recalling some past events and scenes.

Among the haziest and proudest memories of my boyhood there was the thrill of having been patted by Romesh Chunder Dutt and seated in the lap of Bipin Chandra Pal when on different occasions they happened to visit my hometown, Rajahmundry, and were far beyond my comprehension. Things were different when I encountered on the Rajahmundry railway platform some eminent men – old Motilal Ghose who said that while his skin was old his spirit was still young, Devi Prasad Sarvadhikari, Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, who took us by agreeable surprise by touching the feet of our own Subba Rau Pantulu, and Bhupendra Nath Basu who was described to have 'chemical tears' in his eyes. It was also my privilege to have seen in his own flat in Bombay, Dinshaw Edulji Wacha who told Chintamani in 1933 that he had missed no single issue of the *Economist* (London) since 1861!

## Sir C. Y. CHINTAMANI

These landmarks in memory, so isolated and detached, necessarily begin and end in themselves. But not so the memories that cluster round Chintamani and Sapru, close association with whom during my twelve-year stay at Allahabad I have always regarded as the greatest single blessing in my life. My talks with them individually were so many and so intimate that I could have asked for no other 'liberal education' which, if I may say

so, was also Liberal education, as they were fully steeped in Gladstonian Liberalism and their whole political outlook was richly coloured by it. Born a little earlier in England, both Sapru and Chintamani – Chintamani thought that Sapru was so much like Rosebery while Chintamani was, in my view, so much like Harcourt – would have found their place beside Asquith and Morley. Both of them were great conversationalists with this difference that Chintamani was more animated while Sapru was more mellowed. I have always regretted that some of the best things said by them were lost in the wastes of conversation and not unoften felt that their 'resurrection' was a public service.

I met Chintamani for the first time in 1923 when after resigning his Ministership in U. P., he paid a visit to Rajahmundry and gave a public address in what was by a curious coincidence called the Chintamani theatre. His host, veteran Subba Rau Pantulu, put him up in his garden house, very nearly beyond the municipal limits ostensibly for giving him a quiet time but really for social reasons! There in sylvan surroundings I met him for a talk one night having been commended to him as a journalistic aspirant. Lying in bed with pillows on every side, he asked me in his stentorian voice what attracted me to journalism, of all professions. "Your own example, Sir," I said, when he smiled and at once asked me if I could give him in chronological order the names of all the Congress presidents since the inception of the Congress. I stood the test – and earned his friendship. He would not let me go without advice. So he reeled off a sentence in that Johnsonian manner which he so much made his own : "Even as it is said that he does not know Shakespeare who only Shakespeare knows, he does not know, Indian politics who only Indian politics knows". I felt crushed under the weight of the sentence but deposited it securely in my mind.

Six years later when he came to Madras for a Liberal Federation, by which time I was on the *Hindu*, having already made some noise as the author of *Sparks and Fumes* which he personally reviewed for the *Leader*, I saw him in the company of my friend, Ramakotiswara Rau, at the residence

of Sivaswami Aiyar. He was in one of his happiest moods and talked to us of men and things. There is one episode which Madras will very much enjoy even at this distance of time. Somehow Ananda Charlu, well-known for his rugged independence, figured in or talk when Chintamani turned round and said: Have you ever heard this? And it tumbled down pell-mell.

"Ananda Charlu once appeared before Muthuswami Iyer and in the course of his argument ventured a quotation. "Kullubhat once said", he began when Muthuswami Iyer brusquely interrupted him and remarked : "I am not interested in what Kullukbhat said or Anandbhat loved to quote. You may proceed with the main argument." Ananda Charlu immediately retorted, "Nor do I bother what Muthukbhat thinks about it"

To such stories there was no end. The general talk itself was full of interesting bits of information as well as of *obiter dicta.*

Chintamani was away in London at the Round Table Conference when I joined the *Leader* at the beginning of 1931. On his return to Allahabad he was invited one day by Gandhiji to give his exposition of conference proceedings. The only other man present on the occasion was Sardar Patel who was, it seems, a silent listener. At the end Gandhiji was reported to have said : "Mr. Chintamani, I now understand why Gokhale compared your mind to a tailor's shop where every piece of cloth is cut to its proper size and shape."

On February 16 (1931) visitors poured into his room at the *Leader* office to hear his reactions at the R. T. C. and his impressions of the delegates. Having been sent for by Chintamani who apparently realised what my presence meant, I sat with my ears pricked up. It was a truly memorable evening. It is not desirable yet to record all that he said about almost everyone among the Indian delegates. What he, however, said of his friends Srinivasa Sastri and Ramachandra Rao may well be chronicled.

"In all matters, big or small, and in respect of every person, big or small, Sastri's dealings are absolutely straightforward, honourable and unselfish. But the one trouble with him is that while he takes a long time

for making up his mind, and then takes up as much time in considering whether to express his mind as made up, it also takes him very long to decide on the form in which he should say it. On several occasions, even in spite of rehearsals, he would not muster up courage to rise and say what was expected of him and what he himself wanted to say. In him we had a leader who never led."

And this of Mocherla Ramachandra Rao :

"In this entire R. T. C. there was not a man who was less pretentious or more profound. The India office could hardly afford to cope with his demand for blue books. He is India's greatest master of detail in politics."

Speaking of R – he was reminded of their earlier visit to London in 1919 and recalled how on one occasion Ramachandra Rao and Lord Pentland had inadvertently walked away with each other's hat.

Several things come to my mind in connection with Chintamani's first visit to London under the Montagu spell. He saw then, among others, Lord Haldane to whom he carried a letter of introduction. Haldane straightaway told him : "If you want the Indian question to receive proper attention in London, you must simply rush to Spender and prevail upon him to do a leader for you." Chintamani said he did not know Spender though he desired to meet him when Haldane gave him a line for the Editor of the famous *Westminister Gazette*. Spender asked Chintamani to his surprise to write an article on the Indian question and hand it to him. "But it won't have the Spender touch", protested Chintamani. "Leave the Spender touch to Spender", said Spender, "but bring me the article". Next day it was done. "When I read Spender's leader", said Chintamani to me "I could find no trace of my handiwork. It was transformed beyond recognition with the pencil of a master."

Chintamani enjoyed his visits to London immensely and some light may be thrown here on the social or personal aspect of his life. He was Johnsonian as much in his strong prejudices and many oddities as in his

characteristic utterances. He not only visited every vegetarian restaurant in London but visited then in the alphabetic order and, of course, he remembered their names. He used to carry a cigarette case holding 20 cigarettes – and of 20 different brands!

Extremely agreeable on the personal side, Chintamani was inflexible in politics. His mind was 'cut in bronze'. He sacrificed many friendships for the sake of his opinions but not a single opinion for the sake of any friend, much less for the sake of any gain. There was a crisis in his career when, as Editor or the *Leader*, he pursued the Montagu line while Pandit Malaviya, who was the Chairman of the Board of Directors and also the President of the Congress, was committed to the rejection of the Montford Reforms. So one day Chintamani told Malaviyaji : "It is not right that I, as Editor of the *Leader*, should follow a policy diametrically opposite to yours when yours is the right to lay down the policy of the paper. Panditji you should let me go." Malaviya's reply was characteristic of his breadth of vision and magnanimity: "My dear Chintamani" he said, "both you and I love the *Leader* and want it to prosper. Its future lies more with you as Editor than with me as Chairman of the Board of Directors. If, in order to avoid any embarrassment, one of us should drop out, let it be me. You must necessarily continue." All this was part of a great tradition which has, alas! gone out of our journalism and public life.

One of the most rational men in our public life, Chintamani in his later years, was too much swayed by the unknown 'spirits' of the other world to the extent of believing in anything. One day he seriously told me that a certain editorial was written during a séance by a committee of three, consisting of Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, Gopalakrishna Gokhale and V. Krishnaswami Iyer! One could contradict him only at the peril of losing his friendship. He evolved a strange theory about the previous lives of some of the world's biggest men. He repeatedly told that Mussolini in his previous life was Julius Caesar, Hitler, was Hannibal, Woodrow Wilson was Pericles, Morley was Marcus Aurelieus and so on.

# BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

## A CENTENARY TRIBUTE

*(March of India, August 1956)*

If it is hundred years since Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born, it is thirty-six years since he died; in other words, he was before the Mutiny or the First War of Indian Independence and dead twenty-seven years before India attained freedom. In his own life-time he was hailed as 'a nation-builder, one of the half-dozen greatest political personalities, memorable figures, representative men of the nation" 'on his death in 1920, he was described by Gandhiji as 'a Maker of Modern India.' Time, often ruthless in reversing contemporary estimates, far from blotting out his name, has but revealed him in clearer contours and more pleasing hues, as the most outstanding mass leader and political strategist of his day and as the one Indian who before Gandhiji, had brought Freedom within the realm of practical politics. Both Sir Valentine Chirol who, years ago, accused him as 'the Father of Indian Unrest' and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru who, the other day, eulogised him as 'the Father of Indian Revolution', meant the same thing: it was Tilak who first organised the Indian people in a nationwide revolt against alien authority and passed on to Gandhiji the burning torch of a resurgent or reawakened India.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak's was the most remarkable story: it was interwoven with the texture of Maharashtrian thought and sentiment which had valiantly sought to preserve a continuity of 'tradition of hatred' towards everything alien. Bal Gangadhar who was born at Ratnagiri, on July 23, 1856, in a family of Chitpavan Brahmins, inherited alike the religious orthodoxy of the Brahmins and the political genius of the Chitpavans. It was a ready charge levelled at him that he capitalised both in organising the people's movement against the British rulers. Notwithstanding his English education and study of law, he grew into a sturdy champion of

deep-dyed conservatism, at the risk of being misunderstood as an enemy of social reform. But it suited him best for the achievement of his own objective – the liberation of India from political thraldom, in as much as he could thereby 'infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour and spirituality' and lead the mass of the people into the wide and open spaces of the country for defying the authority, and challenging the might, of the British Raj.

Tilak had but a single aim in life: it was to overthrow the British in his own day if he could. Unto the achievement of that end, he counted no cost and left no weapon in his well-equipped political armoury unused. Every activity of his was directed to bring him nearer to the realisation of his ambition. In collaboration with men like Mahadev Govind Ranade he pioneered the movement which culminated in the establishment of the celebrated Ferguson College, but even this work of his on the educational side was but the expression of a deeper purpose: that purpose was to create the new political mind in Maharashtra as part of a larger national awakening. A highly controversial figure of that animated period, Tilak found himself cut aloof from maturer and more mellowed minds of his time like Ranade, Gokhale and Agarkar but he had no regrets. Right or wrong, he was bent upon taking extreme positions if there was no alternative to organising the people's movement, for resistance to repression on the one hand and revolt against authority on the other. Not everything he said or did to sustain his leadership will be justified to-day but that was all in the day's game.

It was in the early eighties that Tilak entered public life. Apart from his pioneer work to 'educate people for a new life', he launched two papers, the *Kesari* in Marati and the *Maharatta* in English – and through them 'the first campaign of Indian unrest.' For certain strictures in the *Kesari* on the Karbari of the Kolhapur State, he found himself in jail for the first time, having been sentenced to simple imprisonment for four months while it was during that period of his career he formulated his plans for the educational renaissance in Maharashtra.

The year 1897 was a crucial one in his career. On June 27, two British officials were shot down in Poona by a young Chitpavan Brahmin who was supposed to have been inspired by the teachings of Tilak. He was sentenced to death. Tilak himself was prosecuted for a 'seditious' article published in the *Kesari* a few days before the murder, and, though the article was not his, was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment. He was, however, released in September 1898, as the result of an application signed by men of then eminence of Sir Max Muller, Sir William Hunter, Sir Richard Garth, Mr. William Caine, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt.

He emerged out of the jail as an acknowledged leader of Maharashtra and not much later came to be recognised as its 'uncrowned king'. His political campaign in the Deccan assumed new forms; he organised Ganapati celebrations and Shivaji festivals, even gymnastic societies which were all directed (it was freely alleged by his adversaries) to reviving the dangerous cult of Shivaji, with all its sinister applications. His name and influence soon spread beyond the Deccan and nowhere more than in Bengal where the Swadeshi movement gathered momentum under the growing influence of his personality and preachings. He became a power inside the Congress – and a source of inspiration to 'revolutionaries' like Aurobindo and Bepin Chandra Pal in Bengal and Lajpat Rai in the Punjab. The extremist bid for capturing the Moderate Congress at Surat was foiled but, out of the Surat imbroglio, he rose to be the supreme spokesman of nationalist India. And here let me make an adversary (Sir Valentine Chirol) speak:

His house was a place of pilgrimage for the disaffected from all parts of India. His prestige as a Brahman of the Brahmans and a pillar of orthodoxy, in spite of the latitude of the views which he sometimes expressed in regard to the depressed castes, his reputation for profound learning in the philosophies both of the West and of the East, his trenchant style, his indefatigable activity, the glamour of his philanthropy, his accessibility to high and low, his many acts of genuine kindness, the personal magnetism

which, without any great physical advantages, he exerted upon most of those who came in contact with him, and especially upon the young, combined to equip him more fully than any other Indian politician for the leadership of a revolutionary movement.

Tilak was soon singled out for official persecution. On the ground that certain articles in the *Kesari* on the Muzzafarpur outrage (the murder of an English couple in Bengal) were inflammatory, he was arrested on July 13, 1908. It was a historic trial. It lasted for five days. Tilak spoke in his defence for 21 hours altogether. At the end, he was found guilty and sentenced to 6 years' transportation. Accepting the verdict with 'dignified disdain' he said something memorable. "There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things, and it may be the will of the Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free." He was spirited away to Mandalay. And there he remained behind the bars – 'suffering from diabetes – alone and unfriended, but full of fortitude.' But outside the prison gates and all over India, Tilak became the embodiment of political martyrdom – and 'Tilakism' swept the country from one end to the other.

Tilak was much more than a politician. He was a scholar and a savant. The world had occasion to marvel at the literary fruits or prison life or 'the by-product of an arduous life dedicated to politics.' There is lasting testimony to this aspect of his life from no less an authority than Sir Aurobindo:

Tilak might have filled a large place in the field of contemporary Asiatic scholarship. Even as it is, his *Orion* his *Arctic Home* have acquired at once a world-wide recognition and left as strong a mark as can at all be imprinted on the ever shifting sands of oriental research. His work on the *Gita*, no mere commentary but an original criticism and presentation of ethical truth, is a monumental work, the first prose writing of the front rank in weight and importance in the Marati language, and likely to become a classic.

Tilak, however, willingly surrendered his scholarship and literary pursuits to the service of the Motherland on the political plane, for he felt that anything could wait – not political emancipation. He came out of prison during the First Great War; he rejoined Congress in 1917 since the Surat split; he organised the movement for Home Rule having found in Dr. Besant a powerful ally. The government dreaded him and imposed various restrictions on his movements. He was to preside over the Congress in 1918 but he preferred to pursue Sir Valentine Chirol (who maligned him as the principal fomentor of public disaffection in India) in the British courts. Having lost his case he returned to India and attended the Amritsar Congress (1919) when he pleaded for, in respect of Montford Reforms, what was known as Responsive Co-operation.

It was an unusual phase in his political career when he could not see eye to eye with Gandhiji who had arrived on the scene with his own ideas and philosophy of life but Tilak gave his word that, while he had doubts about the efficacy of Gandhiji's methods he would in no way hinder the progress of the movement. The political scene was having something of a sea-change but he was not destined to see it. On the midnight of July 31, 1920, at Sardar Griha in Bombay, he passed away midst universal mourning. The national mood was summed up by the Special Congress at Calcutta (September 1920) when it paid homage to the man "whose stainless purity of life, services and sufferings in the cause of his country, whose deep devotion to the welfare of the people, whose arduous endeavours in the fight for National Autonomy, would enshrine his memory in the grateful recollection of our people and would be a source of strength and inspiration to countless generations of our countrymen."

The greatest thing about Tilak was, as his Liberal opponent, Srinivasa Sastri, publicly acknowledged, that "Tilak kept an eye on India's Freedom and would not rest, or let Government rest, till it should be won." It was not given to him to see the victory but he left behind him a legacy which led to the Freedom of India while his individual contribution to freedom's

struggle was one both of Himalayan magnitude and a terrific, if secret, intensity. Nobody before Gandhiji had Tilak's unique hold on the Indian multitude. Maharashtra had known no grander rebel since Shivaji, India had no leader comparable to him for a combination, in the same degree, of political sagacity and revolutionary purpose. His courage was unflinching and his will iron; his single-mindedness was uncommon and his sacrifice unlimited. In him the British had an adversary who could overpower them by a calculated, concentrated and a crystallised life-purpose and with utter disregard of consequences. Chintamani had it from Montagu that 'there was only one extremist in India, and that was Mr. Tilak.'

One could picture Tilak best in the setting at the Surat Congress where, amidst the tumult and shouting, he stood unmoved. To the celebrated British journalist, Mr. H. W. Nevinson, we owe the vignette:

With folded arms Mr. Tilak faced the audience. On either side of him young Moderates sprang to their feet, wildly gesticulating vengeance. Shaking their fists and yelling to the air, they clamoured to hurl him down the steep of the platform... Mr. Tilak asked for no protection. He stood there with folded arms, defiant, calling on violence to do its worst, calling on violence to move him, for he would move for nothing else, in hell or heaven. In front, the white-clad audience roared like a tumultuous sea.

So he stood in all his life, defiant, weathering all storms – the very embodiment of the Indian War of Independence in its earlier phase and a shining symbol of pristine Indian Nationalism. It is a picture that will never fade from Indian memory. And it was Gandhiji who said this of the Lokamanya:

It is a blasphemy to talk of such a man as dead. The permanent essence of him abides with us for ever.

## Sir T. B. SAPRU

On this most interesting and vital personality there is much more that could be written but I must now turn to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. There was something Olympian about him – and he had a truly Hellenic mind. Wherever he sat he was at the head of the table, and he instinctively commanded attention and respect. He touched life at many points, always striking a noble note and asking for no return.

When I met him for the first time at Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyar's residence towards the end of 1929, I was reminded of what A. G. G. said of Grey, that he won by his presence. Two years later, at Allahabad when I renewed my contact with him, he was at the height of his glory, having established his personal ascendancy at the R. T. C. In London he happened to part company with Chintamani and the other Liberals on the Hindu-Muslim question, but in all his talks never had he said one word about anyone in private which he could not afford to say in public.

From 1934, the year in which I left the *Leader* and launched the *Twentieth Century*, to 1942 when I was whiffed away to Jaipur, it was my proud privilege to have become a part of his household and very nearly hid political shadow. There was nothing that he withheld from me; his political correspondence passed through me; and he reposed the utmost confidence in me. His residence 19 Albert Road – as famous a private residence as Anand Bhawan in the days of Motilal Nehru, answered to Sir Tej's own description of Lord Reading's 23 Curzon Road in London as the rendezvous of all politicians in difficulty. Almost everybody of consequence I met under Sir Tej's hospitable roof, either at lunch or dinner, while on several occasions when he had political talks with prominent men individually I was the only person present. Many were the inside stories that it was my lot to collect.

Here is a funny one. While he was battling with the Tories, in London, Lord Reading desired to bring Sir Tej and Mr. Churchill together for a cordial talk. He asked them both to dinner. Mr. Churchill excused himself saying: "I don't want to meet that man, Sarpu. He is a revolutionary." Sir Tej so much enjoyed telling this story. And there was sequel to it. When Mr. Randolph Churchill, Mr. Winston Churchill's son and a journalist, called on him, Sir Tej politely declined to see any Churchill, for matter of that!

He was at his best when he was truly indignant. Speaking to a high-placed Englishman from England about the indiscretions of Whitehall, he shouted at the top of his voice; "Why do you send to India Viceroys who are third-rate and Governors who look like engine-drivers?"

He reacted violently to wilful misrepresentation. When he was law member, he heard on good authority that the Governor of U. P., Sir Harcourt Butler, was telling his friends that he (Sir Tej) was responsible for Motilalji's arrest. Sir Tej grew wild. He at once wrote to Lord reading suggesting that Butler should either give him a written apology for such a blatant falsehood or resign his Governorship so that he too might step aside the Law Ministership and sue him in a court of law. "And let Sir Harcourt Butler realise", he said, "that *seven generations of the Butler family* will not be able to pay the damages" (a phrase which became famous later).Lord Reading who had some anxious moments shared his thoughts with the present Duke of Windsor, the then Prince of Wales, who was at that time in India. Both felt that Sir Tej had every reason to feel hurt. The result was that the Butler apology was in Sir Tej's hands in due course and in his archives later.

Never could he conceal his feelings when he felt strongly. He made no secret of his intense dislike of Hoare and Linlithgow. He had several English friends to whom he wrote freely and who reciprocated his confidence. Among the British Liberals he had great friends, notably the late Lord Lothian and the now venerable Viscount Samuel. For Lord Sankey among the Labourites he had special regard.

In India, the Princes were on the most intimate terms with him while Muslim leaders, of whatever school, revelled in his company. Among the Hindus he had particular softness for the men from the South and he thought highly of their intellectual gifts and the quality of simplicity in their personal life.

An eminent product of British culture, he was madly fond of Urdu. "The best Urdu is spoken at only three places in India," he used to tell me. "They are Old Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad." To Hyderabad he went often on professional business, and whenever he went there, the Nawabs gathered around him. Once when the Nizam invited him, a distinguished gathering, including High Court Judges, was present to do him honour. After the party broke up, one of them – Sir Tej loved to narrate the story – rushed to him and said: "Sir Tej, how thankful we should be to you. Was it not due to your presence at the Palace, that for the first time the Nizam gave us at least iced water to drink!

It is hard to find another with such a high sense of honour. He once went to Srinagar on the Maharaja's invitation to give him some advice. While leaving for Allahabad he was a recipient of a sealed cover, on opening which, he found a cheque for Rs. 30,000. (Contrary to popular opinion, Sir Tej was not rich as he always lived like a Prince and saved precious little.) But nothing could tempt him. He at once returned the cheque to the Maharaja and wrote to him saying that it was his last visit to Kashmir if they ever thought of paying him for any service of his to the land of his forefathers!

That was the secret of his influence with Kashmir and other Princes and why he could virtually appoint Minister after Minister, Judge after Judge in some Indian States. One can have no idea of the plethora of aspirants to high office who invariably sought his help. When in 1942, at his own suggestion, I ransacked all his papers, and came across letters from some of India's leading men, asking for this favour or that – for instance, a Governor asking for the appointment of his son, a member of

the Viceroy's Executive Council pleading for his son-in-law, a top Muslim Leaguer for a judgeship in the Calcutta High Court, - and above half a dozen stalwarts asking to be recommended for the Law Minister's place he had vacated! When I told him that I made, with a sense of 'malice without bitterness', a separate file of all such letters, he laughed heartily, and raising his finger, he said with a sense of pride: "My dear Iswara Dutt, let me tell you that never in my life have I written a single letter to anyone asking for something for myself." It was so true of the man who grinded many axes in life but never his own. Incidentally, it is interesting to recall that the suggestion for making him a P. C. came straight from King George V.

Where is another man with his sense of extreme rectitude? He would not allow his own son to live under his roof as he happened to be in the I. C. S., lest it should compromise his own position as a public man. And I knew of none more secular-minded in our ranks. For the 1941 census he was approached with a form to be filled in, and when he was formally asked about his nationality, he said, 'Indian'. "What community, Sir," the official asked. "I refuse to mention the community. I say, I am an Indian. Let your government prosecute me, if it can, for refusing to mention anything about the community."

Beneath his stern exterior lay a heart soft as butter. Amidst affluence he was extremely simple. In his enormous house he seldom stepped out of his own room where he worked and received people, ate and slept. He loved good books and good company. He could laugh heartily and make others too laugh by narrating to them splendid anecdotes while consuming tobacco in every form for, he smoked both cigarettes and cigars, with a pipe in between and the nabobic *hookah* before retiring. His mind, however, essentially dwelt in the remote past when civilisation reclined for a while on the peaks of Hellas and he often said that human thought has not advanced beyond the days of Plato.

# SAPRU

## AN INTIMATE PEN- PORTRAIT

(From *The Hindustan Times*, *May 1, 1955*)

Great institutions become doubly great when they bear honoured names. It is such a memorable event that the Prime minister will open this morning the new headquarters of the Indian Council of World Affairs, appropriately named Sapru House in memory of its founder and first President, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, for, if Dr. Sapru's 'outstanding contribution in establishing the Council and in laying down its standard as a non-party institution for an objective study of International Affairs' is beyond dispute, no single Indian has done more than Mr. Nehru to make India so conspicuously international-minded. The edifice that we now behold is worthy alike of the man whose memory is a nation's cherished possession and of the country's capital which the Prime Minister has in a way- and in his own way- made the hub of the universe. One fondly hopes that the Sapru House in New Delhi will be what the Sapru home in Allahabad was- meeting place of some of the finest minds of the generation or a rendezvous of all politicians in difficulty, provided with a 'a jug of clear spring water for a perplexed conclave'. Indeed, there was something so unique about his greatness that one might well exclaim: 'Here was a Sapru: when comes such another"

On one birthday anniversary in his sixties, acknowledging felicitations of friends, Dr. Sapru said good humouredly: 'Yes, born on December 8, 1875; dead, don't know when, and nothing much in between'. Again and again he insisted on telling them that his own estimate of himself widely differed from theirs and there was little or no justification to make much of one who had but lived the life of a busy lawyer with periodical excursions into politics but with no ambitions whatsoever. "It has been a very hum-drum sort of life," he said on the completion of 70, "punctuated in private

spheres by occasional moments of happiness and more by sorrow than anything else. In public life there has been nothing remarkable except that I have represented a school of thought which is on the wane." Seldom were eminence and modesty so nobly allied as in Dr.Sapru who (to quote him again) 'with no party to follow or lead, with no enthusiasms which inspire friends or influence foes', had yet played a dominant, though not decisive, role in the history of contemporary India, and had, transcending all the limitations of individual, sometimes even isolated, effort, taken on 'the dimensions and amplitude of an institution.' The hearing he commanded whenever he raised his voice in the causes dear to his heart, was the envy of all party leaders while the personal ascendancy he established for himself in all the conferences which he participated in or generally in the councils of the nation was something of a national asset. He stood alone in more than one sense and it was a proud day in his life, when in the New Delhi Town Hall, in the midst of a fierce political controversy, he cried aloud that he represented himself, which was saying a good deal! In representing himself he represented a great tradition – a tradition of noble and dedicated service, with a passionate devotion to lofty aims and great causes.

His whole life was one sustained, unwearying effort to conform to the standards and patterns of a higher plane. At no stage was he guilty of any deviation from attainment of the highest within his reach. He was lucky in his heredity and surroundings. Born on December 8, 1875, 'this spring of old Kashmiri stock', grandson of Pt. Radhakrishna Sapru, Deputy Collector of Muttra, spent his boyhood in 'Kali Masjid', not far from 'Shish Mahal' where lived his junior relative and life-long friend, Col.Kailas Narain Haksar. He often recalled that one frequent visitor to his house was the great Sir Saiyad Ahmad Khan under whose spell he came. Perhaps to that distant day could be traced the beginning of his understanding of the Muslim mind which marked him out as an individual force in our secular affairs.

As a student of the Agra College he became a pet of Prof.Andrews and was 'always to be heard' in the Debating Society 'lending a point to his argument' – one of Col. Haksar's earliest glimpses of the young Sapru – 'by striking with the forefinger of his right hand the palm of his left.'His academic record was brilliant inasmuch as he not only stood first in the First Division in M.A. examination but did his M.A. in one year instead of the usual two! Later, he passed Honours in Law and blossomed into a "Dr." Installed as 'Tej Bahadur Sapru.M.A., LL.B., Vakil', he started practice in Moradabad while after the prescribed period at the District Bar he moved up to Allahabad.

In that famous city those were the days of legal giants –Dr.Sunderlal, Pt. Motila Nehru and Mr. J.N. Chowdhri, Dr. Sapru came under their influence and persevered. Things did not happen to him easily; for seven years, he made the confession, he had not seen the face of a client. Earnestness, industry, high resolve, had their reward. He worked his way up slowly till the day dawned when briefs began to pour in and there was no stopping him from reaching the pinnacle as lawyer and jurist. There was eloquent testimony to his legal acumen and, what was more, to the comprehensiveness of his legal outlook. Vast was his knowledge of constitutional law. It was as the dispenser of good counsel that he was, however, at his best. If his forensic powers were of a high order, of a still higher order were his passion for professional rectitude and his devotion to the traditions of the Bar. Nobody in India had more valiantly taught, by precept and example, the principle that a strong honest, independent Bar was no less vital than an upright Bench for the proper administration of justice. There was Sir Maurice Gwyer's unimpeachable testimony to what the Indian Bar owed to Dr. Sapru – a debt which it would be impossible to overrate. Speaking of his luminous legal gifts, a distinguished leader of the Madras Bar said: "Even in the early days a place on the high court Bench could be his for the asking – and what a judge he would have made!"

It was an irony that though one of Dr.Sapru's earliest ambitions was to become a Judge, thrice had he declined elevation to the Bench and once a Chief Justiceship.

Destiny, however, marked him out for Law Membership under the auspices of one of the greatest legal luminaries of his day- Lord Reading. It was a semi-political diversion in the wake of his emergence into a Liberal statesman under the influence of another charming Jew- Mr. Montagu. This was his first direct contact with the 'art' of government and it gave him an insight into practical politics and administration. He was more than a Law Member! He was Lord Reading's political counsellor. There were, however, obvious limits to his influence. He had the satisfaction of condemning the Press Laws and of delaying, though he could not altogether prevent, the arrest of the Mahatma. He avoided undue strain to his sense of independence by departing – seemingly out of dread of 'the altitude of Simla'- and later day efforts by Lord Irwin to bring him back to the Executive Council, elicited the polite but firm reply that 'I have once or all turned my back on office.' His tenure as Law Member was brief but, as Sir Maneckji Dadabhoy testified, 'the spell he had cast round the portfolio of law was so great that many of his successors took some time before adjusting themselves to the level and the standard he had set.'

As a Law member Dr. Sapru had one eventful experience: he represented India at the Imperial Conference and made history by going for General Smuts over the issue of rights of citizenship within the British Commonwealth of Nations. The immediate provocation was the treatment meted out to Indian Nationals in South Africa. In measured tones and without mincing words Dr. Sapru said that while he was happy to be a member of the family he could not reconcile himself to being lodged in 'His Majesty's Stables!' The thrust had gone home. For a moment King George V himself felt perturbed. Among others taken aback was the great Curzon.' Where were you in my day?' Lord Curzon was reported to have

asked Dr. Sapru – 'a Curzonian method of paying a compliment during the recess!' In later years, other triumphs, particularly in St. James' palace.

At the Round Table Conference, Dr. Sapru was the central figure on the Indian side of the delegation and this country looked up to him more than to any other for a vigorous lead. His reputation as a constructive statesman of unusual gifts was at its highest and all parties except those swayed by excessive communalism had learnt to value his pronouncements and political prudence, not excluding Congressmen who were mostly behind prison bars. The part he had played earlier as part-author of the famous (Motilal) Nehru Report, as an unrelenting critic of the Simon Commission and as a negotiator for peace in the conflict that ensured between the Congress and the British Government , won for him the esteem of his countrymen. Nobody seemed to be better qualified or situated than he, in reconciling differences between the Hindus and Muslims on one side and political India and Britain on the other. And nothing helped him better than the confidence he enjoyed of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald who was then holding 10, Downing Street. He went the farthest to rally the Muslims; he even parted from his old Liberal colleagues in an all-out effort to appease the leaguers. Disillusionment awaited him. The Muslims proved to be wreckers as much as the British Tories. Dr.Sapru had, however , his finest hour when at the first R.T.C. he opened the case for India with a speech which ranked high among the masterpieces of political oratory and when at a later stage he successfully persuaded his old chief, Lord Reading, to support Federation. Much had happened later to belie all hope of a lasting settlement of the IndoBritish problem, but the contribution that Dr.Sapru made to the proceedings of the R.T.C. enhanced his reputation as an authority on constitutional law and statesman endowed with breadth of humanity , magnanimity of outlook and high charm of personal character. In an enduring tribute to Dr.Sapru at the R.T.C., Sardar Panikkar hailed him as 'the embodiment of all that is best in liberal nationalism of India' and the greatest Indian statesman of his generation.

At the end of the prolonged R.T.C. sessions, Dr, Sapru found himself too much independent of others, if not isolated altogether. He was sick of communal animosities and political squabbles and was filled with the gloomiest forebodings which as subsequent events revealed, were not unwarranted. It was a bitter blow to him to find Federation violently tossed on the angry waves of Indo-British politics and finally shipwrecked; yet he thought that nothing could be gained and much might be lost if the R.T.C. scheme lay disowned or despised. He stood manfully by his explosive epigram in the Twentieth Century that "if the foreshadowed constitution is put on the statue book – condemn it as we may- it will work us, if we are not prepared to work it!'He felt relieved when the Congress plumped for office in 1937 and depressed when two years later, on the outbreak of the Second World War, the Congress Ministers were disbanded. He saw grave danger in the slogan of 'Quit India' raised by the Congress and its convulsive aftermath. It was characteristic of him that despite major and serious differences with the Congress, he would not like to see it crushed by a power-drunk bureaucracy. His supreme concern for national well-being and Indo-British settlement left him no alternative to seeking ways and means of resolving the political deadlock. Whether as presidency of the Non-party Conference that he dared to speak the blunt truth with increasing prejudice against British intentions as revealed by unimaginativeness at the Viceregal House and the obduracy at Whitehall.

The mission of Sir Stafford Cripps and the visits, first of the Parliamentary Delegation and then of the Cabinet Delegation, made no marked difference to him as he continued to have a horror of the League fanaticism in India and the Tory machinations in Britain. With political depression strangely corresponding to his own physical deterioration, he was passing through a period of mental torture. His public appearnce became less and less frequent while his only relaxation (such relaxation as he would have as a prisoner to his sick-bed) lay in sharing his mind with

friends through the generous medium of the post. As one belonging to a select circle of recipients of intimate communications from him, I would for the first time make public his later day reaction to Congress leadership as it throws fresh light on his political mood during these troubled years.

"..... It is a matter of deep regret to me that on account of my physical affliction I have not been able to make any contribution even though I know that as a non-Congressman I had no *locus standi*. I must, however , say that the manner in which the situation has been handled by Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel has exceeded my expectations. They have shown that when the occasion requires they can be good statesmen and good diplomats. On the other hand, Muslim League has been carrying on a most provocative and foolish propaganda."

(23rd May 1946)

" ..... Jawaharlal's speech in support of Socialistic Republic was a magnificent piece of oration." (16th December 1946)

For one like Dr.Sapru who lived for long years in ample sunshine and glory, the evening of his life was heavily clouded with personal unhappiness arising out of physical suffering and mental anguish. He found life burdensome and often wished the end had come nearer. The fact that till his last breath his mental faculties and memory remained strong, made him feel yet more miserable. To his innumerable friends it was a consoling thought that he lived to see the dawn of Freedom in India. Among others, Prof. Harold Laski hoped profoundly that "Dr. Sapru will live to see that free and self-governing India which, on the plane only of unified and controlled statehood, can make that full contribution to civilization of which his own career is an example." He lived to see the sun rolling in the Indian Firmament in full-orbed glory, and it was an additional joy to him that 'Jawaharlalji' was in control of the 'Chariot of the Sun'. The feeling was widespread that Dr. Sapru would have had the honour of being India's last Governor General and I vividly recall the deep emotion under which he

told me how generous of Mr.Rajagopalachari it was to have written to him that his was but a case of usurpation! But no one had fewer regrets, for of all the public men I have known, Dr. Sapru was completely free from the taint of personal ambition.

Everything in life came to him unsought, from membership of the U.P. Legislative Council to Privy Councillorship. The first was in those days 'manoeuvred by Pt.Motilal Nehru without his knowing it while the second was offered at the instance of the King-Emperor. Too proud to seek anybody's intervention, he very nearly exhausted himself in making others' careers. Col. Haksar who knew his Sapru best, used to say how everyone who is content to wait in the antechamber of 19, Albert Road and continue to gape in admiration is bound to get somewhere , because, exceptionally affectionate and warm hearted, Sir Tej cannot help responding to affection, whether genuine or feigned." Like many a big man, Dr.Sapru was no good judge of men. Not unoften had he discovered that the recipients of his favours had done the trick. It was a fine trait of his not to say anything against a man privately what he could not afford to say publicly. True, he often talked vehemently but it was all free from guile. Out of a sense of moral indignation he occasionally thundered, sparing none, however mighty, in the process. They were all motiveless explosions- a Kashmiri speciality!

People loved to gather round him when he held his *durbars* in the evenings and hear him talk vivaciously on everything around the sun, from Plato's Republic to Jinnah's Pakistan. Literature he delighted in legal lore absorbed him; the pageant of history was always before his eyes. He so much loved to talk of Indian memories of Mughal Delhi and the events in 1857 as on the occasion of his visit to the Thompson's on Boar's Hill after receiving an honorary degree from the University of Oxford. Old Delhi, he maintained was one of the three places in India where one could hear the best Urdu, the other two being Lucknow and Hyderabad. Never would

he exchange his love of Urdu for any other Indian language; to him it was mother tongue, while his only recreation was the traditional 'mushaira'. A charming host he was a born *racounteur.* In his presence , it was all 'liberal education'.

Left by a "thievish destiny" a widower at an early age, he led a stainless life and devoted all his time and energy to higher pursuits. He made his home a centre of intellectual radiation and found his 'princely income' inadequate for his style of living. Whether he toured the country as a peacemaker or went abroad to speak for it, he insisted on spending his own money though there was little left for all the books he wanted to purchase or the needs of a large growing family. He loved good books, good company, good food and was a Bohemian in his tastes though puritanic in his outlook on life.

Nothing shocked him more than a violation of well established conventions or falling off of standards in any sphere of life. In his attitude to public issues he was uncompromisingly rigid. Never can I forget the spirit behind his eruption when a census officer in asking him about his nationality tried to elicit the reply that he was a Hindu. He stood no nonsense. A straighter man seldom moved amidst us. What a gracious note it was that Mr.Nehru struck in paying him a tribute of homage of affection on his 70$^{th}$ birthday anniversary!- "A good friend on whom one could always rely and a man straight and true when so many about us are neither straight nor true."

His intellectual affinities were with men like Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley and Matthew Arnold. Politically he was nurtured on the pabulum of Victorian Liberalism and in India he was much drawn to Ranade and Gokhale. Yet he would have loved to describe himself, in the British sense of the term, as an enlightened Conservative rather than a Liberal Radical, for his approach to political problems failed to comprehend the later-day social and economic theories that have altered the whole perspective of

politics. He was certainly not one of our prophets or priests but he was more decidedly 'the constructive engineer of politics' than any of his colleagues could claim to be. His strength lay as much in his colleagues could claim to be. His strength lay as much in his moral ardour as in his vast knowledge and many-sided culture. In the ultimate analysis, more than what Dr. Sapru did or said, it was what he was that made life richer and touched a nobler note. Even his eminence as a lawyer and as a statesman – the country's pre-eminent elder statesman in his closing years visibly paled before the full effulgence of Sapru the man who did or said nothing mean but animated the scene with a lofty intellect and a heart of gold. It will be the verdict of history that, in the tradition of Mill, he radiated like 'a great and benign lamp of wisdom and humanity' and in India belonged to a type fast vanishing if not already extinct.

# C.Y. CHINTAMANI

(A Broadcast Talk on June 11, 1955)

Chintamani's has been a life of success against diverse circumstances. I hope its lessons of courage, persistence and steadfastness will be brought out in a biography....' such was the hope expressed by the great Srinivasa Sastri when Chintamani completed sixty. Conductor of his own explorations and architect of his own destiny, Chintamani was in our annals one of the supreme examples of a self-made man. It is a sad thought that even about fourteen years after his death at the height of his fame no biography of the man has seen the light of day and that Indian enterprise and devotion have hardly touched anything more substantial than an occasional memorial tribute. There is, however, the consoling reflection that the monument he had himself left behind, namely the *Leader*, is the only surviving link to his otherwise unfading memory.

Though his title to lasting fame was as a journalist and editor, Chintamani played no mean part in the larger public life of India. There is Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru's eloquent testimony that 'It is a little difficult to think about him just as an Editor of a paper or as only a politician'. Indeed, he distinguished himself in several other spheres – as a social reformer, by precept and example , he fought bad customs and resisted evil influences; as a politician he knew everything worth knowing and applied all his vast knowledge and glittering gifts for constructive ends; as a legislator he rose to be an outstanding parliamentarian and a truly independent Minister whom high office could not tempt, much less corrupt; as a Liberal he was steeped in the Gladstonian tradition; and as a man, with a strong religious bent of mind, he staked his all on higher values. His role as a journalist was but part of a life variously rich (except in the worldly sense) while the evolution of his personality as a whole indubitably enhanced the value of his journalistic achievement and added lustre to it.

Chintamani- Chirravuri Yagneswara Chintamani is the full name – was born in Vizianagaram (Andhra) in 1880, five years before the birth of Congress while he entered public life in 1898, the year of Gladstone's

death. Academically he was inconsequential, indeed negligible; intellectually he was far too well equipped for one yet in one's teens. He knew poverty and endured many a hardship. Indeed, as Birkenhead said of the eminent journalist, T.P.O Connor 'His only sufficient capital consisted of hope and confidence; of both he had in abundance. For, he had already won high-level attention as something of a prodigy. True, he did not read the classics but his was a classical bent of mind. Political knowledge was his single suit. He read voraciously and remembered everything that he read, so much so that his mind had the contents of an encyclopaedia and the quality of a camera. More astounding than the gift of an easy command of the English language, whether he used his pen or tongue, was the invulnerability of a dazzling memory. It was, as Disraeli said of Conningsby's, 'A memory which never had twilight hours but always reflected a noon-day clearness, and seemed to magnify his acquisitions of learning by the promptness with which they could be reproduced and applied.' For so unusual a young man there was no calling more appropriate or alluring than that of a journalist.

The early struggles of famous journalists always make a fascinating reading – and Fleet Street tests a man's faith severely before letting him tread its perilous pavements and qualify himself for laurels in the profession. Like many a journalistic aspirant Chintamani had necessarily to dabble in local experiments to prove his mettle. As a student he started writing on a weekly in Vizianagaram called the *Telugu Harp* and he played on the harp with a rare promise. Then he shifted to Visakhapatnam where the local weekly *Vizag Spectator*,afforded him opportunities to write leading articles; one of them which appeared under the caption 'Failure of Lord Elgin' gave a foretaste of his Jovian authority. He soon found himself as its editor and manager on a salary of Rs. 30 per month. So he was a full fledged professional journalist and legally responsible editor at the age of 18!' There was soon a change from Visakhapatnam to Vizianagaram again, and from the *Spectator* to *Indian Herald.* It was typical of his adolescent exuberance that once he devoted a whole issue to an elaborate and exhaustive criticism of the British budget. As in the case of the famous J.L. Garvin, there was evidence, in Chintamani's early performances, of a terrific intensity.

Bold experiments in the craft nearer home having convinced him of his destiny, he arrived in the southern metropolis to work on the old *Madras Standard* under G.Subramania Iyer whom he admired as the greatest Indian Journalist of his day. But a rude shock awaited him when in the second month of his service he found his meagre salary of Rs.30 per mensem reduced to Rs.20 and himself written down as 'careless, indolent and incompetent!" That was nothing strange in profession where, at the beginning of his career, so celebrated a British editor as J.A. Spender was told that he had mistaken his profession! Within ten months Chintamani was wafted to the North, the unfailing Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha having invited him to join the *Indian People* (which was first a weekly, then a bi-weekly and was later incorporated in the *Leader.)* It was thus that Chintamani arrived in Allahabad – the city of his destiny.

It was shortly after the L*eader* was launched by the ever-revered Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in October 1909 that Chintamani – he was thirty then – began his association with the paper so much identified with him and with the city he liked best – an association which became a vital part of history of Uttar Pradesh and lasted till his last breath over thirty years later. It was hegemony comparable to Scott's at the *Guardian* in Manchster, lesser in duration and authority, but the more remarkable because Chintamani had no proprietorial interest in his paper. In regard to its content, policy and character however, he moulded it after his heart's desire. It was out of the question that anyone, be he a shareholder or director, could ever frighten him by talking of a drop in circulation or advertisement revenue, and seeking to prevail upon him to adopt a more popular line. It was a great day in the annals of Indian journalism when under strain, Pandit Malaviyaji as Chairman of the Board of Directors, preferred to leave the *Leader* and leave it to Chintamani, to dictating his own policy and forcing Chintamani out.

Chintamani adhered to a certain tradition of editorship and had great regard for precedents and well-established conventions. He would not allow anyone, however mighty, to trifle with him or his opinions. Since Montagu

won him over to the Reforms, he had been in the unenviable position of having to align himself both against the Congress and the bureaucracy. He attacked them with equal zest, sometimes with gusto, pleased neither, indeed annoyed both, but he had no regrets. It was a tribute to his sincerity and selflessness that his worst opponents never questioned his motives. There was universal recognition of his character and personality. Posing the question 'What's a great editor? E.T. Raymond defined him as a man who manages to imprint his personality that appears in his papers ! Judged by this criterion, the *Leader,* when he presided over its destinies, was the expression of his mind and the mirror of his personality.

It was true of Chintamani what Beaverbrook said of a certain Cabinet Minister: 'If you run against some projecting bump in his opinions, you must merely nurse a bruise'. It happened to several, not excluding those friendly to him. While he feared no opponent, he forgave no friend if there was the slightest deviation from the path trodden by him. A man of strong likes and dislikes he could be exasperatingly partisan and was eminently capable of revealing his prejudices and pet aversions a little too glaringly. These limitations to his quality of masterfulness were, however, compensated by his unimpeachable integrity and utter freedom from the 'temptations of social position and worldly amenities 'It is inconceivable to me'. said Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru once, 'that Chintamani can be purchased – purchased by money or office or cajolery or flattery or anything else.'

Chintamani had an open contempt for political opportunism or journalistic expediency. He would not budge an inch; as Lord Riddel said of Joseph Pulitzer, 'He would not pander, he would not compromise, and he made himself heard.' Technically the *Leader* was not in the front line; politically it was far from popular, but it had one invaluable asset- an editor who stamped his personality on its pages and made the leading article a potent instrument in the shaping of opinion. Those were days when editorial writing attracted attention and carried weight since editors were in the happy position of expressing their own opinions. Chintamani always held firm opinions – and he had no two sets of opinions, one public and another

private. What mattered more, he had convictions and quite fierce ones too. Metaphorically, he brandished the big stick- and stood no nonsense.

Nobody was a greater crusader in the causes which he believed in. Chintamani had both the 'uncalculating fearlessness' and crusading fervour of W.T. Stead with whom he also strangely shared a mystic belief in supernatural elements. Nevertheless, his political outlook was extremely secular. An adept in political dialectics, accustomed to vigorous, combative writing, he was no model for literary craftsmanship. In his hand the pen was 'a mode of action' and no 'aesthetic instrument'. He thundered more than he radiated, which was the reason why he was a trifle oracular and pontifical. Was it not Srinivasa Sastri who hailed him as 'the Pope of Indian Journalism?'

Nobody could claim in an equal measure that combination of qualities and gifts, which singled him out in his day - a phenomenal equipment, a wonderful command of English, a Johnsonian flair for controversy, rigidity of conviction, dauntless courage and unbending rectitude, and a certain moral earnestness. He was a born editor. As a journalist he ranks high: he is among the giants in India.

# Dr. C.R. REDDY

A PORTRAIT FROM HIS LETTERS

(From *Swatantra Annual*, 1952)

There are fewer blessings in life than friendship with celebrities of one's own country not merely in terms of extreme cordiality but on those of real intimacy. What more could one ask for than the privilege of sharing one's thoughts with them on things, near and remote , and peep into the innermost workings of their minds through the sovereign medium of the epistle? Between C. R. Reddy and me there was a fairly regular exchange of letters across the years from the latter twenties till his death, with no mental reservations on either side and sometimes even in a Puckish vein as a tribute to our mutual affection. And among many other things which went together to single him out on the intellectual plane, Reddy was an expert letter writer – indeed, a master of craft as much as he was a past master in conversation, another of the lost arts of the age.

By any known standards, Reddy was a man of the highest intellectual attainments - and as fascinated as formidable. Scholar, poet and critic in his own tongue, of the English language, written and spoken, he acquired a mastery which won for him a reputation far beyond our shows. Was it not Sir John Squire, one of the foremost living literary critics in Britain and a class-fellow of his at Cambridge, who felt reminded in his presence of 'the eloquence and genius of Burke'? Anything by way of adding to that super testimony would be but like adding perfume to the violet or painting the lily.

In his younger days Reddy became an academic legend. Having given in the Christian college at Madras a foretaste of his brilliance, he found Cambridge easy of conquest. He was proud to have become the first Indian vice-President of Cambridge Union but never was he prouder than when he organised what he called the Indian festival at Cambridge in honour of Gokhale on his visit to the University. Indeed, Gokhale stayed with him as

his guest and he introduced Gokhale to the great Massingham. Those were days when he fondly hoped to make a fortune at the bar and carve out, as he was wont to say, a 'Reddy Kingdom' of his own. But at the instance of Gokhale he burnt his boats and decided to become an educationist. He never regretted the choice.

Big things happened to him on return to India. His very first assignment as a professor had historical associations. In Maharaja's College at Baroda he succeeded Aurobindo Ghose. Mr. K. M. Munshi who belonged to the last batch of Aurobindo's students told me that though he completed his course he used to rush to Reddy's classes if only to hear him! Then followed in quick succession Mysore, Madras and Andhra and again Mysore where always at the top level he had played a decisive role as an educationist and risen to be the greatest in India since Asutosh Mukherjee.

But education was not his only love. In his love there was no sense of exclusiveness! Politics had drawn him since as a student at Cambridge he figured on the platform in Dadabhai Naoroji's campaign for a seat in Parliament. On leaving Mysore for Madras and for a while education for politics he joined the justice party but soon made up for the blunder by assisting in its liquidation. United Nationalists, Swarajists, Congressmen – he lumped them together in his stride and while he gave an intellectual content to the cause of freedom's struggle, never could he take the head – long plunge into it. Yet he did nothing mean on the political scene; often he enlivened by his performances inside the Legislature and pronouncements outside. Animation was his forte, not agitation.

By one of those supremely interesting coincidences in history, the three Andhra intellectuals in politics, each otherwise distinguished in his own way – C. Y. Chintamani, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and C. R. Reddy – were all born (in chronological order) in the same year 1880. Chintamani was an uncompromising Liberal till his last breath while Pattabhi, happily still alive and now basking in gubernatorial sunshine, is a life-long Congressman. Reddy, combining in himself the comprehension of Liberalism at its highest and the moral ardour of Nationalism, was the typical individualist in politics.

With a horror for the intellectual self-sufficiency of the Indian Liberals and the emotional conceit of Congressmen, he preferred to tread his own way and kindle his own light amidst the controversies and conflicts in the political arena. He derided 'the absurdity of holding forth absolutist language in the kaleidoscopic field of politics' and emphasized that any judgement passed without elucidation of an issue can only be regarded as 'an exhibition of low thinking under the guise of high feeling.' It was not for the shallow multitude that he ever spoke: it was the intelligentsia that he cared to address and educate. It was both his strength and weakness that Reddy lacked the party mind. It would be an exaggeration to say that he played any decisive part in politics, but there was little doubt that he was one of the far too few men in the country who, from an isolated peak of eminence, made pronouncements remarkable for their penetration and weighty for their detachment.

It is against this background that one must turn to Reddy the man whose life, for all the sombre shadows cast on it by an unkind Fate, was rich in its content and cadence. He missed the customary rewards of politics, having very nearly always lived in a world of his own, furiously thinking of its problems – the larger problems of intellectual and social interest – and also occasionally thinking aloud. He missed too some of the good things of life. Supremely self-conscious that there was no rival near his throne, he could not avoid a sense of frustration. Yet he neither lacked clarity of judgement nor a sense of humour. He was happy in the thought that there was ready Homage to him as an intellectual. He prized his friendships and loved to cast a spell on those who came within his orbit. Nothing delighted him more than releasing a shaft which hit the mark. His phrases, his epigrams and his jokes all of the pure Reddy Vintage, made him matchless in the line. It was an intellectual treat of the first order to find him radiating in his own charming manner – and watching his lavish display of word - wizardry.

My friendship with Reddy was really an inheritance; he was my father's friend for half a century. It was social reform that was their common

interest while my relations with him had an intellectual basis. He was generous in the measure of encouragement he gave me as a journalist and writer. Knowing something of my bias for biography he offered me the following counsel in one of his earliest letters to me:

Remember Lord Acton's dictum that even funeral eulogies should be couched in the temperate and discriminating language of history and that indeed there is no justification for telling lies even in the absolving presence of corpse. Biography should be written in the spirit of history and not of pamphlet. And that is why it is best written after a man is completely dead in as much as he might not like to hear of the severe things that have to be said about him.

A little later when I happened to join the *Hindu* he wrote:

Glad you have become embedded in the *Hindu*, more and more, and find it no bed of roses. It is the intellectual standard of journalism and will educate you out of your Andhra vapours....

Those were days when the whole country was agitated over the findings of the Simon Commission. Reddy who could probe into their inner character and hidden implications was on the war-path. Writing to me towards the end of June 1930 he exploded thus:

On the whole I feel that it is the funeral pyre of nationalism that they have proposed to erect. Our nationalism is to be consumed by the sectional fires to be kindled. What will be set up by the Simon Commission is a disreputable Indian oligarchy of careerists very amenable to Government pressure. It shuts the door of hope not only for nationalistic but democratic advance.

This is India's hour of trial. The call is for more courage and a more sincere devotion to the public good. The way the country rallies round to the support of the Gandhian movement is the test. Whether we gain anything material or not we shall certainly have progressed in the qualities and habits of nationality, sense of honour and the organised display of patriotic action. The inner soul is more than the outer constitutional garb, and it is on that

we should concentrate our efforts in all honesty of purpose. If we take care of our character as a people, constitutions will take care of themselves.

I have a feeling that for the next three years Reddy was in no happy mood. I was supposed to be 'the only person outside the family' to remember his birthday but during the above period he gave me a peep into the prison-house of his own secret existence when I offered him the usual felicitations:

You are an incorrigible rememberer of an insignificant day. We did not observe the day this year. A Nation's struggle and suffering cannot permit of these rotten festivities,

In early 1935 he opened his heart to me thus:

I have neglected you badly due to mental and moral depression at the great opportunity lost by the country, by people not rallying in sufficient strength to the Congress. About a year later he again wrote in the same vein from Chittoor:

I have been here for some months past – in a mood of strict and exclusive vegetating - and this vegetarianism is the only thing that agrees with me!

I found that the mood had passed when I was in Madras editing *People's Voice*. He was then writing to me in warmer tones. On my return to Allahabad in the latter half of 1937, he cheered me up:

So you are back at the Ganges! Any day better than the Cooum. It is a pity you would not journalise in future year. There was a distinction and educative value which we miss now.

And then with playful ease he added:

I shall be visiting your holy place in November. Wonder where I shall put up? I want European comforts. The soul is Swadeshi but the stomach Videshi! Which is the best hotel?

He would not, however, close the letter without saying something, however casually about the current controversies of the hour. Referring to a divergence of outlook between Rajaji and Nehru (exactly on what question I don't remember) he said:

Intellectually I am with C. R., a moderate and anti-socialist; morally with the more intrepid and straighter J (Jawaharlal), the weaker party. J is a man doomed to be Martyr and there are Judases enough in his camp who are using him today and will abuse him tomorrow.

As in the case of Morley, even in casual letters or on postcards, his style is 'strong and vital' and also often distinguished by flashes of irony and wit. Alluding to Mr. Kripalani's attack on his 'mythical ban on Socialist literature' in the Andhra University, this is what he said:

I suppose an occasional braying is necessary for health and leadership. Yet K is a very nice fellow and highly clever and competent. We have met before and he could have asked for the facts...But his attack on me was charmingly well-written. I read it over and over again enjoying his attractive style. I could have exclaimed in the language of one of Shaw's doctors: 'What a beautiful ulcer! How perfectly ripe!

Whether he always agreed with Congressmen or not, he had for them on the whole a tender regard. At any rate he had little or no regard for the Liberals though he found them individually estimable. In one letter he dismissed them contemptuously:

All Liberals are rats. They mistake patriotism for careerism. In one of my letters I passed on to him one of Chintamani's epigrams which I thought was quiet revealing. Diagnosing the political situation Chintamani said: 'Government lack honesty, Muslims patriotism, Liberals sacrifice and Congressmen judgement.'

Reddy reacted to this rather fiercely and wrote to me:

I don't understand your chief's epigram. If government is not honest, why do the Liberals support it? Is it because they too lack honesty and so have fellow feeling? Liberals lack sacrifice – which translated into psychology means patriotism and courage. Congress lacks judgement – which similarly analysed means that cowardice is an aid to judgement while courage is not. There is not a more contemptible race on earth whether for judgement or character than the Liberals. Every year on the new moon

days they threaten to lose their confidence in government, but never reach the end of the process, and on full moon days they regain it. Themselves heroes of the verbal order, they are easily won over by words as hollow as their own...Constituted as they are, the greatest service they can do to the country is to hold their tongues which, of course, they cannot.

Again, in another letter returning to the charge he hit out thus:

They proclaimed that the Congress is the only power which can deliver the goods and then deliver themselves which is all the goods they can deliver.

It was a sad thing that for all his spirited defence of the Congress, he was at no stage much a *Persona Grata* with it. At one stage it accepted many of his ideas but had still left him out of the picture. I expressed both my surprise and regret at the injustice done to him when he poured out his heart:

You are always hankering for gratitude and worrying about its conspicuous lack in our public men. When I made the proposal – which are now Khaddar-wear of the C. R. Group of Congressites – I was abused by name, and now my ideas are used without so much as the most indirect or inferential acknowledgement. But I consider this right, proper, progressive!

1. Origins are generally mean and should be ignored.

2. Gratitude is a backward-looking virtue – a self-contradiction and does not harmonise with forward-looking progress

3. Governments and parties are agreed in this - they prefer creatures to creators of ideas who are always a troublesome lot. What they want is a sort of blotting pad to reproduce their impressions and they are getting it in plenty. They come to us for thought-purposes-but for purposes of their organisations they prefer dittoists. That is the law of life – official and non-official.

Again in 1946 he wrote in the same strain with a tinge of regret but none

of bitterness. By then the Constituent Assembly had been set up but there was no place for one like Reddy there, if only because the Congress was in no mood to emerge out of narrow groups. I felt that it was a serious injustice to Reddy and also a big loss to India, what a mark he could have made in that August Assembly by bringing his original, challenging and searching mind to deliberation of the complex and grave problems that it was called upon to deal with! His reply was so frank – and yet so fair. He said:

A great pleasure to have heard from you; and your tones are as warm-hearted as ever for which thanks. Yes: it was a bit of disappointment to me that I was not given chance to serve on the Constituent Assembly – not tragic anyway, since there is a Providence that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we may – though he takes a deuced long time to do the shaping! That I would be left out was foreseen, for there was no obligation on the part of Congress to pay me that amount of regard. Their action was natural. The anticipated is never so bad as the unexpected.

Before he bade adieu to the Andhra University it was my privilege to have manipulated an invitation for him to Hyderabad where I was the Public Relations Officer and got for the Andhra University a donation of two lakhs. During the time he stayed there he tried to probe into the intricacies of the Hyderabad problem by talking as freely to Mr. Laik Ali as to Mr. Munshi and Swami Ramanand Tirth with whom we dined. Reddy narrowly missed Kasim Razvi but when he met Nawab Moin Nawaz Jung, Reddy cornered him by asking why Hyderabad needed an army at all without being satisfied with something like a Malabar Special Police Force!

He entertained the hope that Hyderabad might revive 'the traditions of Akbar and Golconda' and prove to be 'the cement and synthesis of India'. He took the gloomiest view of 'the furies and fanaticisms' ravaging this great land and gave anxious thought to the problem. He confessed to me:

My soul's attention flows in the direction of the communal and other problems that afflict this dear old land – almost too old to last long.

As early as in 1946 he gave me of what was passing in his mind:

My interest in Vice-Chancellorship has waned – these are the last flickers before extinction.

It was at that stage that I suggested to him literary retirement, so that he might leave behind something enduring for posterity. So did some others even earlier, including my brother, Kameshwara Prasad in reply to whose letter he thus unburdened himself:

As regards how best to utilise the few years that may yet remain for me, it is strange that you should have suggested devotion to literature at the same time as a Parsi lady friend of mine asks me to quit the University and enjoy a literary retirement. This coincidence happening to be in the line of my own thoughts and feelings which have been welling up for sometime past, I think, will have an effect. Venkata Ramani also suggested that I should bring out a collected edition of my English works and that he himself would come to Chittoor and help me to make the selection. It is not even one month when towards the end of my summer sojourn in Chittoor I made a collection of all my old stuff, including the 'In Memoriam' in prose I wrote on Viresalingam, and found that they covered 3 or 4 shelves of an almirah. There are also the Diaries of my world-tour, which though antediluvian, may yet have some historical and personal interest, certainly historical. So without being very definite about it, I can only say that this blessed seed of your letter has fallen on soil already prepared.

But nothing came out of it. It is our loss.

It was a pleasure to be on writing terms with Reddy who, in his lighter moments or gayer moods, could be simply charming and irresistible as when he said to me that 'even love must be reduced to matrimony if it is to be stable' – himself a gifted bachelor in the line of Balfour. In one of his letters alluding to patronage in this country he hurled this at me:

In India nobody will share patronage with another, whatever else he may share. I am informed by Vyasa that even the Pandavas who shared a wife refused to share patronage with each other.

This incidentally reminds me of his eagerness in his last years to husband his eye-sight if only to read *Mahabharata*. Such was his love of that classic on which he was supposed to be one of the greatest authorities.

It is a sad and depressing thought that Reddy, one of our finest intellectuals and most gifted men, was among the least lucky – and that in the ultimate analysis he should be regarded as one of the 'Splendid Failures' in history, in view of the glaring hiatus between promise and fulfilment. His achievements as an educationist for all their striking quality could hardly make his cup brimful. Even his parliamentary gifts were but confined to a provincial Legislature though "a certain mingling of mellow wit and mellow wisdom that is unique" and his own, could have established him at the Centre. In politics he invariably proved to be receding hero. He was out of tune with his environment and he seemed to seek 'the palm without the dust' like Rosebery of whom he was reminiscent both in brilliance and temperament. Aristocratic, proud, sensitive and a trifle aloofish he could hardly fit in, in any party mechanism, and was content to take delight in mere intellectual exercise. His speeches were remarkable as much for a coherent body of thought as for splendour of diction while some of his phrases enriched the English tongue. Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar, no mean judge of politicians, spoke to me of Reddy as the greatest phrase-maker in politics since Disraeli, not excluding Randolph Churchill who, in England, came next to Disraeli.

It is difficult to say if there will be any posthumous publication of Reddy's speeches, diaries and letters but it will be no small consolation to me if this piece will revive interest in good old Ramalinga Reddy whose memory I cherish with a friend's love and an Indian's pride.

# SRI CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHRI

## TWO FACETS

### (1)

(From *The Indian Express*, Nov. 26, 1955)

This morning Delhi will have the honour of receiving a happy, old 'Warrior', while this evening the Delhi University will have the privilege of hearing 'a man of peace, a philosopher and a seeker after truth,' for Sri Chakravarti Rajagopalachari is all these things combined in one, as felicitously described by Prime Minister Nehru in saying adieu to him on laying down the highest office in the land. Mr. Rajagopalachari was about seventy then and had nothing more to aspire for; yet the Prime Minister felt sure of the country needing – and calling to – 'other services'.

Mr. Nehru was intuitively right in expressing such generous sentiment for, on two occasions, the country instinctively turned to Mr. Rajagopalachari – first when the void created by the demise of the doughty and dominating Sardar needed to be filled in the central cabinet by a man of equal stature and later when, in the wake of an electoral debacle the fortunes of the Congress on the Southern front had to be retrieved and the whole of the Southern Peninsula to be rescued from communist clutches. To what superb heights of statesmanship and strategy Mr. Rajagopalachari rose, is now a matter of contemporary history.

Whether, after the purpose was served the man was forgotten in true political tradition, is a question which, though it suggests itself normally should not arise in the case of Mr. Rajagopalachari, firstly because of his age when no fresh demands should be made on his limited energy (except in a crisis which overrules all other considerations) and secondly out of regard for his own temperament. He is now 75 – indeed, within a fortnight he will be 76 – and "with age has come" as the Andhra university orator said "a marvellous mellowing; the intellect has opened itself to the warmth if the spirit, and the politician, administrator and statesman, is now exceeded by the moralist, the humanist and man of God."

Mr. Rajagopalachari is now in the happy position of being able to claim that he is the oldest of the Mahatma's surviving colleagueship which had stood the test of time, for though it bordered on sentimental adoration of the master, it endued strain of sharp differences on vital political issues on more than one occasion while lesser men would have broken and faded out completely. It was an example of Mr. Rajagopalachari's supreme courage that, if in the course of political struggle he found himself in prison, in periods of political stalemate when he thought differently, he dared, so to say, to "come out of Wardha".

Never had his mettle shone better than when during two critical phases of our history – once when the question of Pakistan became live and then when Cripps came to India – he stood almost alone, four-square to all the winds that blew – and blew fiercely – and raised a voice which, though not listened to, could not but be heard. There was a time when he felt isolated and found himself ploughing a lonely furrow. He had almost lost caste with fellow Congressmen. He was kept at a respectable distance by the high and mighty. But time had its revenges no less than revelations. Politics has its lessons to teach. The man deposed in 1942, was 'enthroned' in 1948. That there was no depression or sense of defeatism in him when Fate mocked at him nor any undue sense of elation when Fortune smiled on him, was eloquent evidence of the detachment with which he could experience eclipse and elevation alike and in which alone lay the secret of his strength and the essence of his eminence. And rare indeed are the virtues of fortitude in defeat and humility in triumph.

It is one of the paradoxes in Indian politics that while Mr. Rajagopalachari has always been taken for granted as an individual force, he has also been a suspect. To be described by Westerners as a Congress Savonarola and Easterners as the Indian Chanakya, out of confounded admiration for his intellect which is as nimble as penetrating, proved to be more a handicap than an aid to ascendancy. To turn inside out every formula or solution of his for detecting a trap possibly hidden somewhere has become something of a political pastime while his fault – or is it misfortune? – has been that invariably he could foresee what others even found it difficult to see. Often he had to pay a severe price for a certain uncanniness which profusely perplexed colleagues no less than opponents. It required all his inner strength to withstand the imputation of

motive by refusing to take into account either popular prejudice or political hostility and to appease this element or the other for purchasing peace at the price of conviction. Years ago he wrote to me thus summing up his philosophy:

Do I believe in God? Then I

shan't flinch or fear.

Will no good come out of it all?

Well, this world is run by a power

That knows...and I shan't worry.

That is characteristic of the man who has acquired a certain spiritual strength.

This is not to say that with the best of intentions he has not sometimes erred, indeed grievously erred, or that because of his very reliance on intellectual resourcefulness he has not sometimes overreached himself. It would be as preposterous as dangerous to claim infallibility for any mortal, however super. But it is enough testimony to his eminence that at no time had he subordinated the higher or larger interests of the country to self or ever directed power, or even ambition, to personal end. Much can be forgiven in a man who honestly believes that he alone can save his party or country if his political integrity is unimpeachable and moral earnestness unquestioned. It is so with all great men who have dedicated themselves to national regeneration and human advancement – on their terms - and learnt to meet success or failure in the same elevated spirit.

It is inevitable that a certain weariness should creep in on men as they grow – and survive several younger ones – and find time slipping beneath their feet amidst fast-changing scenes. So one could understand Mr. Rajagopalachari, with his life in the yellow leaf, striking a note such as this in one of his recent letters to me:

I was educated in the nineteenth century, I have lived now through half the 20$^{th}$ century and I have lived to see everything shattered.

And there is another which I would love to quote:

Round about, the Autumn leaves are falling. Lonelier and lonelier one feels in a crazy world.

Mr. Rajagopalachari is not less happy than any of us to have witnessed the emergence of India into freedom, the new awakening in the country and urge for all-sided advance under the inspiring auspices of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. But what has deeply upset him is a decline in national values nearer home and human values abroad. In his very sense of concern for things higher, one finds a longing for what the poets and philosophers call a Better World – and the irrepressible urge to make the world better than one has found it. Those animated with such noble impulses and inspired by such lofty ambitions live, not for themselves but for other – and the world will lose or gain to the extent to which they are neglected or copied. Gandhiji had no illusions when he said that his soul 'refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery.' But it is by having asked for the impossible that he could do some impossible things and bequeath something imperishable. Mr. Rajagopalachari belongs to the same heroic brand and is, by the sum total of his attributes and achievements, one of our rare men.

It is fatuous to think that his day is over: it is no more over than, say, Winston Churchill's, speaking of whom Beverley Baxter said:

What nonsense! His mind and spirit are ageless. Destiny is not finished with him. Nor is history.

Punning on his initials I had the temerity to describe him as a Colossus in Reserve. Men who measure up to the demands of civilised existence and wrestle with the secrets of the Universe seldom depend on high office for stirring the mind or conscience of generations. Their very presence amidst us is a call for betterment. They do not raise their voice for nothing or in vain. Patel lectures or Convocation addresses are but formal occasions for a life's philosophy to be preached for the advantage of those who have the good sense to profit by wise counsel or a timely warning.

For long years Mr. Rajagopalachari's dark, green glasses have become symbolic of a certain subtlety of the Southern vintage and a synonym for an uncommon intellectual penetration. That was during the years when political argument served its limited purpose. To-day it is the whole man that counts with all his intellectual animation and moral energy for a new code for mankind, for liberation from deadly weapons, evil designs and low thoughts. It is possible that, like Carlyle in his day, Mr. Rajagopalachari

is obsessed with 'the twin themes of moral collapse and political decay' but he is no prophet of chaos. His message can be best summed up in the language of the testaments:

Love the Lord through all your life,

And one another with a true heart.

Not the least of his services is the one he has rendered by talking to his countrymen in the vein of Marcus Aurelius and spurring them on to find an honest purpose in life. The spirit that animates his own purpose 'holds to sail beyond the sunset.'

**(2)**

(From *Free India*, Nov. 26, 1945)

"In politics there is often more falseness, and even treachery, in consistency than in change."

*-Herbert Sidebotham*

During the last quarter of a century, nobody has come nearer to the Mahatma and drifted farther from him than Sri Rajagopalachari. It would be idle to deny that he had politically grown under the Mahatma's inspiring auspices: it would be equally idle to deny that he has but grown to his fullest stature when, on freeing himself from the fetters of political tutelage, he ventured to strike out his own line of action in the tangled politics of the day. If in the process he encountered ridicule, calumny and opposition, he showed unusual grit and courage, and revealed that he loved not the Congress less but the country more.

My mind goes back to a May noon in the year 1942 – the year of great 'disturbances' and, indeed, of great troubles – when a select group of political leaders assembled at 19 Albert Road for lunch, after the All-India Congress Committee which met in Allahabad had concluded one of its most momentous sessions. An old, tired warrior sat in the corner, already feeling isolated in a company, essentially Congress in composition, which kept purposefully silent in his presence. A shadow across the face of the hero of a hundred platforms was visible to those who cared to scan it. Probably he was ruminating over the rocks ahead and the ruin in store for the great

institution which he had served so selflessly but which had hounded him out so unceremoniously. He had just returned from the session where he released alas! in vain, some of his deadliest shafts. In a speech, not less coldblooded because of its unavoidable shortness, he maintained that he was denied justice at the hands of an unusually generous President, that given enough time he could have torn Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's arguments into tatters, that it mattered little if his resolution was thrown out but if they had any forethought they should not pass Mr. Jagat Narain's resolution on the indivisibility of India, for that way lay danger. The House persisted in its folly and he left it exasperated – a disembodied soul. The scene had not lost its effect upon the thinking man whose fault was that he dared to think – and too, think aloud. It was one of those moments when nothing could be read beneath his dark green glasses and impenetrable exterior, except that the man was feeling strangely out of place even amidst familiar faces.

In the life of even biggest men there are, indeed occasions when they badly require the soothing word and the healing touch. Drawing myself nearer to him- I am, as should be clear from the context, of course, referring to Mr. Rajagopoalachari –I, whispered in his ears something which perhaps deserved to be megaphoned "Rajaji", I said. "You have all along ben described as the brains of the working Committee. Shall I now take it that there is a working committee minus the brains?" Visibly moved, undoubtedly pleased, he gently replied; "Ah, you are already weaving your twentieth century incantations. Believe me, I am really filled with sadness. These friends don't seem to realise what harm they have done to themselves and to the country by passing that resolution. They will learn it when it is but too late." All that has happened in this country between May,1942 and now, has indisputably established the correctness and wisdom of Mr. Rajagopalachari.

Rajaji's lot in Congress politics has been an uphill fight. In the earlier years of the Gandhian era, nearer home he had to reckon with Srinivasa Iyenger. He found himself in prison and wrote a jail diary; went to the villages and founded an Ashram; took to spinning and popularised Khadi; interested himself in prohibition and became a pussy-foot; specialized in the Congress constructive programme and Gandhian dialectics – he overshadowed Mr.Iyengar. At Gaya he had to reckon with Motilal and Das. He interpreted the Mahatma's mind carried his point- he overshadowed

the great 'rebels' of the North. When the question of the council entry rocked the Congress in 1936, he had to reckon with Jawaharlal – he built up his case so well that he overshadowed the Pandit. And then as the Prime minister of Madras he overshadowed every other Minister in India, while, as a strategist on vital occasions, he overshadowed the entire lot of our politicians.

Rajaji typified in himself the Southerner's aptitude for argument. Subtlety is his sheet anchor. It is not prudent to cross swords with him unless one is prepared to roll down in dust- and bleed. He has none of the gifts of the orator. Perhaps it would be an exaggeration to call him a polished speaker. He is no phrase –maker either. Yet there are few who could excel him in the exposition of a case and in the art of weaving the tangled web round one's neck to the point of suffocation. In the course of a single day at Tripura, I heard two speeches of his, each of a class by itself, the like of which I haven't heard before or since. In the morning it was the 'fable' of the tried boatman; in the evening it was an 'impeachment' of the 'usurper' of the Congress gadi at Tripuri. The 'fable' was composed of parables which are the staple diet on which he feeds his hearers. The impeachment was incomparable argument spiced with deadly satire. The first was an act of hypnosis; the second the most perfect surgical operation in political dialectics.

His strength lies in his ideas, in his powers, of interpretation, in his mastery of psychological processes. His suppleness is almost sorceric. He is as reflective as resourceful, and behind his readiness in retort there is careful meditation of problems. He is shrewed judge of men and an adept in the art of their management. Kind to friends, he is generous to opponents; he placates the latter more easily than he rallies the former. While he cautiously neglects a party man, he deliberately bestows a favour on one in the opposite camp. The former is perplexed and the latter paralysed – and ere the public recover, they are administered another dose of his specific. He has shaped some careers and influenced the lives of many. His main interest, however, lies in reconstructing society on Gandhian ideals through the medium of his own political ideas.

His abiding concern for the lot of the poor and passionate devotion to the cause of the country, his courageous advocacy of the causes that move

him, his gift of persuasion and his sense of humour, his cheery optimism, his wide catholicity, his deep faith in the resurgence of India and in his own ability to play a decisive part, and above all his intellectual powers allied to moral ideals have established him as one of our major assets. On the personal side he is one of our most agreeable men. His simplicity and sweetness, his plain living and high thinking, and the charm that lingers around him like delicate aroma, make him irresistible.

In Congress Rajaji's name is a synonym for intellect. It is thus that Rajaji, because of his incorrigible tendency to overshadow the rest, is a suspect! It has become a fashion in Congress circles to view with a kind of nervous apprehension, if not with a sense of positive alarm, anything sponsored or stoutly advocated by him- and to turn it inside out for making sure that there is no trap in it for the unwary. It was so when he made the famous Poona offer; it was so when he resisted ministerial resignations; It was so when he advised the acceptance of the Cripp's offer; it was so when he got the Madras resolution passed in recognition of the principle of secession; it was so when he persuaded the Mahatma to open negotiations with Mr. Jinnah; it is again so when today he pleads for realism as the only way out. There is no more misunderstood a man of the Congress school, inside the Congress itself, than Rajaji. He is incidentally the greatest living illustration of the Emersonian maxim that 'to be misunderstood is to be great."

Rajaji is, in several respects, an extraordinary man. If he is dreaded by friends no less than by opponents, he is as much feared and loved as dreaded .They fear him because of his easy victory over them by the deftest handling of every available intellectual weapon, and they love him for his unimpeachable moral earnestness. He is ambitious, they say; he loves power; they say too. But none has alleged that ambition in his case is directed to personal ends or that power is ever abused by him.

Rajaji is not incapable of renunciation. He is a deeply religious man; he is steeped in *Kural* and the *Gita*. There is in him enough spiritual strength to withdraw himself from things mundane, from world material, and dwell in the ampler regions of purer ether. There were occasions when he rose to the heights of self-abnegation. It is the country's good luck that in its chaotic conditions he does not choose to put personal salvation before its

redemption. In this respect, he is like the Mahatma who merges into the multitude and makes a mighty effort to leaven the mass. Nothing seems to make him more miserable than the awareness that the country is going down the abyss while it could be saved by him. If it cannot be educated, let it be humoured; if it cannot be humoured; let it be hustled; if it cannot be hustled, let it, well, be 'stung into sobriety.' The danger is grave; no risk can be taken; the country must be saved. Rajaji's fault is (if fault it is) that he knows he is right and that he alone can save the Congress – and through it, the country.

If a lofty element of self-consciousness is, as Morley says, one of the surest signs of human greatness, C.R. is indisputably great. He even suffers from a sense of infallibility so much so that he is 'as often the victim of his charm as the exploiter of it'. Sometimes, his brains are so overwhelmingly burdensome that under their weight he overreaches himself. But he has moments of calmness and moods of introspection; he can reflect- and recover and rally. He shares the Mahatma's philosophy but does not, like him, 'leave human nature out of account'. He has Jawaharlal's energy of intellect, but is not like him 'a generator of steam'. He is head and shoulders over everybody else in the Congress, in strategy and state-craft. As a constructive thinker and as a realist there is none in the Congress to touch him. He is a born 'Smoother', a first rate negotiator, a coalitionist to the marrow of his bone. He reminds one of Mr. Lloyd George, not only for his quickness of intellect, but in answering best the following description of him:

The power seeing unity in differences and differences in unity constitutes his wizardy in conference. He is at once an explosive of party union and a builder of flying bridges between incompatibles. He is a born coalitionist.

Rajaji is the chief hope of the Conference of Leaders summoned by the Viceroy; he is also the ideal man for working out the coalition idea in the provinces and setting up a National Government at the Centre.

A patriot with a philosophical outlook, a politician with constructive gifts, an administrator with a streak of evangelism, a reformer with a crusading zeal, a statesman and strategist of a high order, Sri Rajagopalachari is one of the astutest intellects and one of the most powerful influences in contemporary politics.

# PRESIDENT RAJENDRA PRASAD

(From *The India Express*, Dec 3, 1955)

Of Dr. Rajendra Prasad , the honoured President of the Indian Republic who has happily woken up this morning at 71 amidst the nation's prayerful wishes for his long life and continuous, dedicated service, it may well be said that if he was Bihar's gift to Gandhiji, he was Gandhiji's gift to India. Was it a mere coincidence, or was it an act of Providence, that their association began when Satyagraha in its pristine setting had its first manifestation on our soil in Cahmparan? In a sense Gandhji was all alone when unknowingly he ushered in a new era in our politics, out of revolt against the oppression of the tenants by indigo planters; he had however no need to feel lonely when he found by his side 'Rajendra Babu' who had felt drawn to him as if by instinct.

That was 38 years ago when Dr.Rajendra Prasad was only 33 but was marked out as the rising hope of the newly created Bihar. After an academic career of exceptional brilliance he joined the bar in Patna and rose to a commanding position. Behind his professional eminence lay a continuous striving for public service since as a student in Calcutta he was deeply stirred by the national awakening in the wake of the anti-partition agitation and Swadeshi movement. And by then he had also come under the magnetic influence of Gokhale and very nearly rallied round his banner as one of the 'Servant's of India'. It was a tremendous strain to him to have, for compelling domestic reasons, withstood Gokhale's call to join the society formally and asked for, or taken more time to dedicate himself to the nation with a sense of completeness. When he however, met Gandhiji in 1917 in his own home-state as a moral crusader, he saw things in a new light; indeed, he saw light. Life was not the same for him; it acquired a larger meaning and meant a grimmer purpose.

That this union of hearts or minds or spirits betwixt two such unusual men should have taken place where it did was a dispensation of Providence. For, what better region could there have been for so happy a consummation than Bihar, 'the *Maghad* and *Videha* of the ancients , the birth place of Budha...Bihar of Chandra Gupta and Asoka of the Mauryan dynansty, whose dominions extended beyond the seas and in whose court Megasthenes sat and Pliny wrote; Bihar of Pataliputra and Nalanda?'

There had been hectic development since. In 1919, in the year of the Punjab tragedy, the agitation over the Rowlatt Act drew Dr. Rajendra Prasad into the world of events and he signed the pledge to break unrighteous laws. In 1920 when the Congress plumped for non co-operation (with the British) he gave up his lucrative legal practice. For all his earnings – such was the measure of his austerity – he had but a sum of Rupees 15 left in the bank! But his faith in Gandhiji was unlimited though the Master offerred him nothing but poverty, incarceration and suffering.

He stood the test , despite chronic asthma. His moral earnestness and spotless character highlighted the Gandhian struggle so much so that Bengal's veteran leader, C.R.Das, who became critical of Gandhiji, openly said that Dr. Rajendra Prasad was the only excuse for the continuation of Gandhism. He could have asked for no greater tribute: he earned it richly. This struggle continued unabated . Dr. Rajendra Prasad was undergoing one of his periodic terns in the jail in 1934 when Bihar was rocked by the biggest earthquake in India's history. It became a moral obligation on the part of even the bureaucracy to set the acknowledged the leader of the Province free. He salvaged Bihar.

The nation paid its homage by offering him the Congress 'throne' in 1934 at the Bombay session. Since then it was to him that the Congress had turned whenever there was a crisis – after the fiasco at Tripuri and latter when Acharya Kripalani, after presiding at the Meerut congress, tendered his resignation. Inside the Congress none was more loved; outside

it none was more respected. His top-level association with it, with his emphasis on the Gandhian code, was a guarantee of its unfaltering standards.

In the nation's eye he was alongside of the Mahatma. On December 11 1946, the Constituent Assembly which was to draft Free India's Constitution, was to choose its permanent President. The great office called for a rare combination of qualities – knowledge, patience, a sweet temper, a just mind and the capacity to command universal respect. The House had not the slightest difficulty in making its choice. Without a single dissentient voice it voted for Dr. Rajendra Prasad – and had since set its heart on his primacy in the affairs of the State. It was a proud day in his life when Dr. Rajendra Prasad about three years later signed India's great charter – the new Constitution.

"Had he not joined Gandhi", said the American journalist, John Gunther, of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, "he would have certainly reached the highest position possible to an Indian in British India; he would have been a Supreme Court Judge or a Provincial Governor. But history has it that, having joined Gandhiji and come nearest to him, he has risen to the highest position within Free India's gift".

A man of solid intellectual attainments and a great jurist, Dr. Rajendra Prasad has a wide range of interests. As India's Food Member in the first National Government he set a high example. He has an abiding interest in nation building work. Among other things he has promoted the cause of Indian history and championed that of Hindi. On the wider arena he has led the world pacifists. His chief title to distinction is, however, on the moral plane. And it is a tribute as much to his political prescience as to his moral instinct that, as President of the Indian Republic, he decided to spend some time every year in the Southern climate and reconcile regional factors, if not obliterate altogether regional distinctions.

Here is a man who, in all the heated controversies of party strife and fierce conflicts of political warfare, has not caused or received a single bruise. There is nothing like bitterness in him and political acerbities have left him untouched. His gentleness and innate nobility, his simplicity and sweetness, his sincerity of conviction and earnestness of purpose, and, above all, his selflessness, have given him a moral stature that the Nation has learnt to adore.

No man has by his personal example raised the tone of our public life more. India knows no gentler man nor a greater gentleman. Simplicity never looked so great as in his presence. His modesty and humility have acquired an epic quality.

There is nothing dazzling about Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Like Mr. Nehru, he is not of the legendry type that can move a multitude, nor like Sardar Patel is he of the stern type that strikes awe in men's bosoms, but he is of the more enduring type that instinctively creates confidence and wins respect. He lacks the fire of original passion but has the steadier blaze of noble compassion. He is our Aristides the Just. Wearing the stainless escutcheon of Gandhism, President Rajendra Prasad is the symbol, alike of a new Republic and an old civilisation, that is India.

# Dr. RADHAKRISHNAN - 67

(I)

(From *The Hindustan Times*, Sept. 5 1955)

At few places in the world where the sea washed the shores is there so beautiful a beach as Madras can boast of: well-travelled men find it comparable only to the one in distant California. There on the Marina in Madras, as 'the low sun makes the colour', men and women who go for a stroll or a drive present an impressive spectacle. Occasionally a visitor finds one more impressive when a vast concourse of people on the sand is addressed by one of the Ciceros of the day. One day years back, a slim, clear-cut white turbaned figure, not looking a politician even by the farthest stretch of imagination, was seen addressing a large gathering of young men, the Presidency College facing the waters having no hall large enough to hold the meeting. Rarely, if ever, had such a contingency of shifting the scene to the beach arisen when a Professor was to speak.

That was, indeed, a 'warning' to Dr. Radhakrishnan who had not so far strayed outside the academic realms. Himself taken aback at such an uncommon experience, he prefaced his discourse with a striking observation: 'When philosophy becomes so popular, it makes matters suspicious.' It was not really the popularity of the subject but of the speaker that was, so to say, at stake. Therein, I fancy, lay the beginnings of the 'popular suspicion' about the future of Radhakrishnan who, beginning his professional career as modestly as any other member of the Madras Educational Service did, had in an incredibly short time taken the intellectual world by storm. Here was a man whom the Indian Universities alone could hardly keep for long within their confines while none could miss in him, even in those now far-off days, the spark that ignited celestial fires.

There was nothing in our academic annals comparable to the power of his personality which sprang from a larger comprehension of the mysterious universe and a word-magic which cast an unknown spell. Not

since Vivekananda held aloft in Chicago the torch of Indian wisdom and become symbolic of something undying, has another Indian become so indubitably the representative of the East in the world of thought. Dr. Radhakrishnan's intellectual conquests, with no 'new worlds to conquer' left, constituted a breath-taking record and won for him golden laurels wherever he appeared and raised his voice. If the very appearance of the man is striking, compelling is the voice one hears above all the tumult and the shouting or clamour and controversies, of the day.

Christ or Buddha, Kalidasa or Shakespeare, the poetry of Tagore or the philosophy of Gandhi – on what subject could he not speak with an authority and a charm, none too familiar in these troublous times when man is sorely in need of a message or a moral that cuts across the murky sky like a sword of lighting? In recent years sanctity of the University forum has, alas! been so much assailed by politicians who mistake slogans for *sutras*. It was a wonder how, even when British Chancellors presided – and their writ still ran through the academic 'chancelleries' – Dr. Radhkrishnan singled himself out by his amazing capacity to 'preach sedition' in the guise of an 'academic sermon'. We know how the faces of the Haileys of the day grew red when he said in his address at the Allahabad convocation in 1934:

Gandhiji's appeal will be written not only by the side of the utterances of the great national leaders like Pericles and Cicero, or Washington and Lincoln, but also of the great religious reformers, as that of one of the immortal voices of the human race in all that relates to the highest effort of men and nations.

Long before it became a practice to talk in terms of a new social order, Dr. Radhakrishnan raised the cry that 'a new sense of social wholeness alone can stem the rot in our present condition' and that 'no state is stable unless it procures for all the members the essentials of a good life'.

It was Dr. Radhakrishnan's most outstanding triumph in life that the East and West alike acknowledged him as the most reliable- and

fascinating – interpreter of each other's mind. It was not a mere intellectual triumph; it was a moral one. Incidentally he made a specific contribution to the Indian freedom movement which any of our foremost political leaders might well envy. To him in Free India the best was yet to be. Little could he have foreseen that Panditji and destiny would conspire together to plant him beneath the shadows of Stalin's Kremlin on the diplomatic front. It was an act of imagination. If today the distance between Moscow and Delhi is annihilated for the good of both and the larger good of a strife-torn world, let us pay our salutations to the philosopher-statesman who was the first to strike the chords of a new symphony on the Indo-Soviet front.

The advent of the Indian Republic brought him home as the first Vice-President. Rajaji stepped aside; Rajendra babu stepped in at the helm of affairs – and there was an additional charm in the presence on the stage of one who could bring to an administration on trail the healing touch of an evangelist. Never was a happier choice made. There are many whom office makes big but there are precious few who can make office big by their association with it. In the ordinary scheme of things a Vice-president is of no great consequence. But when the Vice-President happens to be one of Dr. Radhakrishnan's stature, it makes all the difference. It is the man that matters. Which foreign potentate or plenipotentiary that comes to Delhi, leaves it without seeking Dr. Radhakrishnan? It means but seeking light. It is the country's good luck that as Vice-President Dr. Radhakrishnan has not ceased to be our foremost cultural ambassador. And today when the emphasis has shifted from philosophical to ideological doctrines or the battle of creeds, we find him equal to the situation by his emergence as an apostle of peace and a crusader of a new faith: 'for us neither the American way nor the Russian way but the humanway'.

As a philosopher he ranks high among his contemporaries, as an intellectual he is a major individual force; as an orator he stands alone; yet, more than all that he has said or done he confronts us with the human qualities which have endeavoured him so much to the people. He is the very embodiment of plain living and high thinking and a supreme example

of mental poise. Such is the magnetism of his personality that in his presence all passions subside. It happened more than once when feelings were running high and tempers rising in the Council of State over which he presides with patriarchal dignity and benevolence.

But to find him at his best one should rather catch him alone and either sit quietly by his side or take a stroll with him on the lawn. One will find a lively mind at work, generous sympathy, 'keen interest in the world's works and ways' and a happy choice of words – indeed all the qualities of good talk which is, however, distinct from conversation. For, it requires two to converse. 'Coversation', as Mr. G.E.W. Russel says, 'is like lawn tennis, and requires alacrity in return at least as much as vigour in service'. It was the writer's happy privilege to have been present when Dr.Radhakrishnan and his distinguished friend, the late Dr. C.R. Reddy, were together. It was conversation of a higher order when phrases and epigrams were lavishly exchanged in an atmosphere of good fellowship and genial urbanity.

Who has ever met Dr.Radhakrishnan without wishing to meet him again or made his acquaintance without desiring for his friendship? In his company which is as stimulating as it is soothing one sees things in a new light an more pleasing hues and feels refreshed.The secret of this power of captivating the other man, however high or humble, lies in the sweetness of the man. Talking to him is like breathing ozone at a higher altitude or in a ampler ether. In him nature has so mixed the elements as to put him in a class by himself. He is one of the prime healers of our day.

The world has its philosophers and its statesmen in quite a respectable number but there are far too few philosophers among statesmen or statesmen among philosophers. It is this double eminence that marks Dr.Radhakrishnan out as India's philosopher-statesman for whom a ready welcome awaits in any part of the globe. To know him is to wish him well for, there is nothing that he seeks for himself and there is none who does not wish him unclouded personal happiness as "he wakes up tomorrow at 67". Let ours be the thought that "he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting".

(2)

# OUTSTANDING WORLD FIGURE

(*The Indian Express*, Sept. 5, 1956)

To philosophers all days are alike and equally purposeful. They make no distinction between one day in the calendar and another. Essentially a philosopher, India's Vice-president, for aught I know, may give no more than a gentle node of recognition even to this day when he reaches another mile-stone in life's journey. To us, however, who realise what – and how much we owe him, the day awakens in us lively memories and the occasion calls for a grateful tribute. As one who believes in the great and as an inveterate remembrancer of their birthdays, I would love to salute Dr. Radhakrishnan on his 68th birthday anniversary and wish him many more years of active, beneficent service to the motherland and mankind.

He is, by any reckoning, not only a great Indian but one of those few Indians in our own day who have made a difference to the times. At 68 he is no antiquity; he hardly even belongs to the men of age who just content themselves with 'a mediocrity of success'; he refutes by his own example the theory that the spirit must decay with the body. "Not to let one's thoughts live in the past but to keep them in tune with the life around one", is given to far too few. To that extremely limited and choice band belongs Dr. Radhakrishanan. At no stage in his life has he forgotten the past or feared the present or fought shy of the future. His astonishing capacity to react to new situations with an old faith and to reconcile one point of time to another in the aeons, has carried him forward – and far – as one of the stablest and serenest individual forces in contemporary annals. And nothing distinguishes him more than his generous comprehension which is so eloquently suggestive of.

The free step, the fuller breath,
The wide horizon's grandeur view.

One marvels at the volume and variety of his achievement – and one has reason to marvel more at the quality of his eminence. Here is a man who, in the wake of a brilliant academic career, humbly started his

life in the Madras Educational Service and yet, as years passed, established for himself an individual ascendancy that the world's Universities has learnt to admire and respect.Whether as a professor or as a vice-Chancellor, or as chairman of the universities commission in India, he had so served the cause of education as to be recognised as one of the noblest embodiments of what may be termed the university spirit. No one has more readily commanded the attention of bustling classrooms and crowded convocation halls, or 'the applause of listening senates.' It was the homage, know only to the Acharya's of old, that he received from far and near. And that was no mean achievement.

It was during the period of his active life in the Universities that he came to be recognised, by his erudition and eloquence and unexcelled gift of exposition, as one of the foremost interpreters of the mind, not only of distant nations (nations distant to one another) but of different hemispheres. The East and the west alike hailed him as an explorer in the realms of thought as a diviner of the kingdom of the spirit and as a cultural ambassador in the line of the Masters. And here in India there was a new awakening under the compelling influence of the man who not only re-kindled the fires at ancient altars but presented Tagore the Poet and Gandhi the Prophet in a new and effulgent light. That was, indeed, a positive contribution of his to the rediscovery of India and the restoration of old values – a contribution more abiding than the purely political expression of an inner faith, towards the larger fulfilment of Indian destiny.

Then came a new phase. There was a call to him to play a different role on a highly difficult front and soothe the ruffled political breasts in remote climes by bringing to doubtful minds a true understanding of free India's foreign policy and the Nehru spirit. It meant staking a life's reputation in Moscow which was still then a mystery and seemed to be so invulnerable to diplomatic conquests. There was a dismal shaking of heads in some quarters. A 'Professor' or a philosopher taming a dictator had few precedents in the chancelleries of the world. But to Dr. Radhakrishnan it proved to be more an opportunity than an ordeal. When he emerged out of the Arctic Twilight, he left the great Stalin smiling. It was one of the history's happiest moments – and incidentally, a personal triumph for Dr. Radhakrishnan.

Yet came another phase in his career of astounding success.It was the Prime Minister's wish that he should adorn – though not fill – the stage at home and give a new meaning and value to a seemingly secondary place in the scheme of things. He answered the summons – indeed, as he alone could answer. He is the honoured vice-President of India: incidentally, he takes the chair in Rajya Sabha – (a place analogous to that of the speaker in Lok Sabha) in the tradition of the Guru amidst his disciples, chosen or otherwise. We have all heard of great speakers but perhaps there are few comparable to our own Chairman. We are told how "Mr. Peel ruled by awe, Mr. Gully by law, Mr. Lowther by a certain bluff common-sense and good humour". Dr. Radhakrishnan overwhelms the house – for that matter, any assembly in the world - by his mere presence – a presence not awesome but kindly, benign, angelic. One wave of the hand – and the irate member sits subdued. A gentle home – thrust – and the House is dissolved in laughter. A classic phase or an impromptu epigram – serried ranks are lost in admiration.

Outside the House when our Vice-President makes a public appearance, an unknown animation likes the scene. No gathering is too big or cultured for his 'imperious' sway and 'out the great language rolls', seldom are profundity of thought and depth of understanding so happily attuned to nobler themes and larger purposes. It is to the immense credit of the Nehru Government and the lasting benefit of India that Dr. Radhakrishnan occasionally goes abroad to spread the message of India – a message of peace and love. We are familiar with the ecstatic reaction of British and American audiences to his exalted eloquence. What spell he cast on other peoples or races came to me as something of a revelation when, in recent weeks, I happened to glance through East African papers. It was in *The Kenya Weekly News* that I read this from the pen of a former Governor when, in Nairobi, Dr. Radhakrishnan inaugurated The Gandhi Memorial Academy as an integral part of the Royal Technical College:

It was a memorable and important occasion, such as men in an age to come, may well recall as decisive in our history, as we grope for order and understanding among our current confusions.

As the gentle voice rolled soothingly on , from history to wisdom, from wisdom to sympathy, from sympathy to love of human nature, from what we can now see was well-deserved praise and admiration for the achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, I seemed to sense a new spirit being born, a new bright glow lighting up the sky...

Dr. Radhakrishnan ceased speaking, and after appropriate farewells, we drifted away, I, at least, conscious that something great and new had been injected into the life of the Colony, that we had been given a new vision and a new hope.

*The Sunday Post*, having recorded, how Dr. Radhakrishnan completely dominated the civic luncheon 'where distinguished guests were almost mesmerised by his speech,' wrote in rapturous terms of the visit of 'this outstanding world figure' to Kenya.

Yes, today he is an 'outstanding world figure': he is indisputably more than the Vice-President of India. He represents the universal mind, like the world's great philosophers. Asked who was the most interesting Indian he had met, apart from Gandhiji and Nehru, it was Bertrand Russel who said this only the other day:

Someone in my own line – Radhakrishnan – a very arresting personality and a broad-minded philosopher - a man of real philosophic stature.

It is a tribute that will go down, echoing through the corridors of time, to posterity.

An appraisal of this man of rare eminence may, however, be beyond the common man. But even he will readily recognise in Dr. Radhakrishnan, and be truly grateful to him for, the Grace of Spirit which, in beautiful lines, Whittier describes as

An inborn grace that nothing lacked
Of culture or appliance-
The warmth of genial courtesy
The calm of self-reliance.

# Dr. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

(I)

(*Hindustan Times*, Dec.18, 1948)

Sometime in the early stages of his leadership of the Congress, at a meeting of the A.I.C.C., having with generous indulgence allowed a few sour critics to attack his policy and programme, the Mahatma was reported to have gently turned to "Andhra's learned doctor" and said: "Now Pattabhi open your fire." Up sprang to his feet the man from Masulipatnam, and with characteristic agility and verve, poured forth the lava of his burning eloquence on the scoffers and the sceptics.

Opening fire has been Dr. Pattabhi's pastime for over thirty years, irrespective of consequences, for, if sometime he flayed the opponents alive and left them with the wounds rankling in their bosoms, on at least a few occasions he scorched his own wings in the process. He has no regrets on either score. He is not the man to shed a tear over sundered ties or lost opportunities. He suffers from no excessive regard for others' susceptibilities, if only he is convinced of any deviations from the code on their part. And herein lies his strength or weakness, just as one likes to call it, but it is the key to his character.

Worshipping at no shrine, playing to know gallery, and hitching his waggon to no one's star, Dr. Pattabhi walks his way, not too warily but certainly with his head erect, and takes things as they happen. At no time in his long career has he stretched his hand for a favour or compromised his position for preference. He is extremely self-willed, and least inclined to make things easier for himself by exercising the gift of adaptability. What counts with him is conviction, not convenience. He relies on himself and on no adventitious aids. Neither does success elate him, nor does defeat depress him.

If ever there is a self-willed man in our public life, it is indubitably Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. Here is a man who was partially orphaned at the

age of four or five, who belonged to a family of five survivors that had to subsist on less than ten rupees a month for a period of 13 years, who had no means to buy his textbooks, who had to get on for seven years with a single shirt, and who had, in order to be able to finish his education, rung a scholarship out of every competitive examination and even got round the Christian Missionaries in charge of schools, by mastering The Bible and the Scriptures. As if this early and prolonged battle against poverty was not enough of an endurance test, Destiny drew him to a place which offered no scope for salvation in life. Three feet below the sea level and full of barren wastes, even escape from it to the next important town at a distance of but 50 miles, meant about a three hour journey, suggestive of eternity! But it immensely suited the man whose ambition was not to be too ambitious.

It was not Dr. Pattabhi's fault if for long he could not hide his light under a bushel on the South-East coast. Having, as a young man, come under the ennobling influence of the Brahmo Reformers and the Christian Fathers, he responded quickly to the call of the new Prophets in India. Inspired by the message of Swaraj and the cult of Swadeshi as early as in 1906, he entered public life and gave it a new orientation in Andhra. A practical idealist in whom missionary fervour is allied to business acumen, he sowed the seeds of a larger growth. His activities and achievements are a legion. In 1910, he pioneered the cause of National Education and promoted the advent of the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala – for long a model of its kind; in 1911 he wrote his book *Indian Nationalism*, which was an excellent exposition of the new faith; in 1913 he singled himself out as the ablest exponent of re-distribution of provinces on linguistic bases; in 1917 he carved out for Andhra a distinct place in the Congress; and in between, in 1916 he renounced his lucrative medical practice and became whole-time public worker. In 1919 he launched his English weekly, *Janmabhumi* (which he ran single-handed till the middle of 1930 when the jail claimed him as its own) and enlivened Indian journalism with his lively pen and brilliant comment. In 1922 and 1923, he gave Andhra its first bank and its first insurance company respectively. It is a tribute to his political foresight

that, before the advent of Gandhiji, he anticipated and carried out, except for the *Charka*, every item of the elaborate constructive programme of the Congress.

By temperament, Dr. Pattabhi is an iconoclast. He is fond of breaking the idols of the market-place and picking holes in other's armoury. Between the Amritsar Congress in 1919 and the Calcutta Special Congress in 1920, he was rather critical of the Mahatma, but three months later at the annual session in Nagpur, he became a whole-hogger. Since then he had been, so to say the last ditcher under the Mahatma's flag. Even when the Congress in 1936 blessed council-entry and in 1937 plumped for office, he had not ceased to be a no-changer, much to the annoyance of some of his senior colleagues. He was unrepentant. He declined Sri. Rajagopalachari's pressing invitation to join the Treasury Benches in Madras. Neither the attainment of complete independence nor the formation of the national government has made any difference to him. His is not only a non-official but one too, with something of the opposition mentality, in the sense that he is more keen on holding the mirror to the government than handing to it a series of bouquets, out of a mistaken sense of loyalty.

His critical acumen has its constructive side. Of his intellectual animation and powerful memory there is abundant evidence in the Councils of the Congress. Fluent in speech, adroit in debate and ready in repartee, it is as a committee man that he excels. He is a moving Secretariat – and can do everything from keeping minutes to checking accounts, or from drafting Memoranda to handling men. He is interested in ever so many subjects and knows so much about everything that he can hold your interest for hours. From the mechanism of a motor car to the organism of the human body, or from the intricacies of currency to the clauses in the Constitution, his mind can easily turn and discerningly dwell on. Whether it is on the philosophy of spinning or on the poetry of Swadeshi, he can speak or write with equal facility and vigour. His most distinguishing quality, in the physical sense or intellectual, is fastness. From walking to talking, or from plying the *charkha* to writing a book, he is exasperatingly fast – and whatever he does is suggestive of volume and momentum.

In the inner circles of the Congress he has been for over a quarter of a century a force to reckon with, though not always a *persona grata*. Tilak and Mrs. Besant were among the earliest to recognise his mettle and debating prowess: veteran Vijiaraghavachariar hailed him as dominating personality in the Subjects' Committee; Lajpat Rai described him as one of the ablest no-changers in the Congress; Rajaji acknowledged his astuteness; and Gandhiji claimed him as his commentator.

Two recent achievements of his have won for him special recognition – his *magnum opus*, the *History of the Congress* (two volumes) and his untiring work in the cause of the States' People. And when to these is added his unswerving allegiance to one institution, one creed, one *sutrakara* and one philosophy, we find Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya holding his own among the leaders of the Congress.

The present session (Jaipur, 1948) is doubly important; besides being the first session to be held in Free India, it has to consolidate the present and shape the future, and it is of good augury that is to have for its President Dr. Pattabhi who can reconcile the responsibilities of the government and the requirements of the people, in the light of Gandhism which is his only religion.

Speaking of an earlier stalwart of the Congress and the President of the Nagpur session in 1891, Dr. Rush Behari Ghose (Madras, 1908) said:

Behind his playful humour there was in him a singleness of purpose, a devotion to duty and an independence of character which made him a most prominent figure, not only of Madras but of the whole country. Word for word, this glowing tribute may also be paid to Ananda Charlu's only successor in Andhra to the Congress 'crown'. It is a far cry from 1891 to 1948, but the tradition persists.

(2)

(*Post–Script*, June 29, 1952)

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's sudden gubernatorial ascent is in the nature of an agreeable surprise, though it would have hardly been surprising if, in

1937 or 1945, he had become a Minister or if in the wake of Independence, he had attained Cabinet rank or risen to be a Governor. But things did not happen that way. Office eluded him. And since he ceased to be Congress President, he has been under eclipse.

His present elevation has one or two unusual features, Dr. Pattabhi will now don the robes of office for the first time and on the wrong side of 70. So seldom does the thrill of a new experience begin at the top level that Dr. Pattabhi's efflorescence into a Governor may well mark a startling departure from the theory of gradualness in administration and open new vistas for some of our veterans. For once professional astrologers (who staked on his emergence out of the clouds in June) have scored over political Prophets (who had all but left him severely alone).

Destiny has dragged "Andhra's learned Doctor" to Madhya Pradesh. He will be sworn in as Governor at Nagpur where 31 years ago, at the annual session of the Congress – the biggest in point of numbers – he created a sensation by his reply to Col. Wedgewood in a famous debate in the A. I. C. C. There can be no two opinions about his abilities or equipment or personal eminence. For a second time, except that Dr. Pattabhi is no domicile like the late Mr. E. Raghavendra Rao, the Andhra flag will fly over the Raj Bhavan of Madhya Pradesh.

Dr. Pattabhi's new role possibly calls for a psychological conversation to its rigid requirements. His *enfant terrible* propensity for the unconventional and the odd may cause a strain to nerves peculiarly unsuited to the atmosphere of court and ballrooms. In the process of enforced adjustments or adaptation to conventions which die hard and etiquette which is exacting, he will perhaps make gubernatorial existence less formal and more humane. He has before him the noble examples of Mr. Rajagopalachari and Dr. Rajendra Prasad who have reconciled high office with plain living. It should be comforting to Dr. Pattabhi to find himself nearer to Wardha and Sewagram where the old faith and the spirit of Sarvodaya have not lost their spell. Lucknow may still retain something of its Nabobic glitter but Nagpur will rather revive ancient austerity.

# SIR MIRZA M. ISMAIL

(1)

(*Social Welfare,* August, 1944)

The battle for unachieved ideals promised no abatement and neared no end; for generations the process of political tutelage dragged on a trifle monotonously; a land where an Asoka and an Akbar sat on the throne, was sedulously taught to learn the rudiments of administration from the successors of Clive and Hastings; in a world of dim lights a British peer murmured appreciation of some place as 'a pattern for the world' and 'exasperated' the unbelievers one fine morning. People rubbed their eyes in wonder and caught a glimpse of the new vision of the garden of Mysore where a certain Mirza flowered exuberantly, with the sun of Krishna Rajendra rolling in the firmament in full-orbed glory.

While British India was talking, and talking in its singularly garrulous way, as the decades rolled by, there was a model state carved out and perfected – richly endowed by nature, nobly served by man and wisely ruled by its Rajarishi. Born to the Throne with a most wholesome conception of the duties of a ruler, Sri Krishna Rajendra had revealed his genius in choosing his old, accomplished friend, Mirza Ismail, as the Dewan in 1926. While across the years the Hindu-Muslim problem was being worked up into a story of strife and secession, Mysore presented the unique spectacle of a wise Hindu ruler and his most trusted Muslim Dewan living for one nation, and building up one state. It was, indeed, one of the greatest collaborations in contemporary annals.

For about fifteen years, on foundations well and truly laid by a succession of giants - Rangacharlu, Seshadri Iyer and Visvesvaraya, to mention the most outstanding of them all – the new Dewan transformed the state into a thing of beauty and wrought too a change in psychology of administration. Departments became beehives of activity; officials became missionaries of service; the Dewan became the first servant of the people; the throne became the fountain source of all light and happiness; Mysore became the pride of India and paradise of the Mysoreans. Expert

administration was allied to high civil consciousness; vast industrial concerns sprang up amidst a land of smiling plenty; Bangalore and Mysore acquired the fame of world's beauty spots, a bright country-side beamed with model villages; orderliness was blended with aesthetic taste; progress went hand in hand with prosperity; happiness was in the widest commonly spread. Mysore (the state which enhanced the world's beauty through its Brindavan gardens) became a legend. Social justice and human fellowship vied so much with utility and beauty that a modern sage hailed the Mysore administration as *Rama-Rajya.*

It was one of the darkest days in Mysore when Sri Krishna Rajendra passed away in August 1940. Nothing was more grievous than the loss to the best cared for people in India, and nothing more tragic than the earthly end of what seemed to be an everlasting friendship between the wisest of Hindu rulers and most trusted of Muslim Dewans. To Sir Mirza the loss was far greater than words could ever convey; it was the loss of a friend to whom he owed his rise to eminence and fame.

Things were not the same for him in Mysore subsequently, and in June 1941 events precipitated his farewell from the state which he had so much fashioned after his heart's desire. The withdrawal of his hand from the helm of affairs evoked the most widespread and the deepest regret, for Mirza and Mysore became, in the world's esteem, synonymous terms. Messages of regret at his departure poured in from all parts of India; even the *London Times* from its high pinnacle joined the chorus. It was obvious that the loss was not personal but that of a people to whom he had offered truly dedicated service, and through service to whom he served the larger interests of the nation with an ability and zeal that were uncommon.

Among the many flowing tributes paid to him on the occasion of his retirement from Mysore, special reference must be made to those of Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir P.S. Sivaswami Aiyer, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, Sri C.Vijiaraghavachariar, Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri and Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. All of them were moved by his farewell to the place of his grertest labours, while the redoubtable Sir C.Y. Chintamani , from his sick-bed, exhorted that Mysore's loss should be turned to India's advantage by inviting him to join the Government of India. While a

blundering bureaucracy was dragging its weary way, it was given to a young far-sighted Ruler, the Maharaja of Jaipur, to entrust his State to the tried and veteran statesman. Within the two years and a half he has been in Jaipur, he has already raised its prestige, with the energy of a titan and the vision of a statesman. In months he has covered the track of years – aye, of decades – and made all the dead bones in the desert instinct with life. It is his Roman hand that the historian of tomorrow will find in the liquidation of feudalism in Rajputana, particularly in the emancipation of Jaipur.

His work is incomplete; at sixty one he is in full possession of all his faculties and is more mellowed in his outlook, and deeper too, in insight – and he awaits the call of destiny for an yet bigger role that he and but a few others can play, at the head of a Free India (and one India) in the more spacious days to come, after the war.

What type of man is this on whom the nation sets its eye with such hope and pride? What are the arms he carries in the serried conflicts of his times? What are the peculiar qualities that distinguish him from the crowd? What are his claims to the greatness that is so indisputably his?

It is easy to point out to Mysore and call him an ideal administrator; it is easy to turn to Jaipur which he has within a year and half lifted out of the stupor of ages and call him a great statesman; it is easy to see the charms of the country-side in the leading Southern state, the beauty of Bangalore and Mysore and the fairy-touch of Brindavan, and call him a splendid artist; it is easy too, to see his hand, revealed in a thousand and one things, big and small and call him a wizard. But what are those inimitable gifts from which has sprung a power- - and a power for such good to his fellow-men. He does not overawe you by his might. He does not overwhelm you by his magnificence. He does not overpower you by his brilliance. He does not – he hates to- put up a pose that passes for puissance. He does not move you by any cataracts of oratory. He has no airs about him. Not for him are the tricks of the rhetoricians. His words are simple, precise and direct- and spring from the wells of his heart with an ease and elegance, reminiscent of Baldwin's limpid diction. Occasionally he addresses you from the public platform on ceremonial occasions, and his speeches have the subdued harmony of a highly cultivated mind- a

mind that moves in large curves and wide horizons, and drinks deep, if quietly , at the pure fountains of humanism. He is as simple in his apparel as in his appearance- he is elegance personified. He places his hand on your shoulders- and you are conscious of the healing touch. He greets you with a smile - and an electric current passes through you, soothing your nerves. His geniality is a tonic.

A Muslim by birth, he has served Hindu rulers and enjoyed their "plenary confidence" , such as has rarely fallen to another man's lot. With his own lost cast amidst conflicting elements, he has perhaps incurred their equal displeasure in a manner which has certainly established his freedom from communal bias. Politically, his faith in Federation is in complete harmony with his faith in One Nation. Intellectually and culturally, he is the child, as well as the apostle, of world citizenship. To do good to fellow-men, within the measure of his opportunities, is his only religion. He is as ambitious as he is modest, but it is not vulgar ambition, Sometimes, he commits mistakes- but they always originate from his generous impulses.

One day at tea, in one of the most famous private residences, 'somewhere' in the North, I was discussing with my celebrated host, contemporary achievement in India, in terms of personalities. 'Don't you think', I asked, 'that when it comes to striking ability and solid service, some of the Dewans in the States are not are not a whit inferior to our leaders in British India who are so much behind the foot-lights? 'Certainly so' replied my host and, with a bias for concreteness, illustrated the point. 'Some of them' he said, 'are , indeed, remarkable men. A man of first-rate intellect and stupendous courage there is, for instance, C.P. who could be an ideal dictator if we needed one. For administering the Country's finances and running its railways, none could be better than Akbar Hydari. For keenness, judgement, administrative ability and experience, there are men in the Provinces who are equal to V.T. Krishnamachari and N.Gopalaswami Iyengar. As a man, as a Minister, and as a nationalist, there is Mirza Ismail, head and shoulders above them all. For a place in a truly National Government in India, he will have my first love.

# K. M. PANIKKAR

(From 'Sardar K.M. Panikkar Shashtiyabdapoorthy Souvenir', 1954)

Mr. Panikkar is one of our impossible men, in the sense that he has found nothing impossible, from editing papers to writing books or from advising Princes to taming dictators. That everything should have come to him naturally is a tribute to one of the most receptive and resourceful minds of his generation. His solo performance comprehending so many roles is almost breath-taking; the more the spectators are confounded, the more he is pleased with himself . It is always difficult to cope with one who could cope with many things- indeed, with anything, from a beard on his chin to Peking under his sheen.

For sheer versatility Mr. Panikkar has need to envy but one: he has to envy himself. A poet in Malayalam, a scholar in English, one-time professor, sometime editor, Advisor to Princes and Minister in States, later-day diplomat and always a historian, he is, so to say, a legion. He read history, wrote history, taught history and has in a way made history. The only thing he has yet to write – and should write-is his own story which should be truly exciting if he will only tell us, besides what he has done, all that he has known of men behind the scenes, or 'behind the swing-doors or up those crooked staircase'. Having found no bosom too hard to wriggle himself into and no situation too difficult to wriggle himself out of, he should unravel the mystery that is himself, for the benefit of posterity.

After a short spell at Aligarh where he did some lecturing in the National Muslim University, Mr. Panikkar who was hardly thirty, arrived in Madras as Editor of *Swarajya*, founded by Mr. Prakasam. Since those now far-off days I have known Mr. Panikkar and enjoyed his friendship, and kept in touch with him through correspondence across the decades. I vividly remember the days when he used to move about in a phaeton, dressed in faultless Khaddar and with a Gandhi cap on the head. Even

then he was known as much for his vivacious talk as for his vigorous writing-and for the gift of controversy. He was not destined to stay at *Swarajya* for long but during the time he was there he distinguished himself as an uncompromising critic of the Justice party and of British Imperialism. He was one of the first few, as well as one of the foremost in the line, to storm the ministerial citadel of the Justice Party by a fierce exposure of its administrative ineptitude and political reactionaryism and of its 'Tammany hall' methods in a series of articles, later compiled in pamphlet form under the expressive caption – 'The Cult of Incompetence'. It was first-rate political journalism – clean, combative and stimulating.

He was too much steeped at the moment in Congress exploits and , if I remember right, he went to Amritsar, in the cause of Akali Satyagraha and launched a weekly too. Was it onward? Not much later he gravitated to Delhi as the first editor of the *Hindustan Times*, having in no small way been responsible for its advent and incidentally for the beginnings of English daily journalism at the capital. When after sometime he parted company with its directors and left journalism for good- certainly for his own good- the Indian Press was robbed of some scholarly distinction and original thinking. Mr. Panikar has, in a way and in a sense, remained a journalist all along out of his love of a calling where his throne is still vacant.

More than once it had fallen to my lot to provoke him into journalist essaying when he was rather content to musing under Princely shadows. The article- 'Is the India Renaissance Anti-European?' which had the place of honour in the Twentieth Century launched by me in October, 1934, was by Mr. Panikkar. In fact he gave the journal not only a start but a fillip in quite strange circumstances. For the issue which was to appear in the following December on the first of the month I desperately needed an authoritative article on the J.P.C. Report which was published only a week earlier. I could only think of one man in India who could read, mark and digest - and then dissect- the Report within three days, with an amplitude associated with high – class periodicals; frantically I turned to Mr. Panikkar.

Never had my intuition served me better. The article reached me just in time. It was a marvel to me how he could reel it off and yet give it a structure, and clothe it in a style, which compelled far-flung attention.

Incidentally, Mr.Panikkar who wore the ministerial mantle in three states- as Political Minister in Kashmir, Foreign Minister in Patiala and Prime Minister in Bikaner- was no apologist of the Princely Order though a defender of Princely interests. It was his supreme good luck that at no time had he allowed his historical insight to be dimmed by the fierce controversies of the fleeting day. He knew what was coming.

His article on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report brought him to the forefront as a crusader in the cause of Federation. It was first-rate polemics; yet a superb exposition of the inherent virtues of the Constitution:

First and foremost (he said) , this Constitution embodies the realisation of the age-long and never –fulfilled ideal of a United India: an ideal which the Moghals envisaged but never achieved and Mahrattas never attempted to envisage or achieve.....

The 'peroration' was wound up with the warning that

Nothing is easier than to destroy a Constitution by the shot and shell of logic, but political development even at best is based on compromise and political evolution is dependent on human factors.

It was high recognition that shortly after, the then secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare (now Lord Templewood), in a speech at Cambridge, made warm references to the piece and that White Hall desired to know from me who the 'Kerela-putra' was – for that was the pseudonym which the author chose for himself.

Now it is a tell-tale pseudonym, and has indeed become 'patent'. And if I may permit myself one incidental observation, more than to anybody else it was left to Mr. Panikkar to have made, within the terms of his own remarkable experience, the phrase 'from Kashmir to Cape Comorin' or the

reverse of it, a reality. For had not a new face opened with the efflorescence of 'Kerala-Putra' into a Kashmir *mantri*?

* * *

There are as many interesting phases in his career as there are facets to his personality. He is, indeed, a great combination of personalities or a combination of great personalities. Leaving it to other contributors to size him up from different angles, I would love to dwell on one charming trait in Mr. Panikkar which has so much drawn me to him in life. My own experience, however, individual, is illustrative of his innate large-heartedness in giving tremendous encouragement to Indian or Indo-Anglian writers. Years back on receiving a book of light essays from me while he was in Simla, he cheered me up saying:

The writing of English in India has almost invariably been a business. It is so seldom that one sees it cultivated as a literary art. What has been the result? We in India write either treatises or journalese. The cultivation of a literary style can only come when people take to writing for the pleasure of it. You have achieved what very few of our contemporaries have done: you have succeeded in producing literature.

This meant to me so much at that stage when I was endeavouring to establish myself in a line where for lack of generous reaction to literary work many writers lost the zest for the craft. I owe it to Mr. Panikkar to say that of all his fine instincts I value most his noble passion for discovering talent and encouraging merit. But never would he surrender his judgement to friendly susceptibilities, or fail to stick to it under the influence of later-day developments. Having learnt to associate me with periodical journalism through the *Twentieth Century* which brought us together closely, so recently as at the beginning of this year when I reappeared in Allahabad – this time as chief Editor of the *Leader* - he characteristically reverted to an earlier enthusiasm and struck this note:

I am indeed glad....I should have been much happier if , instead of editing a daily paper, you could have directed a leading magazine of thought

which, in my opinion, is the most urgent requirement of the country. There is no forum for high level thinking in India and it is a sad reflection that men like you should have to waste your time in the drudgery of daily journalism rather than giving shape to the nabulous but germinal thought of the country.

* * *

Thus amidst his multifarious activities and continuous distractions he continues to be a source of guidance and light to his friends who are scattered all over the country. To them he is always a source of delight and wonder. Like Alexander The Great he is in unceasing quest of new worlds to conquer while in his life-line there is the track of Marco Polo. How by his latest book *Asia and World Dominance* he has filled a gap in historical literature is an evidence of his penetrating intellect and prodigious industry. Today he is busy bringing his ever-fresh mind to bear on the difficult subject of the reorganisation of states. And tomorrow! It would be hazardous to speculate, particularly about the man of parts who has played so many parts. Where does he appear next on the stage?

Mr. Panikkar (I don't know why he still clings to the feudal title of Sardar!) is in such 'a symbolic relation to the spirit of his times' that much will perhaps depend on the course of events of history. But if I may venture a prediction, I for one am certain that he is definitely the one man in India today who should, in the not distant future, find the gates of what is known as the Foreign Office flung open to him. He is but sixty – when in Free India men of eminence begin rather than end their careers – and he is yet young in heart which few others can claim to be. That he may rise to his fullest stature in handling Free India's foreign affairs with his unrivalled knowledge of 'the Government of Mankind' and its different systems and his uncanny instinct in locating himself in the right place, will be the fervent wish of his many friends. 'Kerela-putra' is a citizen of the world – and the world is his stage.

## IV

# CONGRESS PRESIDENTIAL GALLERY

(From *The Hindustan Times*, 1948)

The grey-bearded benevolence of Woomes Chunder Bonnerjee and Dadabhai Naoroji, the leonine domination of Pherozeshah Mehta, the soothing influence of Madan Mohan Malaviya and stormy leadership of Mrs. Annie Besant were distinct phases in the history of Congress before Gandhiji arrived on the scene at Amritsar in 1919 and changed its entire course. Indeed, till it came under the Mahatmic spell and turned 'militant', the Congress was mostly a glorified debating society modelling its eloquence and technique on the approved pattern of Mid-Victorian Liberalism. Besides respecting Naoroji's wisdom, admiring Gokhale's logic, fearing Mehta's personality and revelling in Banerjee's oratory, it did precious little to influence, much less over awe, the Government. When it was tired of pleading, it protested; when it was tired of protesting, it launched a verbal onslaught. So it sailed smoothly for over twenty years.

In 1907, however, Surat heard the rumbles of revolt against Moderate leadership, and the split that ensued meant the secession, not the supremacy, of the extremists led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai. In 1916, Lucknow found the Congress re-united. As the veteran, Ambica Charan Mazumdar, said, from the Presidential chair, in one of his unforgettable sentences: 'If the Congress was buried in the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born today in the Kaisar Bagh of Lucknow, the garden of the gorgeous king, Wajid Ali Shah.' The following year, 1917, witnessed new leadership when, under unusual circumstances, Mrs. Besant was elected President. The temper of the times was best revealed in her eloquent eulogy of the Congress when she exclaimed at the top of her voice: "While I was humiliated, you crowned me with honour; while I was slandered, you believed me in my integrity and good faith, while I was crushed under the heel of the bureaucratic power, you acclaimed me as your leader; while I was silenced and unable to defend myself, you defended me, and won for me release." A year later there was again a parting of ways in the Congress,

this time the Liberals having broken away on the question of the Montford Reforms. In 1919, under the dark shadows of the Punjab tragedy, the Congress passed into Gandhiji's hands and underwent an unprecedented transformation. Having since battled for over a quarter of a century for India's freedom and won her objective, what may be described as the Gandhi Congress is shortly meeting at Jaipur – for the first time in Free India – to consolidate victory and shape the future.

It would be interesting to note why the Jaipur Congress of 1948 is not the 64th session as it should have been in the usual course but only the 55th. It may be recalled that the Surat Congress (1907) was a fiasco, and that between 1929 and 1948, as many as ten annual sessions could not be held owing to political exigencies. As against these eleven casualities, there were three special sessions of the Congresss in 1918, 1920 and 1923. It is thus that Jaipur will hold the 55th session while Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya happens to be the 48th worthy to be elevated to the Congress *gadi*, six of his predecessors having presided twice, and two thrice.

The Presidentship of the Congress has always been regarded as the highest honour that India has in her power to bestow as 'the sign of her fullest love, trust and approval.' It is the triumph of the secular character of the Congress that of the 45 Congress Presidents (including the President-elect) apart from 8 Muslims and 3 Parsis, there were four of British nationality, excluding Mrs. Besant, who though Irish by birth, was Indian by adoption. In fact, the very founder of the Congress was an honoured Englishman – Allan Octavian Hume.

A careful analysis of the Congress Presidents will show that they represent a variety of trait and talent and a diversity of regional culture, and yet a common tradition of service. Not all the Presidents from Wooomes Chunder Bonnerjee to Pattabhi Sitaramayya are giants, any more than the British prime Ministers are, from Walpole to Attlee. If the British Parliament has its Pitts as well as Addingtons, the Indian National Congress has its Mehtas as well as its Mudholkars. If in England Gladstone, filled the stage in his day, so did Gandhiji in India – and if, thanks to Gladstone, the Gladstonians were a distinct, if also distinguished, political species in British Parliamentary life, so are the Gandhites in our Congress. Leadership

has different connotation is the pre-Gandhian and the Gandhian eras and the Congress Presidents too are found to have been cast in different moulds, each characteristic of his own environment and background. When the top hats flourished once, the Gandhi caps sway now, while the change in apparel, even in appearance, of the Presidents is accompanied by a change in their expression too, so much so that the Congress which once ecstatically reacted to the rolling periods of the rhetoricians, today enthusiastically responds to the plain, unvarnished language of the new generation of leaders. To recall all the Presidents, one by one, though not in a strict chronological order, and see them in a flash is but to read the history of Congress in terms of personalities and from a new angle.

***The First Phase: 1885 – 1906***

If the Congress turned to Bombay as its first venue, it turned to Bengal for its first President. The man on whom the choice had fallen, was Woomes Chunder Bonnerjee, an eminent advocate reputed for his high intellectual gifts, practical wisdom and charming personality. Seven years later he presided again, at Allahabad. It was of him that Ananda Charlu said that "With the appearance of the most English of Indians, he was the most Indian of Indians, in his feelings, affections and sentiments."

George Yule (Allahabad, 1888) William Wedderburn (Bombay, 1889 and Allahabad, 1910) Alfred Webb (Madras, 1894) and Henry Cotton (Bombay, 1904) form a distinct group. Yule, who represented the big business at Calcutta, was of considerable help to the British Committee of Congress; Webb was an Irishman who took great interest in India as an M. P.; Cotton belongs to the Civil Service, missed a governorship by having, because of his pro-Indian bias, come into a clash with Curzon, and from the Presidential Chair visualized the ideal of the United States of India; and Wedderburn, also an I. C. S., gave not only all his time to the service of India but spent all his pension on Indian causes, so much so that Surendranath Banerjea hailed him as 'truly an Indian patriot in the garb of an English official.' Budruddin Tyabji (Madras, 1887) and Rahimtula Sayani (Calcutta, 1896) were among the earliest in the Muslim community to identify themselves with the Congress. Both belonged to the Bar, and while Tyabji, brilliant as an advocate and speaker, rose subsequently to

the Bench, Sayani distinguished himself as fellow of the Bombay University and as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council.

Of the four men from Bengal who walked in the footsteps of W. C. Bonnerjee – Surendranath Banerjea (Poona, 1895 and Ahmedabad, 1902) Ananda Mohan Bose (Madras, 1898) Romesh Chunder Dutt (Lucknow, 1899) and Lal Mohan Ghose (Madras, 1903), it may be said, that they bore the lineaments of genius. Dutt who came from the I. C. S. was a poet, economist and historian, and the most versatile of them all; Bose, educationist and advocate, was the saintliest; Banerjea and Ghose excelled as orators. "For half a century, Surendranath Banerjea" to quote Mrs. Naidu, "assailed the heavens with the thunders of his splendid oratory at the burning wrongs to his people." If Nevinson compared him with Cicero, Chintamani ranked Ghose higher as an orator. Yet, for the loftiest flights of eloquence, there has been nothing comparable to Ananda Mohan Bose's peroration at Madras.

Of the two Presidents that Madras gave, Ananda Charlu (Nagpur, 1891) and Sankaran Nair (Amraoti, 1897) it is difficult to say who was the sturdier. Both were unfailing in independence. Ananda Charlu of 'rugged eloquence' was a life-long Congressman and non-official while Sankaran Nair had both official ascent and political eclipse.

Of the remaining five from Bombay, Ganesh Narayan Chandavarkar (Lahore, 1900) and Dinshaw Edulji Wacha (Calcutta, 1901) are an interesting pair. Judge, Vice-Chancellor, and an ardent social reformer, Chandavarkar was a man of considerable learning of whom a former Governor of Bombay said that 'he stood out as a type of which India possessed few examples at a time when there was need for sober counsels and lofty guidance.'His eminent colleague, Wacha, though absorbed in business, found time to make a very solid contribution to public life. His energy was so terrific that it would have been 'conspicuous in New York.' He was described as 'a compact packet of nerves and electric vitality.' An authority on economic and financial affairs, he had the distinction of having followed every budget from 1861 to 1936, the year of his death.

I have reserved till the end of this section the three biggest personalities of this period, lest the rest should otherwise appear dwarfed. Dadabhai

Naoroji (Calcutta, 1886 and 1906, and 1906 and in between, Lahore, 1893) Pherozeshah Mehta (Calcutta, 1890) and Gopala Krishna Gokhale (Banaras, 1905) were men who would have risen to the highest eminence in any part of the world, and in any age. The venerable Dadabhai was 92 at the time of his death; he had forty years of public life to his credit before the birth of the Congress; for twenty one years later he was its leading light and thrice wore the 'crown' and used the historic expression 'Swaraj' for the first time from the Congress Presidential Chair (1906). The first Indian to enter the House of Commons (1892-1895), 'There never was' as Wacha said, 'in the van of the old Liberal Guard a standard-bearer of his fearless courage and splendid isolation.' Speaking of his life, Gokhale recalled 'its sweet purity, its gentle forbearance, its noble self-denial, its lofty patriotism, its strenuous pursuit of high aims,' and exclaimed: 'As one contemplates that, one feels as though one stood in a higher presence.' A Rishi in politics, Dadabhai was the greatest Indian of his day since Raja Ram Mohan Roy of revered memory.

Another illustrious Parsi, next in rank only to Dadabhai, Pherozeshah Mehta was one of the most formidable politicians that India has produced. 'Uncrowned King of Bombay,' he was to the first generation of Congressmen a terror. On the civic side he was to Bombay what Joseph Chamberlain was to Birmingham, an imperious figure, at once brilliant and dynamic. A great speaker and a greater debater, he was the greatest adept in the difficult art of the management of men. His style of living and the Turkish cap he affected so impressed the foreigners that, when he went abroad, he was mistaken for the Shah of Persia. For magnificence and masterfulness, he was the prototype of Motilal.

Gopala Krishna Gokhale was of a different type - a type more familiar in British than in Indian public life. He was the brain as well as the soul of Indian Liberalism. Student of Mill, disciple of Burke, and friend of Morley, he as much influenced public opinion in England as he moulded it in India. If Ranade determined his character, Mehta shaped his career. For knowledge of a subject and mastery of its treatment, he had no equal. As a statesman he was in Massingham's view, higher than Asquith (later Lord Oxford). He lived a life of poverty, founded an institution of missionaries – the

Servants of Indian Society – raised public life to the level of a Church, and died, in Tilak's words 'a Prince among patriots.' Gandhiji who honoured Gokhale as his 'guru' described him as 'pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion, and chivalrous to a fault' and claimed him as the most perfect figure in the political field.

***The Second Phase: 1907 – 1918***

Rash Behari Ghosh, President-elect of the Surat Congress (1907) had the unenviable distinction of being metaphorically thrown out of the chair, since the session was literally broken up. He, however, adorned it at the Madras session in the succeeding year. A giant at the Bar, he enjoyed a continental reputation. The Calcutta University had not known a more princely benefactor, with the solitary exception of Tarak Nath Palit. He was the most literary of the public men of his time. Bishan Narayan Dhar (Calcutta, 1911) was another literary celebrity in his day. A lawyer of Calcutta, he was one of the earliest Congressmen whose speeches and writings commanded wide attention. The first Kashmiri Pandit to ascend the Congress 'throne', he was described by Motilal Nehru as the Saint of Almora. His immediate successor, R. N. Mudholkar (Bankipore, 1912) had no literary pretensions, but he was immensely interested in politics, Congressman, 'education, social reform and industrial development. A devout Congressman, 'his own province of Berar never had a more devoted son.'

Three war-time Presidents came successively from Bengal – Bhupendra Nath Basu (Madras , 1914) Satyendra Prasanna Sinha (Bombay, 1915) and Ambica Charan Mazumdar (Lucknow, 1916). Basu had a narrow escape from transportation for life when repression was rife in Bengal. He was a man of considerable powers of eloquence. Montagu endearingly called him 'a wicked man' as he never carefully read the papers received by him as a member of the States Council. Sinha who occupied the highest positions that had ever fallen to the lot of an Indian in his day and was later raised to the peerage, was the foremost in the legal profession. He attended but two Congress sessions in all, including the one over which he presided! Through his work at Whitehall as India's Under-Secretary of State, his influence on political developments was almost decisive. Montagu recorded in his diary that Sinha was the greatest gentleman and the most loyal and

attractive Indian he had known. His successor, Ambica Charan Mazumdar, Faridpure's grand old man, was remarkable for his 'rare fights of oratory'. His book *Indian National Evolution* is a classic.

During the present phase, there were two Muslim Presidents- Nawab Syed Mohmood (Karachi, 1913) and Hassan Imam (Bombay special, 1918). Fifteen years before he became the President, the Nawab, as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Madras Congress, gave high proof of his national outlook. A descendent of Tippu Sultan, he was, according to Nevinson, 'calm, modest, and generally silent but for a few definite words thrown into a discussion.' Hassan Imam, brother of Ali Imam, was a staunch nationalist all his life. As a young man he took part in Dadabhai's Parliamentary election; in later years he led the Home Rule League deputation in England. He was a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, and a philanthropist who gave equal donations to the Banaras and Aligarh Universities. As Congress President, he supported Gandhiji's Satyagraha movement against the infamous Rowlatt Bills.

Madan Mohan Malaviya (Lahore, 1909 and Delhi, 1918) had a personal ascendancy in the Congress and the country, comparable only to Dadabhai Naoroji's. Since he made his mark at the second session of the Congress in 1886, he clung to it all his long life with a son's fondness of, and devotion to, the mother. This white-robed Pandit of Prayag was described as the Venus of the Congress. He was a deeply religious man; yet nobody had a greater spirit of tolerance. His simplicity and sweetness, his selfless service, and his saintliness marked him out as the most revered man in India, next only to Gandhiji. His eloquence in English as well as Hindi, allied to his 'silver tongue', moved the multitude. By founding the great Hindu University on the banks of the Ganga at Banaras, he raised to himself a memorial. India knew no greater peace-maker or optimist.

The first woman to preside over the Congress (Calcutta, 1917) Mrs. Annie Besant, was one of the greatest woman of all times. As a girl she knew Milton's 'Paradise Lost' by heart; in the earlier years she fought by the side of Bradlaugh in British public life; in the wider arena she launched Bernard Shaw as a man of letters; as a Theosophist she led a world movement. At one time she edited 14 papers and wrote for every

one of them. Her powers of organisation were excelled only by her powers as an orator. She was a spell-binder; she made the welkin ring. Her work for India in particular is imperishable.

***The Third Phase: 1919 – 1948***

In the early years owing to a long spell of incarceration and later owing to his death on the eve of the Amritsar session, Tilak missed the chance of becoming a Congress President. The absence of his name in the presidential calendar is a singular omission in the Congress history. If Tilak had not presided at all, Gandhiji (Belgaum, 1942) presided but once. Yet, of Gandhiji it may be said that since 1919 till now he has been more than a President, inasmuch as the Congress during this phase may be described as the Gandhi Congress. His feet so much covered the Earth and his head so much touched the heavens that he was unlike anybody, and above every one, in our history. Others were but in nominal charge of the Congress; he was its maker. The Congress owed much of its prestige and all its strength to him. Even after his death it has not ceased to be his. Lajpat Rai, who presided over the special session at Calcutta in 1920, might not be a Gandhite in the sense in which his colleagues were, but it would be wrong not to acknowledge his obligation to Gandhiji's inspiring leadership. One of the truest and staunchest nationalists of India, Lajpat Rai rose to be the foremost leader of Punjab. Scholar and savant, speaker and writer, and above all a crusader, he lived a patriot and died a martyr.

Such was Gandhiji's consideration for his Muslim compatriots that four of them became Presidents under his banner – Ajmal Khan (Ahmedabad, 1921), Abul Klam Azad (Delhi special, 1923 and Ramgarh, 1940) Mahommed Ali (Cocanada, 1923) and Ansari (Madras, 1927). Ajmal Khan as a Hakim and Ansari as a doctor, were men of repute in the medical profession and were the most respected citizens of Delhi. To the cause of Hindu-muslim unity, both rendered invaluable services. If Ajmal Khan was President of Civil Disobediance Enquiry Committee (1922) Ansari was the founder-resident of the Congress Parliamentary Party – and each played a decisive role in the Congress politics. For sheer intellectual brilliance, Mahommed Ali had no rival among his co-religionists, either in the Congress or outside. As editor of the *Comrade*, he made history. His

pen was a power and his tongue a terror. Master of lively phrases and sparkling epigrams, he had a weakness for piquant situations. Irrepressible and uncontrollable, he was a man of the fiercest impulses who sometimes over reached himself. His Pan-Islamic obsession which was such that at one time he spoke of 'the corridor from Constantinople to Kanpur' often betrayed him into excesses.Another personality but without such fanaticism is Abul Kalam Azad. A man of learning, a writer of brilliance and an orator of the first rank, Azad is also endowed with rare political acumen. Today he is bearing new burdens under the friendly auspices of Jawaharlal Nehru to whom he is very much devoted.

There was something colossal in both C. Vijaayaraghavachariar (Nagpur, 1920) and S. Srinivasa Iyengar (Gauhati, 1926). Hero of the Salem riots and pre-Mutiny days, Vijayaraghavachariar was a pioneer in public life and a man of indomitable spirit. Tall and sturdy, he dominated any gathering and overpowered it alike by his erudition and wit. He was one of the greatest constitutional Pandits of the Congress. His junior, Srinivasa Iyengar, son-in-law of India's greatest lawyer, Bhasyam Iyengar, was himself one of the giants at the Bar. He had a very sharp intellect – and as sharp a tongue when he spoke under provocation. A man of extremely generous impulses, he was rather volatile. He was a superb organizer and an expert in the management of men. He was too quick for his following and too tough for his colleagues. Since the late V. Krishnaswamy Iyer, Madras cannot recall a more dynamic leader than Iyengar.

Motilal Nehru (Amritsar, 1919 and Calcutta, 1928) and Chitta Ranjan Das (Gaya, 1922) equally formidable and fascinating, stood on a pedestal of their own. Both were foremost in the legal profession, and if as lawyers they made great fortunes, as patriots they made great sacrifices. Alike in several respects, they were yet structurally different. Motilal was essentially a prince and Das a prophet. If the former was the brainiest of the politicians, the latter was 'the kingliest of dreamers.' As the twin-founders of the Swaraj Party, they gave a new turn – indeed, orientation – to Congress politics. They were born leaders who lent distinction and colour to the Congress – and for long the country may not see their like.

Mrs. Naidu, (Kanpur, 1925) the second woman, and the first among the women of India to preside over the Congress, is a class apart. A poetess of the widest renown, under Gandhiji's spell she picked up the cross and flung the lyre. If, as a speaker she reached lyrical heights, as a conversationalist she stands alone. Today she is 'Her Excellency', and at the head of a Government in a Province which does justice to her Catholicity. Shivering on the brink of seventy she still retains the spirit of youthful optimism.

Jawaharlal Nehru (Lahore, 1929, Lucknow, 1936 and Faizpur, 1937) and Subhas Chandra Bose (Haripura, 1938 and Tripuri, 1939) came into prominence as the leaders of Young India, the former under the leadership of Gandhiji and the latter under the inspiration of C. R. Das. Intrepid, daring and ambitious, Subhas Bose was the grand rebel in our politics who staked his all for the freedom of India and had a fall, which, like his life, 'baffled all speculation.' As the later-day Netaji, he will live in history. More refined in appearance, more synthetic in his gifts and constructive in his approach to problems, Jawaharlal Nehru has played the most considerable part in recent political history, with the sole exception of Gandhiji. Dominant with all the qualities of a born leader, he was yet the most disciplined of the Mahatma's lieutenants. Motilal and Jawaharlal are the only father and son to have presided over the Congress, and if Motilal presided twice, Jawaharlal presided thrice like the great Dadabhai. Nobody has laboured harder, or with greater success, than he, not only to treat but to make India as a part of the world problem. As the first Prime Minister of India, he has mellowed into a statesman and also won the recognition of the world as one of the greatest individual forces of the day.

Vallabhbhai Patel (Karachi, 1931) and Rajendra Prasad (Bombay, 1934) are the very pick of the Gandhi bunch. The former is the embodiment of strength and the latter that of sweetness. Vallabhbhai excels in political strategy and is unequalled as an organiser – and wielder of the 'big stick.' In 'rolling up the map' of India and redrawing it as India's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of the states, he has singled himself out as a man of destiny. Rajendra Prasad is the greatest gentleman in Indian public life and the best loved of politicians. Incapable of making any enemy or

losing a friend, he is, in a large sense, truest product of Gandhism. A man of intellectual eminence, he is morally 'the tallest of the Romans.' His character is the nation's proudest asset.

Kripalani (Meerut, 1946) and Pattabhi Sitaramayya, President-elect, Jaipur Congress, are both distinguished evangelists as well as exponents of Gandhism and men of consequence in the inner circles of the Congress. Since the days of Champaran, Kripalani has trodden 'the Gandhian way' and harnessed his keen intellect to the service of the Congress, as its Secretary for long years. Of longer standing as a Congressman, and endowed with brilliant gifts as speaker, writer and organiser, Pattabhi stands for the Gandhian ideals like a man of granite and maintains a tradition that has made India free and will also make her great.

***Post – script***

In bringing this article to a close it may be mentioned that the average age for the attainment of Congress Presidentship is 50, that if re-election is taken into account Dadabhaai Naoroji was the oldest, being 81 when he presided at Calcutta in 1906, and that otherwise Vijiaraghavachari and Pattabhi Sitramayya happened to be nearer seventy when elected. Among the youngest were Gokhale, Azad and Jawaharlal. While Jawaharlal was 40 at Lahore (1929), Gokhale was 39 at Banaras (1905) and if special sessions are taken into account, Azad was but 35 at Delhi (1923). As for the 'bulk' of the Presidential address, two Muslim Presidents established a record, Mahommed Ali for the longest and Ajmal Khan for the shortest. And, if I am not mistaken, Pattabhi's will be longer than shorter, for intellectually he is nearer Mahommed Ali, though professionally he was with Ajmal Khan.

# THE ANDHRA GALAXY

(From *The Indian Republic*)

Of all reputation political reputations are the least enduring, though they are the loudest while they last. Likewise of all estimates, contemporary estimates are the least reliable though they are the best documented. Time which is supposed to be a healer is not unoften an erasure; it wipes out many names of the day from the memory of posterity and makes a clean sweep of the debris accumulated in the receding years.

Men of the moment or heroes of the hour are a legion; we almost jostle with them at each lamp-post. They are so obsessed with their own sense of importance as to be little conscious of the darkness enveloping them. At the end of the year they dwindle, while at the end of the decade they disappear. Not so the men of real greatness; they are like guide-posts and landmarks which neither distance obscures nor time obliterates.

Essential greatness knows no adventitious aids. Civic addresses and University doctorates are no insurance against the creeping paralysis of effacement. Garlands and processions are no passports to future recognition. The wreaths fade and the caravan passes into the limbo of oblivion.

II

Viewed in such a perspective, we find that in Andhra public life there were among the honoured dead hardly a dozen whose names animate the page of history, while it is extremely doubtful even if those really counted for much in the all-India context. Andhra fulfilment, in terms of personal worth or individual distinction, has somehow not touched lofty heights, though it has risen far above the common level.

On deep reflection I have found but one satisfactory explanation for the absence of fullness in Andhra stature. What the Andhras lack is not the element of greatness but that of self-consciousness or self confidence, due

to inherent inferiority complex or environmental chill- and an element of self-consciousness is, as Morley says, one of the surest signs of human greatness. Bengal had it in abundance; Bombay – more particularly Gujarat than Maharashtra – has wrested this-'talisman'; U.P. is not far behind in the race. On the rest of the country there is a wet blanket. Intellect is, and has been, the forte of the south, but men of intellect are seldom men of destiny.

III

It is against this background, rather a misty one, that I now project on my canvas the few Andhra celebrities who had affected the mind of passing generations as well as the fewer, among the living, whose names promise to descend to posterity.

**Viresalingam and Venkataratnam**

Viresalingam Panthulu whose birth centenary was celebrated on 16th April 1948, was no politician, even by the farthest stretch of imagination.Yet, in a large sense, he was the pioneer of public life in Andhradesa , as one who both inaugurated a new era in Telugu literature and created a social revolution. In the impact of his versatile mind on current forms of literature and in his reformist crusades for the rise of woman, the redemption of the widow and the uplift of Harijans, were the first glimmerings of the dawn in Andhra. A poor and lonely man, with nothing to sustain him in all his struggles but his own 'inner voice' and iron will, he swam against the sweeping currents of Time and yet changed their direction. He it was that inaugurated the era of modernism in Andhra and summed up in his own life story the evolution of an epoch.

Closely associated with him and only next to him in creating the social harmony and liberalisation of Andhra was Venkataratnam Nayudu, familiarly known as Nayudu Garu. If Viresalingam Pantulu was a Telugu Pandit, Venkataratnam Nayudu was an English scholar. Physically as well as intellectually Nayudu Garu was a man of formidable dimensions; morally

he was an exemplar of equal magnitude. In his appearance, grandiloquence and humanity he was reminiscent of the immortal Dr. Johnson. A lifelong educationist and reformer, he rose to be the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, and for a while made his appearance in the Madras Legislative Council, but these were more inconsequential diversions in a career of dedicated service as an evangelist. In richness of diction and the exquisite balance of phrases and the flow of rounded periods he had few equals while by his own example and the compelling power of eloquence he wrought a transformation by elevating the moral standards of his generation.

'The life of Viresalingam and the life of Venkataratnam' (as described by an intimate friend of theirs but revised chronologically) 'make up the two hemispheres of one glorious orb of illumination for us in the Southern Presidency: Viresalingam the hero and Venkataratnam the sage, the one with his ideal of righteousness and passion for work and the other with his ideal of saintliness and passion for worship, the one an influence to direct the energies and the other to mould the aspirations – both, the twin stars that have swayed, and shall long sway, the southern horizon.'

**Subba Rau Pantulu and Ramachandra Rao**

On the purely political side in modern Andhra history, the foremost in his day was Ananda Charlu who, besides being one of the 72 sponsors of the Indian National Congress, was the first in the entire South to wear the Congress crown. As President of the Nagpur session in 1891, he was the immediate successor to the masterful Phirozeshah Mehta. Yet, for some unknown reason, it was Nyapati Subba Rau Pantulu who was acclaimed as the patriarch of Andhra public life and the Grand Old Man of Andhra. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Madras Congress of 1898, and General Secretary of the Congress from 1913 to 1917, he was a front-rank figure in the Congress but he missed the Presidential honour. As a member of the Old Imperial Council he was among the giants. He was one of the pioneers of the Andhra movement and in every way one of the prime-builders of modern Andhra. A man of considerable experience, acuteness

and sagacity, he had grown radical with advancing years and kept abreast of changing times, so that in Andhra public life he carved out a niche of his own.

Among his junior contemporaries none in our public life was more venerated than Mocherla Ramachandra Rao. For no fault of his he missed the rewards of service which had fallen to B. N. Sarma and Kurma Venkata Reddi, but the absence of just recognition had in no way robbed him of his prestige or diminished his stature. A man of polished urbanity and unimpeachable decorum, he had no enemy in life, personal or political. The South had not known an abler legislator or better committee man, nor India a greater master of blue books and detail. For the example he set as the best informed man of his day and for the stainless escutcheon he wore, his name will endure.

**Raja of Panagal**

Whatever might have been its effects – they were of course adverse – on the growth of larger nationalism, there is little doubt that the Non-Brahmin movement in the South was not without its historical justification. Of the Justice Party which was its organisation, the founder was Thyagaraya Chetti while the prize-boy was Kurma Venkata Reddi, but neither of them had the stature of the Raja of Panagal. An aristocrat to his finger-tips, the Raja excelled as a diplomat. His genius for statescraft worked wonders. Though his fangs were essentially meant for the Brahmin anatomy, it was known that he had consistently upheld the Indian cause as against British interests. If nearly 97 percent of the people of the South awoke to a new destiny by virtue of their numbers and successfully challenged the age-old monopoly of the Brahmin in the official scheme of things, it was not a little due to his personal ascendancy in the power politics of Madras. The harvest that is today being garnered in the South by those who do not technically belong to the party which he led but are otherwise his spiritual successors, is the legacy of his friendship and a posthumous tribute to his memory.

## Hanumantha Rao and Gopalakrishnayya

Among the great idealists of Andhra who left an indelible impress on their times were Kopalli Hanumantha Rao and Duggirala Gopalakrishnayyaa. They were men of sparkling gifts; they lived a dedicated life; and alas! They both had a premature end. They were educationalists; scholarship and learning claimed them. Yet no two men were so unlike each other. A recluse and a dreamer, a prophet and a priest, there was no more unassuming a man than Hanumantha Rao, he was the very soul of simplicity. Embodiment of Andhra Renaissance and pioneer of national education, he passes into history as the Founder-Principal of the Andhra Jateeya Kalasala and as a man of the finest culture and the highest character.

Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya had none of the recluse in him. He was a rebel who could rouse the multitude to fury and lead it to revolt. Of good build and impressive appearance, at one time he grew a beard – a forked one, and became the picturesque symbol of one of the most popular movements in our annals. There was thunder on his brow and lightning in his looks, and as he raised his resonant voice he drove the crowds mad till they were seized with the frenzy of passion. Since his death ere he had grown to his full stature, he became, and still is, one of the legends in Andhra.

Both Hanumantha Rao and Gopalakrishnayya represented Andhra at her best, the one emphasising the idealistic aspect and the other the emotional.

## Nageswara Rao

No Andhra leader was more universally loved or had greater claims on the gratitude of the people than Desoddharaka K. Nageswara Rao. An entirely self-made man whom prosperity never elated nor the demands on charity ever depressed, his name was a household word. His fine culture and great catholicity drew to him men of all communities and ranks, and if

he was the friend of rich, he was also the patron of the poor. Art and letters owed much to his benefactions; many institutions and myriad individuals turned to him incessantly as their unfailing guide and tireless benefactor. But for his unswerving allegiance to the Mahatma and the Congress and generous solicitude to a host of individual public workers, Andhradesa would not have made so striking a contribution to the cause of Swaraj or so rapid a progress in endeavours, constructive and creative. In Andhra memory his name will forever be enshrined as the giver of all good things for public good.

**Chintamani and Raghaavendra Rao**

More than a passing reference is due to the two Andhra celebrities whose distinction and domination enriched public life in the provinces beyond Andhra in which their lot was cast and incidentally enhanced Andhra's prestige beyond. Each was a colossus – Chintamani in U. P. And Raghavendra Rao in C. P. Chintamani was a lifelong journalist and politician, having come on the public scene early in life as a prodigy. As Editor-in-Chief of the *Leader* of Allahabad and the most combative of Liberal leaders, he was a power in the land. His equipment was immense, his memory phenomenal and his public-spiritedness irreproachable. His sense of integrity and independence was, indeed, so high that Samuel Hoare preferred any Congress extremist to Chintamani at the R. T. C. His short tenure as Minister in U. P. added to his stature by virtue of its very shortness which was due to political reasons, and in or out of office he was dreaded. With the solitary exception of Pandit Malaviya, Chintamani was the foremost builder of public life in U. P.

Raghvendra Rao was a barrister by profession and a politician by instinct. Astute and resourceful, he had a Lloyd Georgian flair for the political game, and for long years he was a pivot of politics in C. P. He was in and out of the Congress and, whether in or out, a force to reckon with. If as a congressman he was a Minister, as a non-*persona grata* with the Congress he rose to be a Governor. History will record that he was the first

Indian Governor who struck to his Gandhi cap when the union Jack was flying over the Government House in C. P. As a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council he made history by his famous duels with Cripps. He died comparatively early, leaving behind him in C. P. a memory as enduring as Chintamani's in U. P.

**Prakasam and Pattabhi**

Among the living celebrities in Andhra I can think of only four whose names will command the attention of posterity. The name of Sri Konda Venkatappayya, justly honoured for his long record of service, lacks the peculiar vitality that is associated with Sri T. Prakasam or Dr. B Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

Mr. Prakasam was at one time a leader of the Madras bar, but he was no legal luminary like Alladi Krishnaswami. He was for about a decade Editor of *Swarajya* which he founded and nursed with his life-blood but he was no journalist of eminence like Chintamani. He was a member of the Central Assembly in the days of Motilal Nehru but he was no patch on his own predecessor, Mocherla Ramachandra Rao. He was the Prime Minister of Madras recently, but he was not so outstanding as his predecessor and whilom chief, Sri Rajaji. He has little political equipment and few intellectual gifts. Yet this man is so intrinsically great that all his limitations and failures have not dwarfed, much less shattered, him. His personal sacrifices are comparable only to those of Chitta Ranjan Das. His grit and courage are reminiscent of Vithalbhai Patel's. His invincibility in strife or struggle is on a level with that of Subhas Chandra Bose. His towering personality is his greatest asset, he has the heart of a lion. Andhra history will treat him tenderly and remember him as a hero under whose feet Congress earth trembled.

Dr. Pattabhi, whose gifts are as brilliant as they are varied, and whose services to the Motherland are as enduring as they are many-sided, has already established himself in the national pantheon as the ablest advocate of the linguistic movement, as the foremost spokesman of the States' people,

as an authentic interpreter of Gandhism, as the official historian of the Congress, and as the only Andhra since Ananda Charlu to ascend the Congress *gadi*. No politician has done more to put Andhra on the map, and if the Fates are not unkind, he may change the Andhra map. Disappointment and defeats have never soured him, nor have the fruits of victory intoxicated him. Age has not blunted the edge of his mind, nor added furrows to his face. At seventy he is soaring to new heights. In the annals of Andhra he will live as one who has not only carried her torch to every nook and corner of India and lighted many a dark patch but shaped the things to come.

**Reddy and Radhakrishnan**

Today, Andhra is proud of claiming among contemporary intellectuals Drs. C. Ramalinga Reddy and S. Radhakrishnan as her own: tomorrow she will have reasons to cherish that pride. In Andhra they had no predecessors, and it is doubtful if they will have successors, while in all India they have no equals in the particular types of eloquence of which they are the masters, apart from being specialists, each in his own line. Life-long educationists, they have given a new orientation to University education; they have established themselves as thinkers; they have developed angelic wings as speakers.

In politics too much of an individualist, and in education not little of the autocrat, Reddy does not excite popular enthusiasm or always command popular support. Yet nobody is livelier in discourse or controversy on the platform on which he appears. As an young man at Cambridge he attracted Gokhale and even won the encomium of Sir John Squire as an Indian who had 'the wisdom and the eloquence of Burke.' The fates have been to him none too kind. He is genius under curse. His achievements are by no means negligible but they are not proportionate to his accomplishments. His great service has been in setting the intelligentsia athinking by his original thinking and inimitable exposition. As a wielder of the English tongue, particularly in what is known as Parliamentary form of speaking, as a wit and as a phrase-maker, he is matchless.

Eight years his junior, Radhakrishnan lacks Reddy's intellectual acumen and incandescence, but by the steadier pursuit of aim and the sweeter graces of life he has left Reddy leagues behind. His grand comprehension as a philosopher has lit the contemporary scene. Combining in himself ancient wisdom and modern thought, he has done – and is doing – a lasting service by interpreting the East and the West to one another. Incomparable master of a new diction, he has 'exalted the eloquence of man', and as India's ambassador of culture he has become unique.

Ramalinga Reddy and Radhakrishnan are the best of friends; they are the most famous of Andhra's intellectual twins; they complement each other: and they will pass into history, hand in hand, as thinkers and word-charmers.

## V

Andhradesa which has, in modern times, produced a crusader like Viresalingam, a reformer like Venkatratnam Naidu, a patriarch like Subba Rao Pantulu, a statesman like Ramanchandra Rao, a Minister – diplomat like Panagal, and idealist like Hanumantha Rao, a rebel like Gopala Krishnayya, a benefactor like Nageswara Rao, a political strategist like Raghavendra Rao, and a journalist-politician like Chintamani, and has today, to her credit and pride, a puissant personality like Prakasam, constructive genius like Pattabhi Sitaramayya, and intellectual giant like Ramalinga Reddy and a philosopher-ambasssador like Radhakrishnan, has a distinct place of its own in the general scheme of things in a Free India which no group of men or set of circumstances can dispute or deny. In the sense in which India has declared herself independent before independence has become a reality, Andhra has all but declared herself a Province before the province has become reality. Whatever be the political exigencies of the day, whatever the temporary set-backs and whatever the moves on the political chessboard, Andhradesa can no more be dodged of her destiny. Does she lack in historical tradition? She had once an empire. Or in geographical importance? Vizagapatam is there to give the answer. Or in

economic resources? Look at the prospects of the Rama Pada Sagar Project. Has she no administrators of eminence? One Sir S. V. Ramamurti is more than a match for half-a-dozen high placed men at the centre. Has she no spokesmen or moulders of public opinion? Her sons are the cream of the Indian press. Has she no publicists, politicians, parliamentarians and policy-makers? Sambamurti, Giri, Ranga, Kala Venkata Rao, Gopala Reddi and Smt. Durgabai can combine and administer a province.

It will, however, be said, and not without justification, that our public men are a prey to mutual jealousy and given to pulling each other down. Differences and divisions have been our doom. In extenuation of our shortcomings, it may be pleaded that cliques, controversies and conflicts are not the special property of the men of the South. There is so much of dust on the name-plates in Delhi that it would be idle bluff, if not, sheer hypocrisy, to make too much of these. Andhra will as surely settle down as a province as India is settling down as a Free country, despite the wrangles of leaders or divergencies of their political outlook. Not with-standing long-standing doubts and current pessimism, Andhradesa should soon catch the glimpses of a new vision and take her place among the sister States of the sovereign republic of India with a message and mission of her own.

# FROM CHINTAMANI TO CHALAPATHI RAU

*(Thumbnail Sketches of Andhra Editors)*

India is not particularly rich in editors, when we talk of what E. T. Raymond would call real, if not great, editors. Surely, it is not every editor that is worth of the appellation, whatever be the salary he gets – or takes.

Andhra editorship is, however, no apologetic affair. It has illumined the journalistic landscape far beyond its (undefined) borders. It has claims to recognition, even to eminence. Here is my gallery of Andhra editors, from Chintamani to Chalapathi Rau – from one who was my chief to one whose chief I was: or, to put it differently, from the most famous to the most brilliant of Andhra journalists. In between Chintamani and Chalapathi Rau, we have Mr. Prakasam who strayed into journalism and remained defiant till he was stampeded into a crash; Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who surrendered the gifts of a vivid journalist to the preoccupations of an active politician; the distinguished Kotamraju brothers – Mr. Punniah whose hold on Sind is next only to Chintamani's in U. P., and Mr. Rama Rao, who 'subbed' his way all over India, blazed in Lucknow and returned with laurels to the home-province; Sri K. Ramakotiswara Rau who brought to periodical journalism the pure breath of art and culture; Mr. C. V. H. Rao, most academic of journalists and the least pugilistic of controversialists; and that indomitable pair discovered and fostered by Mr. Prakasam, Mr. G. V. Krupanidhi and Mr. Khasa Subba Rau, who jointly waved the banner of *Swarajya* and are now respectively starring in the North and stirring the South. These constitute no dim constellation.

**Sir C. Y. Chintamani :** Can Chintamani be portrayed in a paltry paragraph? He was one of the most outstanding editors in our annals; he was, indeed, much more than that. He was for thirty years an editor, and too, the editor of one paper. The *Leader* was his first and last love. He made an indifferent newspaper an organ of opinion, respected all over the country. He made it a potent instrument in the building up of the public

life of the United Provinces. His amazing industry, encyclopaedic knowledge and phenomenal memory, his powerful eloquence and ready pen, his political acumen and his parliamentary gifts, his flair for controversy and genius for conversation, his rigid opinions and fierce convictions and his fundamental regard for the higher things of life, established him – to use Mr. Srinivas Sastri's inimitable phrase – as the Pope of Indian Journalism. It would be easy to deride him, as 'Gentleman with a Duster' did Asquith, that 'he acquired scholarship by rote, politics by association and morality by tradition.' And one might legitimately say that he lacked the finer graces of style – and of life. But who can deny or dispute his eminence as an editor with something of the mellowness of Spender and much of the vitality of Stead? How true, indeed, of Chintamani what was said of W. T. Stead?

Whether you liked him or disliked him, agreed with him or disagreed with him, you would never be indifferent to him. There was that about him that could not be ignored – a certain chivalrous uncalculating fearlessness, a joy of battle, a fervour of conviction. There were no half-tones, no subtle romances and delicate nuances in his equipment. Everything was broad as the day, indisputable as the multiplication table, emphatic as the thunders of Sinai.

Never had Chintamani expressed an opinion that was not his own. His moral authority was unquestioned. Of all our men he answers best Raymond's description of a great editor. He was our only giant.

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**Mr. Prakasam :** if Chintamani was, as the phrase goes, a born journalist, Mr. Prakasam stumbled into journalism by accident. He was an editor who never edited, and it was just like him that he had no pretentions. Political events in the wake of Mahatma's arrival brought him on the journalistic stage as the founder of *Swarajya* and he lent it the weight of his honoured name. He showed great courage in making it the mouthpiece of the Congress in the South, and made a rare sacrifice in running it against

overwhelming odds. He rallied intrepid youth round him, and gave his men stone – not bread, toil – not rest, and made it physically difficult for them to get on and psychologically impossible to get out. He inspired them with faith. These were certainly no mean achievements. His services to journalism in the South were striking, if incidental. Who can ever forget that Krupanidhi and Subba Rau were his gift to India's Fleet Street Brigade?

**Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya:** One of the individual intellectual forces in the country, Dr. Pattabhi resisted journalism as an occupation, and brought to it, however intermittently, the fervour of the crusades. It was on the eve of Amritsar, when the Congress was coming under the spell of Gandhiji, that Dr. Pattabhi, who was then, though politically a Congressman, temperamentally an iconoclast, launched a weekly in English – *Janma bhumi,* in the style of Mohammed Ali's *Comrade*. Week in and week out, he produced it single-handed – and at a stretch, and enlivened our journalism by his sparkling comment and unmistakable individuality. Though the development of his ego was stifled by the obsession of Gandhism, he had not ceased to scintillate. His lifelong study of problems, uncanny powers of observation and penetrating presentation, his mastery of facts and figures, his analytic mind which occasionally functioned like a surgeon's knife, his prowess as a debater, his fluent, if mordant, pen and his versatile gifts made him a force to reckon with. It was a loss to journalism that he declined to edit the *Bombay Chronicle* and failed to revive *Janmabhumi*, and robbed it of his copious eloquence and colourful personality. If he settles down in Madras as the Chief Editor of the *Morning Star*, the journalistic horizon will certainly be brighter, but one dreads to think of his fatal flair for missing opportunities.

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**Kotamraju Brothers:** The Ghose brothers – Shishir Kumar and Motilal – were the most famous brothers in Indian journalism. In Andhra we have the Kotamraju Brothers as in Western India there are the Natarajans. Mr. Punniah and Mr. Rama Rao had none of the advantages of the junior Natarajans. Self-made men, they are a study in contrast. Physically

Mr. Punniah is tallish and Mr. Rama Rao short; politically the elder is a smoother and the younger a stormy petrel; temperamentally the former is a 'settler' and the latter a 'globe-trotter': and from the worldly point of view one does not miss the ground under the feet, while the other does not allow any grass to grow under them.

**Mr. Punniah :** After early struggles which he faced with a calm mind and a cool nerve, Mr. Punniah gravitated to Sind which has for thirty years been his adopted homeland.One morning he found himself saddled with the editorship of *Sind Observer* since when he has remained in the saddle with remarkable persistence and imperturbable equanimity. Not that there are no stormy episodes in his career. Once there was a hitch; it developed into a crisis, he had left the paper – and within a short time he returned to the post of duty with a bang. There he still is, with a moral authority which is unquestioned, and all to his credit. Mr. Punniah's journalistic gifts are substantial, though by no means spectacular. He is a practised writer who can use his pen without flourish but with telling effect. In a most difficult province he has held his own and occupied his position with grace and dignity and brought honour to his profession.

**Mr. Rama Rao :** Mr. Rama Rao's journalistic career reads like a story of a voyage on the high seas under stormy skies. It is so typical of the uncertainties and thrills of Fleet Street. With the solitary exception of Mr. Pothan Joseph, no journalist in India has changed more papers, or gone through the vicissitudes of this most precarious of professions with greater fortitude or courage. After a brilliant academic career and an year's tutorship in the Pachchiappa's College, he proceeded to Sind and plunged into journalism. At several places – Karachi, Allahabad, Bombay, Lahore, Madras, Delhi, Lucknow – and at a few more than once, he lighted his torch, but at none for a longer period than at Bombay. It was in the Western capital that he made a big name as one of the top men on the technical side of the newspaper work. He served on almost every daily in Bombay, not excluding the prosperous *Times of India*, and time was when he walked in trousered dignity, waving his hat on the pavements of Bori Bunder. Delhi

knew him as an expert news-editor while Lucknow hailed him as the fearless editor of *National Herald*. It was a revelation to find the vigilant news-man shaking the editorial rafters and acting as the sleepless sentinel of Congress fortunes in U. P., when the Government of Sir Maurice Hallet launched an all-out offensive. With a most frenzied pen in hand, he became the very symbol of editorial defiance. He braved the wrath of the bureaucracy and became a popular hero. As a journalist with a passion for sub-editing and page-making, he has perhaps no equal in India. As an editor, however, he has the limitations of his virtues. Love of the grand manner excepted, he is the nearest approach to Garvin's 'heat without light', volition without direction, and passion without purpose. His future is always problem. But one thing is certain. He is the knight-errant of Indian journalism, and one of its formidable, if incalculable, forces while on the personal side, he is one of the most generous, upright and lion-hearted men in our ranks.

**Sri K. Ramakotiswara Rau :** Of scholarly disposition and refined tastes, gentle, affable and lovable, Sri Ramakotiswara Rau is one of the few high-souled men that have brought distinction and honour to Indian journalism. One of the earliest to be caught in the maelstrom of Gandhian politics, he became a renegade to the bar and a recruit to journalism. The daily press, with its hurly-burly and feverish excitement, offered no real solace to Mr. Ramakotiswara Rau who had a longing for creative endeavour. So, in his seventh year as a non-co-operator, he summoned courage and sponsored a high-class periodical which is a sheer delight both to the eye and to the mind. If *Triveni* meant for him the triple-stream of sorrow, suffering and sacrifice, he refused to lower the flag. If his taste was expensive, he minded not the cost. I remember how, when so generous a patron as the late Srinivasa Iyengar felt exasparated by the fastidiousness of the journal, Mr. Ramakotiswara Rao hated to trifle with the standard he had set for it. No journal more truly mirrored or marked the Indian Renaissance for which it stood. India applauded his effort, but failed to give him support in an adequate measure. He showed unusual persistence and superb courage in fighting a losing battle, but not even when the sky

seemed darkest, had he allowed himself to be overcome by despair. Triveni is still alive though in other climes and in friendly hands; Mr. Ramakotiswara Rau is , though a recluse in the homeland , still the source of its inspiration. Like a small window that opens a large landscape, this journal of art and culture promises a brighter day for higher periodical journalism- and it is to its illustrious founder-editor that we owe the glory of its existence and the sweetness of its memory.

**Mr. G.V. Krupanidhi :** Fleet Street has it Casabiancas. Mr. Krupanidi was one such in the earlier- in fact the earliest- stages of his career as a journalist. His record was all the more creditable as he had no passion for journalism when he emerged a law graduate. As an apprentice under Mr. Prakasam , he flung his ambitions to the four winds and followed his master on the perilous paths of non-co-operation, and when the Chief founded *Swarajya* he dabbled for a while on the managerial side and , without any effort, drifted to the editorial line. It did not take him long to become a full-fledged editor, with heavy work on his hands and heavier responsibilities on his shoulders. Was it not C.R.Reddy who called him the Bayard of Indian Journalism? That was the first phase of his career. The second opened in a prosperous setting in the capital of India where, after a spell of special correspondent's work, he shared editorial authority with Mr.Devadas Gandhi on the *Hindustan Times*. More recent developments have led to his presence on a new stage, as the Associate Editor of *Indian News Chronicle.* Mr. Krupanidhi is a self-taught journalist and a self-made editor. He seized opportunities without surrendering his loyalties. His imperturbability is an asset. His neatness of work, lucidity of exposition, elegance of manner and subtle sense of humour have always stood him in good stead- and he knows Spender's secret of 'expressing extreme views in moderate language.' His main virtue is reliability; his supreme gift is for friendship. In a profession torn by bitter jealousies he exudes a charm all his own.

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**Sri Khasa Subba Rao :** Morley was reported to have once remarked that he found it easier to rule Ireland than to manage Stead. I shouldn't be surprised if on occasions Mr.Prakasam felt that it was less difficult to run *Swarajya* than to manage Mr.Subba Rao who confronted him as it were, with the presence of a 'moral skyscraper' and tried to overwhelm him by a glittering array of first principles, whether the issue was one of the higher politics or of mere office routine. Mr. Subba Rao's sterling character was his sheet-anchor; it still is. Other virtues come but next, He could have been a lawyer and made more money; he could have been a teacher and moulded the youth better. He has stuck to journalism and brought to it the lawyer's skill in argument and the teacher's gift of exposition. Like a lawyer he would not however, argue any case – and for any fee. He is the inveterate foe of the barristerial frame of mind in journalism. What does it matter if he changes his views or heroes? His attitude at a given time is governed by intellectual convictions and moral considerations, and by no sordid motive. He serves no paper on which he is not in full possession of his soul. Did he not leave the *Indian Express* one fine morning with no thought of the morrow? He spares no men who have, in his view, violated the code. Has he not thrown his dear Rajaji overboard on the recent ministerial issue in Madras? He has no fear of the men that rule the roost. Look at the way in which he is going for the present Madras Ministry and even the Congress High Command, hammer and tongs. As the founder-editor of Swatantra he is at the top of his form. To the scholar's equipment and the craftsman's excellence, he brings the thinker's original approach and the crusader's fiery zeal. There is in his writings that rarest of things-character. One hears in them echoes of Chintamani's political vigour and vitality and Natarajan's moral earnestness and austerity. To the cause that is dear to his heart, he is both an intellectual and a moral asset. The highest standards of journalism are safe in his hands. And among the present-day editors in India he has few equals and no superiors.

**Mr. C.V. Hanumantha Rao :** Mr. Hanumamntha Rao as a journalist reminds one of Ramsay MacDonald's trite saying that while all men cannot be famous, any one may be useful. It is no small thing to render good

service without trying to dazzle the world. Mr. Hanumantha Rao has worked his way up by a record of solid, silent work in a line where one may be solid but cannot remain silent. His first innings were on the *Indian Nation* of Patna, where, leaving behind him the humble school-master's copy books, he browsed on blue –books as a careful student of public affairs, and made an academic approach to the discussion of current problems. A good assistant, he found himself in the editorial chair which had fallen vacant a trifle abruptly. He made a wise use of his opportunities while the paper which changed nine editors in its first year, found itself lucky in the discovery of a man who combined efficiency and loyalty. Even his steadiness and earnestness were not unassailable when plotters arrived on the scene. A small daily in Lahore-*The Daily Herald* - came into his hands and he put up a good show with resources none too adequate for his requirements. The shades having again closed in on him, he diverted his attention and activities from journalism in the Punjab to publicity in Madras. Mr. Hanumantha rao is a journalist of the assiduous type. No subject is too dry for him- he assembles his material with care and writes profusely. The pen in his hand is the day's tool and no aesthetic instrument, and he employs it conscientiously striving after no effect , but seeking to inform, to educate and to convince the reader. As an editor he is in the line of Pandit Krishna Ram and Mr. Subramaniam, safe and reliable men who believe in sober and responsible journalism.

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**Mr. M. Chalapathi Rau :** It is a joy to me that I launched, among journals the T. C. and among journalists, my friend M. C. It is a pleasure to acknowledge a just obligation, and let it be said in fairness to Sri Ramakotiswara Rau that young Chalapathi Rau was his discovery. In November 1936 when I agreed to pilot the *People's Voice* and desired to have him by my side, M. C. readily joined the crew, though neither he nor I had any illusions about the fate of the vessel. On the very first day, he started as a leader-write. The *People's Voice* was a short-lived affair, but it was his association with it, more than anything else, that made it memorable.

It was a happy circumstance that I successfully persuaded him to cross the Vindhyas and go with me to Allahabad. When I floated the *Week End* he was my chief associate. It also happened to be a short-lived affair, but it was his hand again that gave it a literary tone and staggered the younger intellectuals of U. P. Later began his association with the *National Herald* of Lucknow, which continues still under happier auspices, but for the interlude on the *Hindustan Times* during the period the former ceased publication. In the first phase of his connection with the *Herald* when he was an Assistant Editor and leader-writer, M. C. was its brain and soul. Today, he is its honoured editor and all-pervasive force. History will record that two men read dangerously at Bangalore in their earlier years. One was Mr. Winston Churchill and the other is our own Chalapathi Rau. He read everything he could lay his hands on – literature, history, politics and what not. We have learnt to respect his knowledge, but it is his style that has made us captive. He is steeped in the classics. He believes in the *Manchester Guardian* school of journalism, and swears by the Scott-Montagu tradition. Among British editors he prefers Spender to Gardiner, and the former's self-discipline to the latter's vivacity. As a leader-writer, he created a sensation by his articles on War – the best in India since the days of the late S. Rangaswami. As a columnist – he wore the mask of Magnus – he gave Delhi and Simla the shivers. As an editor, he is developing a new personality. Of all his virtues I prize his loyalty most – loyalty to friends and loyalty to principles. I doubt, if in the long run, he will settle down on a paper like C. E. Montagu and weave his spells, or go round the globe with a pen in hand like Henry Nevinson or Philip Gibbs. Whatever he may choose to do, he is the one man in our journalism today who can, by his rare craftsmanship, refute his own opinion that 'In India, journalism is too distant from literature.' He can at least establish that 'journalism is literature written in a hurry.'

# SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

In political records the main interest of a personal story must lie in the points at which it chances to touch weighty things, besides the familiar matters of today. What arms did your man carry in the serried conflicts of his time? Did he let them rust, and trust for safety to his shield? What pace did he strive to keep with the revolving forces of his age?

- Lord Morley

There is in Jawaharlal Nehru so much of the spirit of Spring to which Rabindranath Tagore likened him. Few men of his age in India, fewer men at his age anywhere, can claim to possess the amazing vitality and perennial charm which are the secret alike of his greatness and glamour. Here is a man, now in his later sixties, who has amidst all the stormy vicissitudes of politics and the tempestuous blasts of life, remained true to his type- the four-square personality that seldom breaks and never bends.

In later years it became a fashion in some circles to speak of Jawaharlal Nehru as 'too many men within himself'. Whatever be the truth or otherwise of the subtle implications of such an epigrammatic portrayal of the man who baffled the world as much as he fascinated it, one is perhaps confronted with three Jawaharlals in any attempt to study the evolution of his unusual personality- the Jawaharlal of the pre-Gandhi phase in our history, the Jawaharlal by Gandhiji's side and the Jawaharlal of the post-Gandhi period. If in his life-story one is struck by the hiatus between the environmental influences on him in his early years and the political influences in later days, one is no less struck by the vivid contrast between the sturdy rebel under Gandhiji's flag who was known 'to dare and never grudge the throes' and the Prime Minister of India who has developed into a mellowed statesman. It is the story of a man who has not only changed - or grown- with the times but made a difference to them, by his flaming courage in struggle, his poise in power and his moral earnestness right through.

# I

He was born in Allahabad on November 14, 1889 in an aristocratic family of Kashmiri Pandits whose 'ancestors came down from that mountain valley (Kashmir) to seek fame and fortune in the rich plains below.' As the (only) son of Pandit Motilal Nehru who was the acknowledged leader of the bar and about the ablest political leader of his generation, Jawaharlal was born and brought up in a house which first dictated the fashions of the city and the province and later governed the politics of the Congress, As a boy he lived in westernized surroundings and had the luxury of an English governess. At eleven he had an Irish tutor with Theosophical bias under whom he developed a taste for reading a liking for poetry. Thrilled by the magnificent oratory of Mrs.Annie Besant, Jawaharlal joined the Theosophical Society when he was thirteen though he soon dropped out of it. His boyish enthusiasm was deeply stirred by Japan's victory over Russia and for a while he was lost in Japanese history and the knightly tales of old Japan. His youthful imagination was fired and he began to muse of Indian freedom and of the larger Asian recovery.

It was at such a period (in 1905) that he went to Harrow and found himself amidst English boys who with a few exception, struck him as dull. He felt greatly interested in the General Election of 1906 and happened to be the only boy in his form who could give his master a complete list of Campbell-Bannerman's cabinet. Apart from politics, he was fascinated by the early growth of aviation. For his good work at school he got as a prize one of Trevelyan's Garibaldi books, when he obtained the other two volumes of the series and browsed on them with the result that visions of similar deeds in India came before him. Finding Harrow too small a place for his big ideas, he left for Cambridge, but he was unhappy to leave Harrow which he had grown rather fond of. As an undergraduate (in the Trinity College) at Cambridge he spent three quiet and pleasant years and read a good many books on literature, history, politics and economics. He used to attend the 'Majlis' (the Society of Indians in Cambridge) and hear the discussions on political problems but he could not overcome his natural shyness and diffidence and participate in them. After obtaining a second

class honours in Science tripos examination in 1910, he left Cambridge for London where he was called to the bar in the summer of 1912. In the succeeding autumn he returned to India, a 'bit of a prig'.

Having returned to India, after a stay of over seven years in England, he found himself in surroundings old, yet new. That year he attended the Congress session at Bankipore and found it to be "an English-knowing upper-class affair where morning coats and well-pressed trousers were greatly in evidence" and more "a social gathering with no political excitement or tension". The only person who impressed him as one who took politics and public affairs seriously was Gokhale.

He soon joined the High Court and found himself 'engulfed in a dull routine of a pointless and futile existence.' In those years he felt attracted to the Servants of India society but had not thought of joining it as for one thing its politics were far too moderate for him and as for another he was not prepared to give up his profession. He however joined the Home Rule League, started by Tilak and Dr. Besant. It was at that time that Jawaharlal found his father, chiefly due to Mrs. Besant's internment, drifting away from the orthodox Moderate position while on the other hand Moltilalji had been closely watching Jawaharlal's growing drift towards Extremism. It was in 1916 that the younger Nehru met Gandhi for the first time. It was in the same year that he was married to that noble woman, Kamalaji, who had, till her death followed in his footsteps with exemplary courage and fortitude.

On his return to India as a full-fledged barrister, Jawaharlal Nehru was expected to follow in his father's footsteps – at the bar as its leader, and in public life as a Moderate. He could have specialized in science and become a Professor; he could have settled down as a historian or a man of letters and earned fame; he could even have persisted at the bar and, as the then Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court, Sir Grimwood Mears, said, 'snatched away the laurels from his father's brow.' But it was not to-be so.

Though he had no pronounced views in the pre-Gandhi era, Jawaharlal Nehru's leanings were towards the left, as a Tilakite and Home

Ruler. The Liberals in their arm-chairs left him cold. Given to reflection, though somewhat impulsive, he saw a new picture of India- 'naked, starving, crushed and utterly miserable.' With the Shavian instinct of thinking in terms, not of persons and groups but of the community as a whole, Jawaharlal thought of mass amelioration much more keenly than any of his friends and colleagues. When once he recognized that he(Gandhiji) came to represent India to an amazing degree and to express the very spirit of that ancient and tortured land," Jawaharlal had no hesitation in taking his place by Gandhiji's side.

II

To be Gandhiji's side or under his banner meant, in the case of Congressmen generally, and in Jawaharlal's particularly, confinement behind prison bars. Between 1921 and 1934 he was repeatedly in jail- for five and a half years in seven terms. Doubtless a great hardship, to Jawaharlal Nehru it was in one way, a blessing in disguise. It was as a prisoner under the British Raj that he read voraciously, reflected deeply and gradually developed his own political philosophy. His conversion to Gandhism was slow but sure, wholesale and yet not blind; his estimate of it was frankly, and sometimes, fiercely, critical. Often he was assailed with doubts as to the wisdom of his master's policies and actions. He had doubts too about his colleagues, and about other men and matters. He, however, seemed to explain:

But though I may doubt all beside me

And anchor and cable may part

Whatever – whatever betide me

Forbid me to doubt my heart.

So, whatever happened, and howsoever his mind moved, he followed the Master. And the Generalissimo of the non-violent revolution could hardly have asked for a more disciplined or daring soldier in his army.

On the Congress scene, Jawaharlal rose to be a Colossus. But the ascent was by no means easy for, he had to reckon with colleagues who,

though they shared his passion for freedom, did not share his outlook. They could hardly bring an inquiring mind on the problems before the Congress and the country. They were lacking in his sense of history; they were hardly bothered to think of the great historical forces contending for mastery beyond our own shores. They lacked too his opportunities, his wider contacts and his singular experience. He was hardly reconciled to the one track Congress mind. He dared to shatter its complacency. And step by step, within the measure of his opportunities, he gave a new orientation to the Congress. In1927, at the Madras Congress, fresh from a visit to Soviet Russia, he moved the resolution on Independence; in 1928 he founded the Independence of India League when the elders toyed with the idea of Dominion Satus; in 1929 as President of the Lahore Congress he got the Congress pledged to complete Independence- and mildly interested in Socialism; in 1931 at Karachi Congress he made himself responsible for the resolution on Fundamental Rights; in 1936 when he presided for a second time at Lucknow, he administered the congress an yet stronger dose of Socialism and directed its attention to the tempo of events abroad. And it was thus that he managed to give some economic content to what were hitherto mere political doctrines- and a larger purpose to the corporate existence of the congress. From then onwards, for a whole decade, he played so decisive a role in the Congress as to leave few in doubt about the succession to Gandhiji in God's good time. Nor had Gandhiji himself apparently any doubt about what should happen during the next phase in our history for, with his intuitive power at its highest, he called Jawaharlal Nehru his political heir or nominated him as his successor.

The Mahatma was not unaware- on the other hand, he was only too well aware - of Jawaharlal's aloofness from him, his unwavering allegiance notwithstanding. There was perhaps something, in George Slocombe's description of 'an agnostic Lenin meekly obedient to the precepts of a Christian Tolstoy.' But Gandhiji knew his Jawaharlal better. The old man knew the young man's fits and moods, and his temperamental limitations but he also knew the key-note to Jawaharlal's personality-'noble frankness' as Mahadev Desai characterised it. He knew too that

The courage never to submit or yield

And what is else not to be overcome,

was Jawaharlal's principal asset. Whether it was a lathi-charge in Lucknow or firing in Rae Bareli, or bombing in Chungking or turmoil in Spain, it was all the same for him. Who was there in Gandhiji's ranks that could capture the imagination of youth to such an extent or claim his passion for the reconstruction of the nation on planned basis or contend with him in the race, to plant India's banner on mountain-tops? Jawaharlal Nehru was the only choice. And it was him that the Mahatma nominated and blessed.

III

So, when the hour struck, India turned to Jawaharlal Nehru for taking charge of her affairs. Then began the third (and present) phase of his career which might well be described as the fulfilment of past promise and the promise of future fulfilment. To him and his colleagues, the hour of triumph was not the hour of joy. He was the lot to bear a burden which would have crushed the shoulders of any other; he bore it with dauntless courage and high dignity. But greater trials and tests than those arising out of the seething cauldron of the Partition, awaited him. Nothing else , not even the loss of his great father in 1931, or of his beloved wife five years later, had shaken him so badly as the assassination of his master, on that fateful evening on January 30, 1948. Within six months of his primacy in the scheme of things, he found himself, as it were, spiritually orphaned. He seemed to have suddenly aged; he had begun to feel utterly lonely. But he, the noblest embodiment of the Gandhian ferment in India, had borne the rude shock with uncommon fortitude, with no thought other than that of completing the Mahatma's mission.

Jawaharlal Nehru is something more than the Prime Minister of India; he is the prime-architect of post-Gandhi India; indeed , he is today taking his place as one of the prime-builders of a new world order. There has been no parallel in history to India's rapid strides within an incredibly short period of less than a decade. If a nation is judged by its security at home and prestige abroad, India need envy no other; she has but to pay her

salutations to the one man who has left his impress on its vast surface and written his own name across the skies. To have given to his people a secular outlook which guarantees fair treatment to all the minorities, to have inaugurated a Sovereign Republic, to have ushered in a new era in Democracy, to have laid the foundations, truly and well, of a Welfare State or a Socialist Co-operative Commonwealth, to have harnessed the country to immense plans that promise prosperity 'in the widest commonalty spread' and to have incessantly worked for peace on earth, without deviating by a hair's breadth, from the path of political rectitude, is seldom the content of one man's achievement – or even effort. Seldom in our annals have so many owed so much to a single man's stature and personality, for their material well-being and national honour.

My mind goes back to a day years ago when I asked one of India's most brilliant sons what he thought would happen to the Congress after Gandhiji. 'You know', he said, 'what happened to the Maharatta empire after Shivaji.' To put it cryptically my distinguished friend forgot- or overlooked – Jawaharlal Nehru but for whom the catastrophe that was predicted would have perhaps occurred to the Congress, even to the country. Jawaharlal Nehru firmly stood between chaos and cosmos and saved the country from rolling down the abyss in the encircling darkness after the partition and the Mahatma's death. Indeed, he played the same part, amid graver threats and more thickening gloom, on the global front too, and singled himself out as a 'sea-green incorruptible' in the eyes of those who know him. Yet the world knows but half of him.

To the West he is still an enigma, wrapped in Oriental mystery because the West cannot easily conceive of a man who stands alone, and above the tumult and tensions all around, and simply resists all overtures from rival blocs eager to annex India, in seeking to divide the entire world into two warring camps. If he is a real Democrat with unwavering respect for the freedom of the individual, why is he friendly to Moscow and Peking? – ask those in the West. Why does this man who wants Imperialism and Colonialism to be buried five fathoms deep, still stick to the Common Wealth or turn to Washington? – ask the Communists. There is none either

wholly good or wholly bad. What is bad in either, he does not want or approve. What is good in both, he grasps. And he sees no reason why they cannot pursue their respective ways of living, without pursuing each other in suspicion and sowing all along the line the seeds of conflict. Jawaharlal Nehru has not only read history but learnt its lessons and found War to be no remedy to any problem. If anything, it has multiplied problems and made them yet more difficult. He has a horror of war; he has a horror of war-mindedness. He is steeped in the teachings of the Buddha and in the tradition of Gandhiji; he is the child of a non-violent revolution. He can never be a party to any pact or alliance, on a military basis, for all such pacts and alliances though sponsored as anti-aggression fronts, have the fatal tendency of ending up in hostility or leading to a holocaust. He sees wisdom in the will to live and let live, born of a wider tolerance. His own remedy to international unrest lies in reliance on Panch Sheel – the Mansion of Peace raised on five pillars of Faith. His is, however, no meek submission to evil. Whether it is Imperialism or Colonialism, racialism abroad or communalism at home. he lets himself go

Like withering blast

of scorching flame,

Like hurricane

upon the sea.

But it is moral indignation, more effective than political sabre-rattling. And when he explodes but refrains from joining those who are all for an eruption, they complain of 'the sensitive and inscrutable Mr. Nehru curling up like an armadillo,' and pompously, if peevishly, proclaim that 'understanding Prime minister Nehru of India, involves a complicated exercise in Yoga, beyond the comprehension of most Westerners .'

It is a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru's angelic patience in international dealings that even those who were hasty in holding his neutrality or non-alignment to ridicule have since begun to understand him better and to see the wisdom of not mistaking all those who are not with them for those who are against them. Whether between the East and the West or the Democracies

and the Communist governments, he is the uniting link and not the dividing hyphen. There is something extraordinary in the man whose name is the theme of honour's tongue not only in India or Asia or even in the enlightened West but among the Arabian sands, or on the banks of the Nile or in the torrid clime of Africa. It is as a builder of bridges over yawning chasms that he would pass into history. And it is for peace – and for peace with honour – that he has dedicated himself to, as a modern Sir Galahad, with the strength of ten. His heart is pure and mind noble. No man who had his experience at the hands of the British would ever have become so true a friend of theirs but for the most exalted conception of true world citizenship. There is a story current- may be apocryphal, but I hope it is true- that the massive and mighty Winston Churchill was lost in admiration over the former implacable enemy of the Raj(which he was sworn not to liquidate), having conquered hate and having conquered fear. If no nobler tribute could be paid, nobody has earned it better either, than Jawaharlal Nehru, for he so gracefully fulfils the fine tradition of *Noblesse Oblige*

IV

What kind of man is this who has singled himself out for a special niche of his own in contemporary annals? What are his attributes? What is the essence of his greatness? And what is the secret of his charm? For, he is not only out of the ordinary run of distinction but almost unlike any other among the celebrities of the day.

He was born to greatness. And he has by a disciplined will built himself up for a unique role on history. In one of his broadcasts to the nation he publicly acknowledged that he came under the influence, indeed, the spell, of three men of pre-eminence – his father – Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

Motilal Nehru was a born patrician: he was princely and leonine. Wherever he sat, he was at the head of the table majestic in his mien and mighty in his element, he had lived a magnificent life and became a legendary figure in his own day. As his only son, Jawaharlal Nehru could have, like Lord Rosebery, asked for the palm without the dust. But with an

almost open contempt for easy success in life, he chose the hard way and wrestled with his own destiny. And never did he forget that he was the heir to a great tradition

Under Gandhiji's flag,Jawaharlal Nehru slided into a 'brave new world' which called for an inquiring mind, an intrepid spirit and an inflexible purpose. His loyalty to his leader was only excelled by his devotion to the Motherland. While he gave the best in him, he was incapable of blind worship. He questioned Gandhi and obeyed him; he obeyed Gandhi and questioned him – and, in the process, he emerged as the one man in the Congress who, while practising Gandhism, could give it a richer content and a wider meaning. He was given all the latitude he wanted – or needed. Critics openly, and friends tauntingly, described him as 'the spoilt child of the Mahatma.' He became the prince charming of the Congress and the idol of the youth. But he was still the coming man – and his day was yet to come. That day came much later amidst civil disorder and communal carnage which would have shattered weaker nerves. It is sad to recollect that Gandhiji was not destined to be alive when Jawaharlal Nehru came into his own on the international scene and brought to it all that Gandhiji himself stood for.

The Gurudev (who was born in the same year, in the same month and on the same day as his own father) came into Jawaharlal's life much later and very indirectly. One could, however, see that he felt drawn to the Bard as much by his broad international outlook as by as literary eminence. There was a certain refinement in Rabindranath Tagore and in his attitude to life which doubtless appealed to Jawaharlal Nehru. Extremely sensitive to beauty and joy, he turned to the poet for the music in his soul and the magic of his words. And nothing moved him more than the fact that "Rabindranath Tagore gave to our nationalism the outlook of internationalism" and by enriching it with art and music, transformed it into 'the full-blooded emblem of India's awakened spirit'.

All the qualities of Jawaharlal Nehru spring from the heart – and his heart is as pure as crystal. If his perceptions are quick, his instincts are noble. His enthusiasms are as generous as they are spontaneous. He has

his likes and dislikes. But he is incapable of pursuing people to their grave, or harbouring ill-will against anyone for long. For all his wrath against evil, he could not be ruthless in putting down evil-doers. He perhaps lets his feelings be played upon by courtiers and flatterers but luckily he knows where to draw the line. He takes too much upon himself, either because he feels sure only of himself or can rely on his own mental and physical resilience. He loves power but only for impersonal ends. He is so straight that he never wears a mask. No man's face is a truer index to his feelings. Mostly he is his own counsellor; nearly always he is his own physician (in the political sense). He argues with himself: yet he thinks aloud more than any living politician.

Jawaharlal Nehru is no orator, in the fullest sense of the term. Perhaps the only quality of the orator that he has is his burning love of the Motherland. He is apt to falter and ramble. Though effective, he is as prolix or discursive when he speaks as he is precise and incisive when he writes. There is quality of poetry in his written word. Yet the crowds hang on his lips. Not a single passage in his peroration may be recalled but the face of the speaker haunts one's memory for long and the impression that Jawaharlal Nehru the man leaves behind, survives. It is because of his transparent sincerity and indefinable personal charm.

He has set up several records in life- as a political prisoner, as a Congress President, as an election campaigner and what else! No living man has his personal magnetism for drawing mammoth crowds, whether inside India or outside. There is none so intensely human as Jawaharlal Nehru, who, without the least obsession that he is ensconced at the top, can play with children-on their own terms, or share the homely joys of the peasants or even dance a step or two with tribesmen. And whether he laughs heartily or explodes suddenly in public his countrymen understand him and love him all the more for his naturalness. There has been in our midst or even within our knowledge, no more beloved a politician.

Prime Ministers of countries , however varied be their gifts or whatever be their personal charm or agreeableness, are ultimately judged as Prime Ministers- and by their contribution to the wisdom or folly of their times.

There can be no final estimate of a man who is yet one of the principal actors on the stage. But Jawaharlal Nehru has already achieved enough to take his place among 'great contemporaries.' He has set India on the road to planned progress: he has set an example in tenaciously adhering to certain moral values against any advancing deluge from whatever side. He has, so to say, become a kind of barometer of international conscience.

He is, indeed, an unusual man- as unusual as the Younger Pitt was in his day. There is a striking resemblance between the two in certain vital, though very limited, respects. Jawaharlal Nehru is , as Pitt was, a heir to paternal eminence and equally an adept in the exercise of political power, 'as it were a limb of his own body.' There is about Jawaharlal Nehru as about Pitt, 'an air of solitude- the solitude of superiority , of a transcendent greatness of ability and character. 'And how true it is again that, as in the case of Pitt, in that of our own chosen leader, 'the stature of the great solitary has grown with time. Jawaharlal Nehru also reminds me of what Lord actor said of that great Christian statesman, Gladstone: 'There are especially two qualities that will not be found in other men. First, the vigorous and perpetual progress of his mind .....His other pre-eminent characteristic is the union of theory and policy.' Today, among the living statesman, with the solitary exception of the last of the (British) giants- Winston Churchill, India's Jawaharlal Nehru, stands by his own right on a pinnacle. Our own joy lies in waving to him for what he has been to us in these difficult and disturbing times.

## *What they said*

**OF**

# THE STREET OF INK

By K. ISWARA DUTT

1956

I congratulate you on your brave fight for the liberty of the journalist and for the best ideals of his profession.

*- Sir Philip Gibbs*

A brilliant performance..... written with great skill and charm..... such an interesting book. *- Sir Mirza Ismail*

You make reader almost identify himself with yourself....You have very artistically mixed biography with history.

*- Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya*

I have found *The Street of Ink* engrossing. You have a very individual style and you portray a fascinating period.....you have retained a rare integrity.

*- Mr. Hiren Mukherjee, M.P.*

Memoirs by an eminent journalist.....An unusual book.

*- The Pioneer*

Iswara Dutt writes with refreshing frankness and courage. His book makes very pleasant and instructive reading.

*- Tribune*

An impressive record....really a miscellany of memories. And Iswara Dutt is at his best in the role of a recounteur.

*- The Hindu*

***on Iswara Dutt's style of writing***

I have known Sri K. Iswara Dutt from his College days. Without any advantage of wealth, birth or influence, he has risen by steady and honest work to the present position when he is recognized as one of our leading journalists. His style has clarity and sparkle and his writings often cease to be journalism and become literature.

- S. Radhakrishnan

Iswara Dutt has served Andhra Desh and India in a difficult profession with ability, integrity and courage. His friends have been men of great eminence and his work and character have earned their appreciation. These are pieces of literature…… Iswara Dutt's writings have the charm of an older century and its style of thought and expression.

– C.Rajagopalachari

Shri Iswara Dutt occupies a very high place among the great journalists of our country. He was the Founder-Editor of the *Twentieth Century* and occupied with distinction the Chief Editorship of the *Leader*. He stood more for principles and this made him resign his place in order to uphold the greatest traditions of journalism.

- V.V.Giri

Shri Iswara Dutt is one of the leading journalists who is very well known in all corners of the country. Some of his writings are so popular that they will live long as masterpieces of English literature. Andhras are proud of him.

- N. Sanjiva Reddy

Shri Iswara Dutt has developed a style of his own. His descriptive memories of men and matters project a clear and accurate picture on the mental screen of the reader. In his own right he occupies a high position in the journalistic world, expressing his views without fear or predilections, and standing as a shining example to his compeers as well as to the future generation.

- Justice K. Subbarao, Chief Justice, the Supreme Court of India

In two branches of journalistic achievements, Iswara Dutt has excelled most of his contemporaries, the personality sketch and the light essay. He has carefully cultivated the art of master craftsmen in the line and added his own super ability and scholarship to it. Unlike many of us, his contemporaries Iswara Dutt will live in history for a time, for he has written pages that will live for their artistic excellence.

– K. Rama Rao, Editor, *National Herald.*

It is this deep and abiding interest of Shri Iswara Dutt in men rather than matters (and in men that matters) which has made him supreme in India in the difficult and delicate art of pen-portraits. He is irresistibly drawn towards great personalities and is, by his own right, a notable and charming personality.

- V.R.Narla
Editor and Writer

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