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AUTHOR'S NOTES.

IN lieu of dedication : See Chapter Twelve, *passim*.

In lieu of preface: This whole book is no more than a preface. The next year or two will give me material and to spare for the chronicle proper. So, disliking Chinese boxes, I shall not insert a sub-preface in this.

In regard to motto: Many inconsistencies may be picked out by the reader. My own views have changed at various times, and some conversions have perhaps outrun the others. But the submerged populace of India has problems that never change, and practically no views to readjust. To the relationship between myself and them I therefore apply the words of Stephen Vincent Benet:—

“I am the voice of the weathercock
That all winds come to and all winds mock,
While you are fashioned of steel and stone,
The silent thing that can suffer alone.”

That consciousness has never left me in the writing of what follows.

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CHAPTER I
RETURN FROM THE WEST.

1

This chapter is in the nature of a striptease. Very little of the rest will be.

I had left India for service in the desert in May 1942, immediately after the failure of the Cripps Mission, and came back in May 1945, about a month before the opening of the first Simla Conference. Those three years overseas had been for me a time of uncertainty, distrust, exasperation and despair.

Uncertainty regarding the future of my own commission in the Indian Army which became despair when we learnt that regular commissions would only be available on the abominable terms of "British service, attached." Distrust of every official item of news or propaganda which filtered through from the Jehu & Tottenham Mills, and of much individual information on the opposite side. Exasperation with the despicable servility to Churchill of the Labour

leaders, exemplified as much in regard to his blind hatred of nationalist India as to his atrocious rape of Greece, and his later bludgeoning threats against the Yugoslav heroes of Trieste.

I make verse as rarely as Mr. Pooter imagined that he made jokes, but the Trieste business, after what we had seen of Italians (other than the Red partisans, who supported Tito's claim) drove me to the meretricious rhyme.

False, fawning, shameless, whore of each that
wins,

You ask our force to cloak your earlier
sins ;

You, Babylon, wish Slav and Austrian slain
To bring your old bed-guerdons back again ;
So against friends, to slake your quenchless
greed,

Our lordships fain would make fresh armies
bleed.

How have the young men sinned, in all these
years,

To lose their laughter for a harlot's tears ?

However, that little piece of British bad faith came shortly after my return. The outstanding major event which relieved the previous period of waiting in Palestine and Egypt was killing of Ahmed Maher Pasha, which gave Allied troops the best laugh since the downfall of Mussolini, though not so satisfying as his subsequent picturesque end. The Egyptian ruling caste had pursued a policy of trickery, cowardice and exploitation for four and a half years, gaining fortunes from the Allies as greedily as they would (with less likelihood of success) have attempted to outsmart the Germans. They had encouraged the miserable peasantry to blame the occupying forces for their lack of a share in the plunder. When their own soil was invaded, this foul palace clique, as treacherous to each other as to the people, agreed as one man on letting-others-outnumbered by eight to one—do all the fighting. Then, when Churchill came out into the open with his construction of an anti-Russian Aegean and Levantine bloc, they like Turkey won the extra reactionary vote he desired at the peace by declaring war on Germany when the nearest

German troops were on the northern bank of the Senio. Well, they led Turkey by one casualty, and that as swift as an Olympian thunderbolt.

It all gave my B. S. friends in the Indian reinforcement camp a glorious opportunity to rib me about the number of wealthy Sidkis, Makrams, Nahases, Mahers and similar parasites at the head of the Indian resistance. I have never seen any use in denying or failing to face this point, but ensured that those who were in the slightest degree open to conviction did not forget the presence and influence within the Congress fold of advanced Socialists, and, at that time even Communists ; nor the amount of wealth, equally sterile for all productive purposes other than bribery, which buttressed the most active party of opposition. Some of them, however, were past praying for ; to their atrophied intelligence communism and communalism were synonymous.

Before this diversion I should really have explained the element of plain despair in my later days abroad. From the very beginning I had seen this as a war of rival imperialist

lootwallas, and in 1940 both Congress right-wingers and Communsits were agreed on the point. I joined the army as a volunteer, because I was sick of tutoring spoiled evacuee brats from England and because the pay attracted me. However, I dimly foresaw Russian participation and hoped that a mass of fellow-socialists boring from within the services would be of more use, whether Britain collapsed or not in the long run, than raising pacifist clamour without.

Then came various events, some pure gain, others extruding a moral from the maze of disaster. 22nd June 41 was one of the first type, and so was the brief release of Congress leaders early the following year. Examples of the second were the collapse of the imperial facade at Singapore, the gradual rise of the straightforward Tito over the double-dealing Mihailovitch, and the increasing socialist control of partisan movements in France, Greece and North Italy.

I had made two fatal mistakes in studying British politics from a distance. One was to

underrate the mad-bull strength of the devil, and the other to overrate the vigour, courage and bona-fides of the supposed angles. The realization of this as 1944 drew to a close made me suspect that, unless Russia marched implacably, China threw off its Anglo-American-financed despotism and India rose in another and more coherent August Revolution, the peace would give imperialist bludgeon-men a wider field and a more obsequious home following than before Events in South Africa, Burma, Malaya and above all Indonesia have justified this foreboding, heaped, pressed and running over.

I gave up expecting a Labour Government to show any more liberality outside its own garden than a Conservative. Churchill may have saved England. I still think that, as opposed to Germany it, if not its colonial empire, was worth saving; and for years its salvation was bound up with that of the U. S. S. R., a power in which *pace* a gentleman whom I hope to address further on—I still place rather more trust than in the U. S. A. But no astrologer could have foretold a worse conjunction of cosmic forces than that which set this loathly rhetorician,

compact of conceit, self-interest, snobbery and hate, on a pedestal which his defeat on domestic policy has done virtually nothing to shake. He has debauched the leading minds of every major party, and blustered or buffooned his way into the pulpy heart of the actor-worshipping British public (Palmerston's, Disraeli's and Baldwin's public) until their fawnings in speech and print have stamped Britain incurably with his portrait in Indian eyes. A "New Statesman" article long ago called him "the oldest old woman in Europe," which was as culpable an underestimate as the British Press's early efforts to laugh away Mosley and Hitler.

2

I spent a fortnight just before embarkation as *chevalier du guet* to a Minister of State's guard, designed to protect him from suffering Moyne's fate on his own doorstep. Nothing worse came our way than an occasional spent bullet from across the canal, where Russell Pasha's *chaukidars* nightly fired at shadows. The guard was strong enough, even by Viceregal standards: An outer perimeter, two hundred and fifty

yards by four hundred, was manned by a hundred Indian riflemen and tommy-gunners; an inner one, roughly one by two hundred, by a dozen civil police with buckshot muskets the size of young anti-tank guns. Redcaps with revolvers wandered in and out. I hope Sir Edward slept soundly. Curiously enough, the cast-iron refusal to entrust this guard to an I. C. O. did not originate with the great man at all. His A. D. C. told me that he had no prejudice against them whatever. Just another instance of old womanhood run riot in G. H. Q.

From this job I only gained one item of interest: a first-hand description by His Excellency of President Roosevelt's all-obstructive testiness during the last few months of his life. I was sorry to hear it. All the time, I had marvelled at the tact, patience and discretion with which F. D. R. had handled the ups and downs of his British colleague. There had been none of the cattish asperities with which the rival barkers Churchill and de Gaulle had delighted the Axis. It was a tale of decay which saddened me even though his indifference to India had often been exasperating; the blind

eye which he turned to Churchill's hasty and scoundrelly qualification of the Atlantic Charter being a flagrant case in point.

Well, that came to an end, and for a week I hung about in Mena, nursing a heart bruised by the departure of various E. N. S. A. beauties, and hoping for a substitute in Bombay. Making love has two great advantages in this horrible world: it isn't rationed, and it absorbs your entire attention while it lasts. Once on board, this view was thrashed out among a score of passengers, and found only two dissentients; one a soured and probably seared ascetic, the other a guileless youth who had assumed romance to begin at an out-of-bounds notice, and been lucky to escape with the loss of some nasal blood, six pounds and his breaches.

From the Port Trust Railway, which is a cinematic conducted tour of the worst slums outside a nightmare, and Kalyan Transit Group, about which the less said the better, I came to my regimental centre, which for four years from the date of commission I had managed to avoid. They kept me in stooge jobs for a few months

to help speed up the disposal of English refugees, some of whom had come out as cadets under compulsion and others ready-commissioned as volunteers, but the bulk of whom in both cases had done well on Indian rates of pay without appearing to feel any obligation of sympathy or common courtesy towards the country itself. Then, after one false start, I was sent as adjutant to a depot that shall be nameless. It had the laziest, scruffiest pack of V. C. O.s and senior havildars I have ever seen, and the most loutishly malcontent rank and file. In that unit I confess to having struck I. O. R.s five times, a thing which nothing but a gross insult to my best friend had ever before provoked me to do. Many of the men's lapses one could make allowance for. Some were new recruits from slum homes, and I shall have more to say about that later. Some had been done out of well-earned leave or promotion by a fit of spite on the part of some fine old kursinashin gentleman in subadar's pips. Indian K. C. O.s have been blamed, not always unjustly, for that sort of thing, but the old "backbone" breed are far worse. Most pitiable of all were the repatriated P. W.s whom a bowelless

Government and High Command kept hanging in the wind while every one was sorted into the imbecile categories of "White," "Grey" and "Black." This policy, with the news of I. N. A. trials to come, combined with unpardonable acts of destruction and attempted murder in the lines, and headaches from a blow received in Cairo two years earlier to send me into a psychiatric hospital at Bangalore—the town of which my old memories and subsequent discoveries took me nearer to complete insanity than ever.

My venerable friend Dr. Francis Harden has exonerated that institution in the Bombay "Sunday Standard," with from his own experience much justification. I was well treated throughout. Finally they boarded me out, as "permanently unfit for military services," and never was a man more thankful.

The R. I. N. strikes and bombardments had just run to a close, and Attlee had forfeited his claim to Indian respect for ever. No British party-hack seemed able to see the signs of the times, which were as vivid as Tamburskelver's analogy of the overstretched bow.

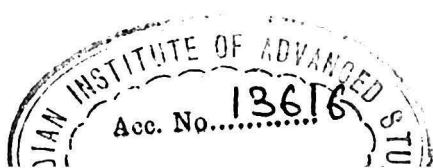
“ Einar then, the arrow taking
From the loosened string,
Answered, That was Norway breaking
‘Neath thy hand, O king !”

But party poltroons over there have grovelled
to Colonel Blimp from time immemorial.

There is not much more to tell. I tried in vain
for commercial or clerical work in Calcutta and
Bombay, and took to drinking as in the summer
before. Now-a-days I touch neither alcohol nor
meat. Young and ill-provided readers should
note that this lowers not only expenditure but
sexual voltage ; my belief in casual eroticism as
a drug remains firm, but when you sit “ burd-
alane ” without even resources to procure the
commercial type the protein-fed impulse grows
into a waste of time and temper.

Anyhow, I came to Lahore after an absence
of six years, and settled down to write. What
follows is the result. It is not long, and it will
in many quarters be redeemed only by its
brevity. “ Que voulez-vous ? ” In a short life,
I have come to believe that a man incapable of
hate is incapable of love. Jehovah himself could

not love Jacob without hating Esau ; and Esau typifies the heavy-handed old school tie brigade as closely as its opponents are often reduced to the justifiable subterfuges of his brother.



CHAPTER II

THE FIRST D

I

“The debit side of India” said a disgruntled neighbour in the hill-station to which I had gone on release leave “can be summed up in three words : dirt, dishonesty and delay”.

He was, I think, very accurate. But he took for endemic bacilli what or no more than irritating eruptive symptoms.

Once in Italy I was called in by the advance party commander of a unit moving into new billets. His men were Indian sappers and a few attached signalmen ; the class composition of either is immaterial. I do not know the name of the officer commanding the outgoing unit ; there had been three at least, two of them European, as the villagers told us. Nor shall I disclose their corps. They were not gunners, tankmen, signalmen, sappers or infantry, and they were not of the corps whose depot drove me into Jalahalli. Let that suffice.

They had been scheduled to leave a rear party and supply a marching-out state of furniture

left on the premises. On his arrival, my escort had found nobody there. He and I counted from the outside eleven broken windows out of eighteen at the front, and five out of sixteen at the back. Under the cookhouse window, a fan-shaped pile of rubbish spread for six or seven yards. Shallow latrines dug at the end of the garden had not been covered up, and loomed through a mist of flies.

Indoors were three ground-floor rooms which we named the Melon, Orange and Sugarcane Rooms, according to the chief type of detritus or mould which remained. Don't ask me how the sugarcane got to Tuttifrutti, or whatever the place was called. It was as exotic as the pan with which all three chambers were bedewed. The smell of old melon rind in bulk struck us as the foulest yet, until on entering a small back-office or store-room we discovered why the garden latrines had met with relatively little use. Modesty was here better preserved.

Next door to this vomitorium was a langarkhana, with no outlet for the smoke but a broken pane. The one directly above it had been similarly employed by lighting wood fires against the plaster wall, and smashing an entire skylight for

chimney. The back half of the main block ran one storey higher, and its upper windows got the full benefit of the smoke from this.

In five large rooms the walls had been frescoed in the style of the "Men Only" arcana of Herculaneum and Pompeii. The non-Italian origin of these graffiti was apparent from the Nagri, Urdu and bad English captions, none of which made edifying reading.

2

Mr. Karaka has rightly condemned the foreign practice stressing "grease spots" to the exclusion of blood spots. Readers in India who have ever taken their uniforms west of Cairo or east of Dacca in recent years will know by what odds of thousands the blood spots do in fact outnumber the other kind, and to them I need make no excuse for this glimpse of one other which enraged me by its very isolation. I had seen many spotless billets occupied by Indian troops in obscure places, and now these architects of putrescence must needs plant their kitchen-midden on a highway where British, American, French and, alas, even Italian troops were passing week in and week out.

Any American who reads this may help to balance it by consulting one of his compatriots who served at Cassino. Day after day I heard incredulous admiration from them as we saw Sikhs, Dogra Rajputs and P.Ms of my own battalion, and Madrasis of the Signal Corps, getting up at three in the morning (our slope being under enemy observation by daylight) and sluicing themselves in the mountain streams : this at a time when all ranks were being issued with special winter clothing. On the strip of shore between the Hammam Junction and Alamein in August and September 42, I have seen British, Australian, New Zealand and Indian troops wallowing in shoals. Another imperial division, nearer the coast than the Kiwis and some of the British, were apparently not interested in the scheme. Their nation has put out more complaints about the alleged dirtiness of Indians than any other in the world, and it has a large seaboard population; ninety per cent of Indian troops have never seen the sea till they come to cross it.

Dirtiness in billets is a factor which requires constant checking in any and every army. In World War I, it was a favourite reproach against Highland units, along with other unendearing prac-

tices. I have met three Highland battalions in the field, and they were in three cases impeccable. The fourth case was my first meeting with one of them at Ruweisat Ridge; one company at least rivalled the Tuttifrutti garrison. Eighteen months later we relieved them again at Poggiofiorito, and in forward company caves or battalion headquarter cowsheds you could have eaten your dinner off the floor. I refuse to believe that any unit with capable commanders cannot, from subadar down to cook, be taught how to keep its persons, clothing, equipment and billets clean. The class composition and the officers' nationality are immaterial.

But this is not by a long way the last word. Practically all dominion troops, and perhaps seventy percent of British, come from homes where cleanliness and tidiness are accepted as the natural order of things. A clerk from Hackney or Camden Town (I have lodged in both) does not, on getting into uniform, require to be forcibly restrained from rearing behind hedges or spitting tobacco juice over his neighbour's palliasse. Neither does a Welsh miner—perhaps, whenever he gets a chance, the most scrupulously clean type of

workman in the world. Nor does a cowman from any but Cold Comfort Farm. Nor yet a mechanic from a decently planned rousing area in Australia or New Zealand.

However, there are all too many parts of Britain which make sour soil for house-pride or modesty to thrive in. Shadwell Jarrow, Gorbals, East Bristol and Cardiff Docks did not encourage their growth. A rent collector in those towns must have had a conscience either seared with hot iron or clotted over with garbage. We didn't hear as much about them as we should have, in spite of Orwell, Macarthur and Urquhart, until refined ladies in remote country houses began to shriek over the lousiness and urinary incontinence of young evacuees. If you haven't read "Put out more Flags," try to do so. It is not really a book to laugh at. Few, in fact, of Waugh's extravaganzas leave you with a very clean palate ; but in this he does the most cathartic service of all.

"If you do give them a bath, they only put coal in it" was a fine old maxim on the improvement of working-class conditions. Few of the elderly gentle-women who bandied it about bothered to nag their menfolk into trying the experi-

ment out. What few baths did get through the tangle had as much effect on the great mass as extrication intact of one battery ever had on the Gazala retreat.

So British conscription brought British Harijans to light : verminous, dishonest, often illiterate. Now pause to consider a sepoy lured by army pay, and that is far from princely (a jemadar's basic pay is that of a British lanceserjeant) to quit his undrained, cow-befouled, over crowded village in almost any rural district ; and think how long is required before training in hygiene becomes instinctive. Then go a stage lower, and pick out a cook, ward-servant, wet sweeper or shoemaker's mate from somewhere behind Victoria Terminus. He comes in the more readily, though his pay is even worse, because it probably improves his standard of living by four hundred percent, against the rural sowar's or sepoy's two hundred. Swarms of these half-starved scarecrows have entered the ancillary services : the stronger to the Pioneers, the slightly skilled ones to the I.A.O.C./I.E.M.E., the rump to the I.A. M.C., in the old I.H.C. grades, or the R.I.A.S.C. and I.G.S.C. They have in many cases been

shipped prematurely overseas, under officers who had no sanitary conscience of their own, to make Tuttifrutti what it was—a stumbling-block to the British, and to the Americans more than foolishness.

3

What we saw at Tuttifrutti was the Bombay and Ahmedabad filth bubbling up through the military crust. Now take that filth on its own ground.

There is no overlooking dirt.

I have seen it in many places, and in widely varying degrees. I am obsessed with it because dirt is life.

Poverty is life.

Prostitution is life.

Drunkenness, gambling and thievery are life.

Life, to you, may be what you make it. To the Neapolitan, Cairene or Madrasi depressed subject it is what the government and his employers make it. And that, in the long run, is what the Empire makes it.

I have seen a sweeper in Delhi gather up dried horse-dung, mould it to a consistency and clap it on top of the few shreds of tobacco in his chillam. I have seen one boy of about thirteen stab another in Rawalpindi for the loss of six annas over knucklebones. I have been present at an autopsy in Cairo whose subject proved to have inflated his belly with stone-sprinkled dirt from the roadside. So what? If you are a philosopher, and have dined well, smoked a good cheroot and made a successful flutter, you may fairly say that it might have been even worse. The sweeper might have had no tobacco left to start the fragrance at all. In one or two quarters that I will gladly point out, the six annas might have been six pies. And the heir of Cleopatra might have resorted to rat-poison, if any chemist had given him credit.

Philosophies vary, but dirt is everywhere a symptom of the same disease. It only varies in virulence. Whitechapel is cleaner than Gallowgate. Gallowgate is cleaner than Sharia Clot Bey. Sharia Clot Bey is cleaner than parts of Port Said, the worst of Port Said than the worst of Bombay, and the worst of Bombay than the initial stages

of a compost heap. The compost heap has the advantage in so far as its inhabitants appear to love it.

But, as elderly female litigants in England—"the widow and the orphan who claim their ten percent"—are fond of saying, it's not the amount we worry about, it's the principle of the thing.

Symptom of what? Harold Begbie, Katherine Mayo and other devout sojourners—Nichols is devout only in his mirror—consider it a symptom of Hinduism. They pounce triumphantly on hot-eyed, bhang-rotted "faqirs" which is their generic term for mendicants of every religion, except the kind who inveigle themselves into domestic service by the display of a crucifix, and may condescend to work for a fortnight before going off with the spoons.

"Look at that monster, my dear deaconess! Plastered all over in ashes, turmeric, faeces and red powder"—here a pause for the less mealy-mouthed to dilate on the sexual significance of this colour, especially in solution—"wallowing in his filth, simply wallowing. How can any people hope to raise themselves when they actually reverence creatures like that? "And away to write home

all about it. I wish some of the faqirs were a little more uncouth, and supported by the powerful allies of the Brute Carle in "Sweyn Vonved".

"A wild swine on his bosom he kept
And upon his shoulder a black bear slept,
While around his fingers, with hair o'erhung,
The squirrel sported and weasel clung".

A rousing cry of '*nacho, bhalu*' would soon convert the audience from a blot on the landscape to a blur on the horizon.

I don't like "faqirs" one bit. Taking to tobacco—from cigarette to cheroot, and on at last to Sweeper's Equine Blend—might mellow me by emancipation from the thralldom of an over-sensitive nose. But according to Dr. Shelvankar, who can have no conceivable interest in distorting the figures either way, there are in India not more than a million "religious and semi-religious mendicants, monks, beggars and vagrants of every description". The context (I prefer, unlike some commentators, to quote in consonance with the contexts) makes it clear that this refers to *all* unprofitable servants in the country, and that the

last two words of the noun-string are not governed by "religious". If General MacMunn's picturesque Criminal Tribes are included in the million, my case is strengthened; if not, they are still outside the category of even semi-, milli-, or micro-religious.

Taking the million, I should estimate secular beggars, such as cripples, dwarfs, hydrocephalitics, paralysed ancients and superannuated harlots, at not less than sixty per cent. That leaves Four lakhs of sannyasis, sadhus, pirs, gosains, bairagis, lamas, mullahs and out-of-pocket hajjis among a population roundly estimated at forty crores. One in one thousand. Double it to include the regular priesthood, throwing in deacons, acolytes, doorkeepers and if you like devadasi-wardens, and you get, or I get, one in five hundred. This is the theurgical root of all the filth in India.

Even now, I have not allowed for the Muslim, Sikh and Vaishnava types of "faqir" who have not infrequently been known to wash. Nor for the climatic dissuasions from cleanliness prevailing among Shias, Kafirs and Lamaists in the great frontier belt that swings round from Chitral

through Yasin, Gilgit, Skardo and Leh to the deserts of upland Zanskar and Rupshu. At thirteen thousand feet, believe you me, there are nine or ten months in the year when John Wesley himself would be tempted to keep the godliness and let the cleanliness go.

So the first dose of cold water in this book is the one that isn't there. Nature has quite a lot to do with it ; possibly the gods of the pagan encourage the cult of coprophagy and faeco-ablutionism. The troglodytic British standards of plumbing have quite a lot to do with it, too.

No European has the right to cavil at indigenous dirt while seven British hotels out of ten and ninety-seven bungalows out of a hundred still employ thunderboxes or shallow-pan privies. The social aspect of this I shall touch on in Chapter Eight ; here we are considering the dirt itself rather than the finer feelings of the nightsoil removalist. Lahore in the hot weather is still perfumed by ponderous and lingering excrement carts. During the rains, the municipal drainage system comes to the surface of public attention, and most of the street-tainted water stays on the surface of the

drainage system. It's a pity that commissariat elephants no longer chase D. C.s up a choked sewage outfall. And it's no use whatever blaming Indian local authorities for the crudity of private conservancy arrangements. If the European residents had ever felt bad about it, they could have squalled for water sanitation till they got it. They that will be foul, let them be foul, is a verdict on Europeans as well as Indians. And then they wax superior about the American obsession with plumbing !

I too am obsessed. The European hypocrisy is awful, but down the bazar things in themselves are too awful for words. Life, life, life. Dirt, dirt, dirt. Death, death, death. " Shantih, shantih, shantih ". If only Eliot were here to write it!

CHAPTER III
THE SECOND D

1

In more than one part of the world, India is synonymous with dishonesty.

This is because the British publicize India far more than the Americans publicize China, or either of them France, or any uncensored correspondent Russia. India is a permanently occupied country, and the turnover of rootless occupants is rapid and profuse. All of them talk.

Half the trouble is climatic. You undoubtedly get more worked up over a bit of dubious haggling when the mercury stands at 115 or 120 than when it is well below the eighty mark. And in a strong-smelling bazar it gets more under your skin than in an air-conditioned department store, though morally this is all upside down. An undeniable exasperating factor is the mealy-mouthed servility which usually covers a bazar shopkeeper's most ticklish moment. Another, in the earlier days of this last war was the shocking prevalence of bad coin.

Some types of dishonesty are practically nobody's fault, especially wartime ones. No rationing system can avoid incidental mistakes, injustices and bottlenecks. Victims, especially poverty-stricken and under-nourished ones, inevitably set up a demand for a black market, and as the rumour gets around the wealthier classes come in to buy and often remain to trade. Prices go up, cut-price rivalry comes in, police—also underpaid—are bribed, and shark lawyers look on and joyfully foment complications.

Add to this that the Indian tradition goes back much further than the European, for reasons similar to those in occupied Europe during the war. To loot an invader's stores, to swindle him under the guise of collaboration, to disaffect his personnel by inflating prices for goods in the supply of which his official channels cannot outpace them, to debase currency until all money is suspect, are not only satisfying revenge for his robberies but effective acts of sabotage. The Mahrattas practised such subterfuges against Aurungzeb's locusts, the Bengalis against the repeated Muslim invaders of earlier days, and all classes against the mixed chicanery, blackmail and open plunder of John Company.

In the last days of this gradually emasculated Robbery, Inc., and in the early years after the Crown took control of the racket and more effective measures for its protection, the tradition grew among peasants exploited without redress by their landlords under such system as the infamous Permanent Settlement of Bengal—a device by which the Company, at calculable loss to their immediate and future returns, secured the allegiance of a solid and unscrupulous landowning class without a word in stipulation for the safeguarding of the miserable ryot. Industrialization created a new sweat-ed labour field. Crocodile tears over this sort of thing in a high British Official are so outrageous as to call for fire from heaven. If Governments of the nineties and early hundreds, in an epoch when Harold Begbie blethered about the “Social-istic” nature of Indian administration, had cared the price of a Bodyguard sowar’s gold braid for the welfare of the artisan class, they would have done everything in their power to promote first independent trades unions, then a federation—whether on socialist or syndicalist lines is immaterial—and see that those unions were harmonized, *not* with the imposed government, but with such

local self-governing bodies as had survived by their pettiness or were beginning to grow up under popular pressure. For the executive to have shackled the unions by company-union or "corporate" methods would have put the bosses on both side of the table, and provoked a proletariat aroused by concession of the union principle to extraorganizational violence. But what they did was even worse. Workers' industrial combinations have been persecuted and victimised in a manner unparalleled outside Tsarist Russia or Nazi Germany.

No, the worker loses every way. If he stays contented, he starves. If he goes on strike, he is replaced by one still more miserable who covets a job of any kind. If he does so in a municipal service, he is usually jailed. And if he pilfers, there is one more black mark for well-fed Britons to set against his people.

2

There is one side to the promotion of dishonesty which is purely loathsome.

I do not sentimentalize prostitutes, and I dislike the idea of increasing my sales by sexual

titillation. But this must be told. Nichols, with his genius for selecting the irrelevant and insignificant—witness his puerile shuddering at the Bombay waterfront and utter indifference to the slums—paraded devadasis, who carry no social weight whatever. I take leave to present ward-nurses and school-mistresses, who carry a lot.

Beverley scoffs at the idea of importing school-marms into the jungle. He as good as suggests that there would not be a virgin left among them in three months, and may be right. But as the urban population can afford to spend more on its pleasures, the educated young ladies prefer to cultivate the cities rather than the jungles.

I live in Lahore, where the racket is perhaps the worst in Northern India. "Hospital nurse" or "schoolmistress" is as habitual a tonga-driver's invitation here as "private girl" in Calcutta or "memsahib" in Delhi and Rawalpindi. However, I have visited altogether twenty women of this class, and only three were in Lahore. The rest were made up as follows: three apiece in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi and Allahabad; two apiece in Bangalore and Lucknow; and one in a central

station which I refrain from naming, as there is only one civil hospital there, and that very small one.

Of the whole number, eleven were junior nurses on pay which in Calcutta ran as high as Rs. 40-per mensem. They had to find their own quarters (only two were living with their families) and lodging and dearness allowances, where granted at all, met the cost of living by less than half. I have heard a good many hard-luck stories, and these girls once their suspicions were overcome talked with a ring of spontaneous truth. The other nine were schoolmistresses with the one exception of one who typed in a Corporation office. Among them the rate of pay averaged thirty to thirty-five, with equally inadequate provision for board and lodging prices. The ages of the whole lot, which one may take with a larger grain of salt, ran by their own statements from eighteen to twenty-four; only three were over twenty-one. By class proportion, they were divided into four caste Hindus (two Jatnis and two of bania families in the U.P.), two low-caste Christians,

three Sikhs, ten Musalmanis and one who called herself an Anglo-Indian, but spoke almost unintelligible English. I imagine that she came from Chittagong, though she gave her hometown as Dacca.

Sleep well, my grave and reverend seniors of the medical and educational professions. Well may these wenches echo the London strumpet who described herself at Bow Street as being "of a certain profession", and when coldly informed that the bench [recognized only the legal, medical, military and literary professions replied undauntedly "Mine, your honour, embraces all four". The nurses usually begin by being unprofitably seduced by the younger medical and surgical staff; until, like the baker's drudges in "Elmer Gentry", they grow tired of giving services free.

Don't assume the girls to be natural wantons. All but a few come from village or low city families who cannot afford a dowry that any respectable or well-connected *parti* would look at, and any healthy Indian girl who reaches the age of seventeen without feeling the occasional urge for a

tumble has something radically wrong with her. Moreover, these poor but honest jills of two trades trades almost invariably support their parents, if alive, and though it doesn't run to champagne the aged parents are well content to forgive.

A tart is not necessarily dishonest, but she attracts and inspires parasites to an appalling degree. Somebody once told me that if you could put a single roof over Telaviv it would be the biggest brothel in the Mediterranean; and Telaviv, now a centre of Zionist heroism, has for much longer been a hotbed of all swindling and extortion. Here gariwalas, avaricious landlords, ambushing footpads and whining distant relatives thrive more widely than over there. I am glad to say that young princes are much rarer than in London.

3

The practises I have so far listed are those of the under-dog. Those of the men on top are complementary to these, and make a much worse picture. As Chesterton said of the English peerage, its predatory founders were better men than their

idle descendants ; and infiltrating commercial brigands, whether British, zemindars or banias, were at least more admirable for energy than those who sit and inherit. I am not writing this medley against the British alone, on Mr. Tony Weller's sagacious principle that it'll sell all right if I only blow them up enough : there is a mass of rank, cynical, unpardonable dishonesty among Indians of the wealthier class, and if it is commoner in rich Hindus than in rich Muslims, that is only because in the rich as in the poor class there are more of them. The high proportion of Khatri-Sikh money lenders and pawnbrokers is partly due to the constriction and attrition of Sikh landholding after the annexation. Some Parsi belly-princes in the liquor trade make one see red (prohibition in Bombay was pre-eminently a joint Hindu and Muslim attempt to hamstring them) but anyone who writes of all Parsis as selfish plutocrats should inspect a few chawls on the city cantonment fringe of Poona. Dwellers there take no great stock in blue old Pehlevi blood ; they are Indian proletarians pure and simple.

The callousness of affluent magnates in this

country, Hindus, Sikh, Muslim, Parsi and Christian, towards the poor is as shocking as it is widespread. Landlordism in the rural districts is often as oppressive as urban capitalist exploitation. So long as communal electorates, special constituencies and nominated memberships exist, criminals of this type will find their way into positions of public trust as regularly as a misguided state perseveres in returning Bibb. I make no bones about recognizing dishonesty and trickery among the boss classes, or wanting to see them go the way of the bulaks. Possibly their proportion to the total population is higher in India than elsewhere, though I should like to get the lowdown on China. The remedy is in the hands of the Indian proletariat but until the British go they haven't got a chance in hell of applying it.

CHAPRE FOUR. THE THIRD D.

1.

Right at the start, I address this chapter to civilians. Anyone who has ever served in the army half as long as I did knows that the civil, commercial and governmental delays of India are as a hen to a horse compared with those of the British and practically any other military service. Collection of travelling and detention allowance or arrears of difference of pay on promotion ; inane courts of enquiry on accidental injuries- I have known one moronic old colonel insist on holding one on a man who had sprained his ankle taking cover under shelling ; equally futile, cheese-paring investigations into the loss of a twenty-pound tin of ghi or twelve annas of public money; obstruction of supplies, not only mechanical parts but ammunition and even rations, in rear and even advance echelons; muddling of promotions, complicated by the equally idiotic devotional cults of seniority and caste proportion (in the case of specialists, unpardonable) ; shirking of responsibility by warrant officers or V.C.O.-s cowed by the penny-wise cheese-paring referred to all; these are chronic instances of laziness, inefficiency and delay. In O.T.S. we

received long lectures on O. & A.-organization and administration : when driving and maintenance was introduced, the innocent assumed its abbreviation to stand for Disorganization and Maladministration, which in Agram Barracks at that epoch was paralytic. But the high-ups are rarely, if ever, so candid.

Civilians accustomed to the smooth running of offices and stores in England or America are apt to fume at Indian delay, which pervades places high and low. They are not alone : Mr. Gandhi has repeatedly condemned the cumbrous and protracted course of justice, and pleaded for the simplicity of local panchayats—or village soviets, if you, like me, prefer it. Snow has mordantly collated, examples of hopeless incompetence and muddle over wa supply and transport as late as 1944. The blame for sluggishness in cantonment boards, garrison engineers' offices and municipal sewage committees cannot be thrown entirely on clerks and inferior overseers while gazetted officials are constantly within hail, but it is a fact that long traditions of dominance and inquisitiveness have reduced the clerkly and storemanly mind all over India to a disgraceful lack of energy, responsibility and initiative. Here,

as in the case of dirt and dishonesty, the whole *onus probandi* lies on Government and Civil Service in the dock.

Delay and bad faith on the part of independent businessmen and shopkeepers is far less excusable, and its joint prevalence is my chief reason for despairing of any future for private enterprise in India. "Planning" and "control" by the present regime is unthinkable; they would make confusion twice confounded and corruption twice corrupt. Eternal vigilance in the price of collectivism. If an independent India cannot face this fact, she had better shut up shop and call in the Russians.

2

I dislike the idea of cleanliness, fair dealing and punctuality being forced down a nation's throat. I would much rather see people goaded to sit up and think for themselves—also, naturally, to act. But in the depraved, atrophied, mutilated condition of public conscience and initiative which has been the achievement of Company and Crown, compulsion from above will be inevitable until the tide of education is well on the flood. Are there enough sufficiently ruthless and honest and vigilant administrators ready to take the job on?

In this and the two previous chapters you may have already detected the beginnings of an almost hypochondriac conflict of sympathies, which will be more and more apparent later on. That is between India on her own feet. India swung clean into the Russian orbit, and India brought under the thorough but unobtrusive guidance of America. As a nationalist I prefer to believe in the first ; but if that fails, as a socialist I would vote for the second; yet purely as an English-speaker and a lover of not too drastic measures, I have a regretful longing for the third.

Egypt is a country in which, apart from the aspect of power politics, I should most like to see Russian control predominant. Stronger antiseptics than even the U.S. can apply are needed to purge it from the stench of graft, self-seeking, oppression, immorality and corruption which its foul king and ruling interests have cast over it with a force unknown even under the British and the Turks. Farouk the Flabby and Sidki the Soapy have a precarious throne on a dungheap. Nahas is king of his own midden and means to cling there : the equally untrustworthy Makram

did a service with his Black Book, though the parliamentary proceedings which accompanied it were suggestive of Mr. Justice Gocklecarrot and the twelve red-bearded dwarfs. I fancy that the magnificent Zaghlul—whom Allenby completely repudiated for the mere suggestion that his negligence had caused an assassination which, at the worst, was only a fair reprisal for the black-and-tanneries of drunkard Australians—could have made something of a social revolution, I do not believe that any living Egyptians politician can. Nor do the fellahin, who look more and more on “Abu Shanab” as their messiah. I hope that the fidally gets to them.

Is India's condition equally crippled and stultified? In a country of its size can honest statesmen of Nehru's and Azad's calibre make headway, against the double stream of innate subtlety and officially-fostered apathy. They must be given a trial; but if all fails, I hope that Nehru will show himself a big and wise enough man to call in help, from whichever of two candidates it proves available.

This has been a short chapter. Delay is a simpler and shorter problem to tackle, as I see it, than either of the others. But, whoever's the fault, all three are there ; and India must tackle them herself, or call in the plumber to do it.

CHAPTER FIVE.

ASSASSINE : OPEN AND OTHERWISE.

1

The most determined and unscrupulous attempt to wreck all chances of settlement just now comes blatantly from the Muslim League. In one glaring instance they have overreached themselves, though it is a point that curiously eludes many foreign spectators.

Up to within the last two years, Jinnah's insistence regarding basic principles of accommodation was laid on Hindu-Muslim parity of representation. The newer ground of manœuvre is League-Congress parity. This makes it quite conceivable that, in a house of five a side, there might be five Muslim Leaguers, one Nationalist Muslim, two caste Hindus, a Congress Harijan and a Congress Sikh. The actual proportion of Muslims to all the rest would be as three to two. Can any greater concession to the leader of a faith (or "nation"!) be imagined? And could any but a politician impure and complex deny his co-religionists such

a benefit ?

But no : Congress must not elect a Muslim, because this post-prophetic hierarch and hireling has excommunicated Nationalist Muslims from the Faith. Alleged Congress victimization of depressed classes pales before the epileptic campaign of slander, cheap insult ("Maulana Haw-Haw"), gutter vulgarity ("recruit devadasis for Gandhi deified : I.N.A. Comfort Brigade veterans and massage experts preferred") (Authentic extract from "Dawn," 14 March '46,) and sheer goonda violence launched by the League in the past six months. And the most malignantly persecuted of all their opponents were Indian Islam's own minority—the Nationalist Muslims of every kind.

Jinnah may be unable to afford a withdrawal from his grotesque position. Far less can Congress let the matter slide. They *must* elect a Nationalist Muslim now, if they never contemplated doing so before.

The Rajaji school might like to see it slide, and the N.M.'s thrown to the wolves.

Who besides the League would be gainers by this? To calculate that, one must take into account the force of example. Jinnah's claim conceded, Ambedkar would be the first to exploit it. 'No Congress Harijan' would become as rabid a cry as 'No Nationalist Muslim'. Congress, having abandoned one gun, would in the end be forced to abandon another. I do not think that the responsible heads of the Christian, Sikh and minor communities would stoop to this paltry type of blackmail. But the mischief would have been done. Those two relapses into spineless acceptance of communalism would drive the Congress Socialist Party into opposition like lightning. It would almost certainly come to an accommodation with the Communists; and with this anti-Congress unity before them, the rump of Radical Democrats might at last repudiate the vertiginous ward-heeler whose name they popularly and briefly carry, to swell the active proletarian forces.

Nothing could rejoice me more than to see

these three dynamic groups reunited. But I want to see it happen by the re-entry of Communists and R.D.'s into a strong Nehru-Narain Front, not by yet a third rancorous left-wing fission.

Consider the plight of Congress if attacked by three radical forces : Muslim League S.C.F. and what may be called an activist proletarian front. (This last would, in such case, inevitably draw thousands of recruits from the other two. There is an inchoate and ineffectual progressive trend in the League which has little reverence for Nawabs and Khan Bahadurs, nor will the rank and file of S.C.F. be for ever gulled by Ambedkar's gravelling trust in Churchillism.) The wealthy Congress right wing, which has always shown a tendency to make the best of two or more worlds, would seek prosecution among Mahasabhaites, Marwaris and Maharajas. After that the strain on the Sikhs would become intolerable, and Khalsa disruptionism the order of the day. The Christian nationalists would be left with the alternatives of joining the Red Front (perhaps best), reverting to the Hindu-and-muddy-water status of scheduled castes, or by a mass migration developing the

national absorptive capacity of a united Kerala. This last, for the Punjabi and Hindustani speakers who form a large element in the fold, would come a trifle hard. And if the chain of causation didn't kill Mr. Gandhi, with or without a fast, we would be finally, indisputably accepted as an immortal.

All these potentialities are latent in the Nationalist Muslim quarrel. It is the most pregnant question of the year, and the severest trial of Congress's nation-wide appeal. If they weaken, they will become one sectarian body among a dozen, and one of the two most vicious ones at that.

2

Here, then, is your tangled and at the heart of it the tug of war which will give Congress either its triumph or its deathblow. Other strains are laid on it from outside. The capitalist, Russophobe wing within Congress is growing more and more vaciferous, and the Communists more hot and bothered. To maintain the lead in rivalry with each other, they and the Congress Socialists have both fomented sporadic outbreaks of violence which

served no purpose in face of the Government's Goering-fisted intransigence, and wasted energies and confidence which ought to have been scrupulously conserved. The League are mustering all their power to twist the Kashmiri agrarian and proletarian revolt into a communal issue. Old Forward Bloc elements in Bengal are suspiciously quiet. And Burhan-ud-Din and Abdul Rashid are still in jail.

Assassin in a sinister term. It originally meant a fanatic warped into soulless obedience by dope. (These were H.H. the Aga Khan's progenitors.) During the two decades before World War I, political Homicide came to be regarded as more of an anarchist than a socialist weapon. But in Russia, whether sustained by anarchists, social-democrats, social-revolutionaries, German agents, Finnish and Polish separatists, or in the Rasputin case black reactionaries, it grew into a steady, mordant ulcer did yeoman service in finally bringing the hellist Romanov regime to its fall. If the late Tserina-Attila's spy and Cagliostro's paramour-had died a little earlier,

Lenin's task might have been tripled in difficulty. The Bolsheviks were very lucky in their timing, and in the groundwork put in beforehand by their rivals.

Similar the activities of Congressmen in recent years may have helped to create a suitable state of impending chaos which gives the Communists their opportunity. on the other hand, Communist goings-on may have embarrassed the Congress centre to the benefit of the right wing and the Congress-loathing Mahasabha. From every faction's viewpoint, there are gunmen lurking in the shadows to pounce on miscalculation or indiscretion, and carry off loot and often credit.

Whom do I regard as forces most dangerously inimical to the Republic in its cradle? The designs of extra-Indian Powers will keep to the next chapter.

First, of course, the drive for Pakistan. This is reaction of the blackest dye: a turning back of clocks to the polity of Ommayads, Abbasides and Fatimides. It aims at the perpetuation of that spirit which finds a devotional cloak more

attractive then a parliamentary one to cast over naked personal ambition. Its acceptability to a Socialist or Communist Asia can be judged from a study of Russian Turkestan in the early nineteen twenties, or Turkey during the main period of Kemalist social reform. League communalism is as cancerous as Mohasabha communalism, and vice versa : these, not League and Congress, being the two opposed champions of mediaevalism.

If anyone thinks the policies of Congress and Mahasabha fundamentally identical, let him study the latter through its own outpourings. The League has never berated Congress more savagely (though often much more scurrilously) for maintaining caste Hindu elaims, than the Mahasabha has done for its constant practice of concession and accomodation towards the Muslims, Does Knnone now recall the Giant Gooseberry season of 1940, when some fertile Hindu brain credited Mr. Gandhi with a design to hand over his co-religionists and their land to no less a couple than ex-King Amanullah and the Nizam of Hyderabad ? That one takes a lot of beating, but it has not

kept pride of place through any lack of the *cacoethes superandi*.

Mahasabha tactics are expansionist : Hindustan for the Hindu alone, and all existing territories for Hindustan. Nichols pours vitriol on this kind of *herren volkerei*, and he is absolutely right. They if anyone, are the tutelary genii of money-lenders, forestallers, strike-breakers and every other active kind of parasites. Also they are on excellent terms with the inactive parasites, and those are worst of all.

You can feel impressed by stature of Birla's and Bata's (nor is that a slip of the pen for Tata's, as some earnest ass may hurry to point out) just as there is an impressive quality about the sweeping, amoral energy of a Flivver King, a Gold Corner buccaneer or a placemen-pampering King-fish. You can't feel even grudging respect for a belly-prince of old-time Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Schwarzburg-Sonderhausen, or modern Kashmir, Hyderabad and Rajasthan.

In which connection, let me tell you a significant little-story.

Nichols, in dissecting a rather crude undergraduate pamphlet under the name of "official Congress propaganda", lifts horrified hands at the statement that Alwar-drastic tamer of horses, was deposed "because he was a patriotic Indian." John Gunther, in "Inside Asia", makes it clear that Alwar was removed, not because of any malpractices in his own backyard, but over a refractory mood of his which jeopardized, ever so slightly, the stability of the paramount power's revenue. He might, says the writer with perfect truth, have gone on being "vindictive" to the end of his days. So in a sense the question and answer composers were not entirely wide of the mark.

They may go too far, and kill *too* wealthy and "loyal" a merchant on provincial soil ; thus Indore found his world well lost for love, or jealousy. But the paramount power's eyelids are normally very heavy.

Those are the two main types of wrecker. Europeans of the lower official or higher commercial strata do not concern themselves

much with deliberate sabotage. They have done no particular harm in their Jim Crow-shielded fastnasses of Breach Candy and the Saturday Club. Their devotion of hours off duty to the war effort would have made a much difference in the mass as the bumper off Westbrook Pegler's auto.

Missionaries have been blamed repeatedly by the diehards for spreading "dangerous thoughts", but there are quite a number who throw their weight and that of hell fire behind reaction. Such a one was the retired brigadier, and self-styled general, whom I heard thundering to a guileless B.O.R. audience in November 1940 against the release of "Barabbas Nehru, the friend of the devil, the friend of Hitler and Mussolini," and whom I shall allude to again. These missionaries, however, to give them their due, are mostly self-supporting, apart from what they can blarney out of Dame Violet Wills. They are not buttressed like the nawabs, nizams and maharajas, with money that is so hot, in the Hollywood sense, that all the cold water in the Wular Lake couldn't make it respectable. The Roman Catholic church, an institution of which

I am not a member and have no wish to be, is on the whole more respective to nationalist sympathies than the Protestants. Sour evangelicals quota this as a proof of the spiritual affinity of Romanism and Brahmanism, a theory which can be upheld by quotations ranging from Borrow to Jogendranath Bhattacharjee, and spiced by a suitably dubbed version of the "Awful Confessions of the Maria Monk".

I am getting tired of lightweights, though. Keep the two leading communalist parties in mind, and you will realize that they give us quite enough to chew on.

CHAPTER SIX

BOGEY-MEN: GENUINE AND OTHERWISE

1.

In India today there are three prevalent emotions. One is greed, one is hate, but the greatest of all is fear.

The League stand is activated by all three: greed of power, hate of the Hindu and fear of retribution. The Princes by the same, substituting "worker" or "peasant" for "Hindu". The rich and powerful by this also. The Dravidian and Harijan groups by fear alone; the aboriginals by fear alone; the Communists almost entirely by fear-of revenge for 1942. And Congress, Government, Europeans, Princes and all by fear of Russia.

I am not here going to say a word on the lessons that Soviet Communism holds for India. This chapter deals with Russia simply in the light of long-term power politics, as it will also with

America.

Does Russia plan to make of Pakistan a new and vaster Azerbaijan? Does she mean to launch an offensive through China to Indonesia? Does she plot the seizure of the ridiculous Kafiristan-Badakhshan-Wakhan-pandandle as a preliminary to Chitral, Chitral as a foretaste of Kashmir, and Kashmir as the gate of the Punjab, in a pincer movement with advance through southern Afghanistan? Is there in her foreign policy a controlling thrust of idealism (which is not opposed, but complementary, to realism) or is she just the same old bear walking more like a man than ever?

Weighty problems, whether you are working them out in a poor but clean garret like my own, or among the draperies of your Gaddi Room, or in about three cubic feet of bad air per head in a cotton-operatives' chawl.

2.

Russia, strange as it may seem, feels tired.

You can't acquit the Anglo-Saxons of some

complicity in providing some ground for this. When Stalingrad was half-strangled, the English conception of a Second Front was loot, rape and arson by liquor-primed British and Canadians in the streets of Delhi.

The people of the R. S. F. S. R., by widely-varying accounts, are an outstandingly generous, goodhearted, sentimental race. They love Mother Russia, and will give more than plasma to put life back in the old witch's veins. Do you, my circle, think them insensitive to Mother India, scourged by the licensed brutalities of Anglo-Saxon Huns? Weary, world-martyred, uncomplaining as this great nation are, they have time to pity and embrace disarmed folk such as you, the Untouchables and me.

3.

None the less, they have been bled white. They have seen shameless butchery carry the day in Hellas when Brimstone played on Russian loyalty to the common cause to keep them neutral while this English and Gurkha thugs put the Metaxist pimps back on their gaddi, in face of the only

Greeks who had lifted a rifle since the Nazi hireling George II made his unchallenged getaway to Crete in 1941. They have stood a great deal more than the barrel-rolling pub-crawlers of the London blitz. They have kept quiet while Drago the Damned was lifted back to his old pinnacle, and Fauntleroy Karageorgevitch canonized by the incurable Cockney Lumpenproletariat. Are these poor, decent, Nehru-minded mazdurs and kisans the monsters of whom Brimstone and K.M. Munshi warn us to beware?

Don't believe it, Panditji, Sarat, Jaiprakash. So-called Soviet Imperialism is not better and no worse than Congress Internationalism. I am not quite young enough to believe in the black and white rule of thumb in probing human motives. I can well conceive that Marshal Stalin would, as a great soldier, be glad of Algeciras and Salonika for his battleships. But I am pretty sure that that Christ-bold scientist of war, peace and justice would open fire on the abominable bayonet regimes of Greece and Spain simply because they *are* abominable. Strategic ambition alone will never

goad the folk of Russia to war again. They need a righteous revivel to rouse them. And once aroused-Hindus alone excepted-there is no more idealistic race of crusaders on earth.

4.

Hail, Columbia!

You too are a breed whom our Saxon magnates treat as gift-bearing Danaans. How does the mirror confirm it?

You're a good emotional crowd, which is why I like you. The British make lords out of German-coal-selling Premier Baldwin and Krupp-shareholding Foreign Secretary Simon. There was no Federal campaign to hallow the ashes of James' G. Blaine, Simon Cameron, or Warren Gamaliel Harding. We don't lay on the whitewash either. Nariman, Jinnah, Subhas got their kick in the back when they asked for it. Two-timers of 1942 that prayed for the resistance martyrs and ate the contractors' bread of the Q Branch are overdue for theirs.

Jobs for all. Womb to tomb security. Regular commissions in the Aguinaldo army that aims to crack open the "God-given Empire" as wide as Kate Gallagher's quim. Are you heirs of John Brown and Thaddeus Stevens going to help give us the Jehu-Tottenham raspberry?

Don't pick up the old sabre for the Kaaba's timeless acolytes. Nor for the Hatfields and Mc Coys of Rajasthan, who made the desert hell for a thousand years without even a bible-thumping pretext.

Just for a change, let's take parable from En-Dor-

Astronomy and astrology are basically the same. So are chemistry and alchemy. All four hold a tract for the times.

Astronomy, as I see it, gives a clue to the communal and political set-up. Five major, five minor and one intermediate planet drift round our third magnitude star. The Muslim League is pluto-last, loneliest, coldest outlier marching through Zamharir of inhumanity. The princely, Birlaist,

Mahasabhaite coalition, by contrast, are the incredible and perhaps imaginary Vulcan, spinning closer to the sun than ultra-violet Mercury, a furnace of evil and crooked passion. In between converge Mercury, Venus, the earth and Mars cooling off, and Neptune, Uranus, Saturn and Jupiter growing steadily warmer. Liberals, Unionists and compromise groups of all kinds mingle in these.

And in the dead centre, the Temperate zone of space, flies the planet that is a planet no longer: giant Lucifer, atom-bombed by the Great Comet into ten thousand jagged asteroids. Who is this but non-violent Congress, at the mercy of personalities and factions? A traveller in India, rocketing through space without his compass, may land by inspiration on Jupiter or Mars, whichever he aimed at; or, like Dunsany's voyager, he may hit the stardust belt between.

"The thing which turned my hair white in a moment was the knowledge that I had landed on the wrong planet" said that unbappy aeronaut. What about us, trying to find a coherent body the size at least of Eros, on which to plant our feet.

and deafened by cranks who clamour that a Russian or American comet is on its way to disintegrate even that?

Both those Powers are unlikely bogeymen, just because their war is over, and ours only half begun. They have waited long enough to reach their "Land of Begin-Again", and now all but the psycho-neurotics want to settle down and "learn to live and love again, when the world is quiet and still". That's a meretricious tune, but for India with the hill unclimbed it holds a very sad appeal.

5.

What a boon is the Russian bogey to those who would pawn their souls to keep "Dominion" India the milch-cow of the London-Canberra-Auckland Ottawa-Pretoria Axis! And what joy they must feel when they see, not only kulak and profiteer cliques, but honest, well-meaning Congress morons fall for it.

There is one bogey spook, just one, to dread in his apparent deathbed. That is the late, unlamented Fuehrer of Great Britain, who would

get up from it for a stab at this country as Ruthven rose up to kill Rizzio. The deed of old Ruthven and his daggersmen was the apotheosis of Scotlands' pious and blue-blooded terrorists. The malignant plottings of Churchill are that of the Imperialist Old Guard, and they are much less to be laughed off than any vague threat from Moscow. Stalin, at a pinch, might prove the Bothwell who snatched the menaced queen, Mother India, from the claws of the lordly murder-gang.

Winston Spencer Churchill, Muhammad Ali Jinnah—by these names two men were dedicated or baptized. The names in which my Christ, Gandhi's Christ, Lenin's unknown god, will arraign them at the bar are the names of Herod and Caiaphas.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TRAVELLERS: CAREFUL AND
OTHERWISE

I

This is the last of the three chapters in which I am trying to sort out the specific forces—religious, political, and all—which are hindering the march to independence and revolution, as distinct from the general phenomena of the preceding three. Unlike Four, it will not be a very little one, because travellers do almost as much harm, though in a looser and less consistent way, as communalists and external power-politicians.

There have been some whose length of stay almost lifts them out of the travelling category, but who really belong there because in the end they go back, and write books about us abroad. Three of the best in this group are E.M. Forster, Edward Thompson and Penderel Moon. A very bad one was Katherine Mayo. An even worse one—who did not stay very long—was a cavalry

subaltern named Winston Spencer Churchill. He, in a way, during the earlier part of his career, reminds me of Beverley Nichols. You know, the bright, breezy, bouncing sub-janta-wala type. There was a music-hall skit in the early years of the century :—

“I’m Winston Churchill”...Lord applause.

“I’m Winston Churchill.”.....Horrid pause.

“The one damned thing that’s wrong with me.

Is my confounded modesty !”

I misdoubt whether a more conceited soul ever came out of limbo; Beverley runs him pretty close, though. India, at an interval of forty years or more, gave both of them their fun for striking an attitude and addressing Buncombe in a voice of what they believe to be thunder. In Winston it is the snarling of a vicious-tempered old dog, in Beverley the mewling and spitting of a dyspeptic kitchen cat.

Keir Hardie, Josiah Wedgwood and Fenner Brockway have all made valuable visits to this country, and done their best to wake the complacent

British public up to it. I don't count Mosley, whose sympathy, even in the Labour Party as he then was, India could very well have done without. His transit was no more than a flash, and he laid himself open to the severest charges of ill-informed pontification. A traveller whose reception on the advice of Mr. Gandhi I have long regarded as a blunder was the Prince of Wales. I share the Regular Army's affection for Taddie, though similarly tempered by rage at the opportunity he flung away of knocking the bumpkin Baldwin and the windbag Lang out of public mischief for good, and bringing new blood into the inbred, progressively sterile Anglo-Greco-Germano-Scandinavian royal clique of Europe. But that milk has been spilt for good; he was unquestionably a dog-tired man at the time, and he came out of it with cleaner hands than the two devils who dethroned him. You may say that Teddie was no socialist, but a demagogic playboy with Fascist leanings. I don't know; the subject still hurts me too much to argue about. All I know, and it is no more than all the world knows, is that he was young, fresh, vital, eager to learn and quick to sympathise. Many

Indians took him at that valuation. I think myself that he should have gone straight to Mr. Gandhi on landing and worked out a compromise. Gandhi *was* India then, however far he may have let that position slip since. But I suppose Teddie's dear papa would have had kittens at the bare idea.

I mustn't harp too long on one man, at least not until I come to Beverley in detail. By the way one or two friends here have asked me for a booklet by Mr. Michael Foot called "Brendan and Beverley" under the impression that it refers to our verdict-and-sentence merchant. It is a very good book, though much out-stripped by events and full of rather topical allusions above the average Indian head; but the second partner in it was Beverley Baxter, a man equally good at scurrility (witness his vile article on Windsor just after the dethronement) but lacking the effeminate pseudo-glamour that put Nichols on the literary map to begin with.

Other travellers who have left their mark? I may be wrong, but I don't think Hannen Swaffer has ever touched these shores. You know Hannen—the man who comes to swaff and stays to bray. Still, braying is better than mewling; I'd like him

to get the lowdown on us, if he hasn't done so already.

American journalists are about as well beloved as copperheads by the British Conservative press (I am tempted to use the shorter name Tory, which to Americans has a living sense from their own revolution, but have explained in another publication, which you would gratify me by buying, my reasons for eschewing it.) They are welcomed by Indians because they come prepared to go into the high-ways and hedges for their facts rather than waste time dining "among the tuberoses" at Government House, or drivelling about Ajanta, Ayurveda, meeting film stars and parties at which the narrator can't even be accurate about the colour of Dr. Jaisoorya's beard. People like Edgar Snow get down to the scrutiny like men, not hermaphrodites. I dwell on Snow here and elsewhere because he is a great and good socialist, who can do more than any other contemporary American to put over the integration of socialism and nationalism. But many writers with no Russian sympathies at all have done jobs of patient and thorough probing into Indian grievance.

nces ; and as I hinted in the last chapter, any irrevocable swing away from the Soviet orbit by Indian revolutionaries would enhance the value of these in India's eyes. Even a diehard anti-Stalinite such as Gene (Gastonia) Lyons would be of service to the country just now. Lyons is tough ; he calls a spade a spade and the Soviet Union something else, and I don't think he would pull any punches where the Raj is concerned.

What is more, the folk from the States may not care much for John Lewis or Earl Browder, but there are black patches on American life which they recognize admit, fight against and are prepared to discuss on the level with either Indian or Europeans. Every decent American loathes the apocryphal Senator Claghorn and his nightshirted lynching addicts ; but they don't deny their existence, or call it grossly evaggarated. Most of them feel a sore spot about their ancestors' virtual extermination of the American " Indians ", and the immigration laws which bear a bit hardly on Chinese, Koreans and our type of Indians. I've met more than a few who think that the stockyards have still a fair way to go before the grandchildren

of Jurgis and Ona Rudkus can be said to get a real square deal. But then the human thing about American radicals and Indian Congressmen is that they can discuss that sort of thing, along with untouchability, prostitution, hoarding and the rest of our own ills. They can bambast themselves and each other without getting hot under the collar and spouting the chicken-crust English metaphor of "fouling your own nest". Britishers in the main can't: nor can Leaguers, Mayo is the American exception, Nichols the British rule.

2

I am an insatiable traveller myself, and if it can be done at Government expense, well, I take a good view of taxing the enemy for the cost of the war. That was how I got to Cairo, to Sfax, to Napoli and back to Hospital Town East. If I were a cheap, low-grade mis-imitator of Karaka, I should have written a book called "Brindisi" (or Taranto, or Bari, or Avellino) "With Its Skirts Up", and believe you me that isn't a pretty sight. But I wasn't there long enough to dig far under the surface, and in a place like Arielli or Portella we had more urgent things to get on with than

mass-observing in the stews of Napoli on five days' passionate leave. So it never got written. I did listen to some delicious farmyard imitations from orchestra in the Benevento Officer's Club. But then I wasn't brought up on counterpoint, or to consider an Officer's Club. any more suitable base for writing about Italy than Government House or Peshawar Hospital for writing one about India. Not even Italian music.

I reckon our paripatetic judge-and-jury Beverley makes a bigger fool of himself on the subject of music than anywhere else. Twelve years ago, he edited a lavish and lewdly-illustrated volume of old English and Scottish ballads. It wasn't anything like as good as Aytoun's or Brimley Johnson's, but it was a good notion all the same. Does the cretin fail utterly to grasp that "Hindu" music, or Mandarin or Pushtu or Arabia either, is folk music of the same kind—living, growing, changeful and zestful? My own taste in song and tune is as instinctive and, if you like irrational as my taste in girls. I can recognize

and love elemental earthborn music as keenly as I have recognized and loved the simplicity, honesty, tenderness and courage of a woman whose name doesn't matter. There are the Scottish favourites : eerie "Tamlane", heartbreaking "Kirkconnel", and bare, stately "Otterburn". There are the Methodist hymns of the Cymri which leave Moody and Sankey at the post. There are *Aupres de ma blonde* ", "En passant par la "Lorraine" and "Compagnons de la Marjolaine " There are the sweet German ballads of Arnim & Brentano's unjustly forgotten "Knaben Wunderben". There is the plangent appeal of a zither playing "Zakhme Dil " in Peshawar, and there is the deep, inebriating menace of Khaksar drums along Anarkali. They are all hardy annuals and perennials, not glasshouse exotics like Mahler and Offenbach.

If I had the chance to get a sound judgement on Indian song I should not go to Nichols. The only popular form of music that he appreciates used to be the Ponce's Funeral March of Horst-Wessel. I should go to three masters and lovers of their own traditional tunes : Paul Robeson,

Lawrence Tibbett and John Jacob Niles.

3

Travellers of the shallow type come, see, and go away into their studies to conquer. Look at the difference among missionaries. American ones generally come with a sympathetic and flexible interest in Indian religions. British, by and large, compare badly. The Roman type are the most human, and medical or educational bodies like the C.M.S. do good work, though all in the soapy name of imperialism. Real filth comes from the John Kensits, Frank Frosts and Daniel Bartletts, whose controversial standards are those of a sulphurous, machine-gun-mouthed bargee. I have quoted one of these—never mind which—on the subject of “Barabbas Nehru”, What figure that snuffling, shuffling quack from the Stiggins—like Fundamentalist underworld will cut beside Panditji at the Judgment Morn is a matter of high academic interest.

I didn't stress the missionary menace in Chapter Five because it would have diverted serious attention from the two heavy-weights. But

a menace it surely is. The spectacle of organized, alien-subsidized barkstorming by these. Little Bethel Imperialist Lady-Helps gave one more push to the weight which toppled in 1857. No globe-trotter can do more good than one with an able pen and kindly heart. None can do more mischief than one with a bellyful of ill-digested prejudice and a tongue like a rattlesnake. Housman's lines were made for them.

“Who relish their victuals and rest on their bed.

“With flint in the bosom and guts in the head.”

Some are just ridiculous, like the Islam-and-water buffon Quilliam. Others go a lot worse. So you see, gentle reader, that I don't believe in ignoring the minor mudslingers. As for imitating themwell, as the old gent said when falsely arraigned for stealing a fellow-member's gamp in the Athenaeum Club, I leave that sort of thing to the bishops.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NOT IN OUR STARS?

1

How far are we underlings?

I must approach a delicate subject with one essential disclaimer. If any Communist, Royite, Leaguer or British Conservative scripturalist plans to cite the devil to his purpose by construing this chapter as an attack on Mr. Gandhi, they had better think again. In this world of mediocrities, my intense respect is reserved for four great soldier-statesmen: Marshal Stalin, Marsha Tito, the late Marshal Subhas Chandra Bose, and Mahatma Gandhi. The dogged, resourceful integrity of the last may or may not be Christ-like, but to me it merits the title of "soldierly" in its highest degree. None the less, I believe his traditional strategy is no longer adequate for the Indian front. Ahimsa and satyagraha are the weapons of self-conscious underlings. The wheel has come full circle, and what we need now is the strategy, not of 1929 but of 1857.

I shall not fall into the snare of calling the Rani of Jhansi India's Joan of Arc, any more than I should apply it to her worthy successor, Col. Lakshmi. It is a phrase that has been cheapened and eroded by well-meaning addication to every sweet pistol-packing girl-graduate who ever winged a cantonment magistrate in Bengal. But there was one man—Tantia Topi—who may fairly be called India's Simon Boliver. He failed through sheer weight of numbers; and the British, who talked about "clemency" in those days too, hanged this recognized soldier like a Pindari felon. Look around and show me a Bolivar or a Hofer in the country today.

Non-voilence has worked to a certain extent against the British. It will not work against the princely diehards or the Pakistan irreconcilables. A Free India may hava as massive a problem of civil war as China after the Kuomintang began to march.

My friend, sponsor and patron Jag Parvesh Chander, who will tear strips a yard wide off practically every page in this book, has written of Mahratta "chivalry". I beg to differ. Chivalry

would never have built the Mahratta power. It would not have smuggled Shivaji out of the wolf's den; it would not have inspired his Pearl Harbour liquidation of Afzal Khan. Resistance movements fighting a perjured, bloody-minded, unscrupulous tyranny—whether implemented by Himmler, Pobiedonostev, Linlithgow, Afzal, or Gort, Cunningham, D'Arcy, Mc Connel and the rest of the Palestine gang—have no time for chivalry. A chivalrous or non-violent politician would have condemned the attempted shooting of Laval by Colette, and the actual shooting of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson (not our Jumbo, the other one) by Dunn and O' Sullivan. He would rule out Shivaji, blackball Michael Collins, and refuse an old school tie to either Ben Stern or Amin el Husaini. Only the Tragic Muse could have pitted these two courageous libertarians in opposition. England, of course, played "Faithful Hagen" to the Muse, dividing and ruling *More suo* in order to have a pretext for keeping a foothold in the Levant and a stranglehold on the Mosul pipeline. It is a game at which India has had many proofs of her virtuosity.

I am not a hero, and since being shot up at Enfidaville, knocked on the head in Cairo and anxiety-neurosed at Montecassino—the veritable “Gethseman” of the poem which Eliot could not understand—I dislike even inevitable violence. But the lynching of Mussolini, besides being richly comic, was a justifiable act of war. So was the Chittagong Armoury Raid. So was the blowing up of the King David Hotel, and the burning of the Four Courts in the last stand of Cathal Brugha and Rory O’Connor. So was the shooting of hostages by the Communards of Paris.

All this time my nib is almost split by the conflict of three elements in me: an Anglo-Indian body, a Russian morbidity and introspectivity of mind, and a sentimental Americanism which nothing but the worm can eradicate. As far as reconciling myself to violence goes, however, I have warrant from all three nations. I do not condone Chauri Chaura, the crazed slaughters of Dzherzhinsky and Szamuely, or Sam Adams’s obsession with tar and feathers. But I take off my hat to the Armoury Raiders, the Red Guards of Kronstadt, and the valiant band of Harper’s Ferry. The soul

of Tantia Topi also goes marching on

2

In our stars or in ourselves, the paralysis of such vast reserves of revolutionary material that lies about all over India, from Kashmir to the Moplah country, and from the Nagas to the Hurs, is a shocking and formidable fact. It clogs the fact of Nehru, of Joshi, of Jaiprakash and of Allama Mashriqui alike. One swallow does not make a summer; the spalling of Beatty and Gainsford in this town six and a half years ago did not make a revolution. If non-violence is a snare and a delusion, a more dangerous one is violence that goes off at half-cock. To underrate your enemy and overrate your support is fatal. Venizelos found it out in 1935. John Brown found it out in 1859. Cade, the Jacobites, the Mutiny leaders, the victims of Cavaignac and Callifet, all found it out in the long run, but they had had more justification at the start.

The enemies in this case are all worse than Popery for arrogance. Nazidom for self-whitewashing and Sovietism for slippery adroitness. The potential supporters are disorganized, potential

and suspicions.

It is not only to the kisan that a socialist nationalism can look for an army. It is to every factory worker capable of sabotaging production. It is to every one of the enemies' "mercenaries who can shoot a colonel, fire a Q.M. store or unlock a rifle-kot. It is to every municipal scavenger who can help to paralyse the town sanitation. It is to strikers of all grades, whether non-violent, stay-in or active with dynamite. Also there are elements to which it is very decidedly not.

Non-violence is useless, and sporadic violence detrimental. But childish violence is worst of all.

The mob who strung up II Duce and his Clar-reta by the heels, and then played football with them in a public square showed sound political instinct. In that foul old thug they were destroying the key and symbol of a whole regime. It was fitting that Dragon should fall, not only into the street, but into the gutter. And those ancestors of theirs who played ball with the head Sejnus nineteen centuries, before were right for

the same reason. If the wickedest and crookedest survivor of Mussolini—and by this I do not mean even Spain's present ruler, but Britain's late one—were ever again to show his fat-ringed neck and bloated features in this country, he should be shot down or grenaded within a hundred yards of leaving the airport. But there are other types of violence less easy to understand.

Wholesale raping of European woman is not entirely a Cheltenham nightmare. It has been seriously and emphatically commended by politicians who really ought to know better. That sort of thing is the impotent, hysterical sign of a slave mentality. It is as unconstructive and puerile as the vapourings of John Paul Jones's victims.—

“ Had I had guns, as I had goods, to work
my Christian harm.

I had strung him up from the quarter-deck
to trade with his own yard-arm :

I had nailed his ears to my capstan-head,
and ripped them off with a saw.

And soused them in the bilgewater, and
served them to him raw.

I had flung him blind in a rudderless boat
to rot with the drifting bark,

Or trailed him aft of his own craft, a bait
for his brother shark.

I had lapped him round with coco-husk and
drenched him in the oil.

Then lashed him fast to his own mast to blaze
above my spoil.

I had filled him, full of pine-splinters, and
trammelled his beard in the mesh.

And spitted his crew on the live bamboo that
grows thro' the gangrened flesh,

I had flung-ed him down by the mangrove
brown, where the tide-rip sucks and
draw :

Moored by the heel to his own keel a mark
for the land-crabs' claws..."

It is all rather frothy, isn't it ? No serious revolutionary ought to talk like that. And the same with women. Dhundu Panth's Cawnpore killing was a matter of military security, or can be

plausibly defended as such, but mass rape as a political measure is too silly for words.

Such talk and conduct is the mark of manifest underlings. There are so many more serious things to worry about. In the study of political violence as a weapon and a science, it is absolutely fatal to wander away among showy side-issues. The weapon—raffe, dynamite, spanner in the works or cell-formation in the enemy's army—is to be judged, not by any absolute moral standard, but by its utility towards the end ; and, not less important, the degree to which it may obscure the end. I admire the Jesuits greatly : I would only alter their maxim to "*ad majorem populi copiam*". The supplying of the masses is the root of all things ; murder may help it, arson often, sabotage almost invariably. Rape, never.

3

We have looked at the strategic or tactical blunders which mark the unhelpful underling. Still worse are blunders caused by losing sight of the aims.

The supplying of the masses ! The clothing of the masses ! The literacy of the masses, and their awakening to public spirit ! These are the goals to keep in mind. Nationalism can crowd out socialism even more effectively than socialism can crowd out nationalism. If, as I pictured in Chapter Five, we lose the common touch and let patriotism be exploited and monopolized by the wealthy, the oppressive and the parasitic, all we shall get will be "National-Socialism" of the worst German type.

James Connolly was the greatest realist in this respect whom one should strive to copy. He kept adamantly rooted in his mind the parallelism and mutual dependence of the national and proletarian interests. So, to a lesser extent, did Michael Collins and Cathal Brugha. So did not Liam Lynch or Arthur Griffith. Only Jim Larkin carries it on. Two other men would have made admirable "National-Communists" but for a fatal Jewish phobia : Zelea Codreanu and William Joyce. They had more of the root of the matter in them than the dupes of the Mahasabha and

Congress Right to-day.

The only fault, dear Brutus, that can be blamed on our stars is launching us into the imperialist vortex to begin with. If we cannot climb out of it, we are convicted underlings, And the only thing to do in a case like that, as I have deafened you by insisting, is to become the underlings of a better alien system.

Joshi's followers understand that. But Joshi is an Indian and would, I am certain, prefer to get Communism in the country by Indian means. He would only call in the Red Army as a last resource. Jawaharlal and Jaiprakash would boggle at calling it in at all. But, if they want to avoid the dilemma of doing so or being blown inside out in the name of non-violence and-shades of jesting Pilate ;—truth, by what Luther, no fool, called the four winds of priests, prelates, princes and bad citizens, they must go bald-headed along the parallel railway lines of national unity and proletarian uplift. They must go all out to sweep away the Three D.s, whether they are practised by the wealthiest

or saintliest figures in the country. The League and the Mahasabha have nothing like the progressive content necessary for this task. I believe that Congress has.

CHAPTER NINE

UNRAVELLING BABEL

1.

Six hundred and sixty-six is to Christians a horribly fascinating number. For centuries English exegesists—the kind who picture God as an Englishman twelve feet tall—have, with batteries of temporal and special measurements from the cryptic pronouncements of Ezekiel, Daniel and St. John oddly named the Divine, pinned the label of Antichrist on various popes, on Louis XIV of France, on Bonaparte, Wilhelm II, Lenin, Hitler Mussolini or whoever else happened to be threatening English commercial interests at the time. And when the world survives the rise and fall of each, they excuse themselves on the ground of having miscalculated some of “those damned decimals.”

Just as the Englishman at home has a magic historical landmark and a talismanic triple figure,

so has his counterpart in India. History, to so many in England, has been accurately summed up as "1066 and all that". Out here it is apt to be dismissed as "1857 and all that". So too, we are constantly assailed, in the linguistic field with the simple and seductive figure 222.

Why some of our confirmed Indophobe missionaries haven't found a pretext for multiplying this by three and locating their pet Beast in India, I can't imagine. But their political opposite numbers find it useful enough unaltered. 222 languages (often they do not even bother to add "or dialects") are to them and their dupes an insuperable obstacle to Indian unity.

For a searching analysis of this claim, see R. Palme Dutt's "India Today", a copy of which in 1941-2 I was compelled to keep secret from the polite Gestapo of Kohat military circles behind a loose section of wainscoting. He works down from Hindustani, Bengali (a mother-tongue spoken by more than use Italian) and the major Dravidian tongues—four in all—through minor, localized but deeply-rooted vernaculars such as Assamese, Oriya

Punjabi and Sindhi to the relatively insignificant twenty--or fifteen--lakh groups who speak Kashmiri Pushtu, Garo, Gondhi, Konkanese, etc.; and from there he digs down among a tangle of hill, jungle and hybridized Patois, to dignify which by the name of significant mother-tongues is like inviting San Marino or Liechtenstein to a place between the Big Five at the peace-table.

It is rather like the undistinguished figure of 562 feudatory and protective states. Beginning at the 21-gun mark, you come down the scale not too steeply as far as 108 separately represented in the Chamber. Next comes a bloc with small collective representation; and then you go downhill very fast indeed. An extreme example is the Simla Hill Agency. Herein are eighteen states: Bashahr, with just over three thousand square miles, equivalent to sixty by fifty on the level, is twice as large as the other seventeen put together. The next in size would, on the level, measure twenty-four by forty, or less than a thousand square miles. And they go down to Nos. 16, 17 and 18 with a square mileage of respectively 12, 8

and 4. (Somewhere in Gujerat I believe this is beaten by 2.) Around and among these little empires are the major and detached portions of the large but thinly peopled state of Chamba, and the smaller ones of Mandi, Nahan, Suket and Bilaspur; several splashes from the plains state of Patiala, which is untidier than England's Worcester or Scotland's obsolete Cromarty; and little Simla District, a hundred aggregate square miles in nine separate pieces. The entire hill tract from Jammu to Tehri-Garhwal, excluding the intrusive Kangra District, would make two under-populated districts of the Punjab, or one with a rather unmanageable area.

That diversity is parallel to that of dialects. Just as this hill tract is to the whole area of the Punjab and Punjab (plains) States, so is the whole mass of dialects therein to the common tongue of Punjabi. So-called Landha, or Western Punjabi, is subdivided into sixteen forms, and the proportion of the total to Punjabi proper is as one speaker to eight or nine. And this, mark you, is in a province where anyone who has had two years' hedge-schooling is virtually bilingual in Punjabi and

its near relative, Hindustani.

The Dravidian triangle is divided into four large and homogeneous linguistic areas, on which any reasonable federal system would be founded. These are Andhradesa in the north-west, scattered over the tongue of Madras province only preserved in order to fence off interior States from the coast, and of parts Hyderabad and Bastar; Kannada, covering south-western Hyderabad and southern Bombay, with all its splinter States; Kerala, a trinity of Malabar District and Cochin and Travancore States; and Tamilnad, comprizing most of Mysore and the whole south-east and middle-east of Madras. The respective languages, Telugu, Kanauri, Malayali (not Malayi, Mr. Nichols and Tamil are the only ones recognized in official and commercial use. The lesser tongues—estimated at oversixty—are no more important in relation to those than Pudukottai or Banganapalle States to Madrass Province, or Satara to Bombay.

2.

,As I see it, any Federal Government should

have a threefold educational policy in regard to languages.

Firstly, to distinguish and recognize all languages which are truly so in the dual respect of having a recognizable number of habitual speakers and a clearly defined regional coherence. In a country of forty crores I should put the minimum speaking population at twenty lakhs, and the maximum number of separate regions at three. All these languages should be culturally encouraged as in the Soviet Union ("Damn the man, King Charles's head again!") and business in courts of first instance and village, if not district soviets conducted in them.

Secondly, to spread the *lingua franca*, which can only be Hindi, or if you prefer it Hindusani, as the medium of business in all higher courts and assemblies and the sole language of central government communications; also to foster the cultivation of essential diplomatic languages—English, Russian and Chinese.

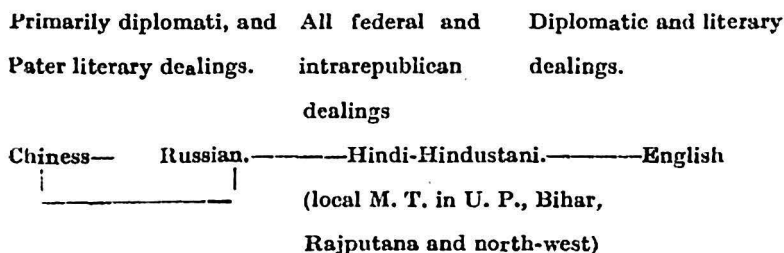
Thirdly, my brethren, to eliminate all other so-

called "languages" as thoroughly as poverty or bubonic plague.

I make no apology for dragging the Soviet analogy; nor for insisting on the intensive preservation of English. My reason for this last is chiefly that some of the best proletarian literature in the world has been written in English, and all literature loses something by translation. Kipling in French is even worse than Dumas in English. And the authors whom I shall enumerate shortly have an irreplaceable flavour all their own.

A further argument in favour of English which cannot be burked is the very strong prejudice existing in its favour, as opposed to Hindi, in the South. The communal basis of this would be removed by federation and removal of racial or communal jealousy, but for some years the only hope of persuading Telugu, Tamil and other vernacularists to accept Hindi and cooperate in its propagation will be to guarantee them the general use of English and its teaching in an equal proportion.

The scheme of linguistic development would therefore run mainly according to the subjoined diagram:—



LOCAL VERNACULARS

Gujrati, Mahrathi,
 Sindhi, Oriya,
 Bengali, Assamese,
 The four main
 Dravidian tongues,

and minor true languages as qualified above.

My reasons for extending Hindi for all purposes to Rajputana have been given in the last chapter but two Punjabi is closely enough related, and the bulk of its users sufficiently bilingual for the general use of Hindi (or Hindustani) to cause no

great inconvenience. Assamese should be encouraged to assimilate itself to Bengali. Mahrathi, though closely akin to Hindi by comparison with the rest, has a strong and communally harmless tradition deserving all respect.

3.

A word on the teaching of English. literature is unavoidable.

Wordsworth, Lamb, Shelley and the rest of examination-cramming poets are as dead as Queen Anne from this viewpoint. All English poetry should be cut out of curricula, and left to the mature selection of advanced students. Purely historical writers can be ignored; history is best taught in the vernacular, and the style of Macaulay or Froude is absurd on Indian student lips. The case of technical works is hardly germane; and obviously the predominance in physics, mechanics and chemistry of terms derived from European classical tongues makes English impartment of these subjects desirable.

Fiction is a wider field. Here I shall express

preferences all my own. Here the original, idiomatic English version is the ideal medium of study to be aimed at. But this should on no account preclude the use of vernacular translations by less advanced readers, for the message of much significant fiction is to be inculcated at an earlier age than will usually be suited to the teaching of English.

American authors' sales in Russia are a good guide. Jack London heads the list, outnumbering the next three combined, and this seems to me ideal for both India and Russia. London is a straightforward, nervous stylist—by British highbrow standards crude—and a gripping storyteller, while his human sympathies are forcibly manifested throughout. Also his own life, like that of Mark Twain, is a chronicle full of meaning for intellectually alive proletarians.

Mark Twain I should have put first but for difficulties of dialect.

The other two Russian favourites, Upton Sinclair and O. Henry, should be read together as the next stage. Once the idioms of these two

have been mastered, there successors are a matter of very liberal discretion. Dos Passos and Hemingway, Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis, Faulkner and Cain are manifest leaders in this field. And the ultra-moderns often convey an elementary message that no flattening vernacular translation can obliterate: let the integrated intellectual and working-class public have Taylor Caldwell, Nelson Algren and John O' Hara raw in any language that suits them.

I also make an outstanding exception here in respect of poetry, and that, as you may guess, is Steve Benet. The meaning of John Brown is a high theme that calls for poetic richness of treatment.

This section is no more than an outrider to the chapter, and I shall carry it no further.

Babel, in short, has been grossly exaggerated by interested parties. But an attempt to iron out fundamental native growths right down to village level would be a disaster. The principle is simply that, as the circle widens and impinges

on others, so the linguistic basis should be widened; and that this widening process should be progressively continued downwards for the benefit of all who have the aptitude and desire to avail themselves of it.

CHAPTER TEN

THE MAN ON INDIA'S CONSCIENCE

1

If Coulson Kernahan is still alive, he must be well past his prime, he was in vogue as a barnstormer for conscription long before World War I, and wrote a string of mediocre novels in support of it. But to me his title to the remembrance of later generations rests on a phrase, which, considered as a book heading is cumbersome, yet shows a glimpse of essential truth. "Nothing quite like Kipling ever happened before."

A unique man in a unique country, for nothing quite like the Indian Empire ever happened either. And you can't understand Kipling without a line on India, whether he is writing about Strickland, Hobden, Bat Masquerier or the Madonna of the Trenches. India gave him the width, variety, flexibility and occasional crudity that make him supranational. Brought up in a constrict-

ted and relatively consistant country like England from birth to six and seventeen into maturity, he would, never have come in later years to slip so plausibly into the skin of America, Frenchman, rustic Briton or colonizing Roman, however widely he had travelled after hardening. His is the width, variety, flexibility and crudity of India.

Certain other characteristics are related to this by being (in the old sense of the term) Anglo-Indian. He was far too intelligent and irreverent to become a Blimp or a theo-nationalist—"Recessional" is a warning, not a vaunt; and what can one say of "The Islanders"?—but he could not shake off the assumption of racial superiority which made his bumptiousness so obtrusive, especially in the U.S.A. I suspect that his evil and un-Indian acquirement of technical details was a subconscious reinforcements of this assumption.

The conception of him as an arrogant die-hard is even in those qualities largely ignorant of his background.

The books and ballads which made his name contain some of the fiercest strictures and satires

on pretentious incompetence in high places (more than on the Paget level) that have ever been penned. Whether Private Mulvaney is, as many Irishmen assert, an unconvincing example of his race, he is still an under-dog, and one with a richly pungent tongue. I am fonder of Mulvaney than of any other Kipling character created before Torpenhow. Strickland is fascinating—I believe that Warburton is accepted as his prototype—but we do not get enough of him. And, little as I am qualified to judge the authenticity of an Irishman's or Yorkshireman's background, if Ortheris is a bogus Londoner I will eat this typescript from cover to cover.

While attributing so much to the young man's Indian background, one cannot afford to overlook the English upbringing of the adolescent. He came back to this country conditioned by the tyranny of a sadistic woman, and by the ups and downs of an exceptionally rough and tough public school. If you want to verify this, look it up in his "Something of Myself", published a year before he died. Nella Braddy's book is a

plagiarism of this from cover to cover, and her style makes me suspect her of having written it in the midst of a prattling nursery and dipped her pen in the children's golden syrup.

The brutality which has been fairly said to characterize much of his work is a natural outcome of this, amplified by his pride of blood. (He was not of even remotely mixed descent. That story is overdue for suppression.) And this is my chief defence for introducing a chapter on this hackneyed subject. I am recording my impressions, not only of my own return to India, but of what I observed of contemporary reactions to the Indian problem outside. Whereas some people misunderstand Kipling through ignorance of his Indian background, others do so through ignoring the other aspect, and accept his treatment of Indian subject-matter as typifying the outlook of men less soured in childhood. This is the subtler and more dangerous tendency of the two.

I am not trying to glorify standardized Anglo-Indian mentality (again, please observe, in the

old meaning of the adjective) at the expense of a cynical and acid satirist, I hate it beyond measure. But part of this also, in its most brutal and insensitive aspects, may be due to similar causes in men of hopelessly inferior calibre. A youth moulded by the legalized bullying of an English "public" school—and some are still rank-rotten with illegal forms as well—may find his ingrained resentment given perilously free outlet by the cult of racial superiority, even if he was not indoctrinated in his cradle.

5

A rather bitter twist has been given in recent years to Kipling's loosely-quoted phrase "the white man's burden." Some people may be surprised to learn that this was not applied to British rule in India, but to the American assumption of power in the Phillipines. Modern comparison suggests that they have learnt the art of both taking it up and laying it down a great deal more effectively than the British.

His communal prejudices were unfortunate

and not always consistent. Muslim against Hindu, with Sikh a varying quantity in between : Northern Hindu against Southern : Indian against Burmese, except where his erotic instinct overcame him : European, not necessarily against, but above the lot, though he could put savage comments on London life into a Muslim mouth : a contempt for Bengalis which he portrait in "Kim" does not wholly counterbalance : and a mixture of patronage as a dislike for Eurasians which cropped out at its worst in "Kidnapped", the most insufferable and vulgar story he ever wrote. There is an earlier story in the same book. "His Chance in Life", which treats the subject with more decency, but still with undisguised condescension.)

He has done more than anyone else to perpetuate the heresy of naturally "martial classes" or "races" which Churchill and Amery have exploited ad nauseam. He has proclaimed superficial globe-trotter's half-truths with just enough depth of local colour to carry conviction. He has alternated bafflingly between cast-iron ruling-class

standards of conduct and an unquiet subtlety shown in his sombre studies on the borderland of madness. The man who could write "In The Same Boat" and its satellite verse, "Helen All Alone", knew what he was talking about. This churlish tendency grew on him with the years: "The House Surgeon", "The Gardener", "The Wish House" and "Fairy-Kist" are spine-chilling-examples; but it was evident much earlier than his return to England. Witness stories as unlike in content as "At the Pit's Mouth", "The Dream of Duncan Parrenness" and "The Strange Ride of Morrowby Jukes". And this dark thread in his imaginative make-up was, I am certain, an almost purely Indian heritage.

He is on India's conscience, because even in his most topical and narrow studies he is immortal. The savage vulgarities of the late P. C. Wren will be forgotten in another decade. But Kipling lives on in this country. Coming back, I have been continually reminded of the extent to which the minds of Europeans are still saturated with him. What is worse, their depraved appetite picks monotonously on the very worst of him. So

you can't ignore him as a determining influence in the British decline and fall. One day, when independence and rudimentary social justice have come to stay, Indians will be able to read him—and his craftsmanship is unrivalled—with a detached and disinterested appreciation. But his evil has outlived and obscured his good.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
GOING.....GOING.....

1

Walking down South Parade on a daylight pass from the bughouse, I ran full tilt into Maureen, which is not her name. She and I had had a nodding acquaintance five years earlier, so we shook hands inanely and turned into Funnell's for a symposium. I have never been fond of that place since the night when I got out of window up among the telegraph wires, but the ground floor is tolerable enough. Besides, shortly after that contretemps, the joint had been ruled off limits to cadets, and I always make a habit of trying out an offlimits area as soon as it ceases to affect me.

"You" said Maureen coldly, "have no damn business to be still a lieutenant."

"Once," said the Mock Turtle, "I was a real turtle. Captain to you. Twice, in fact. The

third pip just failed to stick."

"What are you doing now?" she asked. I told her.

"If they do board you out, will you take your release in India?"

"Bet your sweet life. Were you going to offer me one of Nichols's passage inducements?" You can say things like that to Maureen. I don't recommend it in general. However, it was the floor she spat on and not me."

"Woman", I said, "in 1941 your mother would have had something to say about that custom. Do you do it often in the home?"

"In my home", she informed me more coldly than ever, "that name is not mentioned. Give me a drink to take the taste away."

"He does dole out *mist. expect.* pretty freely," I agreed. "Nor have I ever been able to visualise a girl on less than fifty rupees a month going to the pawnshop to bribe a buck private on more than fifty dollars a week."

"I make seventy," Maureen said dreamily. But I can find better uses for it than that."

"Blue it all on silk appurtenances" I advised her. "You might catch a tired business man at the dockside."

Her only reply was to start whistling "Red Sails in the Sunset", which must have been old when she hit double figures.

"There's a better song than yours" I pointed out.

"And that is?"

"Throw out the lifeline on a harmonium. If you still play the organ in St. Nemo's, you can give it them as a voluntary."

"Cynical swine", she said, and left me to hold the check.

2.

Tony, whose parents also christened him otherwise, did not spit, but used language which strongly needed drowning. Him I took to Basco's.

“Refugees” he addressed his third glass. “That’s what they call us now. You can thank Beverley for that, just when we were beginning to persuade Indians that the game was as dead as Queen Anne.”

“Well”, said I, “he woke the world up to it, blast him. All we can do now is prove him wrong in action.”

Tony looked at me suspiciously. “What say? You in this Andamans racket?”

“Am I, hell. It might work under the Soviet, whether we finally got the Andaman & Nicobar Constituent Republic or only the McCluskieganj Autonomous Area. But even that might go the way of Birobidjan. We’re the Jews of India in that way, chum: we have to circulate.”

“Suppose we did it in an independent country?”

“Then it would work out on the American principle; European Territory or Anglo-Indian State Reserve. In one generation we should be like the Red Indians of Parson Pete’s day.

“There’s some think Anglos poison, and others that call them scum,

“And night and day they are melting away, clean into Kingdom Come.....

“Don’t let’s turn ourselves into museum pieces.”

Tony glowered at me.” What did you mean about Jews?”

“Just this. The Jews of Russia were a race with a constantly precarious future. Long after the Communists took over, old prejudices lingered. Stalin didn’t want the taint of Jew-baiting in his commonwealth, and he didn’t want Russian Jews to adopt Zionism in despair, and become a fifth column of the British. So he gave them a republic of their own, in which the community, or the bulk of it, could settle down in homogeneity, like the Buriats, the Tajiks or the Volga Germans. But the intended beneficiaries simply didn’t want it. The diehards among them (equivalent to our own relief-ship-minded faction) still clung to Zionist ideals. They had their divisions of Sephardim and Ashkenazim; we have ours of

Protestant and Roman, British, French and Portuguese descent; but in both cases these are negligible compared with the difference outside."

"I get you" Tony said. "But the parallel isn't altogether exact."

"Damned few international parallels are. I consider this one near enough. We have our 'Zionists', and we have the other anti-Birobidjanin outlook too. That is the ideal of spreading throughout the federation, retaining our communal accident of dress and diet, which harm nobody, but claiming equal rights of citizenship anywhere in the Union. That's how I interpret Mr. Anthony's policy, and it's the best on one condition."

"I knew you'd get to reservations before long, Chris. You always loved hairsplitting and ultra-refining."

"I never loved the word 'safeguards', anyhow. But there is an elementary safeguard to which we have as much right as the dispersive Jews of Russia. When their attitude became plain, th

Soviet government accepted it, and them. It put down anti-Jewish as well as all other aggressively communal agitation with a rod of iron. So they lost nothing by their all-Union outlook. What we have to make sure of is that the Azad Hind government will do the same bare justice to us. And, like the Russian Jews, we have to earn it."

"Earn it how?"

"By co-operating from the earliest with the forces that will have the final decision. Jews who fought against the Bolsheviks were liquidated, not as Jews but as reactionaries. Those of us who fight against Congress and its allies will be liquidated, not as Anglo-Indians or Europeans, but as enemies of the Union. Those who trust and aid the nationalist parties will have the right to expect fair citizenship. I firmly believe that they will get it."

"In what outstanding way can we help them?"

"First and foremost, against Pakistan. If we condone that tendency no nationalist will ever forgive us. If Jinnah is not removed after the

achivement of independence, he will have to make some show of fight or be shown up as a windbag and a laughing-stock. His conceit is too great for that. And we must go into the fight on a level. Government circles deprecate the maintenance of 'communal private armies.' What the devil is the A.F. (I). but a ruling-caste private army manned by their European and Anglo-Indian dupes? In the I. T. F. and O.T.C.s, all communities mix—except ours. The first thing to do is for those inside and outside the A.F.(I). to boycott it forthwith, and agitate for admission to forces of the I.T.F. type on an equal footing with all the rest."

"I believe you"he said, after a minute or two, during which I had slaked my creaking throat. "Is that all you can suggest?"

"That was no more than Alpha. Beta is economic, and Gamma linguistic. The Anglo-Indian class has a predominantly administrative and industrial back-ground. Revenue, education and commercial clerking come under the first head;

railways, canals and telegraphs in the second. Once we can free such of those lines as at present carry the taint of 'reservation' and subservience to the Satanic, there will be no reason why we should be forced out of them. Theoretically, any comrade should be adaptable to any job if taken in hand early enough, but in practice I don't see why a class which has a long tradition of conscientious service in a few specilized lines should be suspended to abandon them.

"And the question of pay?"

"Is bound up with that of living wages for all classes and all occupations. We don't want to see Anglo-Indian salaries go down to the level of Indian contemporary ones in general, but to see the latter brought up to the high level all round, and after that both improving together."

Tony grunted. "There'll be a fight for that and no mistake."

"Muck in, then, and help with it. It's a mercy that you understand the magnitude of the problem."

"Fair enough. What about language?"

"It's not as crying a problem now as it used to be. You don't get so many country boys and girls affecting to despise the vernaculars, and only learn as much kitchen-Urdu or Gnjirati or Tamil as will scrape them through their domestic and business dealings. You, I know, can speak two Southern languages fluently as well as Hindustani. Young Maureen, whom I met just up the road, has been bilingual in English and Hindustani from her cradle. But English remains our mother-tongue, and once it ceases to be the hallmark of a domineering foreign raj, we shall have as much right to retain it as any other linguistic group to keep theirs. Besides, only pathological purists demand the elimination of English as a runner-up to Hindustani. What language do they expect Indian diplomats to use in America?" Provided we keep the two in their right proportion, we shall remain entitled to the use of one as a mother tongue, just as the U. P. population has the advantage of already having Hindustani for its own."

I left Tony soon, because there was the four o'clock bus to catch and Jalahalli to crawl back to. He seemed a little more cheerful, and I think this may have been due more to my argument than to the beer, which is normally a melancholic tippie.

Two days later I paid a deliberate visit to an aged acquaintance whom I may call Grandfather Blowhard. He was sixty-seven, a relic of the good old buck-passing days when it was accepted as natural law that the rootless European should look down on the domiciled, the "pure" domiciled on the Eurasian, and he with most vehemence on All The Rest. You can't hope for much reorientation there.

"At twenty-one, many their fortunes seek,
But at three-score it is too late a week."

Grandfather lived in one of the northern towns with his youngest daughter Inez, twenty-nine; her husband, David, four years older; and a quartet of children from three to ten, for whom I cannot be bothered to invent bogus names.

He was not vested with the awful majesty of a French grandmother ; in fact David and Inez only suffered his crotchety and lugubrious presence because he amused the young. That was the one attractive thing about him ; he may have had many others ; and just outgrown them.

Theirs was a railway background on both sides. The old man had risen in his day to be chief stationmaster at a sizeable junction on the G. I. P. David's father had been employed by the North-Western, one of a moribund breed of well-paid engine-drivers. Railway families tend to conservatism : witness even to this day the garrison who snipe at Messrs. Anthony, Shea and Gibbon from the battlements of Moghalpura. David, however, had exploited an aptitude for physics and mathematics, studied in England on a London University scholarship ; and became a gazetted canal engineer. He did not talk about Home with a capital H as did the old man, who might in his lifetime have got as near to it as Karachi or Quetta.

I had a late pass that day, and stayed to

supper. Grandpa had clearly been finding his customary audience a little restive of late, and leapt at the chance to lecture a fresh victim, and a younger one at that, on the follies and disorders of the times. It was all rather like Edgar Snow's conversation with the cockney restaurant manager, which deserves to go down in literature with those of Borrow and Jack Slingsby, or Jonathan Wild and the chaplain of Newgate. But old Blowhard's colloquy, with the congregation dutifully saying amen at the major pauses, outran the classical ones in point of length, and Snow's little gem in point of vehemence.

Money was the mainspring of his grievance. Before the American invasion, he told me, a family could live in Cleveland or Fraser or Richards Town at an all over daily expenditure of one-eight per head. This I had heard before. He asserted that this had been quintupled in the last four or five years. David got his head snapped off for venturing to suggest quadrupled as a milder estimate. It would have been useless to point out that the prices even of ration-

ed, and far more of unrationed consumer goods had rocketed in every country involved, and that neither wages or dearness allowance had kept pace with them in India, which was the fault neither of the American visitors nor of the Indian academic proletariat. He suggested the word-pictures we read in past and present U.S. literature of a veteran Ku Kluxer denouncing the extortions and pretensions of "brash, uppity niggers," and condemning the earnest New Englanders who fomented them. I envied Inez, who got away at coffee time on the pretext of hearing her ewe lamb bleating. But, as a corrective to my over-sanguine reactions to Tony and Maureen, the sederunt had its merits.

That night I got into a furious wrangle with one or two British service fellow-patients over my marprelate view of Mr. Churchill, and said things about the English in general which might have come from Subhas Bose or Sean Russell. It created an unfounded suspicion of drunkenness,

and I got no more passes that week. Afterwards I had other worries connected with the town which are immaterial. But sceptical Maureen, suspicious Tony, resigned David and shipwrecked Grandfather have haunted me ever since.

So far as I can judge, the tide of co-operation is about three-quarters flood. It may be more, if you rule out the grand-paternal generation as an effective influence ; but against this must be set the younger folks' respect and consideration for their elders, which in this community is traditionally strong. Anglo-Indian family life before this last war was far more of a reality than that of Great Britain. I imagine that these ties will also be considerably loosened in future, but should not care to see the process go too far.

The distinction between Anglo-Indian and European cannot hope to survive independence for long. Any "domiciled European" who has been so from birth is already an Anglo-Indian in the eyes of the constitution-makers. Any one subsequently settled who resolves to stay on will find his children merging or sterile, as Anglo-

Indian fertility is the higher of the two. Any European with roots elsewhere will be not a citizen, but a metoecos.

This has been a temperate chapter, and I have kept the emetic Nichols out of it as far as possible. He cannot be left out of any Anglo-Indian study just now. He has enraged and outraged a whole community in a manner unequalled since Dickens wrote the American scenes of "Martin Chuzzlewit." Perhaps he has done it a long-term service; but I think that the *zeitgeist* was there long before him.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN !

I

Eleven chapters have been inflicted on the common reader. A thirteenth will be soon. Meanwhile the reader can take a breath. This is written for one man alone. I don't know his surname; he may know mine. Neither of us has seen the other's face.

You, Skipper, who beat me to my dream-girl, how does the set-up strike you ? Do you look back on the din of fiends through which you steered her in Calcutta, and consign a land of such material to perdition? Or do you see yourself as a two-star general in World War III, leading task forces over Shangri-La to keep the Russians out? Don't do either if you can help it. The former is killing a conscience, and the latter would be killing a world. I shall write and bind her by triple oaths to restrain you.

India and America are as intimately connected as America and China. If your people don't weigh in with an alliance, the Soviets will. That might be the solution after all. Good neighbours can't always help us clean house in the way that paying guests could. Which of the two prospective tenants India would get on best with is a debatable point. She has had her pocket picked by the present one several times too often.

There are men alive, by the grace of human tolerance, who are chortling with *schadenfreude* over your folks' experiences in India. "One good thing about the war" they say, omitting reference to their own pockets, "it's disillusioned the Americans about India, and disillusioned India about the Americans."

I have heard plenty of tales in support of this. You came here from a land where taxi-drivers and shoeshine boys get something like a living wage. You had money to spend, and so you paid their opposite numbers over here what seemed to you simply just. And-until they reaped the result, British officers lay back and thought, how green

was my ally. (Relax: I know where that crack started, and I've been fighting that application of it ever since.)

Did you yourself see much west of Calcutta? I hope so, for Calcutta isn't India. Working there is like working in a greenhouse with a cesspit under your window, and paying ceilingless amenity prices for both. From what has gone before in this chain of grouches, you may say "Show me a better." Well, Karachi is drier, Delhi slightly cleaner, Simla a better laugh, Bangalore cheaper, the Punjab cities less like him, while in Madras they speak English and use handkerchiefs. I never yet found an Indian city that hadn't at least one redeeming feature. Of course, you took the only Calcutta one away, and I don't blame you.

Upton Sinclair set you all to cleaning up your jungles, or the features of them affecting the nation's belly, while John L. Lewis has since been hacking at the kind which affect its heart. Maybe you don't like Lewis or Socialism. One day I'll get to the States and see what rugged individualism has done there. You have already seen

something of what it has done in this country. Calcutta, here again, is the traditional forcing-bed of corruption. There, as Hickey mentions is the most matter-of-fact tone, "a man named Sharif had acquired a large fortune" (or it may only have been "handsome competence") "in the situation of an extra deputy assistant clerk in the Calcutta Treasury." The rugged individualists of this region are Bata's and the Maharaja of Burdwan. In Bombay they are Birla's, and I know that Birla pays lip-service to the Congress. There are other Congressmen who did not fatten on British contracts after August '42, and who are rather anxious to fatten on Birla.

In Hyderabad and Jammu-Kashmir, they are first and foremost the princes, then to a more circumscribed extent their descending hierarchy. "When the officer's done lushing, the private may clean the pot" is a basic States' maxim. Whether a Kashmiri Muslim cultivator skinned by his Hindu ruler's publicans gets any kick out of the thought that various Deccani Hindus are being similarly fleeced by a potentate of the Faithful,

I much misdoubt. In the state of communal jealousy and mutual deficiency of public spirit to which Anglo-Princely domination has macerated the agricultural mind, it isn't quite impossible. But they both continue to be skinned. Both these states are show pieces for the demonstrators of communal disharmony; nothing will convince them that popular unrest is the upsurge of sweated labourers who happen to be Hindu (or Muslim) against a foul form of trust whose beneficiaries happen to be Muslim (or Hindu). If the paramount power which sold Kashmir for a song to Gulab Singh as the equivalent of thirty pieces had cared a snap of the fingers for Kashmiri Muslim sentiment, it would have replaced his objectionable dynasty by a more endearing one long ago. If it had felt any twinge about the religious sensibilities of kisans in the Nizam's smashed-and-grabbed Dominions, it would have sent the family packing to market their crores of idle bullion where they could, and put in one of the deposed Mahratta scions of whom in those days the supply was never known to fail. Either course might have created

a communally over-conscious island, but it would have stripped the bogus devotional veil off conflicts which are simply those of man against brute.

You may look on trade unions and co-operatives as an esurient pack who make headway by taking an inch and then asking an ell. It will be a long time before they run any risk of that here. From the Tolpuddle Martyrs to the Meerut "Conspiracy" Martyrs was a century. And the Meerut objects were the more modest of the two.

Are you getting tired, Skip? Am I flogging a dead horse, and have you come to all these conclusions long ago? May be you have ; may be I'm a fool to imagine that anyone without an axe to grind would be hoodwinked for a week by Churchillite fustian and Ameryite evasions. Those two patriarchs remind me of the Pope as seen through the eyes of an Orangeman I knew in Italy. "He may be a mighty big man, and a mighty learned man. I don't say anything

against his morals. All I can tell you is that he's got a damned bad name in Portadown." Besides the distinction of being the only "damned" anecdote that can't by any stretch be fathered on the Duke of Wellington, that has a moral for those who study the Pope from the angle of Rome to the exclusion of Portadown, and those who paint Churchill from behind the rose-coloured glasses of Britain, and never the jaundice-yellow ones of Ireland, Greece or India.

You have had a chance to look through the last-named pair. Power politics apart, do you seriously think that Russian, American, or any but South African rule could possibly look yellower?

II

This was to have been a short chapter, but I still owe you and myself a word of personal explanation.

You have probably been thinking that an American who spread himself over thirteen

chapters in panning U. S. administration of the Philippines would deserve no sympathy from his addressee in England. You are more likely to sympathize with the home American desire to tar and feather him; and you would expect the English to understand your resentment.

Well, the English readers of this, if it ever goes to print, may have their own views about tarring and feathering me. Or they may just ignore me in the dignified spirit of Dr. Jowett. "You mustn't think too hardly of us, Master," "We don't think of you at all." Either way, they may imagine that they have a right to your applause.

My objection to this is threefold. Firstly, the top-ranking British governing class in India is leagues removed from the working and voting class of Great Britain. There has been one brilliant exception—Reading. Even his discreet and limited outlook on the future of Indian nationalism was too feeble and open to new

ideas for the taste of such as Lloyd and O'Dwyer.

Secondly, nothing has ever given me the least reason to suspect that a similar divorce of sympathies and *Weltanschauung* exists between the United States public, industrial, agricultural, and the senior administrators in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Guam or elsewhere.

Thirdly, the boss class are not my own people.

My folk on the father's side were small farmers in Soetland until the fifth generation before mine. Then came five in succession, each of whom branched out on his own and rose on his own: a preacher, a carpenter, a lawyer, an I. C. S. magistrate and a schoolmaster. I got a soft start in the army at government expense. Whether I rise, wobble or sink at the expense of the reading public is nobody else's funeral.

Do you remember how in June 1942 one Sir John Wardlaw-Milne moved a vote of no-confidence in the British Cabinet as a result of the rout in Libya? Those of us who were out there had various views, mostly ill-informed, on the capa-

bilities of existing division, corps and army commanders in the field. Some in reposed little confidence in the C.-i.-C. himself. Wardlaw-Milne's brainwave was to replace General Auchinleck in supreme command by H. R. H. the Duke of Gloucester, who, I believe, at that time held a decorative job in the grade of lieutenant-colonel. Private Browndoff, Sergeant Oldsweat and Second Lieutenant Pipsqueak thought the proposal stank. I was number three. So were most of my contemporaries. A few of those who were old enough voted the Conservative ticket before 1940. They won't be that easily fooled again.

The mob has tired of loving a lord, but a Royal Duke still has a certain hedge of dignity. I don't know what qualifications the late Duke of Kent had, apart from having married into the best-hated royal family in Europe, for governing New South Wales. (Did you ever read Belloc's "Lord Lundy"?). Windsor put up a better showing in the Bahamas; but then Windsor's trouble was that he had looked hard at the depressed class, and cared for it. That is the real reason why he became

Windsor at all.

There are too many titles in British India, and too much drapery. Beverly opines that the Nizam of Hyderabad would feel affronted by their absence. I think a shock of that kind might do H. E. H. all the good in the world. In the days of Thackeray all this pimpery-pompery was secure from caricature in his "Book of Snobs" because it still fitted in with the times. Disraeli petrified it, with supple understanding of his Titania's suppressed desires. Now it lingers on, entombing viceroy after viceroy in a prison unsullied by sympathy, sincerity or sorrow, Linlithgow looked out of the petrified forest, saw glimpses of misery, despair and strife; his remedy—the British panacea—was August the Ninth, and a flood of defensive lies by his Charlie Mac Carthy, Tottenham.

Not much more for you to wade through, my friend. I'm not setting out solutions, but just asking you to keep the picture in mind. Whether it inspires you with technological missionary zeal; whether you feel that the Soviet would make a

better job of it; whether you hold to a belief in India's ability to stand unsupported and uninvaded by either Power; all the decisions will be yours. I only want you to care. Whatever horrors you saw in Calcutta, don't let them brand this country as beneath your contempt. It isn't. The U.S.A. would not have been in 1783 or 1865. And a country whose leader, Nehru, may have to play Washington and Lincoln in one is worth your contemplation and your pity today.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE DEATHBED KICK

I.

Good morning, everybody, I hope you enjoyed your breather.

This, after the good ham lines of the last chapter, may seem to you a grievous and amateurish error in construction. It is deliberate. I do not aim to end on a note of individual comradeship, but of red national hate.

Four-course dinners have been out of my line for a long time. Five-course ones were never in it. But I hold certain dietetic heresies. One of which is that the highest-flavoured dish should always be the climax. If you want ice-cream to remove the taste of this dish, you won't get it. Go and clean your teeth instead; the carrion reek of the joint will take a lot of brushing away.

This is the story of a gesture that was never

made. And it is a parable of the Big Three. The Russians could not have afforded to make it. The Americans could have, and would have. The British could have, and didn't.

That gesture would have been a complete, unconditional amnesty for every member of the Azad Hind Government and its instrument, the Indian National Army.

Before going any further, let me emphasise for the last time that I am not in any connection a philo-fascist. I have mocked repeatedly at Boseite vapourings about a synthesis of Fascism and Communism. Cocktail of sump oil and spring water : town-merger of Singapore and Hammerfest! Socialism, including Communism, I look on as a course of surgery, Fascism as a gangrenous murrain.

Why then should I take up cudgels on behalf of the allies of Japan ?

Because the rule of thumb for gauging quislings does not apply to India—like the Atlantic Charter.

Because the Burmese rebels, who started by worse pogroms of Indians than anything alleged against the I.N.A., ratted on their Japanese allies at the eleventh hour, and were rewarded, while the I. N. A. having chosen the "wrong,, side, stuck to it, and were victimized for their consistency. Because the military caste which condoned or justified the slaughter of August 1942 is no more fit to sit in judgement of cases of so-called "gross brutality" than a pack of diseased whores to stone a woman caught in her first fornication. Because the events of that month alone were sufficient to absolve any Indian rank from his oath, whether in Japanese hands or out of them. And because, above all, I can find no grain of respect for a regime which, knowing itself doomed, makes the puerile gesture of handing out blows and kicks from its deathbed.

The I.N.A. shot Indian members of their circle for various acts : rape, theft, insubordination, attempted desertion and incitement to fellow-candidates to boycott it. Most existing armies would have done the same. There are more than

a few V.C.O's and I. O. R's whom I have reason to consider would be no loss to the main body by death, and no burden on its conscience by flogging. I.N.A. activities of this type were no worse than the use of legalised torture by flogging in Great Britain.

I do not believe in making heroes of them. Some may be of use in a social-revolutionary struggle from conviction ; other simply as torches and guns for hire. The Yugoslav partisans have found no risk in employing a limited number of ex-Ustachi. The Russians have experimented boldly with Arrow Cross and Iron Guard veterans. In the civil wars they employed ex-Tsarist officers, with political commissars to keep them in order. When we have a reliable people's army, 'trained in socialist theory' we shall be able to scrap the commissar system as they did. For this reason I am devoutly glad that the C. P. in India joined hands with Congress in the recent agitation.

Those I.N.A. men who choose, in the coming clash, to further Fascist and reactionary ends will be dealt with by the Indian people. That is a

future potentiality with which India's present alien war lords have no business at all.

II

Clemency !

Oh, you gang of Humpty-Dumpties !

"When I say a word, it means what I want it to mean.....The question is, which is to be master." Well, the brass hats are going to be masters as long as they damned well can ; and if clemency means what they what it to mean, heaven preserve me and all other detrimentals from their severity.

There are four minimum conditionous which an interim or any other kind of indigenous government should make it their first job to fulfil :—

One : Instant release of all men serving sentences under the late trials, and compensation out of Britain's army estimates in proportion to the length of sentence awarded, whether served in full or not. This would, of course, include compensation to any men whose sentences expired be-

fore the order of release.

Two : Expungement of all verdicts and sentences passed on I.N.A. men from the court or other records, and public burning of all available copies of the court-martial proceedings.

Three: Dismissal of the C.-in-C. responsible for the trials, and replacement by an American untainted by New Delhi and its works. A clean British service general would be better than the present, but the risk of getting an admiral Godley type is too great.

Four : Reinduction into the regular army of as many, all ranks, who opted for it at their substantive I, N. A. rank.

Those are the opinions of a convinced socialist and anti-fascist, which I will defend to the face of any Britisher or American alive.

III

The proposals I have outlined above may affront even Congressmen by their thoroughness. But

they are what the ruling military caste has asked for. They would rub the snout of that caste well in the mire where it belongs, and close the most nauseous chapter in its history since Jallianwala.

I am deeply sorry for B.O.R.s. in this country nowadays. They are, as Kipling says, prisoners at large to begin with. They are barred from friendship with Indians by a uniform which stinks. And among the domiciled class who speak the same language, traces of 'Tommy this and Tommy that, and turn him out, the brute' are not entirely obsolete.

Private Brownedoff, even in peacetime, isn't a brute except when officers and magistrates drive him to it. He sometimes takes a drop too much, and his adjectives are monotonous. In this he is no worse than the "Gentleman Cadets" who came out here to supplant plebeian "Officer Cadets" enrolled in the country; drank Bangalore, Kakul, Mhow and Belgaum dry, and, before G. I.s were heard of, initiated what rot did actually set in among a minority of domiciled girls and women.

The brutes are all on top. Now their cradle is beginning to rock.

Always the army seeks a means to meddle in politics when liberation is on the carpet. Early in the last decade, there was a wide release of political prisoners. Did the Garhwali mutineers of Peshawar get off? And what, if not craven paltering before army indignation, prevented the Chittagong Armoury Raid prisoners from freedom at the same time?

The generals are a century behind the civilians. The civilians are a century behind the politicians. Too often the politicians are almost as far behind the people. But the military high-ups take the palm : Sir Alfred Knox and the late Sir Bernard James are their true mouthpiece. In a free India, they will have no more scope than plague-rats in a sanitarium. And biting like rats they go down.

108-12 P. A

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