

# Behar Herald

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## That Unity Bogey

By Hamdi Bey

IN the name of unity, the British Government has been trying to force totalitarianism on India. The situation in the country for over two months has been highly unsatisfactory. Several of us had so far refrained from commenting on the situation because we thought that neither of the two parties—the British Government and the Congress—could be supported in the action they had taken. Both these parties had at the same time been guilty of taking steps which have been responsible for a serious undermining of the ability of the country to defend itself against foreign aggression. To use a much used and abused phrase, both the Government the Congress *stabbed in the back* the soldiers defending India.

The Congress did so by taking steps which they could not have conscientiously taken if they had given a moment's thought to the dangers that threaten the country. The Government's betrayal of the defence of India was older in point of time. They were guilty of having completely ignored the people's wish to be associated in the defence of the country, and managed the politics of the country in such a masterly fashion that even in the fourth year when a Japanese invasion seems imminent there is no internal unity in the country, the major political parties have been forced to keep away even from a consultative body like the National Defence Council, and a large number of people became unwilling instruments of saboteurs. If in spite of Government publicity campaigns thousands of people over a large part of the country are so careless of the sufferings that a Japanese regime may bring to them, then surely the present administration has not much to commend itself.

This popular apathy towards the turmoil of a foreign invasion is a very ominous evidence about the failure of the present administration. Changes

much more comprehensive than the tinkering with the Viceroy's Council that have been done so far, are a necessity to-day, and any person or organisation that opposes the transformation of the administration into an effective means of defence of the country, not only deserves severest condemnation, but the punishments that are provided by the Defence of India Rules. Unfortunately in this country those who should be punished by such rules are beyond the compass of these Rules, and the people are being denied the right to a defence which they deserve.

Presently, the greatest number of Indians are not concerned with independence. Their preoccupation is defence. That is a point that has been missed completely by Mr. Amery and Mr. Churchill, and even by a leftist like Sir Stafford Cripps. The inability of Mr. Amery and Mr. Churchill and their agents in this country to appreciate this can be understood. Even the British Home Guard met the opposition of such people in the year 1940, when Britain was in a threatened position similar to what India is in to-day. But one expected differently from Sir Stafford Cripps; his Russian experience and his political associations in England indicated that he would appreciate and understand the anxiety of the Indian people about their own defence.

If Cripps had come to India with a scheme for the defence of the country his mission would have been a success. Instead of taking into consideration the Indian anxiety about the defence of the country, he solely confined his efforts towards Indian aspirations for independence.

That is a form of political myopia typical of most Englishmen today. Political aspirations might have been the governing factor in the India of the thirties but just at present the anxiety

about defence is overwhelmingly more powerful than dreams of independence.

Few Englishmen realise this. Sir Stafford never did and his approach to India was insulting in the extreme. Instead of coming to India and shake hands with a country waiting to enlist as an ally of the United Nations, he came to treat with India as if it was a rebellious country. And just think what an error it is to treat an ally as a rebel, and what a reaction such a treatment would create.

Yet till to-day the extremely guillible Mr. Amery goes on repeating silly dreams about India's future, and not betraying the slightest concern about the present and the immediate future.

The real difference between the British and the Indian viewpoint today is that while Britain is apprehensive of a rebellious India going over to the enemy, India is apprehensive of her defences being mismanaged by people who have no stake in the land and she having to bear the brunt of an invasion. And India is not unnecessarily apprehensive. She has before her the example of what happened in Malaya and Burma. The British-sponsored Governments in those countries had lacked a base and thereby the stake of self-existence in those countries and had withdrawn. The people were left to the mercy of the invaders. I am sure the most hair-brained of the comic British propagandists would not suggest that the Malayans and Burmans

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**KAJAL-KALI**

**Behar Herald**

Patna

Tuesday, October 20, 1942

**"WHAT THEY FOUGHT  
EACH OTHER FOR"**

Throughout World War II, secret fears have been gnawing at the minds of the Democracies. It is not primarily the military strength of the Axis that the Democracies are afraid of—it is the moral strength. It is not their own resources or ultimate war potential that the Democracies doubt—it is the ability of democracy to survive as a political system. What democracy really fears is that Nazism and Communism have got something it has not got; that the latter are young but democracy is old; that they are the future and democracy is the past. This concealed fear secretly saps democratic morale. This doubt also serves to reinforce other allied doubts—bewilderment at the mixed character of World War II which is a national war here, a social revolution there, a colonial revolt elsewhere; bewilderment at the failure of the religious and moral standards by which nations have so long lived; bewilderment at the light-heartedness with which the masses seem ready to barter their hard-won political freedom for economic security.

The democratic sense of moral guilt long ante-dates Hitler and his fifth columns. For the last hundred years, many of the world's great books have been despairing indictments of contemporary civilisation,—diagnoses of its doom. Series of secular seers warned civilized men that civilization was dying of social septicemia. In Norway, Ibsen lashed modern society in a series of dramas symbolic of the cold rigour of his rage. In Russia, Tolstoy, having des-

cribed the society he repudiated, disavowed his own writings as a symptom of that society. In England, Tennyson was obsessed all his life by the disintegration of 19th century civilization, which he dressed up for poetic purposes in the garb of the Arthurian legend. Though he tried to trust the larger hope, he could never quite shut his eyes to visions of a startling realism:

"The fortress crashes from  
on high,  
The brute earth lightens to  
the sky,  
And the great Aeon sinks  
in blood."

Bernard Shaw, despairing of any serious communications with his age, tried clowning to convey his belief that 20th century man must change or nature would supersede him as she had the dinosaurs.

Thomas Hardy, unable to believe that the world in which he found himself could have been created by a conscious Power, saw evidences of "the coming universal wish not to live". Such is the cultural background of modern man's moral fears.

The world looked superficially healthy in the first decade of this century. Those of us who are old enough remember those days of peace, security, order and stability when "a dollar was worth five francs and nobody thought that it could be worth anything else until the Day of Judgment". That Day arrived with the dawn of Tuesday, August 4th, 1914, though none of its victims recognized it as such. They failed to realize that the Russian revolution was an integral part of World War I—the first serious lesion in the civilized social body. The second was the rise of Fascism. We are just beginning to realise that World War II is really a continuation of World War I.

To-day, men all over the world are fighting a war for survival as well as for a social revolution. World War II is a multi-dimensional crisis,—it includes conflicts in which nations are fighting one another as also conflicts which are ideological, political, social and economic. These latter transcend political boundaries, for no nation, including the Axis Powers, is free of them. They

overlap purely national allegiances and disrupt the national fronts.

In the past, the democracies used to have pendulum movements from Right to Left and from Left to Right. A period of consolidation and reaction followed a period of social reform. This cyclical behaviour ensured the stability of democratic institutions during the period when only a few extremist groups challenged the advantages of democracy over any other form of Government. But this easy and regular pulsation of democratic organisms has been violently disturbed ever since the last war. The democratic pendulum became erratic; whenever it went to the Left, the spectre of Communism reared its head. Whenever it swung to the Right, the alarm of Fascism was patent.

Three forces, Nationalism, Collectivism and Pacifism, are acting to-day on all nations and individuals. Collectivism is the tendency to integrate the individuals into the complex organisation of modern industrial society in such a manner as to obtain more efficiency from him and to ensure him more security. The supreme example of combined nationalism and collectivism is Nazism. We cannot deny that this system works. It has in fact worked so well that it has enabled Hitler, starting from scratch, to build up in seven years a collectivist society so efficient that none of the other systems opposed to it, even possessing infinitely larger resources, has been able to compete with it as yet. The most important question for democratic nations to-day is: Will they be able to develop an economic society as efficient as the Nazi collectivist war machine without renouncing the fundamental principles of democracy? Democratic society has always had to struggle to solve the contradiction between its two major objectives: technological efficiency (which implies a strong centralized organisation, tending towards collectivism) and the liberties of the individual. There are two classic solutions of the conflict: (1) the capitalist solution preserving free enterprise in spite of economic inequalities; (2) the socialist solution, which lays stress on economic

justice.

Whether Capitalism will disappear in the present conflict or whether it will undergo transformation and adapt itself to the changed world, time alone can show.

Simple people think that the war is being fought to crush the Germans and kill Hitler. But Fascism is not bounded by the Rhine to the west and the Vistula to the east. It rose to power in that geographical area because the conditions were propitious and the most powerful and respected forces of the Right in every country in Europe (not excluding Great Britain) helped, aided, abetted, supported, admired and appeased Fascism in Germany. Another childish view is to imagine that if Germany, Japan and Italy were defeated, we shall all be happy and virtuous ever after. Nations have always been, and will always be, aggressive when they think it will pay them to be so. If the present villains of the piece were out of the way, new villains will arise so long as human nature remains the same.

**COLLECTIVE FINES**

Collective fines have been imposed and are being gradually realised from people all over the country. Most people would not have understood the meaning of the expression in 1939, but news reports from France and other occupied countries in Europe, for the last 3 years, have familiarised us with its implications.

The arguments that can be adduced in support of collective fines are not difficult to grasp: Violent mobs have done damage to public property and money is needed for repair or replacement. It should not be paid out of public funds. The people of the locality where disturbances or acts of sabotage on a wide scale have taken place should be made to pay for the damage done.

All this is quite clear and unassailable, but only superficially. If we examine the question a little more deeply we will find it to be not so simple as expressed in the few lines above.

What the Germans have done in their military occupa-

tion of an enemy country cannot be repeated in a country in which the people live under their own system of Government and are administered by civil laws. If a section (a very small section really, as we know and as has been repeated on many occasions by the highest authorities) of the people suddenly start indulging in criminal acts, the ordinary laws of the land, reinforced by the special war time measures like the Defence of India Rules are sufficient to deal with them. Collective fine is a complete denial of the excellent principle of English law that a person should be presumed to be innocent till he is proved to be guilty; that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape punishment than that one innocent person should suffer. Collective fines are bad in principle as they are bound to be levied on men, the majority of whom are innocent. It is also a fact that the so called 'haves', the people with vested interests and material stakes in the country are not likely to be disturbers of peace as they would be the first to suffer. The late disturbances were very largely caused by people who had very little to lose. In Patna, most citizens would testify from personal knowledge that the unemployed rickshaw-pullers did most of the damage. These people had no inconvenience to fear of in cutting telegraph and telephone wires. The actual wrong-doers all disappeared from the city on the 14th August, and are quite immune from any collective fine that may be levied on the citizens of Patna. The fine will have to be paid by perfectly innocent citizens, 95% of whom had nothing to do with the destructive activities. And by an irony of fate, the heaviest share of the fine will have to be borne by the well-to-do or fairly-well-off section, who, on psychological and material grounds, are averse to any disturbance of peace. If the collective fine affected a large number of wrong-doers and a small number of innocent persons, there would not have been any strong objection to it. But the fact is just the reverse. Another argument in favour of the collective fines is that the people of a locality where large disturbances have

taken place have been in sympathy with the law-breakers, or at any rate they did not prevent the mob from carrying out its destructive activities. This argument again is not so sound as it appears at first sight. We know, and we are sure the authorities also know, that in many cases, if not all, the disturbances were caused by outsiders who were careful enough not to do any damage in their own locality for fear of consequences. It has been officially admitted that disturbances in some of the eastern parts of the U. P. were caused by people from Bihar, the the recent disturbances in Manbhum were due to people from the adjoining districts of Bankura and Midnapur in Bengal. The damages in a particular quarter of Patna may not be due to the inhabitants of that locality but people from some other part of the town. In many cases again, private property has been destroyed or looted. The presumption here also is that the hooligans concerned were not of local origin.

As regards the view that the people should be punished because they did not try to stop mob violence, we have pointed out before in these columns that the blame should be shared equally by all, Government officials, police, Mahomedans, depressed classes, Christians and Hindus alike. Unarmed people cannot be expected to have the courage to face mob-fury that even well-trained and fully armed police and soldiers are finding hard to stop without repeated firing and even have to resort to the use of tear-gas bombs or machine-gunning from the air. To hold people to blame for not being able to do better than the police or soldiers is not fair. We have not been told anything of the principle on which the collective fines are being imposed; whether these are merely recuperative, or punitive as well. The heavy nature of the fine imposed on Patna leads one to think that the fine is many times more than the actual damage caused.

One of the strongest objections to collective fines as they are being imposed to-day is not only that the bulk of such fines is being realised from innocent

people, but that no Government can afford to alienate the sympathies of those who are, and have been, on the side of law and order by indiscriminate penalisation of the general population.

## Notes & Comments

### A Prophecy Fulfilled

According to the *Hindu* of Madras, Mr. P. S. Rajan, "a research student in astrology and allied sciences" has come to the conclusion that on Oct. 10, five planets, viz, sun, moon, mars, mercury and venus are coming for a palaver at Virgo,—result—"an earthquake is certain on that date".

The fact that Mr. Rajan considers the sun and the moon as planets is enough to show his scientific eminence. Such a learned man can never be wrong; Japan alone has 1000 earthquakes in the year,—an average of 2.73972...earthquakes per day.

One wonders what the "allied sciences" are in which Mr. Rajan is researching. They are probably alchemy, palmistry, phrenology, black magic and divination by tea leaves.

### The Back Door Front

The Washington message of 3rd October that American troops have occupied positions in the Andreanos group of the

Aleutians without Japanese opposition means that the latter are slowly but surely being ousted from their foothold in the broken bridge between Asia and America. From east (Alaska) to west (Siberia) the islands of the Aleutian chain in serial order are: Unalaska, on which is situated Dutch Harbour, bombed by the Japanese; Andreanovski Islands (Reuter evidently does not like the Russian name but has called these, Andreanos Islands in the cabled report); Kyska, Agattu and Attu. Of these, Unalaska is the American base, Attu and Agattu have been evacuated by the Japanese, Andreanovski have been occupied by the Americans in the latest message; only Kyska (newspapers spell it as Kiska) remains under Japanese occupation, and that also not for long.

The Aleutians have a weird, Wagnerian landscape; the fog lifts only once in the day for a short time, volcanoes puff huge smoke rings; fog-chilled winds howl over grassy moors. It is difficult to imagine a more desolate place on earth.

### A Suggestion

New Indian Standard Time is a rather cumbersome expression to indicate the recent horological innovation. It is much more convenient to call it by its proper and correct name,—Moul-

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mein time. The time that we now observe is really the local time of the eastern part of Burma, of  $97\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  East Longitude.

### All So Puzzling

A Reuter message (Oct. 3) from New York is rather confusing: "The dinner held in New York to-night (Friday, Oct 2) to celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's birth-day turned out to be also the wedding breakfast of Miss Holmeshall who married Dr. Haridas Mazumdar earlier in the day."

Are we to understand that the guests were invited by Dr. Mazumdar on the occasion of Mr. Gandhi's birthday, but he (Dr. Mazumdar) accidentally and in a fit of absent-mindedness happened to get married that morning and so the wedding feast was telescoped into the birth-day anniversary dinner?

Even if our assumption be correct, we are unable to understand how a dinner at night could become a breakfast, unless the happy couple are in the habit of beginning their day from 6 P. M.

### The Palmy Days Of AL Capone

Quite in keeping with the gigantic scale in which things happen in America, over 50,000 petrol ration books have been stolen from official rationing offices in the U. S. These coupons will entitle their possessors to claim one crore gallons of petrol. It is further said that many of these books were sold at a price of 50 dollars in the black market.

There is really no shortage of petrol in America, but "gas" has been rationed to save rubber tyres.

### Hoarders, Please Note

Good news is rare these days and so the information from Delhi that our wheat stock will be replenished by import of one lakh tons wheat from Australia and that it has been decided to reduce the monthly quota of our rice export to Ceylon by half is doubly welcome.

It is said that the first instalment of wheat from Australia has already arrived in port.

Ceylon is to get 5,40,000 maunds of rice, (half the quota) between now and the next main rice harvest in April. The rice deficit of Ceylon will have to be made up by imports of Australian wheat.

### Silly Season Stories

Some mischief-maker with a perverted sense of humour has been spending money in sending telegrams to Mr. Allah Bux and Mr. Rajagopalachariar in the name of the Metropolitan of India.

The telegram to Mr. Allah Bux purported to invite him to Calcutta on the 14th or 15th of October. The wire to Mr. Rajagopalachariar asked him to address a meeting in Calcutta on the 15th October at which the Metropolitan of India would preside.

The Most Rev. Foss Westcott has been compelled to inform the public through the news

agencies that he had nothing to do with these invitations, meetings and messages.

### Three "Officers"

It is said that on the 10th October, three persons went to the court of the S. D. O., Patna City and with the geniality of George Robey demanded charge of the Sub-division, saying they had been appointed S. D. O., Peshkar and Orderly. We are told that these three optimists have been arrested and are being prosecuted.

We have known people who believed themselves to be the Emperor of France or the King of America, but we have never heard of their being arrested and prosecuted.

### Mr. Ford And We

We have never envied Mr. Henry Ford his fabulous wealth, but we sometimes have a longing desire to receive a special correspondent of Reuter in our editorial "Cottage" (that is how all palatial mansions are named) and talk to him about "war and peace". We would tell Reuter's representative that "people have always been sadder, poorer and wiser after each war." That "we must have a different kind of peace this time". We would further like to tell our interviewer that "In the post-war period all nations eventually will join in a Federation of the World", even if there be no Parliament of Man. We would also tell the world through the representative of the News Service that "The end of the long war would probably find the nations concerned exhausted".

Mr. Ford can do all these things and all his sayings are cabled to every corner of the earth and printed in lakhs of newspapers all over the world. We are denied the publicity even if we are ready to say equally sapient things.

### No Prizes Offered

The total number of prisoners taken by both sides in the War is not known to the public. The decision of the German Government to put the British and Canadian Dieppe prisoners in chains has caused the B.B.C. to give out some facts:—

1. There are 1,70,000 more German and Italian prisoners in British hands than there are British prisoners in German and Italian hands.

2. There are 23,000 German prisoners in British hands.

3. That 2,500 British and Canadian prisoners were taken at Dieppe.

Will some of our mathematically inclined readers try to find out (1) the number of Italian prisoners in British hands; (2) the number of British prisoners in Italian and German hands from the above data?

### Absentee Riches

The total issue of currency notes by the Reserve Bank of India at the end of last month was Rs. 503 crores. Against this issue the Bank held sterling securities in London amounting to 300 crores, gold coins and bullion

in India of a total value of 44 crores, rupee coins amounting to 27 crores and the balance, 102 crores in Government of India rupee securities. A year ago, the total issue of currency notes was less than 300 crores, and if the war continues for another year, the total issue of currency notes may mount to 700 crores. India's sterling balances in London will also continue piling up as the Government of England will be making increasing purchases of war materials in India, which cannot be paid for by the dwindling exports of British goods to India.

What to do with our sterling balances in London has been a problem for the economists. During the last war, a similar situation arose, and it is said that almost 300 crores were frittered away by a futile attempt to peg the £ to a fictitious value and the improvised system of Reverse Council Bills.

### Making A Mystery Of It

In this connection in a recent *Times* editorial it has been said:

"The Government of India would presumably have to find private purchasers in India for any industrial securities expatriated. On this point the experience of the British Government in respect of sale in America of British-owned investments in United States undertakings has not been such as to encourage easy imitation. And there will be plenty of scope for the employment of sterling balances to finance capital works programmes in India after the war".

We wish the *Times* to have been more explicit and less cryptic. We would like to know what the difficulties were in selling British-owned investments in the American undertakings to the American people. Whatever the difficulties might have been, we feel sure that there would be no difficulty in finding purchasers of British-owned industrial securities in India.

In fact, it may be safely predicted that these securities would fetch extremely good value if sold in the open market here. As regards the suggestion made by the *Times* to keep the accumulated sterling balances in London for buying goods from England after the war, one is reminded of the homely instance of advancing money to the milk man to be repaid in future, month by month, by a (promised) regular supply of milk.

Somehow or other, the arrangement invariably fails to work and does not give satisfaction to either party.

### Unnecessary Speculation

Newspapers are speculating on the likelihood or otherwise of the stability of a new Ministry in Sind. The names of people whose inclusion in the Ministry is likely to add stability are being freely discussed. It seems to us to be an entirely superfluous activity. Any Ministry, with any combination of persons, can carry on if the method adopted in Orissa be followed.

### The Perennial Problem

The supply of coal to the public of Patna is a topic on which we cannot write without emotion. Some coal have been received in Patna by private dealers during the last fortnight and is being sold to the public at Rs. 1-8-3 per basket. Heaven knows how much coal the basket contains, but the dealers have removed their scales and have adopted a take-it-or-leave-it attitude to intending purchasers. Even if one is keen enough to buy coal at this rate and pay the price of a maund for an amount which may really be 30 seers, one has to pay the *thelawala* anything between -/8/- to -/12/- to bring the coal to his house from the station yard because the road barrier adds 2 to 3 miles to the distance.

Some wagons of "controlled" coal arrived in Patna on Monday last, five days have gone by, but as the authorities have not yet been able to calculate the price at which this coal is to be sold to the public, the sale has not begun. It may be that mathematics is not the strong point of the authorities who have to carry out this complicated task. But we have been told by several people that the delay is helpful to those dealers who are now selling coal at 1/8/3.

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# Rabindranath

By The Hon'ble Mr. N. R. Sarkar

It is a great honour to me to be able to associate myself with today's function. To avail of this opportunity to pay my respectful homage to the memory of Gurudeva, I have undertaken the long journey to Jamshedpur in spite of the great pressure upon my time, the indifferent state of my health and the fact that my presence now at the seat of Government at Delhi was very necessary in view of the critical times through which we are passing.

Commemorative meetings are being held today all over the country. They bear testimony to the great love and respect in which Rabindranath is held by his countrymen. So profoundly had he influenced every aspect of our life that it is difficult to believe that the Poet is no longer amongst us.

I attach great significance to this function at Jamshedpur. It is a place which has attracted people from all over India as well as from abroad. It is like a broad sea formed by the inflow of many streams from many directions. Enriched by the contributions of people of various races and nationalities, it has built up a composite civilization and culture free from any narrow parochialism or a myopic outlook. Jamshedpur, therefore represents in some form the ideals of universal love and brotherhood, which the great Poet had set before his countrymen.

A year ago today, on this 7th of August, Rabindranath passed away. Memories of great men lie embalmed through the ages in their own life's works and the precious legacy which they bequeath to all mankind. By his lofty humanism and transcendental genius, Rabindranath also became the kin of the whole world. Still it would be a pardonable parochialism on the part of Bengalees if they regard Rabindranath as peculiarly their own, or if contemporary Bengalees were to feel a special pride in the fact that they were privileged to be born during his age and in the Province to which he belonged. The loss of Rabindranath comes to us Bengalees with a particular sadness—a sense of a deep personal loss, a feeling that we have, as it were, lost one of our nearest and dearest relations. For the space of more than half a century, Rabindranath had enriched the Bengali language with new dictions, invented new tunes in our music, given new motifs to our art and literature, introduced new strands of thought in our nationalism and profoundly influenced the patterns of our cultural make up.

I am not a literary man, nor do I have any pretensions of discoursing on literature; nevertheless, it is evident that modern Bengali literature bears the indelible impress of Rabindra-

nath's ideas, ways of thinking and expression. Those who are familiar with the progress of Bengal's fine arts know what a great part Rabindranath's inspiration played there also. Abanindranath Tagore, that notable exponent of our fine arts, has himself acknowledged Rabindranath as his inspirer in this field. In dramatic arts and dancing and in the cultivation of modern music the enthusiasm that is now to be seen in Bengal is directly attributable to Rabindranath. He has enriched our national life, made it fuller and sweeter, and brought happiness and joy to a monotonous and colourless life. Indeed, modern Bengal is largely his own creation. Even in his mannerisms of speech, epistolary style or calligraphy, the modern Bengalee has been profoundly influenced by Tagore.

I need hardly say that the object of this meeting is not the perpetuation of the memory of the Poet. Indeed, by his own inimitable creations in art and literature and by his contributions to political and social philosophy and religion and by his many-sided activities, Rabindranath occupies a position of such lofty eminence that there is no need for holding meetings to express or make known our appreciation of his worth and genius. The world has acclaimed him as one of its greatest man and as a genius

that is born probably once in many generations. As Hermann Keyserling has very aptly said—"There has been no one like him anywhere on our globe for many many centuries. That is, Rabindranath is the creator of a nation...the last historic figure of this kind in Europe has been Homer". There is no need, therefore, for our feeble expressions to proclaim to the world his greatness. His work has immortalized him. I think the purpose of such meetings should rather be self-introspection, to examine how far we have proved worthy of his rich legacy to find out how far in our lives we may have been able to realize the lofty humanism which pervades his poems, songs and literature, and had inspired his whole life. I

think such meetings would be worth while only to the extent that we succeed in obtaining light and guidance from the vast store of knowledge that he has left to us.

Rabindranath's towering personality and his many-sided genius have left their indelible impress on practically every branch of our life. There is, in fact, practically no problem in national or human life which Rabindranath does not touch upon and of which he does not indicate far-seeing solutions. He points his unerring finger to the fundamental weaknesses of our national life and character and he also gives forceful expression to our strong points, to all that is best in our cultural and social life. He has thus, on the one hand, tremend-

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ously enhanced our sense of self-respect and, on the other, he has also not hesitated to mercilessly expose the plague-spots.

The new phase in India's national and political life which started with the Swadeshi movement, and whose first surge was witnessed in Bengal, owed a great deal to Rabindranath. It may be recalled that an agitation was started in Bengal early in this century with a very limited object. Its purpose was merely to nullify the partition of Bengal and its method was the boycott of British goods. Among those who gave a new turn to this limited political agitation, and converted it into a national movement and a fight for freedom and roused the national-consciousness of the people, Rabindranath occupies an honoured place. Young Bengal drew inspiration and courage from his poems and writings, and enthused by his fiery songs, steeled itself to cheerfully bear all repression and incarceration. I would only quote here extracts from two songs which have succoured and sustained many through periods of great suffering and tribulation. Rendered into English, they would read something like this:

"As indeed their grip will tighten  
So indeed will our bond break  
The more that their eyes will be blood-red  
The more will our eyes open."

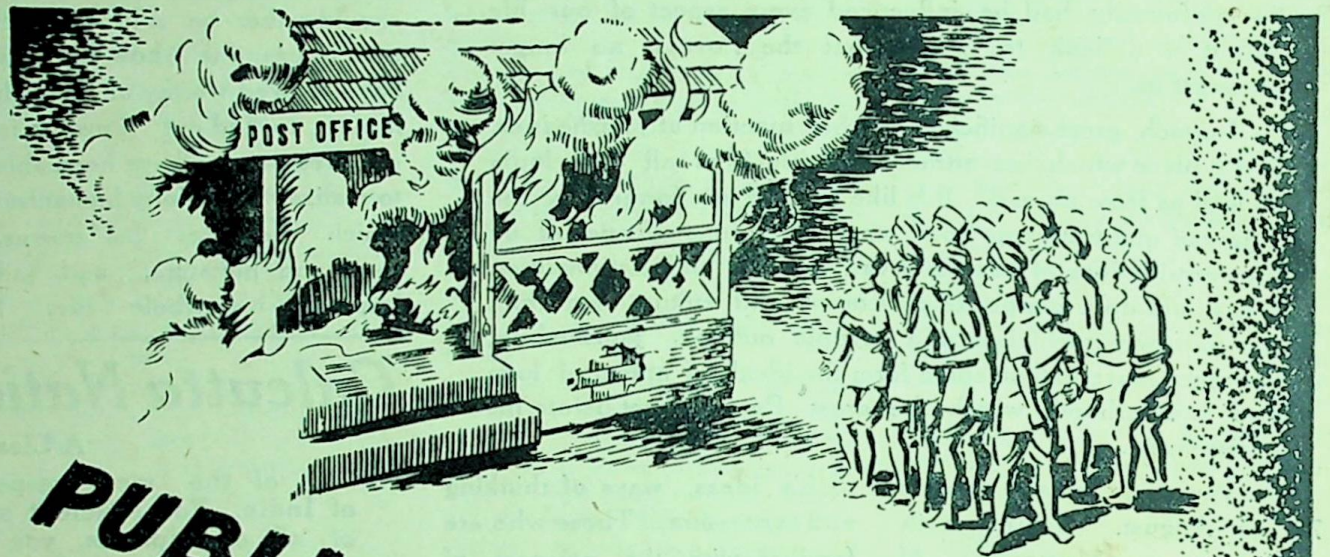
"What Providence has ordained,  
What power on earth will alter?  
If you enfeeble us, certain retribution will overtake you too,  
For if the load be too heavy, it sends the load itself to the bottom"

While by his songs, poems and writings Rabindranath gave strength and inspiration to the nationalist movement, he urged his countrymen not to lose sight of fundamental facts and problems. Thus, he emphasized that if boycott of foreign goods were launched in a fervour of nationalist sentiment, the fundamental problem would remain untackled so long as we did not make positive endeavours for building up national industries of our own. In all

things, he laid stress on the need for national self-development and self-reliance. He believed that unless we were strong and self-reliant and really independent in our thought and action, political freedom could not be had either by prayers and supplications or by any other method; and that even if political freedom were thus attained, it could not be a lasting thing in the absence of innate strength. He taught us the virtues of self-reliance and

helped us to regain a sense of national self-respect. He was also probably the first to realise and advocate that the nationalist movement must be broad-based if it were to gain strength and succeed. Speaking at a time when political movements were confined practically to the educated middle classes, he pleaded the necessity for mass contact. Thus, more than 30 years ago, at a Conference in Pabna in Bengal, he said—"If we wish to make our political wel-

fare and betterment true and lasting, then it must be broad-based and we must above all things devote ourselves to the uplift of the under-dog". He expressed his idea beautifully in one of his poems where he says that there, where lives the poorest of the poor, the lowly and neglected, the destitute taking his seat behind everybody with timidity and diffidence, in that neglected corner do I feel God's presence and there do I hear the sound of His footsteps.



## PUBLIC ENEMY No.1

The rat against the world: the goonda!

Worst blot on our honour,  
First check to our freedom.

He robs, destroys and kills—  
Hurts our people most,  
Hurts Government least.

He gets away with his crimes  
When police and troops come  
And the innocent suffer.



DO YOU WANT THESE MISERIES TO STOP?

Shortage of food and high prices in towns. No market and no money for our peasants. Separated families cut off from each other. Wrecking of schools, dispensaries and post-offices. Destruction of records which secure pensions, savings and ownership of land.

## FIGHT GOONDAS

It is the common man who suffers: we can control this disorder ourselves better than the authorities alone.

In his *Letter from Russia* there are again remarkable passages on the masses who toil unceasingly, and though themselves lying in the backwaters of culture, sustain that very culture by their grinding labour. Again and again we come across this recurring motif in his writings—an intense sympathy for these toilers. Present-day society, he says, uses a section of the community merely as a standard to hold up the torch of its civilisation, while that unfortunate section of humanity has no share in the benefits of this civilisation, the light of civilisation throws its rays upwards but underneath there is eternal darkness. To Rabindranath, the inevitable nemesis of such a state of things was absolutely clear. He observed that the pent-up sighs of this accursed section of humanity would one day fill the whole sky with its stench and envelop the entire world in a cataclysm born of the inequities of this civilization based on the slavery of a class. Indeed, he believed that the world belonged, not to the rich, but to those who produced riches. He also believed that the foundations of political progress could never be built upon the quicksands of a social system based upon slavery. In all this one can discover not only the seed of all the later movements for mass contact, village reconstruction or the 'Harijan' movement, but also clear-cut, well formulated ideas on all these problems.

Of the Hindu-Moslem problem, which today is defying all attempts at a satisfactory solution and is holding up our political advancement, Rabindranath took a very broad and liberal view many years ago. The very clear and lucid manner in which he had analysed this baffling problem is as striking as it is revealing. He did not evade the complexities and difficulties of the problem. On the contrary, he faced them squarely. He said that there was a time when the feeling of distinction was not so acute. This was due not so much to the fact that there was no such feeling as to the circumstances that we had lost vigour and become almost lifeless. Then came a time when the Hindus became proud of

their own achievements and heritage. And it was but natural that Muslims would also feel the same about themselves in course of time. Rabindranath had the farsightedness and sagacity to realise that the problem was no longer how to evolve unity by overlooking differences. This union, he said, was not to be achieved by any sort of patchwork; we must view the problem in its true inwardness. He advised Hindus to be more generous since they have so far had more of the opportunities and advantages of life. He also felt that, however much we dislike the tendency of Muslims to seek their own betterment separately, real and permanent unity could come only when Muslims had come up in the social and economic level. For, so long as great disparities continued, jealousy and ill-will between the communities were also bound to continue and any unity that might be achieved would necessarily be artificial and short-lived. Referring to the criticism often heard that a foreign power out of a policy of divide and rule was keeping the communal differences alive, Tagore said that if the people themselves became free from feelings of communal disunity, no Government could succeed in fanning or perpetuating communal differences. Even when they pursue such a policy, they would ultimately overreach themselves. For, the hunger that is roused by undue indulgences to any section can never be appeased. It always clamours for more and more, so that this policy must ultimately recoil on those who pursue it.

Rabindranath could never countenance inequity or the exploitation of the weaker by the stronger. He was fearless and uncompromising in his condemnation of oppression and atrocities. After the perpetration of the Jalianwallabagh massacre, he did not hesitate for even a moment to renounce his Knighthood. The letter to Lord Chelmsford in which he renounced this title will find an abiding place in Indian History. You must also have read the spirited reply he gave to Miss Rathbone's statement about India just before his death. Such a reply is only possible from a person whose love for the country burns at white heat and who

is deeply hurt by insults meted out to his motherland. Rabindranath did not hesitate to severely criticise Japan's policy of aggrandisement in China, in spite of the attempt of the Japanese Poet Nogouchi to canvass support for his country's policy and actions.

The unhappy state of Indo-British relations had greatly

grieved Rabindranath. With unerring insight he indicated some of the fundamental causes underlying this strained relationship between Indians and Britishers. He said that the English possessed many sterling qualities, but unfortunately not that of endearing themselves to others. Referring to the English cha-

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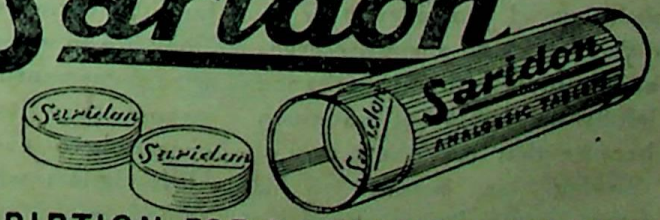
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8

racter, he once made this profound observation :—

"Even when they do you good, they do not feel for you; when they offer you protection, they are not prompted by any feeling of affection; they claim to be just, but are not moved by any respect for you; in short, even when they have made themselves useful to people, they have not considered it necessary to endear themselves to them; when they provide you with nourishment, they do not make it tasteful, and if it makes you feel sick, they turn the frowning eyes upon you."

It is this peculiar trait in British character which has been mainly responsible for the increasingly strained relationship between Indians and Britishers. The psychological hindrances to which Rabindranath referred have always stood as an unfortunate barrier between the British and Indian peoples towards developing feelings of mutual understanding, trust and confidence.

To his thoughts and ideals, Tagore has sought to give a concrete shape in the Viswabharati—the International University at Santiniketan. It is not only a great centre of learning, but under the cool shade of its mango groves, he undertook a great experiment for achieving a synthesis between the culture of the West and the culture of the East. This striking experiment has stirred the imagination of savants and thinkers all the world over. Viswa-Bharati has not only attracted scholars from every part of the globe, but has also been the fortunate recipient of the munificence of many foreign organizations and Governments. Only the other day, Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek donated a princely sum to this unique institution.

I have heard some say that we owe it to the memory of Rabindranath to develop and strengthen the Viswa-Bharati. The Viswa-Bharati should by all means be fostered and developed, but I consider for a different reason; a son preserves and improves the inheritance left by his father not so much because that is one way of showing his respect to his father, but really because in his own interest and for his own

of that inheritance. It is therefore very heartening that Mahatmaji should have taken the initiative and raised Rs 5 lakhs for the Viswa-Bharati in memory of the late Dinabandhu Andrews. I sincerely hope his noble example will be emulated by all his countrymen. For Viswa-Bharati is a priceless legacy which Rabindranath has left to the nation, and it may one day be the radiating centre of that spirit of international fellowship, based on a true appreciation of each other's culture, which he sought to realise through this institution. This inheritance we should therefore in our own interest carefully foster and improve and it is here to this University that we should invite all men, Aryans or non Aryans, Hindus or Muslims, Buddhists, Christians or Sikhs, to assemble and to unite in the furtherance of that larger humanism which recognizes no divisions of caste, creed, religion, race or community.

Rabindranath's versatility was as many sided as it was amazing, and I do not think that even if I were to speak for days together I could finish all that one would like to say about this superman. He is generally known, particularly to the public outside Bengal, as a great Poet. He was indeed one of the greatest Poets of all times. But he was not just a poet whose imagination weaves beautiful lyrics. He was more than that. He had a more rich and fuller personality. He was a seer, a humanitarian and a great political thinker. He deeply thought over our social and political problems and indicated far-reaching solutions for them. His political writings, particularly during the period of 1906-17, are a treasure house of clear thinking and wisdom which every Indian should be familiar with. It is rather sad that although many of Tagore's poems have been translated in other Indian and foreign languages, his political writings are but little known outside Bengal. They are so valuable and full of wise statesmanship that I feel strongly they should be made accessible to every Indian and all foreigners who are anxious to understand modern India. It should therefore be one of our foremost duties to arrange for an

early translation of these writings of Rabindranath into other Indian as also foreign languages.

I have said before that Rabindranath has given us courage and inspiration in many a dark moment of our lives. If I may speak of myself, whenever I have felt depressed or despondent, I have sat down with a book by Gurudeva and derived new life and courage from his writings. The times ahead of us are very difficult indeed. Events both within and without this country are moving towards such directions as may fill many of us with dismay. Withal, each one of us must do our duty as best as we may. And to the end that we may be able to do so, I think we could do no better than turn to Rabindranath again, and say with him:

"It may be that your loved ones will forsake you, but mind it not, my heart.

It may be that the creeper of your hope will be laid low in the dust all torn, its fruits wasted, but mind it not, my heart.

It may be that the dark night will overtake you before you reach the gate, and your attempts will ever be in vain to light your lamp.

When you tune your harp, the birds and beasts of the wilderness will flock around you. It may be that your brothers will remain unmoved, but mind it not, my heart.

The walls are of stones, the doors barred. It may be that you will knock oft and again, yet it will not open,—but mind it not, my heart. (—From Poems, by Rabindranath.—)

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Company Reviews

# The National Indian Life Insurance Co. Ltd.

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- (2) That the investments of the company are sound and yield a fair income to the company.
- (3) That the company's rules and regulations are liberal and policy conditions are such that they can not be twisted against the Policy holder.

Judging from this standard, the National Indian Life Insurance Company Ltd. is one of the soundest and safest Life offices in India.

Those who conduct Life insurance Companies in India mostly lack the essential knowledge in the Principles and Practices of Life Insurance business. The result is that when once a man has insured or has thus got his foot in the snare, he is treated with little courtesy by the company. Whenever the Policy-holder, on account of his natural ignorance of contract law, gets into some difficulty, the company banks upon the ambiguities of language in the prospectus and policy conditions. The company seldom volunteers to interpret the policy conditions liberally and goes out of its way to help the Policy-holder sympathetically. This has been the most hideous aspect of Life insurance business in India.

I am, however, glad to say that the National Indian Life Insurance Co. has been one of the few exceptions in this regard. Next to Oriental, its policy conditions have been framed to give the Policy-holder full sixteen annas of his money's worth.

It is, therefore, a particular pleasure for me to go through the Annual Accounts of this company. The report of its accounts for the year 1941 is very satisfactory as will appear from the following figures. I

am giving the figures for 1940 also to show the consistent progress the company is maintaining;

	1940	1941
Premium Income	Rs. 13,56,800	Ks. 14,16,600
Claims, Surrender etc. paid "	4,46,700	7,35,300
Management Expenses "	4,60,300	4,73,500
Expense ratio	34.07 %	33.41 %
Life Fund	Rs. 72,58,300	Rs. 77,85,200.
New Business	" 49,41,500	" 60,79,900.

The Policy holders of the National Indian can count themselves as lucky that the management of the company is in the hands of Messrs Martin & Co., the keynotes of whose business are efficiency and soundness. These are reflected in the investment policy of the company which appears to me to be very wise and cautious. It ensures a good yield while keeping a cautious eye on the integrity of the funds. The net rate of interest earned last year is 4.52% which is certainly a matter for congratulation and is expected to make the future valuation position a satisfactory one, if this rate is maintained.

The Shareholders of the Company have also every reason to feel satisfied as a dividend of 8%, declared for 1942, free of income tax, is quite a good proposition in these times of easy money.

I extend my congratulations to Mr. S. P. Bose, the mentor of the company. He is a keen sportsman, and I can quite believe that he treats his policyholders and field workers in the spirit of a sportsman. Now that the Company has got into its proper stride, he will be able to guide its progress towards glory with confidence and courage.

S. L. Roy

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# A Strange Bird Colony In Patna

By S. L. Roy, M. A.

ON the 15th September of this year, as I was wheeling past the Wheeler Senate Hall on my push-bike, my attention was caught by a loud and rancous squabble coming from two tamarind trees that tower over the line of houses opposite the Senate Hall. Looking up, I saw the two trees full of the slim black little birds with snake-like long necks—the Little Cormorants or Snake-birds—and pond-herons with a few of the beautiful white herons we know as cattle egrets. The trees were full of a number of finished and half-finished nests. The presence of the herons did not surprise me so much as that of the Snake-birds. They were the last birds I expected in the midst of a large crowded city. At first I thought that they were trying to use the trees as a Dharamshala on their way to some other destination. But that thought did not last long as I began to observe them.

The Snake-birds were very active. Some flying round and round; some breaking off tender twigs from the trees and carrying them to the nests under construction; and some attacking mild-looking Paddy-birds that were trying to sit on their nests. After a regular beak to beak fight, the paddy-birds had to admit defeat and retire, leaving the nest, the result of its many day's hard labour, in the possession of the resolute little amazon—for the Snake-bird was a female of the species. I had read, of course, that the Snake-bird is not particularly a timid bird but I had never expected to find it so aggressive and pugilistic as to attack birds heavier in build than itself. Apart from these attempts at occupying the nests of other birds by force, there were other Snake-birds who were building nests in pairs. Both partners were at the game. One was breaking twigs and carrying them to the nest where the other was doing the work of the mason. The latter was probably the she-bird, while the other was her devoted husband and slave, for the season.

The whole phenomenon was unusual. Snake-birds as a rule

live in or near sheets of still water. And their nests also are naturally to be expected close to their feeding grounds. But here they are, far from their feeding grounds. The second unusual point was the attempt of these birds to take possession by force of the nests built by another bird. This is a very rare characteristic among birds.

After watching these birds for three or four days, I wrote to the Honorary Secretary of the Bombay Natural History Society to find out if there is any record of these birds having been found building nests in the midst of a large crowded city and far from water and this is what the Rev. Father J. I. Cains, S. J., the present Honorary Secretary, writes; "The Little Cormorant is a familiar and fearless little bird. In the non-breeding season it is found on rivers and swamps and even in village ponds, but we have not seen a case of these birds occurring in a crowded city."

At the time of writing, (13th October 1942), the noise has subsided on the trees, because the occupants have settled down to their tasks. The quarrels for occupancy right are now over. The birds are now quietly busy fulfilling the great urge of reproduction. At noon, the birds can be seen sitting in the nests. Some may have come out and sitting on a bough close to the nest, which is usually in the fork of a strong branch, may be preening themselves. Occasionally Mrs. Snake-bird is flinging a few words of filthy abuse to her neighbour, Mrs. Paddy-bird. The latter may grunt an answer which does not appear to be so vulgar in language. Mrs. Cattle Egret on the other hand has chosen her nest far away from the Snake-birds. She seems to have preferred the top most nooks and as the paddy birds were also selecting the same high altitudes—there happened inevitable bad blood between them. The Cattle Egret, as gentle as his looks are beautiful, avoided all trouble by selecting the lower branches. But it is noticeable they have built

on the outlying parts of the branches to get air and sunlight in full, instead of building on the inner branches thus avoiding the shade of the heavy foliage of the tamarind.

In the evening, as the sun is sinking into the horizon, the trees again hum with noise. The male birds return from their day's forage and after some circlings about, sit near the nests in which the she birds are sitting. The voices of the birds are not harsh as before which denotes that there is no quarrel going on. Probably hubby is cooing to his wifey and so the notes gurgle and are soft.

Now for some general description of the bird. The word "cormorant" comes from latin *Corvusmarinus*. The English word has probably been derived from the French patois "Cormarin". The name of this bird illustrates how ideas run parallel in different races with different languages. The latins called it a water-crow and we in India also do the same. The word in Bengali is "Pan-courai" or "Pani-kak". In Hindi also it is known as "Pan-courie" or "Pan-kowa".

There are two kinds of cormorants. The larger ones frequent the sea. They are large sea-fowls, breed in flocks on steep cliffs, occasionally on rocky islands. In old times these birds were trained to fish in England the practice being now obsolete. They belong to the family *Phalacrocoracidal*.

The snake-bird is the little cormorant, also known as the "Darter" on account of its swift dart-like dive into the water. It frequents swamps, back-waters of rivers, pools of water along the railway lines in Bengal, or any large piece of shallow water. It is said to frequent rivers; but during my many journeys in the riverine districts of Bengal, I have not noticed it in running streams. It is very swift in water. Its speed and skill in water to catch fish after fish is beyond exaggeration. Sometimes it waits in the river with its whole body under water, only the long neck and the head with its pointed beak above the water. At this time it looks like a snake that rears itself out of water. Sometimes during the day, when its hunt is over, it basks in the sun, spread-

ing out its black wings to dry, which look like our office canvas partitions, and sitting absolutely motionless for a long time.

This will remind readers of Milton, why he compares satan to cormorants (Par. Lost, iv, 194).

"The head, neck and most part of the body is clothed in black, glossed with green. Down each side of the neck runs a row of long pair-like white feathers, tinged with pale lilac. The much elongated scapulars and the small upper wing coverts bear each a median white mark. The larger wing coverts are dull white but the quill feathers of the wings and tails are black."

I must admit that I have not observed the birds well enough to notice the long hair-like white feathers down the neck. But Jerdon reports that the lengthened scapular feathers are worn by Khasias as badge of royalty. It is also reported that they were the badge of one regiment of the Bengal irregular cavalry.

There is a peculiarity in the anatomy of the birds. It has a hair-sieve at the far end of the stomach which prevents the passage of fish bones into the smaller intestines, I can not say if these bones are thrown up. The Chinese tame these birds and use them for catching fish. Each boatman takes out 15 or 20 of these birds and in fishing places hundreds of these birds dive and catch fish to their owners. When a large fish is caught, and a bird is unable to manage it singly another bird comes to its aid and both carry it to their master's boat. In India, these birds have not been heard of to be utilised for such purpose.

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(Continued from page 1)

are having a good time of the Japanese occupation, however, temporary the occupation.

Most Indians apprehend that if the war on India's eastern frontiers did not go well, the British Civil Administration in this country will withdraw to some place outside its borders and there set up a pompous Government just as the Burma Government in India. The Civilian will draw their salaries and hold their offices. Lord Linlithgow and Sir Reginald Maxwell will go about making eulogetic speeches like Sir Dorman Smith that the Indians were true to Britain and the United Nations. But of what avail would these eulogies be to the millions of Indians grovelling before a conquering army.

And it is this fear that has driven the country to despair. It is not that India does not believe British promises about post-war independence. She has ceased to bother about it, because she knows that such promises are never meant to be kept. What is uppermost in her mind today is that she be not left at the mercy of mountebank administrators from 5,000 miles away, but she be given a chance to defend herself in alliance with Britain, America and China.

Indians are completely denied this rightful share in the defence of the country. They are asked to buy defence savings certificates, patronise war melas, subscribe to presents for troops and hide in shelters in case of air attacks. Much of this activity might have been suitable if the war was still being fought in France or on the borders of Russia. But today when Japanese troops are within 20 miles of India's frontiers, such fashionable war work rouses in the people a very justified scorn. It has been noticed that air raid warnings in Calcutta have not received the respect from the people which should have been expected. It is not that the people do not believe the warnings. They believe it only too well, and know they are genuine ones, but since they can do no better to meet the Japanese invasion than hide, they disdain to hide. No amount of warnings and quotations about Rangoon casualties would drive the people to

rance of proper defence, for it is not very pleasant to have two beasts fighting over one's prostrate body; one would prefer to die.

The assurance of proper defence does not mean that Indians want to hamper with the operations of the United Nations. I have never been known to be partial to the Congress, but I have to concede that in the so-called threat that the Congress gave to the British Government it made it clear that the operational control should be in the hands of Allied Generals.

What the country demanded in fact was that the supervision over the affairs of the defence of the country which the I. C. S. manned Government has to-day should be transferred to representatives of the people.

And as soon as the British Government are faced with a clear cut demand like this, they start side-tracking the issue by pulling forward the plea about disunity.

One has failed to discover where this disunity lies and how it is an obstacle to the transference of power from an irresponsible bureaucracy to accredited representatives of the people elected by partially democratic means. Any differences that do exist among Indian communities are only about the future political organisation of India. About the need for the immediate defence of the country there is none. We are not prepared to believe that acute differences about the future of the post-war society do not exist between the Conservative and Labour parties in Britain. If any differences do exist between these two parties, why don't the British unity-maniacs invite the Americans to administer the country till such time that the Conservatives and Labourites are able to compose their differences and come to an understanding about what the future society should be.

In India to-day no large-scale changes are needed. There is an elected Legislative Assembly with pronounced party groupings. This Assembly is surely more representative of the people than the Viceroy's Executive Council, which has a single member who was returned by an election. The Assembly

members would surely be able to inspire more confidence in the people, and the *bonafides* of elected members are already proven. The leader of the parties in the Legislature could be easily called upon by the Viceroy to form a coalition government and the power transferred to such a government. Unless such an attempt is made and it is shown that neither Mr. Bhulabhai Desai nor Mr. Jinnah can form a government which will have the support of the major parties in the Assembly, all talk about disunity is hypothetical. The unity desired by Mr. Amery is utopian and has never been achieved by any country. Even in the disunited India of British propaganda, both the Congress and Muslim League parties in the Legislative Assembly have frequently agreed together. They have largely cooperated and made all the use that the Assembly has been capable of.

Of course there would be the stock British opposition to this suggestion, that the present constitution of the country does not permit of an executive responsible to the Legislature. Neither does the constitution permit of a war being waged. The constitution was not drawn up for such an emergency, and in the present emergency it could be easily modified. Such modifications may only be temporary ones.

Are the British Government prepared to make this attempt to rally the country to its defences? It is not yet too late. Such an attempt is the only way out of the present deadlock, and not the repetition of the promise of future independence. If the British Government do not act in this direction, they are forcing the majority of the people of this country to walk into the Congress camp against their will. Congress activities are made an excuse for withholding rights of the entire population when it is stated that the Congress are not the entire country. We have frequently heard that the Congress is not the whole India, and that Government would not treat with the Congress. The Congress has forfeited its right to be a party to negotiations between Britain and India. But aren't there enough Indians outside the Congress,

and let the Government know it fully well that if the Congress rebellion has failed it is not because of the success of repression but because the majority of the Indian population are merely dumb millions. Mr. Churchill himself said that 70,000 Indians every month were volunteering for military service even while the Congress movement was at its height. Probably these two factors are good reasons in the opinion of Mr. Amery and Mr. Churchill for withholding self-government from Indians. Because why should they transfer power unless they could not do otherwise.

When in the same breath the Congress is said to be not representative of the country, and when self-government is denied to the country because the Congress would not come into the scheme, the talk of unity points to only one direction that all Indians should join hands with the Congress. Isn't that such a state would be extremely dangerous to the cause of the United Nations?

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## News From America

### Metal-Less World

In America, the use of any metal has been forbidden for 76 kinds of domestic gadgets. Among these are ash trays, clothes trees, coat hangers, curtain rods, doormats, mirrors, hat racks, picture frames, shoe trees, waste-paper baskets, percolators, mixers, whippers, fruit-juice extractors. Wood and plastics will have to take the place of metals in all these handy adjuncts to comfortable living.

### Inefficiency At A Discount

Several important American firms were seized by the U. S. Government because of strikes, labour wrangles and mismanagement. Five of these are: North American Aviation; Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock; Air Associates; Peoria and Western Railroad; Brewster's. All these were manufacturing essential war materials.

### No Fairy Tale

Under war conditions in America, the poor men are growing richer, the rich are growing poorer. High taxes and living costs have put many a rich man on half rations. White collar workers with fixed salaries, school-teachers, civil-service employees, and office-workers are worst hit.

Men and women who had seldom had one coin to rub against another are now troubled with a constant jingle in their pockets. Girls who had worked as maids for room and board and a little pocket-money are now offered factory jobs at Rs 350/- to Rs 700/- a month. Men out-of-work for years are now making 26 dollars (= Rs 90/-) a day mixing cement.

In Detroit, tool and die-makers earn Rs 400/- to Rs 600/- a week. Girl stenographers at Ford's Willow Run get Rs 235/- a week.

Easy money can be seen everywhere. The new-rich are using their money to buy things that were once undreamt-of luxuries. Jewelry sales in 1942 are 25% higher than last year's. A plasterer walked into a jewelry shop, counted out 100 dollars (350 rupees) for a diamond-set wrist watch. Next day his wife returned with the watch and 175 rupees more for a better one. On the other side, auctioneers are busy selling furniture and art treasures from hotel-size houses that are now

too big a burden for their owners to keep up. The ex-rich are giving up their town apartments when the leases expire.

### All Flesh Is Grass

An American biochemist believes that it is possible for man to live on leaves, wood and grass if only his intestines are first conditioned to this all-cellulose diet by getting certain harmless bacteria domiciled among the billions of other bacteria that form our intestinal forest.

The cellulose-digesting bacteria belong to the aciduric group and are akin to the *Lactobacillus acidophilus* of Bulgarian buttermilk, which Metchnikoff believed to be the cause of longevity of Bulgarian peasants. The bacteria can be permanently established among the intestinal flora in a month, at a cost of Rs 7 per person.

The theory has been tested with rats. Now it will be tested on a group of prisoners in Sing Sing prison, New York. At present, the darkening effect on grey hair of one of the B vitamins, —p- amino-benzoic acid is being tested on these convict volunteers.

### A Topsy Turvy World

Tin, copper and other common metals have become so scarce that the U. S. treasury is going to release 10,80,000 maunds of silver from its vaults at West Point (New York) and elsewhere as a substitute. The total U. S. holding of silver is 24,08,000 maunds. The main customers of silver dealers were the jewelers, now they are engineers. The chief industrial use for silver is the silver soldering alloy, which joins metal parts better than the former brass-zinc alloy, and has also a lower melting point.

This alloy is used in airplane engine coolers, radiators, ignition systems, cabin heaters, fuselage construction, parachute cords, anti-aircraft guns, machine guns, anti-tank guns, shells and torpedoes, aeroplane motors, electrical apparatus.

### Dress Rationing Slogans

"I'll cheerfully lose my skirt to keep our liberty."

x x x  
"The overdressed woman

will be as unpatriotically conspicuous as though she wore a Japanese Kimono."

News Review.

### War Effort

"For much of the work which Hollywood stars are doing in the war effort, most Americans are thankful. Joan Crawford, starring in *He Kissed the Bride*, has donated her £28,000/- salary to war charities. But other stunts have begun to irk serious minded folk. Typical was the exploit of perky starlet Marilyn Hare. Embarking on a "morale-building expedition", she decided to kiss 10,000 U. S. soldiers. Taking a cameraman with her, the 18-year-old damsel went to an army encampment in Southern California, proceeded to lipstick every soldier she met. Held up army lorries to embrace the driver, interrupted kitchen fatigue duties to salute the cooks. By evening of the first day she boasted of having polished off 733 heroes, with 9,267 to come.

When starlet Jane Russell visited a destroyer, the sailors lined up to be inspected by her, allowed her to handle the 5-in.guns."—News Review.

### Nicknames For Tea Cars :

Soldiers—and sailors and airmen too—have a genius for nicknames. Thus the tea cars have now come within the scope of this affectionate "christening". "The Tuck Box," "Tea Up," "Ye Bunne Boxe" and "Timely Teapot" are a few of the names chosen. One tea car in service with the coastal command has been dubbed "Coastal Kettle".

### "Tea-Hiking" :

"Tea-hiking" is a popular pastime with the American troops in isolated parts of Northern Ireland. At the sight of an approaching tea car the boys drop everything and make a bee line for the tea truck. They do not get a "lift," but they do get a mug of tea. Thus are thousands of mugs of tea disposed of every month by the tea cars now serving the troops in Northern Ireland.

### A Lesson In Doing Without Things

The U. S. private citizen is

finding himself short of many things within the first year of the war. There are to be no more new tyres for motor cars,—even tyres from private cars may be requisitioned to keep doctors, police and defence workers going. Taximeters predict they would be off the streets in a few months. Soon, bicycle or shank's pony would be the only methods of travel. 10 lakhs of motor cars have gone out of use by last month. By the end of next year, a total of one crore and 20 lakhs of motor cars would be stranded. (The total number of motor vehicles in America is 3 crores) This is not due to petrol shortage,—the New World still produces 78% of the world's supply—but to conserve rubber. Already used tyres with a few thousand miles of run still in them are selling for Rs 200/- a piece in some parts of the U.S.

New typewriters can only be had through the rationing board. No new extensions to telephones. No radios, gramophones or refrigerators are being made, so none will be available when present stocks are exhausted.

Suits will have 25% less cloth,—short coats, no tails, belts, pleats, tucks or patch pockets. Women's clothes will have to conform to a basic silhouette; no more rubber for girdles, brassieres or false bosoms. No more flower gardens. No knitting wool except for Red Cross work.

### Casting Steel

For some time past, welding has replaced riveting in the building of ships, planes, and tanks. The latest metallurgical revolution is the replacing of forged steel by cast steel. Casting began to replace forging on a large scale when Ford first cast V-8 crankshafts instead of forging them. Since then, 10 million Ford crankshafts have been cast with great success. Now guns are being made by centrifugal casting. This would have been unthinkable in 1918,—engineers would have said that cast steel is full of pores and bubbles, it shrinks in the mould, its metallic structure is unreliable. But today, the foundry engineer has been able to improve his castings beyond recognition and X-rays are used to detect any flaws in the castings.

Steel for cannon is poured into horizontal moulds which rotate rapidly until the metal hardens. This centrifugal casting avoids blow-holes and shrinkages. A casting machine will easily turn out several guns in the time it takes to forge one. Tests have shown that while forged barrels burst at pressure of 7000 lb per sq. in., centrifugally cast barrels burst at 10,000 lb. One third of all U. S. tanks built to-day have cast steel armour.