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WILLIAM COBBETT

The Creator of the "Hansard"

By T. P. Amerasinghe

ON Tuesday, the 18th June 1835, William Cobbett, the famous English politician, journalist and agriculturist, breathed his last, in the quiet of his own Normandy farm, near Guilford—the seat of one of his latest planting experiments, at the very outset of his heated Parliamentary career. A noble life spent in the service of the poor and the oppressed was this typically old-fashioned Englishman's whose great love of agriculture, in an age when a great wave of industrialism was fast sweeping over England, ran like a thread of gold through the dark and at times stormy web of his political career.

Cobbett first saw the light on the 9th March 1762 at Farnham, the hop garden of Surrey. The England of his birth could in no way be compared with the England of his death, which though his own efforts partly, and owing to economic and other effects was destined to be a much happier place for man—the crown of creation—to dwell in. For in 1762 England faced with the great problem of putting her house in order after her great and victorious struggle with France for 'Colonial Supremacy' and with the baleful portents of the coming struggle for independence in America and the French Revolution, then visible, found very little or no time for bestowing social benefits, viz education, on the masses. Further he was born to a family of purely peasant origin. As could be expected, therefore, the early life of this great man was spent in the fields of Surrey and he had few educational advantages until he arrived at an age when his native force of character could help him to severe self-application. How this great man from such humble birth and lowly early life became the much-loved and venerated Cobbett of 1832 is a strange tale. A Romance indeed!

Qualities acquired whilst handling the plough and watering the crops, stood him in good stead in later life. For,

first and foremost he became the much-respected agriculturist of the late eighteenth century, a man worthy to carry on the noble tradition set up by such various gentlemen-farmers as King George III.—"farmer George"—Townsend—"turnip Townsend"—and others. Further this very same force of character enabled him to endure the hardships of his early London life for did he not become a copying clerk to an attorney no sooner than he came to London by a sudden freak in 1783? And the crowning point of all was that coarseness of self which enabled him to stand the buffets and ridicules which oftentimes assailed him and were sufficient to drive a sensitive man from pursuing his political career to the very end.

The lure of the army proving irresistible to Cobbett we find him enlisting in a line regiment, having endured the drudgery that is the quill-driver's, for some years. Whilst in the army stationed at Chatham Depot, his leisure was devoted to the study of English grammar and literature. Thus were laid the concrete foundations of his literary career destined him to become "the genius of journalism in its early days." Thence he set sail to France, where having absorbed that country's language and literature, he crossed the Atlantic to America and took up his residence in Philadelphia. Here too literature occupied a good part of his time.

We now come to the third phase of his career. Agriculture in early life, then literature merging into journalism in his youthful days and finally his long and lasting phase—politics in maturity. It was in Philadelphia that he first invoked the Muse of politics in an evil hour. For, the side he took in politics—anti-Jacobinism—wholly unsuited him. The reason for this is quite plain. Cobbett wholly misconstrued the state of affairs in the England of his birth,

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A SHORT STORY

THE WIFE AWAY FROM HOME

BY DEWAKI

"COCONUT for the idol on the way—Bahl! Even after Lila has come, am I to tolerate such nonsense?"

And with insufferable contempt on his face, Raghu threw the coconut that Kamala, his first wife, had brought with her as she boarded the car.

Little Kishen looked up anxiously at his mother's face, and she had to suppress her rising tears, for the child had been of late often asking: "Mother, why are you weeping? Did any one beat you or abuse you?"

And the mother could make no reply.

Why should Kamala weep? Because she had been discarded for Lila, the second wife, university trained, who took trouble to make her charming face more charming, who talked to Rahu in English, who discussed Dr. Khare and Sardar Patel with him and mocked Mahatma Gandhiji and his "mad" khaddar scheme! Lila had silks from China and shoes from Northampton.

Making mock of Gandhiji in her hearing—that was the first occasion for revolt from Kamala during what she never the knew was their wooing time. Lila used to visit often and Kamala never realised that Lila was to replace her in her husband's affections.

"Lila, I cannot suffer Mahatma being mocked in this house—please respect my feelings", Kamala had once said, trying to give a gentle tone to her rebelling heart.

"Very soon this house will cease to be yours—" Lila had snapped. Kamala had never understood what those words meant—then. Now, alas, she knew, Kamala was leaving the house with her two years old son to her own father and mother—so that Lila may have Raghu and all that belonged to Raghu, herself.

II

"I suppose poor Kamala wanted to break the coconut to the God up here—observed Lila as she was driving. There

was contempt and mockery in her tone.

But before her fond husband could reply, the car had smashed! One sudden swerve and it lay jammed on the rock on the right side:

Screams and cries—but no one was near. The road lay through a mountainous zone and in curves. Above the rock was the God's temple propitiated by the drivers of cars and buses and country carts.—they broke coconuts, in the faith and in the belief, that accidents would be avoided. It was faith.

Kamala was the first to extricate herself from the debris. And, as she came out, she raised a wild cry of despair. Her head battered on the rock, her Kishen lay bleeding—and dead.

His arms pinned underneath the chassis, Raghu moaned in pain—blood was flowing profusely from a gaping wound on his forehead.

Lila lay unharmed but in a swoon.

Kamala's cry brought to the scene a strong, well built stranger who took the situation at a glance. With one strong push, he extricated Raghu from where he lay pinned. Kamala tore her sarree to bind his open wound.

"Have you not the coconut? You might break it and clean the wound with the water—for there is no water near by—" said the stranger to Kamala as she surveyed water to wash.

"Coconut? Is that not enough for the God—see, my child's head is smashed as the coconut would have been!"

The stranger went to the child and picked it up. Life was extinct.

"Come up—" he said, "there may be some water in the temple above. You take the child—I shall carry the senseless man".

"Lila, where is she?"—were the first words of Raghu as he opened his eyes.

Lila was adjusting her toilette below! Except a few bruises,

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MEN AND MATTERS

COUNCIL SESSIONS

Lack of Public Interest

APATHY OF THE MINISTERS:
EUROPEAN TENSION

By Wayfurer

LAST week Sir Baron Jayatillaka moved an address of protest against the message of the Governor certifying the salary of Mr. Kirk, the Chief Power Station Superintendent of the Electrical Department for the months of July, August and September. The protest was endorsed by the House—the European Nominated trio remaining neutral. It is futile to expect anything more from our representatives than this feeble protest. Our leaders are not of that type who would sacrifice their positions and salaries to force an issue to its end. The attitude taken by the Member for Jaffna is puzzling. He opposed the certification in his speech but sat on the fence when a division was called for. It is whispered freely that Mr. Mahadeva is undergoing a change in his political convictions. Perhaps this particular vote was taken at a stage of transition when he found it difficult to displease two masters, but one thing is certain that he has already displeased his third master. The Board of Ministers are silent on the other certifications. Is it that they have given in to the principle of granting passages once in four years and the increased pay for the higher police officers? By the way, the word "paramount importance" carries a multitude of meanings in different parts of the Empire. In Malta it connotes one meaning, in India, another and in Ceylon yet another. According to Sir Edward Stubbs, in Malta "paramount importance" didn't mean the increase in the salary of the Auditor-General of that place, and yet according to him the increase in the salary of a few police officers in Ceylon is a matter of paramount importance. Certifications may come and go, our representatives remain for ever.

* * *

The score in the Budget innings has passed the quarter century last week. All through it was a case of members playing to the gallery. They merely pointed out the need for one thing or other in their respective constituencies, thus showing their electorates that they were ever mindful of the needs of their electors. They lacked a sense of proportion in their speeches. The need for a Receiving Post Office in a certain village received more attention and thought in members than some important question of policy or expenditure. Perhaps this lack of proportion is partly res-

ponsible for the impoverished state of the coffers. The Nominated member, Mr. Gaddum, rightly gave us an instance of this lack during his Budget speech. I was in vain trying to find out at least a semblance of criticism of the late Sir P. Ramanathan in the speeches so far made on the Budget. Those were the days when Sir Ramanathan inspired terror and respect in Sir Wilfred Woods by ruthless and constructive criticism of the Budget. But now things are different. The Constitution requires the Members, the Ministers and the Officers of State to change skins within the Chamber. At one time the members are the critics of the Ministers and the Officers of State. At another they will have to accept the proposals of the Ministers who are in fact their agents. So much so there appears to be an unholy alliance and the Council is reduced to a mutual admiration society.

* * *

One wonders if the standard of speech making is deteriorating in the legislature. That I believe is the reason why few people patronize the galleries in the Council. In other countries a Budget session of a legislature attracts quite a crowd to the Chamber. Here in Ceylon is a contrast; the public cares nothing for what is happening inside the Council Chamber. This reminds me of the speech of Mr. Mahadeva last week. It could be described as a half-hearted attempt to criticise the Budget. The speech was characterised by lack of facts, lack of preparation and what not. I know the plight of the cigar workers in Jaffna and when the member for Jaffna, referred to them in his speech, it lacked all realities and failed to capture the sympathies of even his henchmen.

Mr. Natesan preached a sermon on the Congress Ministeries in India during his speech. He wanted the Board of Ministers to follow the ideal set up by India at least in the matter of salaries to public servants. His appeal would have had the necessary effect in the country, if only he had referred to the high salaries paid to our Councillors and appealed to his colleagues to adopt the Congress scale of salaries of Ministers and members. The State Council alone is costing the country Rs. 481,800 a year.

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We are warned by competent observers that soon Ceylon will face financial bankruptcy. This is partly true when for the last so many years a mediocre Council is in charge of the finances of the country. This sorry plight of our exchequer is also

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WILLIAM COBBETT

(Continued from Page 1.)

for now the Atlantic lay between him and his homeland. Had he even known to a small measure the real state of England—the England which was at one time the land of free speech, the asylum of political refugees transformed into a mediaeval State by the repressive acts of a one-time reformer—Pitt the Younger—there is every reason to believe that he would never have taken the anti-Jacobin view in politics. Absurdly false rumours were wafted to him, that certain of his countrymen, Paine and Priestley chiefly, were trying to make England subordinate to France by spreading the seeds of revolution in their own land. Had he known that the real mission of these men was the uplifting of the poor and the oppressed by clamouring for reforms, he would never have hurled such foul curses at them. Still, as fate would have it, he became an anti-Jacobin and thereby gave room even for a part of posterity to speak in disparaging terms about him.

On the occasion of Priestley's visits to America we find this reformist to be politician writing a pamphlet entitled "Observations Priestley's Emigration." This and his further flooding of America and England with anti-Jacobin literature, including the publication of a scurrilous life of Tom Paine together with his own calumnious observations on that great man, made Cobbett's career. In America he became a moving force in political circles whilst in England the Government members became his fast friends. Taking full toll of his success, he came to England where he was met and feted by Wyndham and others in token of the Government's appreciation of his services.

As Pitt's supporter he launched a new venture in journalism with his paper the "Political Register" in 1800 which unlike his other ventures lived till his death thirty-five years later. About this time his literary powers were at their zenith. Three years later he began the publication of the "Parliamentary Debates," thus becoming the celebrated creator of the famous 'Hansard' which to this very day records the speeches made in Parliament and in the other governing bodies throughout the Empire. Still he failed to keep it going for in 1812 its publication passed into the hands of Mr. Luke Hansard from whom it took the name by which it is known to-day.

And now we have to record one of the happiest desertions in history—the losing of its champion by anti-Jacobinism and the coming of Cobbett to fight for his oppressed kith and kin in town as well as country—the real task for which he was destined. A political turncoat he undoubtedly became at this juncture but as G. M. Trevelyan puts it, "he saw or thought he saw the ancient rights of Englishmen being stolen from them, and rushed noisily to the rescue." As his later writings and ardent interest in the welfare of the poor will bear witness, his sincerity was beyond all doubt. Immediately he showed that the Jacobin movement, which he was to transform later "into a Parliamentary movement, demanding the vote for the working classes and teaching them

to look that way for relief of their distress," was the thing for which he was destined, for ere long love for the poor prompted him to reduce the price of his paper to a penny. A very small gesture to the immense sufferings of the poor this no doubt was, but coming from a man who had fought against the poor so energetically, it was a great step on the road which was to shower on the working classes much better and richer gifts. It was a great "Ave et Vale" to anti-Jacobinism.

For a time as if with his new creed his star which had erstwhile shone so brightly waned. On many occasions his desire to drive home the condition of the poor more keenly nearly landed him in jail. His former friends in their anger sought to inflict nothing but harm on him. Still he manfully struggled on until he reached his objective. Such a force was his "Political Register" that at the time "it was read aloud to illiterate audiences under the hedgerow and in the workshop; and even the 'respectable' sometimes read the rascal for his shrewd hitting, laughed and cursed his impudence, and rode off thinking on what they had read." Thus through his paper the aristocracy came to catch a glimpse of the misery that was around them. A great service to the poor!

In 1816 together with his late enemy, Priestley, he led the second reform agitation. In this his great power as journalist helped him a great, "for it stands on record that he turned many of his readers from rioting and rick-burning to political discussion and organisation." The war too was nearing its close and he was about to reap the harvest of his career. His great sincerity, however, spurred him on to do a deed which aroused great comment in two continents. For the last time in his life, he set sail to America in 1817. There, fearless of ridicule and in atonement for the grievous offence he had committed against his former enemy but now master, he brought back the bones of Tom Paine with great veneration to England. The ridicule to which he was subjected was immense, yet the act serves to show how completely he was reformed.

Through all this turmoil his ardent love for agriculture never flagged. He put up a big farm at Botley in Hampshire in 1804. About this time an ever-thirsting desire for a seat in Parliament took possession of him. He strove might and main to achieve this end but with little success. A welcome relief in his paper was his warm advocacy of the cause of Queen Caroline. Incidentally he it was who wrote her much celebrated letter to the king.

In 1832 all his ambitions seemed for a moment to be crowned with success. He obtained, with the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, much of that which he had longed and fought so ardently for, and more. He obtained a seat in the Reformed Parliament for Oldham. Further he was loved by the poorer classes whose rights he had advocated as few men were loved before or since. Nevertheless he could not enjoy the fruits of his labours for long. Just three years after he became the child of fortune, he died.

THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

A Survey as to Possibilities of Employment

PROPOSAL TO GIVE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

AN important piece of work done by the Education Department during the past year has been the school survey. In order that the life of the school should be more related to the life of the community in which the school is situated all Inspectors made a careful survey of the possibilities of employment which different areas in their circuits offer to the pupils when they leave school. Information was required in connection with a proposal to establish Central secondary schools in which pupils might have a training largely based upon local conditions, especially those affecting employment. It is proposed to give pupils in these Central schools more intensive training in (a) academic subjects, (b) rural science work including agriculture, ironwork, &c., says the Director of Education in his Administration Report for last year. He further observes:—

The policy which will govern the work of the Central schools is now being considered by the Executive Committee who have before them the reports made by the Inspectors. The Inspectors have examined the opportunities for employment in each area and have considered, in consultation with Head Teachers and representatives of the inhabitants whether such opportunities are met by the present education given in the schools in the area and whether certain additions to the curriculum and changes in the methods of instruction would give pupils better chances of securing employment. Additional information whether the demand for employment was steady or seasonal, and whether employment was generally sought in the home district or in some other place urban or rural was obtained. Head Teachers are being encouraged to make a study of the demands of local employers. It is felt that the school should be part of a more general scheme affecting the life of the community as a whole, and though it is not the function of a school to turn out practical agriculturists or carpenters or clerks, yet its curriculum must be planned with reference to the kind of life which the pupils will lead when they leave school. Above all, the aim of a liberal education is kept steadily in mind. The purpose of education is to turn out the best possible type of man and woman, and whether the pupils are engaged in rural work or in industrial training, or in the usual academic subjects, a liberal education must be the end in view. The subjects studied are means to this end.

English in Vernacular Schools

In my last Administration Report I commented on the increase

in the cost of education due to the optional teaching of English in Vernacular schools. It has been decided by the Executive Committee that facilities for teaching elementary English shall be provided in all Vernacular schools. In the past, English has been taught when there were sufficient pupils who could afford to pay 50 cents a month for such instruction, or when the manager had funds with which to pay the contribution towards the English teacher's salary. In future English will be taught in any school where a member of the staff is capable of giving instruction. The increase in the number of Vernacular school teachers who are learning English is very striking. Most of those who join the Government Training College have some knowledge of English. Certain Correspondence Colleges do a thriving business in giving tuition in this language to Vernacular school teachers. There has been some opposition to this proposal from those who fear that a knowledge of English will cause boys to leave their villages and flock into the towns. This was the case in the past where a little knowledge of English made a village boy feel superior to his parents and his companions in the village. But this superiority will disappear when every child has a working knowledge of the language.

It is hoped that the introduction of free English into Vernacular schools will have the effect of reducing the demand for English schools. A knowledge of English is necessary for economic reasons, but there is no need to increase the number of English secondary schools, many of which have relatively few pupils in their upper classes. In the discussion whether too much or too little is being spent on education mention is rarely made about the distribution of money spent on English education. I do not consider that full value is obtained for the money spent. More money should be available for the development of the better schools and less for the others.

It has been urged that Government should start secondary schools in certain towns of Ceylon, but this is too expensive an idea as long as other schools in the town have to be subsidized. If religious denominations could overcome their differences and pool their resources one good secondary school could be established where religious demands have created as many as four English schools in several of the smaller towns of Ceylon. A few schools well-staffed, well-equipped, and giving a good general education instead of merely preparing pupils for examinations through the medium of English, would be of far greater value to the community.

Central Authority for Motor Transport

Registrar to Prepare Scheme

The Registrar of Motor Cars is to be requested to organise the new central Authority that is to be established to direct and control the motor transport of the island.

This step, however is to be undertaken only after the completion of of the bus and lorry census that has begun. As the Traffic Advisory Board wishes to have the Central Authority organised as early as possible the preparation of the census is being expedited.

The Central Authority will after establishing the new organisation address itself to the question of formulating the fares and time-tables of buses plying along the various routes.

Certain details of the organisations of the Central Authority were considered a few days ago at a meeting of the Traffic Advisory Board when it was decided that the Registrar of Motor Cars was the best authority to organise a scheme co-ordinating the work relating to the registration, licensing and fixing of routes of buses and lorries at present distributed among local bodies, the Police and the Registrar of Motor Cars.

(Continued.)

speed up matters with the assistance of the second respondent, in order that the work might be facilitated for the Travancore Liquidator when he came in and applied to the Court at the proper time.

The liquidators appointed by the High Court of Madras had no right to make any application to the Court here as long as the Bank was incorporated in Travancore.

His submission was that the Jaffna Branch was an unregistered foreign bank, and as such that Court had plenary powers of winding up and appointing a liquidator.

Mr. Gratiaen intervened with the remark that one liquidator, an officer of the Imperial Bank, had been appointed at Quilon and another had been appointed at Madras, and counsel would file documents to prove that they were acting concurrently.

English Law

Mr. Niles said that he made the application under the English Law, which provided for "interim" orders and such "interim" orders made by that Court enabled them to secure within two days of sealing the safes no less than Rs. 130,000.

The Judge inquired of Mr. Niles what was the object of appointing a liquidator if he was not empowered to distribute the assets.

Mr. Niles said that it was to collect moneys, write up the books and give preferential treatment, always acting under the orders of the Court.

Mr. Gratiaen pointed out that the Travancore liquidator might want to have here a man of his own selection, who knew banking and banking law, one in whom he had confidence and, he, therefore asked that the appointment of a liquidator be deferred. Besides, publication of the Order "Nisi" in the local papers was not sufficient. It would be unfair to other creditors of whom the Imperial Bank was the largest if they were not given sufficient notice. The petitioners represented only Rs. 10,000.

After further argument both parties agreed to a postponement till September 14th.

AFFAIRS OF THE QUILON BANK

OBJECTION TO LOCAL LIQUIDATOR

MADRAS LIQUIDATORS IN JAFFNA COURT

LIQUIDATORS appointed by the Madras High Court appeared on Monday before Mr. C. Coomaraswamy, District Judge, through Mr. E. F. N. Gratiaen, instructed by Messrs. Julius and Creasy, and objected to the confirmation of the appointment of Mr. J. Subramaniam Lewis as liquidator of the Jaffna Branch of the Travancore Bank.

Mr. W. D. Niles, instructed by Mr. T. Arumainayagam, appeared for the petitioners.

Mr. Gratiaen with Mr. P. M. Duggan, of Messrs. Julius and Creasy, was in Court on behalf of Messrs. Fraser and Ross, liquidators appointed by the High Court of Madras, who opposed the appointment of a liquidator here.

Mr. Gratiaen said that Messrs. Julius and Creasy's proxy would be filed in a week's time. He produced a telegram purporting to come from Messrs. Fraser and Ross, of Madras, who, he said, had been appointed liquidators for the purpose of winding up the entire bank, embracing all branches.

Messrs. Julius and Creasy also undertook to file a certified copy of the appointment by the High Court of Madras. He had telephoned from Jaffna that morning to Messrs. Julius and Creasy, who informed him that Messrs. Fraser and Ross were acting in co-operation with the liquidators appointed in Travancore.

Present Arrangement

Mr. Gratiaen submitted that the Court should not make any order now, and that the present arrangement of the proctor for the petitioners and the second respondent receiving moneys and depositing them in the Kachcheri might continue for a few more days until he should be in a position to show that the Court had no jurisdiction to wind up one branch alone, disregarding the interests of creditors in other parts of Ceylon and in India.

The business of the liquidators appointed at Quilon and Madras would be to conserve and protect the interests of all creditors, since anyone who deposited money at any branch was a creditor of the entire bank and not of that branch alone where the deposit was made.

If for instance the Jaffna Branch alone was closed when the business of the bank and of other branches was in full swing creditors of the Jaffna Branch had every right to claim their moneys from the head office.

Counsel further contended that neither under the Joint Stock Companies Ordinance of 1861, nor under its local Banking Ordinance could liquidation be ordered by that Court.

He asked under what law the Court was justified in ordering wind-up and appointing a liquidator.

The Other Side

Mr. Niles said he was not going to ask that day for a distribution of the assets, but only that they should dispense with the services of clerks and confirm the appointment of the liquidator, who was to recover all moneys, prepare a list of creditors, write up the ledgers and books, and

(Continued on Previous Col.)

JAFFNA HINDU COLLEGE O. B. A.

The Reunion of Old Boys of J. H. C. will take place on 4th September 1938.

Programme

8.30 a.m.	Pooja
9.30 a.m.	Thevaram-singing Competition: College Students
12.30 p.m.	Lunch by the College
2-30 p.m.	General Meeting
3.30 p.m.	Volley Ball Match: Old Boys vs. College
4.30 p.m.	Principal's Tea
5 p.m.	Football Match: Old Boys vs. College
7-30 p.m.	Dinner (College) Dining Hall

All Old Boys are kindly requested to be present on the occasion.

As the list of Old Boys is not comprehensive and complete and the addresses available insufficient or inadequate several Old Boys may not have received notice of the Annual General Meeting and the Old Boy's Day Celebrations.

Old Boys who have not sent their names and addresses to the Principal are kindly requested once more to do so to enable the Principal to have the Register of Old Boys up-to-date.

S. BALASUBRAHMANYAN
Secy., O. B. A., J. H. C.



Hindu Organ.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1938.

THE SUDETEN PROBLEM

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA IS THE storm-centre of Europe. On the Sudeten problem hangs peace or war in Europe affecting not merely the happiness of Central Europe but of the whole world. Naturally therefore the question has been receiving the closest attention of the Chancellories of Europe. The Sudeten problem is no longer a question involving only the interests of the Czechs and the German minority, but on the solution of it depends the future peace and happiness of the world. It is a well known fact that the Sudetens have for some years been agitating for the redress of the disabilities and the grievances under which they have been labouring in a State in which they are but a minority. When the annexation of Austria by HERR HITLER became an accomplished fact to the dismay of Central Europe, the Sudeten problem and its implications came to be realized more and more

by the Powers interested in the integrity and independence of Czecho-Slovakia. They knew that, sooner or later, Nazi Germany would attempt to extend her borders at the expense of the Czech republic. That was why France and the Soviet felt themselves called upon to pledge their moral and military support to Czecho-Slovakia in the event of German aggression. Britain's attitude to this question was so ably defined in March by MR. CHAMBERLAIN, when he declared in the Commons that Britain was not subject to any commitments in the matter and that her action would be determined by the exigencies of the situation. The Premier qualified his statement, adding that Britain might find herself a party to this question, especially so in the case of two countries like "Britain and France, with long associations of friendship, with interests closely interwoven, devoted to the same ideals of democratic liberty and determined to uphold them." This statement was rightly interpreted as a timely warning against any precipitate action by Nazi Germany. And it had the desired effect of easing the tension in Europe for the time being.

Since then Britain has been actively influencing both parties to bring about a peaceful settlement of this knotty question. She had even gone so far as to send LORD RUNCIMAN to explore all possible avenues of peaceful solution. The mediator's task is, indeed, unenviable. And it must be said to his credit that he has so far succeeded in evolving a formula which might well serve as the basis of negotiations. The plan is to divide the country into a number of Cantons which would have wide powers of local administration and would send representatives to the parliament at Prague which would be responsible for defence, finance and foreign policy. If this scheme is accepted by the Sudetens, it will go a long way towards meeting their demands. But the question is if the Sudeten leader is a free agent or a mere tool in the hands of the Nazi Dictator. The latest news is reassuring in the sense that the British Government have despatched through their Ambassador a letter to Berlin, expressing their emphatic opinion that a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten question rests with HITLER alone. It is to be hoped that the FEUHRER will not be so spoiling for war as to ignore this solemn warning.

The Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd.

It is gratifying to note that the Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd., an indigenous business concern run on co-operative lines, is now entering on its twenty-first year. The Com-

pany has declared a 12 per cent dividend to be paid to the shareholders. The Directors in presenting their report state that "the year has been a successful one in spite of keen competition". It is heartening to find that this local venture launched by a few leading men of Jaffna has outlived the vicissitudes to which most of our local undertakings succumb. The success of this concern is proof that there is business acumen in our people which is hardly ever used to the advantage of the country. Now that employment under Government and elsewhere is very restricted, our people will do well to turn their attention to business—a field which is now almost the monopoly of foreigners. The capital available in the country should not be allowed to be idle but invested in some useful and profitable ventures. There are some shares of the Co-operative Stores for sale which, we trust, the public will come forward to buy and thus help the Company enlarge its sphere of business. This is the only way of arresting the outward flow of the country's wealth. That way lies the prosperity of the country. We hope an earnest effort will be made in this direction.

JAFFNA CO-OPERATIVE STORES LTD.

Appeal for Public Encouragement

The 20th Annual General Meeting of the Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd has held on Saturday the 28th August at 3.30 p.m. at the Company's premises, Mudir, V. Ponnambalam the President, presided. The Annual Report was read by the President, explaining the position of the Company and after careful consideration the Report was adopted.

Then the Balance Sheet for the year ending June 1938 which was circulated previously among members was adopted at the meeting. The Company has declared a dividend of 12% for the year under review. It was brought to the notice of the meeting that shares are still available for sale and an appeal was made to the public of Jaffna to encourage this national business concern.

Ceylon Savings Certificates

The Ceylon Savings Certificates will be ushered in ceremonially by the Postal Department on September 19th.

The Financial Secretary (Mr. H. J. Huxham) and the Minister of Communications and Works (Major J. L. Kotelawala) will broadcast from the Colombo Station on September 16th and September 18th, respectively on the saving, certificate movement.

Agricultural Quota Bill

Draft Approved by Committee

Colombo Wednesday.

THE draft Agricultural Quota Bill, subject to minor modifications, was finally approved yesterday by the Executive Committee of Agriculture and Lands.

The object of the Bill is to facilitate and encourage the marketing and sale of the agricultural products of Ceylon by regulating the importation into the Island of identical and related products from abroad. For this purpose a higher tariff will be imposed on foreign stuff.

No "regulated product" according to the Bill, can be imported into Ceylon except on a licence issued by the Commissioner for Agricultural Marketing.

The local products should pass through the hands of the Commissioner for Agricultural Marketing, who is empowered to purchase, on behalf of the Government all such products and sell them to the importers.

Direct Trade Agreement with Australia?

Parleys with Delegation

A delegation of the Board of Ministers with the Director of Commerce met the Commerce Minister of Australia and the Attorney General of the Commonwealth on Sunday on board the P. & O. Comorin on which the Australian party is travelling to Australia.

The discussion revealed that there was a mutual desire on the part of both countries to increase their trades. Ceylon's case for a reduction of duties on coconut products, plumbago and citronella oil was presented by Mr. Corea. In this connection it was pointed out that a non-Empire country like the Dutch East Indies was Ceylon's successful rival.

The Australian representative said that though Ceylon was now enjoying a favourable balance of trade, yet it was in Australia's interest to treat Ceylon favourably and to reciprocate the proposed import of Australian foods, fruits and wine to Ceylon.

It is understood that Mr. Corea pointed out that favourable treatment to Australia depended on the concessions Australia agreed to give Ceylon.

Personal

Mr. V. L. Joshua, Chief Clerk of the Public Works Department, Muar, has been promoted to "Special Grade" in the Johore Government Clerical Service as from 1st January 1938. He is the eldest son of the late Dr. & Mrs. N. L. Joshua of Chankana.

EUROPE ANXIOUS OVER CZECH CRISIS

Violent Anti-Czech Campaign in German Press

GERMAN PUBLIC DREAD POSSIBILITY OF WAR

London, Tuesday.

THE latest developments in the Czech crisis were considered at a specially-summoned meeting of Cabinet members today, the outcome of which is being watched with anxious interest in almost every capital of Europe.

Sir Neville Henderson, who prior to the meeting, lengthily conferred with Lord Halifax, is believed to have reported on the violent anti-Czech campaign in the German Press and the tremendous scale of the military manoeuvres at present being conducted in Germany.

Outside Influence

Lord Runciman, to whose value and of whose work reports of newspaper correspondents in Prague pay a tribute, is known to be using his influence (not without effect) on both the Czecho-Slovakian Government and the Sudeten German Party with a view to promoting an agreement.

His Majesty's Government is hoping for early evidence of a revival of the stage of active negotiation.

There is no disposition to minimise the gravity and the difficulty of the decisions which have to be taken by the leaders in Czecho-Slovakia, but both in the Press and official circles here full weight is also given to the encouraging factors, among which are the increasing realisation of the responsibilities which the present dangerous situations imposed and the appearance of a growing willingness to accept them and make the necessary concessions.

It is confidently expected that the Czecho-Slovak Government will continue to do all in its power to prevent any incidents.

German Public Dreads War

Berlin, Tuesday.

Alarm over Czecho-Slovakia has given the public a bad fit of nerves. The majority are profoundly uninterested in the future of the Sudeten-Germans and dread the barest possibility of war.

This public uneasiness coincides with serious economic misgivings and a sense of personal hardship, especially among the workers.

Undoubtedly, the authorities fully realise the discontented state of public feeling, especially in the capital and the large industrial districts.

Service Term Extended

Berlin, Tuesday.

Soldiers, whose two years of service, is due to expire at the end of September have been officially informed that their service is extended to October 27th.

MEMBER FOR PT. PEDRO UNWELL

Council Grants Leave

In the State Council on Wednesday Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, member for Pt. Pedro, was granted leave to absent himself from the sittings of the State Council from September 7th 1938 to January 31st, 1939, on grounds of ill health.

Dr. N. M. Perera (Ruanwella) said that he did not like to oppose that motion, but there were strong rumours that the member was going on a deputation. He assumed that it was not so and that the member was going because he was unwell.

AMERICA TO INTERVENE?

U. S View of Sir John Simon's Speech

"Sir John Simon's speech is at once a claim on American support, if a catastrophe should come, and a skilful means of mobilising the threat of American intervention behind the British warning in an effort to prevent one," comments "the Herald Tribune."

It adds, "nor can it be said that the reference is unwarranted considering the lengths to which Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hull have already gone in their support of British policy in Europe."

4-Day Hunt for Wounded 'Rogue'

Pt. Pedro, Tuesday.

Mr. S. C. Rasa Ratnam, teacher Hartley College, Pt. Pedro, has "bagged" one of the two rogue elephants, which had been proclaimed by the Assistant Government Agent, Mr. P. O. Fernando.

This elephant had damaged crops and chased people. Mr. Ratnam shot it in the jungles between Mankulam and Odduchuddan and then tracked the wounded animal for four days.

Finally he came across the animal which had died of its wounds.

Control of Spread of Tuberculosis

An Ordinance Likely

An Ordinance, having as its objective the control of the spread of tuberculosis in this country, will be placed before the State Council shortly.

The Bill, it is understood, will contain provision, amongst other things, for the segregation of patients and for the affording of the most up-to-date facilities for the treatment of patients.

The compulsory segregation of patients will, however, not be possible until adequate provision has been made for the housing of all tuberculosis patients.

Within recent months the authorities have noticed a tendency towards the gradual spread of tuberculosis, particularly in the rural areas.

Recently, about 150 patients were refused admission both at Ragama and Kandana Sanatorium owing to lack of adequate accommodation.

The question of providing more accommodation has, therefore, become an urgent necessity.

The Executive Committee of King George V Memorial Fund, as recently reported addressed the Government on the question with a view to obtaining permission to undertake the building of the new institutions in connection with the anti-tuberculosis drive.

The Committee contemplates the building of one tuberculosis hospital at Welisara and another at Hambantota.

HARIJAN SATYAGRAHA

Near Mr. Gandhi's Ashram

Wardhaganj, Monday.

The first batch of five Harijans are observing a fast and satyagraha on the verandah of the room near Mr. Gandhi's ashram at Shegaon, since Saturday afternoon.

Mr. Khander, of Nagpur, explained to Mr. Gandhi the object of the agitation, namely, the securing of the inclusion of a Harijan Minister in the C. P. Cabinet.

A second batch arrived at noon and left for Shegaon to relieve the first batch, who are leaving for Nagpur tonight. It is understood that the arrangement is to send a new batch of volunteers on alternate days.

Matrimonial

RAJASOORIYAR—SELLAPPAH

The marriage of Miss Thangaratnam, the only daughter of Mr. S. Sellappah, Manager, J. M. B. Fund Ltd., Vannarponne, and Mrs. Sellappah, with Mr. S. M. Rajasooriyar, of the Colombo Municipality, was celebrated according to Hindu rites on Monday the 29th ultimo.

There was a large gathering of relatives and friends at the ceremony and the new couple were the recipients of many congratulatory messages and presents.

NO VOTE FOR ESTATE LABOURERS

WHITEHALL'S SUGGESTION

VILLAGE BILL SENT BACK

THE Village Communities Ordinance has come back from the Secretary of State with a suggestion from him that section 12 be amended with regard to the franchise of Indian labourers.

He has suggested that no distinction be made between Indian and Ceylonese labourers and that all labourers, overseers and kangany and their families living on estates be excluded from the franchise to Village Committees.

The Secretary of State's view was considered and approved at a special meeting of the Executive Committee of Local Administration today. Mr. K. Natesa Iyer (Hatton alone) dissented.

"Discriminatory"

It was generally felt that it was a piece of discriminatory legislation with which the Statute Book should not be sullied. The Secretary of State agrees and is prepared to assent to the Bill if his proposal is adopted. He has given permission to the Minister of Local Administration to make this statement in Council.

The following draft of a section is now likely to replace section 12 of the Bill.

At the election of a member for any ward of a village area, every person of either sex shall be qualified to vote, who—

is a British subject; and

is not less than twenty-one years of age on the first day of May of the year in which the election is held; and

is resident in that ward, and has been so resident for a continuous period of not less than six months during the eighteen months immediately preceding the date of the election;

Labourers Out

Provided, however, that no person otherwise qualified under this section to vote at such election shall be entitled or permitted to vote, if such person—

is a labourer, or an overseer or kangany in charge of labourers, employed on any plantation and in occupation of any building on the plantation provided by the employer for the accommodation of any such labourer, overseer or kangany, or is the spouse or a child or a dependent of any such labourer, overseer or kangany and living with him in any such building on any such plantation; or

has been adjudged by a competent court to be of unsound mind; or

is at the date of the election disqualified by the operation of any order made by a court under Section 18.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Education Director's Discretionary Powers

A Reply to Mr. Advocate S. Rajaratnam's Letter

Sir.—Mr. S. Rajaratnam in his letter published in your issue of 11th August makes an elaborate defence of himself against the Director's decision in finding him unfit to be Manager. He gives a perverted and distorted version of the inquiry held by the Department of Education in connection with the interdiction of myself from the post of Principal of Saiva Training School. As the person chiefly concerned, I feel it my duty to correct some of the mis-statements of Mr. Rajaratnam so that the public may understand the action of the Director in reinstating me in my post and in removing him from the office of Manager.

At the very outset, let me protest against Mr. Rajaratnam's assumption that all his opponents are enemies of the Hindu Board. As for myself I believe that I can safely claim that as a Director, Principal, Secretary, and Committee Member I have always acted loyally by the Hindu Board and that my active co-operation has rendered it possible for Mr. Rajaratnam to achieve whatever success he can claim in his work as manager. The only possible reason for the drastic action he took against me even without the approval of the Committee of the Board is that I was an obstacle to his attempt to capture completely the control of the Board and make it a one man show.

I am a man with serious family responsibilities, and when Mr. Rajaratnam decided to ruin me I had no other course open to me except to appeal to the Director of Education for protection, and if the inquiry went against him nobody is justified in blaming me as I was acting in self-defence. It is equally wrong to say that I have done any dis-service to the Hindu Board by speaking the truth, as a chance is now given to rectify all the past errors for which the Director has held Mr. Rajaratnam responsible.

I shall now proceed to examine point by point Mr. Rajaratnam's statements against the inquiry conducted by the Assistant Director of Education.

1. There was difference of opinion between the Manager and myself with regard to the admission of certain students nominated by the Manager. It was agreed to refer the dispute to the Director for his decision; but before getting a definite ruling on this point, the Manager interdicted me from duty. He is wrong in saying that the Director gave a decision in his favour to the effect that he had absolute power to select students for admission independent of educational considerations. The fact is that the Director never gave such a ruling. If a ruling had been given, why did he not produce it at the inquiry? This was really one of the questions which the Assistant Director was instructed to inquire into. The extract quoted by Mr. Rajaratnam from a letter sent by the Director subsequent to the inquiry does not help him as he was found guilty of having made admissions in violation of educational principles

and the requirements of Code rules.

2. There was no question of disobedience to the Manager as he had failed to get from the Director a ruling in his favour. The President's letter to me was not based on any letter from the Director, but was based on the information orally given to him by Mr. Rajaratnam. The President's letter runs thus:—"The Director has told the Manager, so he tells me, that he has the right to select students and not the Principal." I was therefore right in saying that the Director had not given any ruling.

3. It is wrong to say that my failure to get my Elalai nominee selected was the cause of the trouble between us. Mr. Rajaratnam laboured hard to prove this assertion at the inquiry but failed to do so as it was an utterly false charge.

4. That failure to admit students on the opening day exposed the students to irreparable loss is a myth. Again it is an exaggeration to say that it meant a great injury to the Hindu Board. There was no emergency situation, as there is nothing in the Code to show that all the candidates should be on the roll on the opening day and to prevent the Director from sanctioning the admission of the three candidates in question later for the purpose of determining the strength of the eligible staff. The three candidates were actually admitted by the Manager two days later, a fact which clearly shows that there existed no emergency.

5. The only question before the inquiry was whether the interdiction of the Principal was just or unjust. There was therefore only one issue, but Mr. Watson told us that the inquiry would be a full one, as he had been asked to go into all the circumstances which had led to the drastic step taken by the Manager against me. It is therefore wrong for him to say that Mr. Watson went beyond the terms of reference indicated in the Director's letter to him.

6. It is utterly untrue for Mr. Rajaratnam to say that I said at a meeting of the Board of Directors that the officers of the Department had asked me to say all I could against the Board at the inquiry. My interview with the Director of Education took place long after the inquiry, and it is true that he found fault with me for not having brought the irregularities revealed at the inquiry to his notice earlier; but it is certainly a perversion of fact to say that any officer of the Department conspired with me to make charges against the Board.

7. It is again wrong for him to say that I led evidence on irrelevant matters. All the points on which evidence was taken were really the causes which led the Manager to act against me, and it is the duty of the Departmental officer to investigate fully any irregularity brought to his notice in connection with the inquiry. Mr. Rajaratnam fully participated in the proceedings and cross-examined my witnesses. He only protested against the evidence of two witnesses on one important point when he found that they had irrefutable documentary evidence

against him. It is therefore a distortion of fact to say that Mr. Watson recorded evidence on irrelevant matters despite Mr. Rajaratnam's protest. The only question now is whether the charges brought against Mr. Rajaratnam were proved or not, and the question of relevancy or otherwise does not arise so long as the evidence on which the Director's finding was based cannot be questioned.

8. It is a serious departure from truth to say that Mr. Watson begged for a certificate that the inquiry was conducted along proper lines. It is inconceivable that such a request would have been made from one who had shown so much discourtesy to him. At the conclusion of the inquiry Mr. Watson wanted to know if he had given every opportunity to both sides to state their cases fully and asked us if we had anything more to say. Mr. Rajaratnam was silent, but I said that I had been at a great disadvantage as all my witnesses were teachers working under Mr. Rajaratnam who would naturally hesitate to give evidence against their employer. After the inquiry was over Mr. Watson had a private talk with us with reference to the uncharitable allegations made by Mr. Rajaratnam. He was speaking with emotion as a Tamil who had the greatest reverence for our religion and reminded us with tears in his eyes about the great services done to our religion and language by his grandfather, Mr. Nevin Chidambarampillai, the founder of the Jaffna Hindu College, and by his uncle Mr. Nevin Selvadurai, its first Principal. But he never made any supplication for a certificate of good conduct.

9. Mr. Rajaratnam's complaint that I had been exonerated without even a warning and that I have been given an increment without the recommendation of the Manager shows only his malice. That there was room for honest difference of opinion between myself and the Manager with regard to the right of selecting candidates for admission is admitted by the Minister of Education, who informed me after the inquiry was over that there was ambiguity in the Code clause with regard to this matter. Nobody could therefore blame me for my action, and as the Manager was perverse, the Director had to act independently as the guardian of the interests of the teachers. I am only sorry that Mr. Rajaratnam is not generous enough when he questions the action of the Director in this matter.

10. Mr. Rajaratnam's plea for a Board of Appeal cannot stand as there is the Minister and the Education Committee composed of independent members of Council to revise the decision of the Director of Education whenever there is an appeal against his decision.

Yours etc.

S. SWAMINATHAN,
Director, Hindu Board.

Myliddy,
23-8-38.

[This correspondence is closed.
—Ed. H. O.]

The Paranthan Madam

Sir,—In reply to Fairplay's letter, re the Paranthan Madam, which appeared in your issue of the 18th inst., under the heading, "Indiscriminate charity", I wish to state that the madam satisfies a

public need, and deserves financial assistance from the public.

The building stands on the Jaffna-Kandy road behind the Paranthan Railway station, and is as useful to the travelling public as to the farmers under the Karachchi Scheme. It is expected that the owners of farms in the Northern portion of the Karachchi Scheme, and the labourers who work on these farms will stay there for a night or a day. Paranthan is at one end of the Karachchi Scheme and the farms are mostly situated at distances varying from two to six miles from the station. Those who own land in the middle and Southern portions do not go to Paranthan, but go to Kilinochchi. The Madam will also be a place of rest for people who go to this area from different parts of Ceylon in search of work, and for the inhabitants of the villages served by the Paranthan Railway Station. Students who visit the Karachchi Scheme for sight seeing and study will also find the building useful. But the people who will be benefited most are the traders and farmers of Jaffna who go to the Vanni by cart or on foot for buying cattle, timber, paddy, straw and tobacco.

I am interested in the Madam, because I feel that the colonization of the Vanni should proceed from Paranthan southwards to Vavuniya and eastwards and westwards to Mullaitivu and Mannar. The farmers under the Karachchi Scheme should be regarded as pioneers of colonization in the dry zone. The Karachchi Irrigation scheme would have been a greater success, and the movement for colonization would have proceeded more rapidly, if a madam had been built somewhere near Paranthan twenty years ago. I should like to have madams built at public expense at Mankulam, Vavuniya, Thunakkai and other important centres in the Vanni.

The importance and usefulness of the Paranthan madam will be appreciated when the Paranthan Pudukkudiyiruppu and the Paranthan—Pooneryn roads have been completed.

Given proper facilities, under intelligent guidance the Jaffna Tamils will within half a century be able to colonize the Vanni.

Educated people should take an interest in matters such as this, and give a helping hand to their poor brethren who are struggling to eke out a bare existence under adverse conditions in the Dry Zone.

In progressive countries like England people readily listen and give money to emigration and colonization schemes. The Fairbridge Farm schools in Australia are succeeding because people readily subscribe towards their expenses.

I am not disposed to carry on a discussion on the ethics of Madam building or to engage in a philosophical disquisition on Charity.

I shall be happy if those who are convinced of the usefulness of a Madam at Paranthan will contribute liberally in aid of the building fund, keeping in view the political, economic, and cultural aspects of a policy of encouraging the Jaffna Tamils to emigrate to other parts of Ceylon.

Yours truly,
—V. Muttukumaru,

Nallore,
Jaffna, 25-8-38.

MEN & MATTERS

(Continued from page 2)

partly due to our Financial Secretary. Benumbed by vitriolic attacks on the taxation policy in the recent past, Mr. Huxham has been successful in enlisting the whole hearted support of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, evidently echoing the classical, Nym shall live by thee and Ye shall live by Nym. The country is drifting towards its immediate and inevitable bankruptcy with wasteful expenditure and thoughtless taxation to keep in comfort a large army of officers in the Public Service. I make a present of this to my readers as a bit of information only to show that neither Mr. Huxham nor Sir Baron cares a rap for you or me so long as the deluge does not drown them. A classical example of lunacy in Railway administration is the payment of Rs. 150/- as salary to the Station Master at Baseline Road with subordinates on the same Arabian Nights scale without even a hundredth part as revenue from that station. At the Secretariat and other Government offices one finds clerks studying the race handicaps during office hours to spot out the Treble. And yet the Financial Secretary and the Board of Ministers have nothing to offer in the way of consolation to the distressed taxpayer. Like the conceited Caesar they maintain they are as constant as the Northern Star, so much so the expenditure in this budget are as heavy millstones round the neck of the taxpayer as ever before. Thus killing certainly is not murder according to these Moses.

Kankasanturai will soon be an industrial centre. I am told that negotiations are going on to have a cement factory there. Some Indian capitalists are interested in floating a company to manufacture cement at Kankasanturai. Mr. Subbiah one of Colombo's City Fathers is the live wire of this. Arrangements are already being made to float the company and those interested had a series of conferences with the Ministers of Commerce, and the Director of Industries. I hope and wish that the Government will bless this new undertaking.

By the way, I came across a book by a Catholic priest—"The Grands Cimenteres Sansla Lune". Here the priest condemns the criminal callousness with which the Spanish clergy looked on while thousands were murdered under Franco's orders. The attitude of the Catholic Clergy in Spain was revolting to the Catholic conscience of George Bernanos—the name of the author. According to this book the massacre of prisoners took place in the presence of the priests and not without their blessings. So much were his feelings moved by such sights that the author contemptuously refers to the head of the clergy in Majorca as "the person whom convention obliges me to call the Archbishop of Palma". Then soundly rating the Spanish bishops he asks "you say the people of Spain have lost God. But have you ever given them God to keep? And has not Christian education been sabotaged there by a handful of Church profiteers?"

Europe is passing through a crisis. Hitler dominates the European

stage. No body knows his motive or design. He had ordered a vast military demonstration both in the West and the East. Simultaneously defence fortifications are being pushed ahead at a feverish speed as if Germany is in imminent danger of invasion. From this demonstration to war is an easy transition. The armies, ordered for manoeuvres on the Czech frontier may at any convenient hour be asked to cross the frontiers. This will mean a European war and to hold the other possible enemies, German armies will be ready fully armed against France and Russia. Hitler cannot think of a more detailed plan if he meant immediate war. European Chancellories, however do not expect Hitler to strike. But they may be wrong. The Sudeten situation is most opportune for strife. For if Runciman reports that Nazis are irreconcilable, Britain will then be committed to back the Czechs. That is not so now. Only France and Russia have guaranteed the integrity of their State. Hitler may, therefore, consider it dangerous to wait.

The General Elections are nearing and prospective candidates are busy. I am reliably informed that Prof. C. Suntheralingam is retiring from Government Service soon. He has definite intentions of contesting all the four seats in Jaffna. Perhaps this will be a record in Ceylon or is it in the world. All who know the Professor will know that he is not joking when he says that he is going to contest all the four seats. I know for certain that he will do it and has a good chance of succeeding. He is a darling of the young men of Jaffna, nay, all Ceylon. Even with others his name is very popular. Perhaps it is the ill luck of the young men at the Varsity that he has decided to give up his career and begin a new one. Anyway Jaffna particularly and Ceylon in general will benefit by his entry into the political life of the country.

Order Nisi

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF JAFFNA
 Testy No. 636.
 In the matter of the estate of the late Ampalayana Arumugam of Karaldivu West Deceased. Meenadhipillai widow of Ampalayana Arumugam of do
 Vs. Petitioner.
 1. Arumugam Kanapatipillai
 2. Arumugam Nadarajah and
 3. Kandiah Muttukumar all of do Respondents.
 This matter coming on for disposal before C. Coomaraswamy, Esquire, District Judge, Jaffna on the 11th day of August 1938 in the presence of Mr. A. Kanagasabai Proctor on the part of the petitioner and the affidavit of the petitioner dated the 13th day of July 1938 having been read. It is ordered that the abovenamed 3rd respondent be appointed Guardian-ad-Litem over the minors the 1st and 2nd respondents for the purpose of protecting their interest and of representing them in this case and that the petitioner be declared entitled to have Letters of Administration to the estate of the said intestate as his lawful widow unless the respondents or any person or persons interested shall appear before this Court on the 28th day of September 1938 and state objection or shew cause to the contrary.
 This 29th day of August 1938.
 Sgd. C. Coomaraswamy,
 District Judge.
 [O. 38. 1 & 3-9-38.]

A SHORT STORY

(Continued from page 1)

she was unharmed. The dead child lay, unobserved by its father, in the arms of the stranger.

III

The hoot of a passing bus—it stopped and the driver and conductor and a few passengers ascended to break half a dozen coconuts. Then they saw the scene—all blood and death. "Please let me gather the water from your coconuts—there is my sister lying on the road—" Kamala asked, when Lila herself came up—neat and in tip top condition. Lila went near her husband whose head was now bandaged. The stranger handed over the dead child to Kamala and was gone—in vain Kamala looked for him to thank him for all he had done.

The party were accommodated in the bus and they arranged to have their disabled car being brought home.

Was it indeed, Kamala, that walked the garden? Yes, but her skeleton. Her mind was being eaten up. She hardly partook of food. She never slept. She stared at every flower and every plant; did she see her Kishen? She walked where the child used to play. A living ghost amidst life—for Raghu and Lila had already plunged into life. Whisky and soda had pulled him through all-right.

Suddenly Kamala pauses in her walk and looks frightened. Some words float down to her from the windows above.

"We should not be happy over another's death, but the child has gone out of the way—I am entirely yours".

Her own husband's voice—and he was referring to his own son!

Raghu was pouring his words into the ears of his new wife.

Kamala stood as if paralysed. Then she shook herself and ran, as if she were pursued by hooligans. She shut herself up in her room—for a few minutes. On a clean bundle, into which she had put her jewels, she wrote: "I heard what you said about Kishen's death. I shall also be out of the way".

Kamala, who never went out of the house since her Kishen's death was seen going out that evening—and she never came back again.

VI

That coconut for the God! If only it had been taken! Kamala was superstitious.

And then, she asked herself as she walked, was that man who, with one application of his shoulder, rolled up the huge car? He was never seen again—he had simply disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared? Could it have been a spirit? Could it have been God?

And she laughed as she thought: "God! Can God smash my innocent child's head so cruelly?" And the picture brought tears into her eyes.

"Leave her alone; she is the mother of the dead child. Her sorrow is great"—

That was what they whispered as busmen and travellers went to the God with coconuts and found

Kamala haunting the place night and day. A physical wreck, she feared no harm from man or beast. She lived on the broken pieces of coconuts that were available there in plenty. In fact, people offered to give her food and clothes, but she never spoke a word, she never accepted anything. She ate the coconuts and roamed the rocky place.

* * *

Forty days later, as she was sleeping behind the stone image at night, with the door locked from within—the door allowed both air and light to come in—Kamala was startled to hear a noise as of the door opening. She rose in fear and looked into the eyes of the strong stranger who had helped her.

"Alone here? There are beasts of prey round about—see, that leopard has been drawn here by your smell—Follow me."

The man waved his stick—the animal leapt and disappeared. Kamala followed him as if she were a baby.

V

Not a God—nor a spirit—but a farmer who cultivated his field, watered his trees—all alone, some six miles away from the temple. Ramesh they called him. Very few people came to Ramesh—neither did he go out, except to sell his produce on the market days in the town, fifteen miles away. Ramesh threw the back on his shoulders and walked all the way—no cart, no bus.

"You have made this hut almost a temple, Kamala—" Ramesh once observed, as he returned from the market day and found everything neat.

"Paradise? I was for some days happy in the belief that you were God, until you took me out of the leopard's mouth that night. Why should not this be paradise if flowers and cleanliness can make it worthy of you?"

And Ramesh patted Kamala on her head and blessed her, as he heard her words of love.

The country air—the peaceful life—the constant thought of God and, above all, regular work, all gave a new beauty and strength to Kamala as she stayed with Ramesh for five years.

She was content—she felt that she lived purposefully. Even the flowers seemed to know her. The birds did not fly away in fright as she approached them.

"We are growing rich too fast—" Ramesh once said, "I have more money than I want! It flowed in after you came to live with me."

"Father—you have given me life so that I may be happy ad-

(Continued on Page 8)

Just Published!

திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை

with Critical Introduction, Tamil

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[Mis 113 11-8 to 1-9-38] [T]

A SHORT STORY

(Continued from page 7)

midst the laughing flowers and the waving green. You have brought me nearer to God." And Kamala bent her head in sweet worshipfulness.

VI

It was evening. The setting sun was a blaze of colours. Kamala stood watching the beauty when, from the top of another rock a little apart, she saw Ramesh beckoning to her. She ran to him.

And then she saw, at the foot of the rock on which the temple stood, on the very spot where her child had been dashed to death, another motor car turned turtle.

With Ramesh she walked briskly. A man, drunk and reeling, was prattling something incoherently. Beside him lay the dead body of a woman—most ghastly in blood, with flesh torn out of her stomach.

"Have you a coconut to wash your wounds with?" asked the stranger of the man. He only laughed. "Coconut? I carry no coconuts surely!"

Kamala led the man to their hut—while Ramesh carried the dead body.

* * *

"I am glad she is dead—she was a *Rakshasi*—But I did not kill her."

It was Raghu speaking of his dead Lila. Raghu was saying almost exactly what he had said when Kishen had died six years

ago.

Will Kamala go back with him? Raghu was penitent. He was now poor. He was in debts. He had drunk and gambled away his patrimony on his wife and her friends and relatives.

"Then live here as my—brother" Kamala had said, "We can work hard and earn our bread and feel in the presence of Ramesh the happy and care free life of babies with their father."

* * *

Nightfall—and still no Ramesh. He always returned even on market days, with the setting sun.

Kamala was getting anxious. Soon her eyes fell on a closed cover placed near the image on which she threw flowers every evening and morning.

"Do think me as a spirit if you like—a good spirit. I am going away. The hut and the grounds belong to you. Lift the stone on which the image is placed, and you will find something for you—it is all yours, because it is all mine."

And under the stone were costly jewels and sovereigns and rupees and notes and Government promissory notes, all endorsed in Kamala's name.

"Back to wealth again—" Raghu said with subdued delight.

"Wealth?" and Kamala suppressed her sorrow. "That wealth is not ours. I know Ramesh lived for working out Gandhiji's ideals. The wealth goes to Gandhiji's ashram."

(Ray's Weekly)

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