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VOL. I. No. 35

FRIDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 1947

PRICE FIVE CENTS

## CEYLON WILL CLAIM Rs. 950,000,000 BRITAIN'S DEBT TO THIS COUNTRY TO BE SUBJECT OF SPECIAL TALKS

*Mr. J. R. Jayawardene and  
Sir Oliver Flying to London*

*By Vernon Phelps*



MR. J. R. JAYAWARDENE  
(Minister For Finance)



SIR OLIVER GOONETILLEKE  
(Financial Wizard)

THE full range of financial relations between the United Kingdom and Ceylon I gather on good authority, will be the highlight feature of the forthcoming financial talks in London between the United Kingdom Government and the Ceylon Delegation, that will consist of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, Minister of Finance, and Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, Minister of Home Affairs and Rural Reconstruction, who was until recently Ceylon's financial Secretary.

The inclusion of Sir Oliver in the Ceylon Delegation was, of course, expected as it was he who had controlled the finances of the Island during the critical period which preceded the ushering in of the present regime under the Soulbury Constitution. Sir Oliver's wide knowledge of the financial issues and implications involved in the talks that will be held in London will be of incalculable value to the new Finance Minister who has just assumed office.

Sir Oliver's services to the country in increasing its revenue by his dexterous handling of the tea and copra contracts is still fresh in the country's memory. His successful negotiations in this connection resulted in a higher price for tea and copra and the additional levy of the 37 cents duty on tea (which incidentally evoked much comment in the British Press and the House of Commons, where the British Food Minister was described in some quarters as having been caught napping by the Ceylon Government) brought in a further inflow of revenue to Ceylon's Exchequer.

★ ● ★

I UNDERSTAND that the Ceylon delegation will anchor its London negotiations on the basis that Ceylon needs most urgently the 950 million rupees that the United Kingdom owes Ceylon in sterling balances. The delegation will press that no part of this loan can be foregone in view of the

rising food prices in Ceylon over which Ceylon has no control. In support of this submission the Ceylon Delegation will point to the situation in Australia which recently increased her price of flour by 50 per cent., making the export price three times the internal price.

The Ceylon delegation is confident that when it is pointed out that the whole of the outstanding loan is required for food imports, the United Kingdom is not likely, in these circumstances, to refuse.

Apart from this, I gather, that the Ceylon delegation will press for financial assistance from the United Kingdom and America to finance payments on capital expenditure on machinery, without which agricultural expansion and industrial development will not be possible in Ceylon.

★ ● ★

I ALSO understand that the Ceylon delegation will bring to the notice of the United Kingdom Government the significant fact that 80% of the tea industry in Ceylon is owned by United Kingdom nationals, resident in England and that the dividends earned by these persons result in a very serious drain on Ceylon's available Exchequer.

The Ceylon delegation will above all, in presenting the various aspects of the economic structure of the Island seek commensurate reciprocal advantage for Ceylon in defining the financial relations between the United Kingdom and Ceylon.

A strong claim for such reciprocal relations will be made particularly in view of the fact that the Island today needs all the possible resources it can command to forge ahead with the vast national schemes it has on hand to better the living standards of the people and prepare for eventualities, be they bright or bleak, which the future may hold for us.

With economists all over world predicting the advent of a world wide economic blizzard, it is indeed most reassuring that the Ceylon Government has already taken precautions to ensure that Ceylon will not be caught unprepared if and when the storm breaks.

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# CONTROLS AND OUR NATIONAL PLAN

THE public which has put up with the control of various commodities for nearly seven years will by now expect the Government to remove them.

Some of the controls have already been lifted, for example, control of tyres, used cars, motor vehicles of 9 H.P. and under, certain varieties of cloth, and cement which have been taken off the list of controlled articles. It must be remembered that although one Government has been replaced by another conditions in the Island and conditions in the world generally are the main considerations that have to be taken into account in making a decision on so important an economic issue as the lifting of controls as such. No one disputes the proposition that when a commodity is in short supply and it is also essential to the life of the community it is the duty of Government to take charge of the process of equitable distribution to the public who are consumers.

In modern State-craft another factor has to be very seriously considered, namely the outflow of national wealth. That is why national planning cannot be carried out without controlling various articles with a view to ensuring maximum production on several fronts. In the context of conditions in our country, if the occasion arises we may expect the import of foreign rice to be controlled in order to encourage production of rice within the Island. The production of other kinds of consumer goods may also require the adventitious aid of import control. We have also to remember the fact that every time we purchase imported goods we spend a portion of our national wealth abroad. Therefore although the public may desire to be able to buy anything at any time they would, as patriots, accept the position that a condition of plenty in so far as imported goods are concerned will not indicate any degree of prosperity but on the other hand would help to drain away the resources and the wealth of our country.

IN passing it may be observed that the Opposition in the British House of Commons has accused the Labour Government of having expended a large portion of the American loan on the import of luxury goods into England. The sting in this charge was the accusation that such imports were made in order to give the long suffering people of the British Isles a false sense of the achievements of the new regime. It will be remembered that the British Government obtained a large loan from America to help the British Treasury to find the resources with which to reconstruct war shattered England. Obviously if the Opposition is correct in stating that the money thus secured had been spent on unproductive though desirable purposes the responsibility of the present British Government will be heavy.

There is every need, therefore, for a country to conserve its wealth for the purpose of increasing its internal productivity. The policy on control therefore should be determined by the needs

of an economic plan for national development which we have every reason to hope the Government will announce.

No plan can be satisfactorily worked unless every aspect of national income and expenditure is taken into account. We cannot afford to send between 8 to 10 thousand rupees out of the country on every high-powered motor-car that is bought by a member of the public.

It can be argued that the citizen must have the freedom to do what he pleases with his money. That argument is valid where a Government does not plan its development and is only concerned with direct taxation for the purpose of finding the necessary money with which to develop the country. But when a Government decides to consider the wealth of the nation as a whole in order to assess the resources that are available for development works, even private spending must be controlled in order to prevent wealth from being wasted on unproductive activities. One way of doing so would be to tax motor vehicles of a certain specified H.P. and above so heavily that only a snob or an eccentric would wish to buy them. There will come a stage when the activities of even such gentlemen shall have to be controlled in order to adjust the economy of the land.

IT will generally be accepted as a principle that if an individual buys a car it must be the means of increasing the owner's efficiency and production; for example that car must enable him to double or treble the amount of work performed each day. If the car is used purely for the purpose of taking its owner to and from his place of work and lies idle all the time he is in office it does not increase the owner's capacity or efficiency in any marked degree. To develop this argument in another way, if a person can be of greater value to his business or profession if he can find swift transport and avoid 2 to 3 hours of the working day being wasted at bus halting places, railway stations, etc., then such a person deserves a car in preference to the type described earlier. An Insurance Agent, an Engineer and a Doctor, from this standpoint, should be entitled to have cars because their usefulness to the community would be very seriously impaired if they had to seek other transport.

For the rest in planning a nation's economy it would be wiser to increase the efficiency of public transport by increasing the frequency of bus services and trains so that the average office-goer and the general public will use these utility services and thus save the country a great deal of money.

It has to be remembered that when we speak of cars and transport we neither make cars nor dig for our own petrol. Every gallon of petrol that is used means so much money spent on the export of this commodity. Every additional car put on the road increases the outflow of our national wealth. Therefore in any plan for Ceylon we must necessarily control this aspect of our economy with-

By  
Maha Amarasingha

out paralysing the transport system which is of the greatest importance for the production and distribution of other resources. We have to carefully arrange the various components of our wealth.

IF we examine the process by which the U.K. has met the challenge of Peace, we will find that in the 1946-47 budget there was a deficit of £569,000,000, and the next budget 1947-48 has planned for a surplus of

£248,000,000. In looking for ways of additional revenue the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Dr. Dalton, increased the Customs Duty on tobacco by about 50 per cent. on an average increase of 1s. in the price of a packet of 20 cigarettes and of about 1s. 2d. an ounce in the price of pipe tobacco. The profits tax on Company Dividends was raised from 5 per cent. to 12½ per cent. and a 10 per cent. tax was imposed on bonus shares.

That is a useful model and a pointer to Ceylon.

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# GLASS THAT CAN BE SAWED, NAILED, FLOATED, BOUNCED OR BENT!

Glass that can be sawed, nailed, floated, or bounced or bent like rubber—these are among some revolutionary new applications for glass which promise a bright future for this industry. Today 180 companies in the United States manufacture 1,090 varieties of glass—more than all the metals and alloys combined. From small beginnings at the turn of the century American factories have developed to where one turns out about 750,000 electric light bulbs a day; another 5,000 soft-drink bottles a minute.

THE introduction of some 50 new uses for glass which twenty years ago would have seemed fantastic, has opened up broad new commercial markets for the products of the glass industry in the United States. In such fields as building construction, automobile production and textile weaving, for instance, glass, in its various forms, is taking a foremost position. This increased usage has prompted business analysts to predict for glass one of the greatest single industrial expansions in modern times.

Of the 180 companies in the United States manufacturing glass, four firms, with their subsidiaries, probably account for a good half of the industry's production. For example, one manufacturer in Illinois markets approximately 40 per cent. of America's bottles and containers; a producer in Pittsburgh turns out 60 per cent. of the nation's window glass and 90 per cent. of all plate glass; while a New York firm makes a miscellaneous line of electric light bulbs and radio tubes, along with laboratory, industrial, kitchen and decorative glassware.

Development of non-traditional glass products in the United States has taken place almost entirely since the beginning of the 20th century. As early as 1905 a Virginian glass blower perfected a bottle-blowing machine. By 1916 another inventor introduced the method of flat-drawing molten window glass, and by 1927 additional progress made it possible for a New York firm to produce 500,000 to 750,000 electric light bulbs per day. These were milestones in a new industry.



A THOUSAND KINDS OF GLASS

THROUGH the untiring efforts of American chemists, the industry today makes 1,000 kinds of glass, more than all the metals and alloys combined. The purposes they can serve seem almost unlimited. After scientific treatment glass has lost its traditional brittleness and can now be sawed and nailed like lumber, or floated, bounced and bent like rubber. As a metal substitute glass may be used by the automobile industry to produce crumple-proof fenders and to encase instruments. Airplane makers use glass in its fibrous form to fashion fuselage for aircraft.

Laboratory experiments have revealed many innovations for United States manufacturers. One formula with a 96 per cent. silica content—approximately pure quartz—produces a glass harder and more chemically inert than any other on the market. It is virtually indestructible by thermal shock. At the opposite end of the scale is a glass made with no silica at all, which is almost as revolutionary a process as knitting without needles. A lens made of this substance has remarkable optical characteristics—much greater light-bending ability than the fastest lens previously used.

A newly developed product known as fibre-glass shows amazing properties. This material can be handled like any very flexible substance and can be put to such varied uses as electrical and thermal insulation and as drapery fabric. Another discovery, known under the trade name of foamglass, a black, opaque, buoyant substance weighing only one-fifteenth as much as ordinary glass, is produced by baking finely powdered glass with carbon dust. The product can be readily sawed, shaped or drilled. Foamglass is employed in cold storage insulation, and may in the future be used as roof insulation.

Glass blocks or bricks are finding wide acceptance in American building construction because of their insulating qualities, and their useful and attractive means of lighting interiors.



GLASS BONDED TO METALS

RECENTLY methods have been developed for bonding glass

to metal; or tempering glass, so that it becomes extremely strong; or treating it so that it transmits but does not reflect light; or cold moulding it so that it may be formed into intricate shapes with accurate threads. Glass has become recognized as one of the toughest substances known to mankind. It can be produced with the tensile strength of steel, and with a weight lighter than aluminium or heavier than gray iron.

The general, over-all picture of the future of the glass industry in the United States envisions new glass products making big inroads into fields that have used metals exclusively for decades past. Chemical engineers have produced a glass tough enough to be used for ball bearings and that can withstand pressures known to reduce metals to putty-like substance. Glass springs also have been developed on an amazing scale. One experimental spring compressed several million times still showed no sign of fatigue.

Experts predict that American manufacturers soon will produce glass laminate airplane parts—tail cones, fuel tanks and instrument housing; sinks, refrigerators and wash basins; small boats, glass laminate truck and trailer bodies and prefabricated houses. Engineers, especially in chemical plants, are considering the practical use of glass pipe for plumbing. Already a successful method of electric welds for this pipe material has been developed, and the use of standard pipe fittings is in

the process of production. Such plumbing equipment is especially valuable because of its non-rust and non-corrosive qualities.



MEDICAL SCIENCE SEEKS NEW USES

MEDICAL science also is looking to glass for new uses. Besides experimenting with glass fabrics for bandage materials, surgeons have employed the thread-like glass product as sutures. It is non-absorbant and does not irritate. Hospitals too are turning to the use of glass on a large scale in constructing new medical centres. Whole exterior wall exposures are being panelled with glass which admits 70 per cent. of solar light and blocks out 55 per cent. of solar heat.

The glass industry of the United States views the future with great confidence. Its present capacities for producing ordinary marketable items are up to par and plans are being drawn to include the mass output of scores of new commodities. At present American glass firms turn out 5,000 soft-drink bottles per minute, 600 electric light bulbs per minute, and 125,000 square feet of glass per day. Experts point to these production marks as an indication of what tomorrow may hold.—(USIS).



MR. BANDARANAIKE CARRIES JAFFNA WITH HIM

Mr. Bandaranaike's first visit to Jaffna as Minister for Health and Local Government was impressive. He carried Jaffna with him. It was significant that Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, who had conducted a violent campaign against the U.N.P. was in the lead in welcoming our leader.

With characteristic magnanimity, Mr. Bandaranaike promised justice for Jaffna and thus dissolved the myth that there might be a vendetta against the Jaffna people.

It is a fitting preamble to the things to come, that Mr. Bandaranaike should have chosen Jaffna for his first official visit.

M. A.

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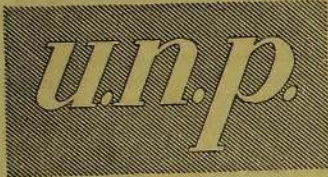
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Friday, 7th November, 1947

### CEYLON ABROAD

THE news that Ceylon will be represented at the International Conference at Cuba raises an interesting point about the representation of this country abroad. At the moment all important conferences on the Continent of Europe have been attended by Mr. Corea and in one instance by a special delegate, Mr. L. M. D. de Silva, K.C. We also had Mr. L. S. B. Perera representing Ceylon at the Empire Aviation Conference which, of course, was on a minor level and does not bear comparison with the conference about to take place in Cuba. We are informed that Mr. A. Mahadeva, former Minister for Home Affairs, may be sent as a special delegate from Ceylon to accompany Mr. Corea. Mr. Mahadeva is well equipped for an occasion of this importance by virtue of his long experience in administrative matters and his knowledge of the economic conditions of this country and generally of the East.

However, we would suggest to the Government seriously to consider the use to which the brilliant gifts and capabilities of Mr. Bandaranaike can be put whenever occasions of international importance demand special representation of this country at conferences abroad. It is true that his duties as a Cabinet Minister in charge of one of the most important Ministries and his additional duties as leader of the House and front bench debator will occupy a great deal of his time and energy. It is equally true that we cannot

"LIKE Veddas speaking of building houses." So goes a Sinhalese saying. When Veddas meet each other on a rainy day, they say: "Let us build a house—you had better bring one bundle of sticks, I will also bring one," etc. Nothing finally happens. I shall not be guilty of such waywardness. But I may be excused if I plan for the relief of the housing shortage—at least examine its pros and cons.

spare him for long periods of absence out of the Island. But we hope that in arranging for meetings of the House of Representatives some notice will be taken of international gatherings where we should be represented to advantage and thereby avoid any difficulty that may arise by the need for Mr. Bandaranaike to be present in Ceylon. We urge this point because as a young Dominion we shall have to impress on the rest of the world the fact that, intellectually, we are capable of holding our own in any part of the world. If we were not led by Mr. Bandaranaike at the Asian Conference at Delhi we might have suffered from the obscurity that attends all delegations that do not have the intellectual calibre and leadership which alone command respect at international gatherings. Mr. Bandaranaike's keen mind and the felicity with which he spoke commended attention from the very outset and we gather that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru entrusted to him the task of the future organisation of Asian Group Conferences with regard to various matters of common interest between the different countries.

We have no doubt that if we were represented by him at least at a few conferences, we should hit the headlines of the world's Press as a country which can give to the world some new slogans of unity and purposeful direction of world affairs. Mr. Bandaranaike is by nature impatient of petty details of administration. His mind and manner are suited for a larger stage, and we should be foolish if we do not urge him and the Government to utilise his gifts to the greatest advantage. This country can well be proud of the fact that we have in him a contemporary of many of those who have in recent years dominated the European political stage and have contributed so much to the development of international friendship and co-operation. We must not adopt the attitude that we are a small country and that therefore our voice must necessarily be weak. If we are represented by those such as Mr. Bandaranaike the world will begin to appreciate the dynamic qualities of the Eastern mind.

## Says Mohammed

The war brought on an influx of rural dwellers to the city of Colombo—many being employed by the military and other emergency departments.

Lack of transport facilities and the desire to stay near the place of employment obliged these workers to seek habitation in the city. The result was a struggle for houses, the inflation of rents and black-marketing by landlords.

We have not yet experienced the serious proportions the housing shortage in England attained, when 'squatters' invaded vacant castles, manors and homes. That situation does not arise because no vacant house is left. Many houses are booked six months ahead, others are swallowed up immediately on vacation, even at the exorbitant prices.

◎ \* ◎

I recently toured the near suburbs of Colombo—the Wattala-Jafla area, and seven miles further, the areas ten miles beyond Kolonnawa; and areas fifteen miles beyond Ratmalana. I did not care for the main roads but studied the interior.

There were miles and miles of bare land, plenty of estates, with one solitary building in each and much wild planta-

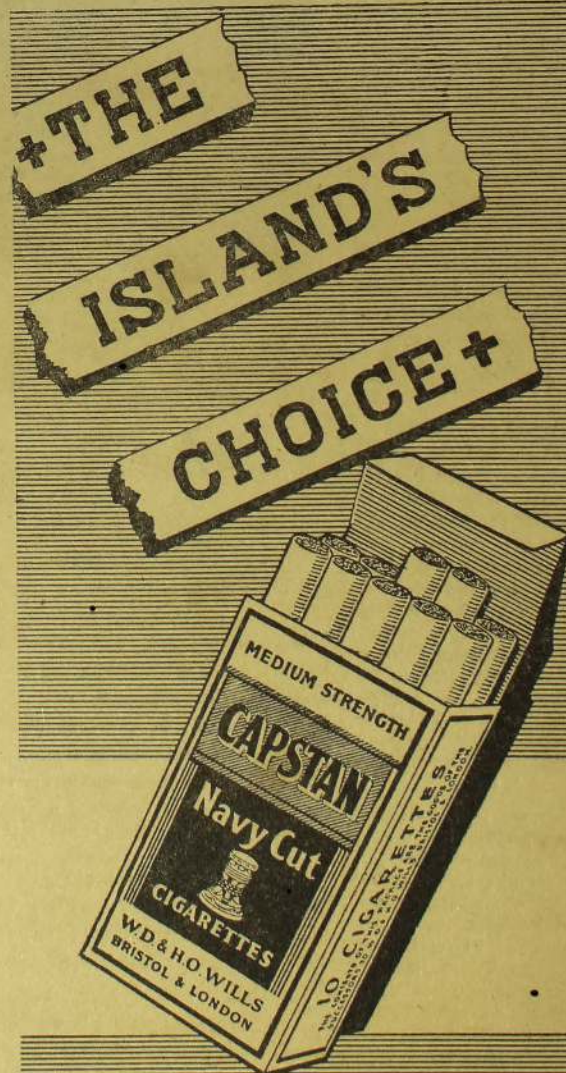
tion, including grassland. What if houses were built here? Granted. Then how will these inhabitants come to work to Colombo?

There was the question and the solution in one gulp. Provide them with transport. A regular and efficient bus service will ensure the worker that he could go to work and come back and join his family. With the added attraction of a rural retreat, many will ease the bottleneck at Colombo and drift to these suburbs if they are only assured that Colombo is only a few hours' run from their homes.

The fact that Nugegoda, once a wasteland, is now a flourishing town is due to no other fact that communication from Nugegoda to Colombo has been made easy by a splendid bus service.

Maintain an efficient transport service and a good fraction of the housing shortage is solved. The owners of those estates and lands in the suburbs need no other prompting than the fact that regularly buses ply their route, to build houses—being assured of tenants who will undoubtedly take advantage of the situation.

As Mr. Kotelawala once said: "The man without a house is not interested in some fantastic number of houses at some date in the future, but he is virtually interested in the one house that he is to occupy."



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# SPORTS

## Commentary

COVER-POINT

I SIT in sackcloth and ashes as I write this review. And it is the Indian Cricket Team, now touring Australia that has made a penitance of me. When the Indians had failed to make any impression on the admittedly weak West Australian team at Perth, and later had their bowling well and truly collared by South Australia, I was one of many, who were firmly convinced that the defection of Merchant Modi and Mushtaq Ali had taken the stuffing, as it were, would be an ill-fated one.

But the week which is just ending has made all of us who were of that persuasion recast our ideas.

First it was Amarnath, on whom the mantle of Captain had fallen with the withdrawal of Merchant, who forced us to concede that the Indians might not after all, be as weak as they seemed on paper. Scoring the first century of the tour, Amarnath went on to emphasise his greatness as a batsman by very nearly hitting up a twin century in a bold bid for victory against the clock. He was assisted in this great effort by Mankad, who has surely staked a claim to be regarded as great an all-rounder as, if not greater than Bill Edrich.

If the Adelaide game did not suffice to

reveal the latent possibilities of the Indians, the match at Melbourne has shown that the tourists, even without their stars, are a factor to reckon with. Victoria has been the unbeaten Sheffield Shield Champions for the last two years and only Keith Miller is an absentee. But, all the honours of the match have gone to India. A dismal start of three wickets for no runs was brilliantly retrieved and once again it was Amarnath who stole all the thunder. Scoring more than half the side's total, the Indian skipper made history with an unbeaten double century and was at the wickets from the time the first run was scored.

A total of 400 was not beyond the State but Mankad and Rangachari had other ideas about it and, in spite of some fielding lapses, Victoria could only get up to within 130 runs of the Indians' score.

Batting a second time, Mankad again proved a sheet anchor till Hazare came on the scene. His half century paved the way for Hazare's success.

The weather gods took a hand on the last day and, just when there was every likelihood of a close finish to the match, rain fell and no play was possible after the tea interval.

The brief exchanges that went into the making of the final day served to reveal that Lindsay Hassett is as steady a batsman today as he was 12 months back when he was such a thorn in India's side.

ALTHOUGH last Saturday was a blank day so far as local racing was concerned, I was fortunate enough to tune in, all morning, to an excellent sports round-up broadcast by Radio Australia and to listen in to running commentaries of no fewer than 16 races. I was more than rewarded for my industry, as apart from the thrills provided, three of Saturday's races had a bearing on the Melbourne Cup.

The first of these three races was the Victoria Derby, over 1½ miles, in which a photofinish had to be called for by the judge before Beau Gem was awarded the verdict from Chanak and Conductor. Beau Gem, incidentally, equalled the time record for the distance.

The second race was the Mackinnon Stakes over 10 furlongs which, I believe, was the race in which Bernborough got crooked last year. The field in today's race included the Caulfield Cup winner, Columnist, and that very consistent miler, Attlee, whose owner sends a £10 food parcel to England every time he wins. It was a grand race and once again the aid of the camera had to be sought before Don Pedro was placed first with Attlee second and Columnist third. Don Pedro came with a sustained run in the straight and just got up to Attlee who had been sent to the front half a mile from home.

The third race was one over 1 mile 5 furlongs in which the winner turned up in the 14 to 1 Dark Man, who beat the Caulfield Cup runner-up, Hiraji, pretty comparatively by over 2 lengths.

A SUGGESTION was recently made by a writer who has apparently let his enthusiasm run away with his discretion, that Senator Gardiner should lose no time in sending his champion filly Kunj Lata either to Calcutta or back to England. As I mentioned last week, the present disturbed conditions in India have made the Calcutta journey too risky to undertake, while the proposal to send the mare back to England has little to commend it. Kunj Lata has had a meteoric rise to fame in Ceylon and has developed into a grand looking piece of horseflesh. But if she leaves the warmth of the East and those climatic conditions which made her a champion, I doubt very much whether she will be able to pick up even a £300 seller in England. It would be better, by far, if she is reserved for the Governor's Plate and the Governor's Cup next year before the return to normal conditions in Calcutta makes her despatch to that centre less fraught with danger.

THE C.T.C. November Meet, which begins a fortnight from today, brings the curtain down on the year's racing season in Colombo, the scene shifting down south next month. Present indications are that next year we shall have much larger fields in most of the races, as the current shortage of jockeys will be made up by the Club retting out one or two jockeys from England and some of the leading trainers retaining riders from Australia. In previous years fields of a dozen or more were the rule, rather than the exception, and there is every likelihood that we shall

have even more enjoyable racing than we have had so far. If only the Club authorities bestir themselves and improve the starting and the various Tote arrangements, everything in the garden will be lovely.

THE Autumn Double has been completed and the Cambridgeshire, run mid-week, was claimed by an outsider in Fairey Fulmar. Had this colt not got home by a bare neck, the English racing season would have ended as it began, with a 100 to 1 winner. It will be recalled that the Grand National and Lincoln both went to 100 to 1 outsiders this year, and it would have been a remarkable coincidence if Joan's Star, who was the Cambridgeshire runner-up two years ago, had completed the Autumn Double at the same odds.

Fairey Fulmar's victory has a particularly strong Eastern flavour. Firstly, his owner is, I believe, a Persian who has made his home in England. Secondly his trainer, Ossie Bell, had charge of that great horse Finalist who carried all before him in India. Thirdly, his jockey, T. Gosling, is flying out to Calcutta, having been retained by the Royal Calcutta Turf Club.

The winner of the Cambridgeshire always has a knack of turning up in the most unexpected places and it is over 10 years since the last favourite justified the confidence of his supporters. That was when Dan Bulger won the race in 1936.

AUSTRALIA'S biggest race, the Melbourne Cup, was run last Tuesday and a big field of 30 contested the issue. The Caulfield Cup winner, Columnist, and the Victoria Derby winner, Beau Gem, were among the course withdrawals and in their absence Hiraji, who had run a very close second to Columnist in the Caulfield Cup, won a great race from the bottom weight. Fresh Boy, who had finished third in the Caulfield Cup. Another light weight in Reg Fury came with raking strides in the straight but could not get up to the leaders in time.

Hiraji is a 4-year-old grey colt and must be one of the very few horses of that colour who have won the Australian classic.

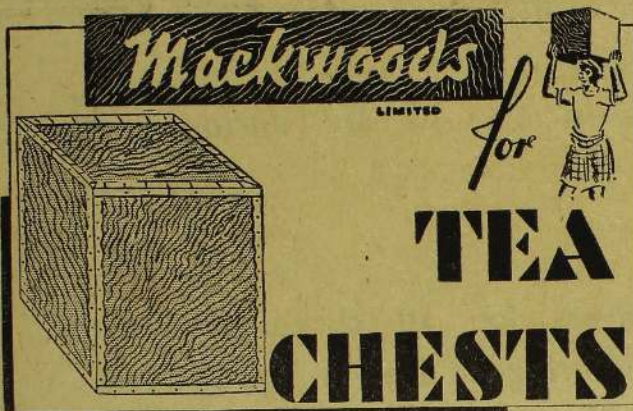
THE retirement of Joe Davis from competitive snooker after holding the world title for more than 15 years made this year's championship less one-sided than it has been for years. It was commonly expected that Joe's brother, Fred, would keep the title in the family but, in a close final, at Thurston's Hall in London, a youngster in Donaldson got the better of him.

I have the most vivid recollection of the snooker wizardry of Joe Davis whose only equal in the game was probably Horace Lindrum, nephew of the incomparable Walter, who, by his mastery, made billiards look so absurdly easy. I remember the first time when I saw Walter Lindrum take the balls in a series of cannons right round the table three or four times in the course of a break of over 3,000. I imagined it to be child's play but when I tried to put it into practice, I never seemed to be able to negotiate even the length of the top cushion!

THE Stubbs Shield Boxing Meet which has just been concluded, provided some very close bouts, in which hard punches were traded. When the semi-final stage was ended yesterday, St. Thomas' and St. Peter's were tying for point to the good of Vijay. St. Peter's first place but Royal came with a rattie this evening to win the shield, a bare point to the good of Vijay. St. Peter's finished a close third but St. Thomas' tailed off today.

THE English League Soccer season continues to be dominated by Arsenal whose goalless draw last Saturday in the London Derby against Chelsea helps them to maintain their unbeaten record. With Preston falling victims to Aston Villa, the Highbury team has now a clear lead of two points in the championship and it certainly does look as if the "Gunners" are out to recapture their pre-war eminence in the soccer world.

THE result of the Ryder Cup golf match, which was played last week-end, showed at what a low ebb British golf is at the moment. Of the twelve matches played only one was won by a Britisher and that was when Sam King got home. British "Giants" like Henry Cotton and Doi Rees were completely out of their depth and it was a landslide in favour of the Americans.



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Arts & Letters

By Quintus Delil Khan

# ANTON TCHEKOV

ANY volume of short stories by Anton Tchekov discovers the same unity of vision towards life. This alone is enough to proclaim him a master of the very first rank in literature. There are many to whom he is incomparably the greatest short story writer in the world. There is in his stories an incommunicable quality which defies imitation. When we consider all the attempts which have been made by writers who have desired to follow in his footsteps to give us revealing fragments of life and how they have only demonstrated their skill in exposition and construction, we can justly feel that there is a quality of uniqueness in Tchekov which defies analysis but which is palpably experienced by the reader, and which springs directly from his amazingly individual genius. "His comprehension," says Middleton Murray, "radiates from a steady centre, and is not capriciously kindled by a thousand accidental contacts. In other words, Tchekov is not what he is so often assumed to be, an impressionist. Consciously or unconsciously he had taken the step—the veritable *salto mortale*—by which the great literary artist moves out of the ranks of the minor writers. He had slowly shifted his angle of vision until he could discern a unity in multiplicity. Unity of this rare kind cannot be imposed as, for instance, Zola attempted to impose it. It is an emanation from life which can be distinguished only by the most sensitive contemplation."

It is a distraction to have a minor author interrupt the narrative of events in order to tell you what he thinks of the character he is writing about. We would always like to have the character come to life and move, breathe and speak in our presence so that our own imagination might show an active response, and that we be enabled to obtain the pleasure that can be derived from genuine creative literature alone. Tchekov can be read with relish for this reason. His princes and peasants, his heroes and the flotsam and jetsam of humanity all acquire that mysterious quality of life which only the magic of vision can endow them with.

Even so great a writer as Balzac interposes too much between the character and the reader, and though he is a showman of genius, we are apt to tire of his mannered endeavour to explain through his own lips what the character alone is capable of telling us in words, acts or gestures. People who today believe that there is some wonderful power of vision amongst only the younger rebellious intelligences now writing can correct their notions as to what constitutes merely clever writing and what constitutes real genius by reading a short story, any short short story in fact, by Anton Tchekov and then turning to their own favourites who, I have no doubt, will taste rather thin after the rich savour of Tchekov. It is an experience worth trying out, and it is very much needed today when the short story has definitely become one of the most popular art forms of the contemporary world.

TCHEKOV is of course one of the great prose writers. He has not that aptitude for phrase-making which results in a strained use of language and which creates suggestions of a mounting crescendo of dubious emotion through the mere heightening of the language. His prose is great by reason of being so very exquisitely the appropriate vehicle of his thought. He eliminates all that is not strictly necessary to create his effect. It is not the method of an artistic mind which can objectively ask itself: "Now what must I do here in order to excite the interest of the reader? What incident should be thrown in? What turn of speech will create the necessary degree of sensationalism which is required for my purpose? Is this the right place for a broad purple passage?"

All this is foreign to the method by which Anton Tchekov worked. He saw men and women in the world engaged in their multifarious activities, some of them with pain in their hearts and

some savouring of pleasure, others greedily lapping up the excitements of life, some bent on a noble mission of helping others, some selfishly seeking their own gain, but all really undergoing a sense of frustration, mixed in a tangle of events, the issues of which they could not entirely determine, and passing on therefore unconsciously, or with partial deliberation, towards the one common end which is the lot of our mortality.

Tchekov loved all types of men and women. In the world of his vision there were no uninteresting men and women, some to be used for his work as an artist, and others to be rejected. He knew that every man and every woman had a story to tell, if only we cared to let them speak, and because of his intense imaginative vision he was capable of acting as their mouthpiece and telling their story with a truer sense of emphasis, proportion and expression than they themselves could if allowed in actual life to speak for themselves.

The greatness of Tchekov is that he understood men better than they understood themselves. The ordinary man loses himself in work or pleasure when he finds the analysis of himself baffling and, if the truth be confessed, a little disappointing in his own eyes. It is only when the artist gazes on such a life that he can see its values and do justice to its hidden and obstructed aims, aspirations and achievements. In this manner Tchekov is a figure of the most outstanding worth in the modern world. His legacy of characters which are immortal is without price. He makes us know the real Russia of his day through his eyes. Only we would wish that Tchekov's mind had been crossed with various streams of European culture, making it more expressive of wider amplitudes of thinking. But he chose to remain obstinately Russian.



ONE great influence in Tchekov's life was Tolstoy. It is pleasant to note how generously he thought of his great contemporary. "I am afraid of Tolstoy's death," he wrote. "If he were to die, there would be a big empty place in my life. To begin with, because I have never loved any man as much as him... Secondly, while Tolstoy is in literature, it is easy and pleasant to be a literary man; even recognizing that one has done nothing and never will do anything is not so dreadful, since Tolstoy will do enough for all. His work is the justification of the enthusiasms and expectations built upon literature. Thirdly, Tolstoy takes a firm stand; he has immense authority and so long as he is alive, had tastes in literature, vulgarity of every kind, insolent and lachrymose, all the bristling, exasperated vanities will be in the far background...." This was written at a time when the theory of Art for Art's sake and other fantastic ideas were becoming popular in English literature, when artists were looking into books on precious stone, and other strange lore, for words consciously jewelled and deliberately decorative. How grateful we must be that at the time this priggish change to mere preciousness was taking place in England and France, disfiguring the main stream of European culture and traditional writing, Tchekov was concerned only with preserving a clear and concentrated vision of life, lovely and wholesome, and informed by a passionate and burning sincerity by virtue of which alone great art can transcend the fashions and posturings of a passing phase of literature and last for all time.

"Pharisaism, stupidity, and despotism reign not in bourgeois houses and prisons alone," he wrote. "I see them in science, in literature, in the younger generation.... That is why I have no preference either for gendarmes or for butchers, or for scientists, or for writers, or for the younger generation. I regard trade marks and labels as a superstition. My holy of holies is the human body, health, intelligence, talent, inspiration, love and the most absolute freedom—freedom from violence and lying, whatever form they may take. This is the programme I would follow if I were a great artist."

This is the programme he did follow all his life and his words have a value for all those who follow the craft of writing or of any craft whatsoever.

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