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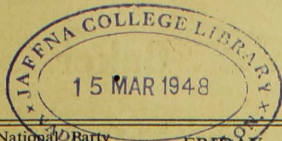
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MINISTER WHO FINDS OUT THINGS FOR HIMSELF

By Vernon Phelps



Mr. A. RATNAIKÉ
(Minister for Food and
Co-operatives)

THE Minister of Food and Co-operative Undertakings made an unannounced tour of the departments under his Ministry much to the surprise of officialdom. The Food Minister has recently done a number of things which have caused much eyebrow-raising among prim and important officials and others.

When the Government announced that a 30-cents plate of rice was available at restaurants, the Food Minister went into an eating house incognito, to make sure that it was. He not only went to the eating house but also ate the meal to make sure that it was substantial and tasty.

I may add that the Minister is aware of the dodges resorted to by certain eating-house proprietors who insist on the purchase of "extras" for providing this meal and that salutary action by the Food Minister is round the corner.

You can't fool the Food Minister, because he knows. He knows because he goes out and finds out for himself. He wastes little time poring over files or official memoranda. He believes in the human aspect which, understandably, is something removed and remote from officialdom. But the Food Minister has not despaired of even humanising officialdom. He goes out to meet the people and takes with him his Ministry officials. The effects so far have been most satisfactory.

A Government that goes to the people not merely at election time but in find-

ing out the problems of the people that need solution, is on the right road. Small discoveries on such surprise visits are sometimes more significant than all the probing done by departmental officials. But it is important to make the visits surprise visits as the Food Minister himself admitted. He is reported to have once exclaimed that "pandals and garlands on Ministerial visits are an impediment to seeing things properly."

Quite! A high Government official has been even more precise. If ever he was garlanded at any place of inspection he visited he immediately proceeded on the assumption that there was something wrong that had to be detected. Invariably he was correct and the garland failed to serve the purpose for which it was intended. I remember Mr. Bajpai's memorable comment: "Flowers don't thrive on me."

★ ● ★

MINISTERIAL visits like the one by the Food Minister must and in fact do, result in quick improvements. I should, for instance, be prepared to take any bet that a certain tea-room contractor in a Government department will now think twice before serving stale hoppers to the clerks at noon. The reason is that the Food Minister walked into this particular tea-room and asked the contractor why he did so, to the utter consternation of the contractor, the clerks and the high officials who accompanied the Minister.

The Food Minister was also able on his recent visit to notice the nice distinctions of prestige that prevail even in the lower rungs of the Government Service that impair efficient service to the public.

The Minister asked a girl cashier at another departmental restaurant the price of some pancakes. Drawing a sharp distinction between a cashier and a waitress the young lady looked the Minister up and down.

But when the Minister's Permanent Secretary whispered to the young lady that her customer was the Minister of Food, she did strive hard to smile her sweetest. It was an incident with a moral which I have no doubt the Minister noted. It was another instance that proved that we still need to get rid of petty complexes and become imbued with a desire for service if we are to achieve full nationhood.

★ ● ★

THE Minister of Agriculture and Lands, Mr. Dudley Senanayake, and the Prime Minister, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, I notice, have also

been going round the North-Central Province meeting the people and ascertaining their problems. The Minister of Agriculture has obviously returned from his tour with a renewed determination to step up production by his announcement that his new target will be 75,000 acres every year and that the colonisation schemes have come to stay.

I am particularly pleased to note that the Minister has decided to allocate an increased acreage (18 acres) to the Kagama colonists for the industry and enthusiasm of these colonists was one of the most vivid impressions that I

brought away on my last visit to the North-Central Province. I notice that the Prime Minister has paid these colonists a similar tribute on his tour.

May I also take this occasion to plead with the Minister of Agriculture now that he is allocating more land for colonisation, to consider the long-standing request of the men of the Agricultural Corps, who form the front-line of these colonisation campaigns, by clearing the jungle for cultivation, that they also be settled on the land and that the reward of their services may take the shape of a little home and land to cultivate.



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The Parliamentary System of Government

By Sir Ernest Baker

Sir Ernest Barker is one of Britain's most distinguished writers upon various aspects—especially the historical ones—of political science and of the British Constitution.

His published works are many and well known. In them, he shows a fine appreciation of the precise interrelation between the past and the present; a sure and subtle evaluation of those elements in political and national life which have proved themselves permanent. He has shown a special interest in National Character—the force which lies behind all political thought and action—publishing a study of the subject in 1927.

His other works include "Oliver Cromwell and the English People" (1937)—of particular value today, since it deals with the only dictatorship which has ever existed in England; "The Citizen's Choice" (1937), and "Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire" (1941)—an excellent and closely reasoned exposition of the subject of its title; while in his chief work, "Reflections on Government" (1942), he seeks to compare the various conceptions of government now current, and states the case for his country's and his own conception. That conception may be summarised: "Freedom... is greater than comfort, for it is a thing of the spirit, and the very root and condition of all values"—a phrase which appeared in one of his earliest books, "Greek Political Theory."

ONE of the great principles which the genius of France has contributed to civilisation is the principle of national sovereignty. Every nation—so France has believed, and so France has taught the world—must be master of its own fate and arbiter of its own life. When France rejected the principle and practice of absolutism, in 1789, she installed in its place, for herself and the world, the principle and the practice of national sovereignty. She said to the Bourbons, "You are wrong in proclaiming 'L'Etat c'est moi';" she said to herself, and she said to the world, "Henceforth we proclaim, 'L'Etat c'est la nation'." The self-moving and self-governing nation—not the nation moved by a single dominant person—not the nation governed, and drilled, by a single tyrannical party—this, it was then declared, is the unit of modern life.

This nation—this unit of millions and millions of members—needs an organ and agent through which it can act. It needs an organ and agent which represents and reflects its being, in all the facets and scintillations of its multitudinous life. That organ and agent is parliament. Parliament derives its authority from the nation, by an express derivation based on open and free election; and a parliament vested with such authority is the sovereign repository for its term of office, of the sovereignty of the nation. It is the trustee which the nation has authorised to act on its behalf; and it exercises sovereign power, under the terms of its trust, for the nation which has given it the honour and the pledge of its confidence.

In proclaiming and establishing these principles France was true to the current of history, and faithful to the rolling movement of "man's unconquerable mind" which determines the course of history. She was going back to an old tradition of freedom which had been impeded and clogged by the later development of her life under the "ancient regime. She was putting away, and casting aside the absolutism which had previously thwarted the free movement of her national life. She was enunciating new principles—but the new principles were also old. They were principles which had lived in her own medieval *Etats Generaux* and her own medieval free communes. They were principles which had lived among the mountains of Castile and Aragon. They were principles which were still living among the mountains and valleys of Switzerland; in

the neighbouring island of Britain; among the dykes and canals of Holland; in the fjords and around the lakes of the Scandinavian north. There already existed, in 1789, a European tradition of self-government by assemblies; a sure and safe and sound tradition, deposited by the working of the human mind as it moved on its arduous way through time. It was the work of France to recover and revivify that tradition.

HISTORY

THE British speaks of Westminster as "the Mother of Parliaments." But there is no one mother of parliaments; and in any case what the British mean is only that the Westminster Parliament has been the mother of other parliaments in the confines of the British Empire. The mind of man produces similar inventions—it even produces the same inventions—separately and independently at many different points. Feeling his way towards an ideal of self government, which he can never abjure, man has invented various assemblies and parliaments, for the realisation of his ideal, at many different periods and in many different countries. It is true that, as the anthropologists tell us, man's general inventions, in the ordinary sphere of the arts and crafts, are often diffused by a process of imitation; and it may also be true that, now and again, some invention, or some improvement, in the sphere of parliamentary institutions, has been diffused by a similar process. The example of French institutions was potent in nineteenth-century Europe; the example of the British Parliament was studied in the Europe of the eighteenth century; and the example of the institutions of the United States has been studied and adopted, during the last century and a half, not only in Latin America, but also farther afield. But a sober review of history will convince the reflective historian—even while he is willing to allow the influence of imitation—that the invention of assemblies and parliaments has proceeded independently, like most of man's other inventions, in a number of different centres.

It is fascinating to record the number of centres. It is profitable as well as fascinating: for it proves, beyond any doubt, the natural movement, of the mind of man—in different countries and under different auspices—towards one common method of government. The Swiss have an old and fine tradition of democracy—of popular self-government in cantons or groups of cantons—which is at least as old as the thirteenth century. Peasant democracies, with all the citizens assembling in their own direct assembly or "foltw-moot," still exist (and have existed continuously through the centuries) in some of the cantons of Switzerland: in the rest, a single House or Chamber, elected by all the people of the canton, acts on behalf of the people. These are indigenous institutions, which an indigenous spirit of liberty has freely and independently created in each of the separate cantons of Switzerland. The indigenous institutions of the separate cantons are matched by the equally indigenous, if more subtle and more complicated, institutions of the centre—the parliamentary institutions created by Swiss genius for the federal system which embraces all the cantons of Switzerland in a harmonious unity. Any man who seeks to study the height which democracy can attain will be well advised to fix his attention on the constitution of Switzerland. Here, in a native laboratory and under native inspiration, democracy has produced achievements which not only show its native strength, upon its own soil and under its own conditions, but also afford suggestion and example to every country which seeks to tread the way of democracy.

Modern Spain, under its present rulers is not enamoured of democracy or democratic systems. But if you go back to an older Spain, you will find a proud tradition of Spanish Cortes and Spanish liberties. The British are proud of the antiquity of their Parliament, which goes back to the thirteenth century. Cortes were already meeting in Spain in the twelfth century. The Castilian Cortes already contained representatives of towns in 1169; in Aragon representa-

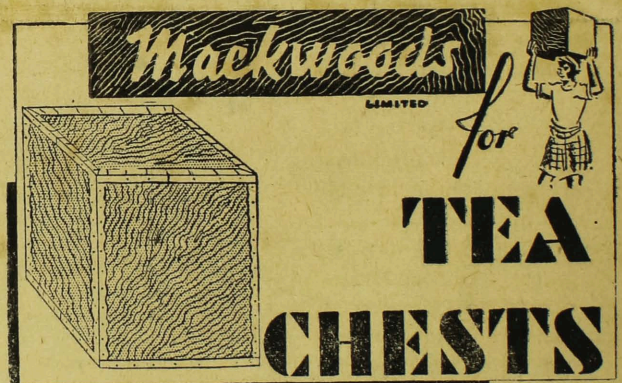
tives of towns and other districts attended even earlier, in 1162. No doubt the "liberties" of medieval Spain were largely the liberties claimed by a privileged nobility; but the Spanish towns were also proud of their franchises and their charters, and as late as 1520 they challenged (though the event proved their challenge vain) the encroachments made on their liberties by the government of King Charles I (who, as emperor, was styled Charles V). The early dawn of Spanish parliamentarianism was clouded over; and a system of absolutism, aided by internal dissensions, was for centuries the fate of Spain—as it was also the fate of France before 1789. But those who seek to recall the origins of the parliamentary system in Europe will not forget the early contribution of Spain; and they may even remember that Spanish precedents and Spanish influences, have been reckoned by some historians among the factors which contributed to the growth of the English Parliament during the thirteenth century. Man's mind has nourished the idea of parliament in Spain; and it will continue to nourish the idea.

From Switzerland and Spain let us turn to Scandinavia. Sweden is an ancient country, with an old and gallant history. Her constitution, like that of Switzerland, is native and indigenous: as a Swedish author has said: "It is not modelled on the pattern of the political costumes which are 'à la mode' in the rest of Europe, but rather after the lines of the old national costume of Sweden, with its peasant's jacket fitting the figure." Early in the seventeenth century, in the great days

of Gustavus Adolphus, Sweden began to turn an old Council of nobles into a new Diet of estates; and this new Diet or Riksdag, contained not only the three estates of the nobility, the clergy and the bourgeoisie, but also a fourth estate of the peasantry. This Diet was a genuine parliament, which waged a long and vigorous struggle against the monarchy; and by the constitution of 1809 it was firmly established as an equal partner in the Swedish State. The subsequent course of history has steadily strengthened the Swedish assembly in an uninterrupted progression of power. In 1866 the old Diet of four estates became a parliament of two houses; and that parliament, reforming and broadening its own composition, and gaining control of the Royal ministers on the lines of a cabinet system, has established a pattern of progressive democracy, and inaugurated an epoch of social reform, which have renewed on a higher plane, the ancient glories of Swedish achievement.

In the great region of culture and civilisation which lies between Scandinavia and Spain—the region of France herself: the region of Belgium and the Netherlands—the tradition of an assembly of estates runs back to the middle of the Middle Ages. The *Etats Generaux* of France are as old as the year 1302: they contained, from their first beginning, elected representatives of the towns; and their activity in the fourteenth century was vigorous and salutary. The continental position of France, and the long wars on which her monarchs embarked, led eventually to

(Continued on page 5)



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Inside the Left_3

By Nandalal

THE second Congress of the Indian Communist Party was held a few days ago in Calcutta. To this Congress went about 800 delegates from various parts of India and about 15 fraternal delegates from the Communist Parties of Burma, Australia and Yugoslavia. The Ceylon Communist Party's delegate to this Congress was its President, Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe.

This Congress is not of mere academic interest to this country. The affiliations and close contacts which exist between the Indian Communists and their Ceylon comrades are such that decisions taken in India have a habit of

finding their way to Ceylon. The Indian "comrades" are the political 'gurus' of our Communists.

Important revisions of party policy were made at this Congress and they foreshadow similar developments within our country too.

New political wisdom has come to the Indian Communists. This was expressed in the advice given to the Party by U. Than Tun, leader of the Communist Party of Burma, who said that "imperialist domination was being continued through the new imperialist tactics of utilising the colonial bourgeoisie against the huge colonial upsurge of the people. The leadership had in the face of the upsurge crossed over and become the collaborators of imperialism."

This thesis and statement of developments is a total reversal of the Party

line previously held and a complete defeat of their expectations.

The Indian Communists and their Ceylon Comrades were patiently preparing for what they expected would be a clash between the "local bourgeoisie" and the British authorities as a result of economic distress. When this clash broke out they intended to join the "bourgeoisie" in the "struggle" and so conduct it that its leadership would soon be in their hands. This was the revolutionary way to national independence, the next stage of which was the "workers" revolution and the socialist state.

This was the theory behind the Communist campaign for "national unity for national independence," a slogan which was frequently paraded on placards through the streets of India and Ceylon.

The Ceylon Communists themselves based their Party conduct on this theory. It was the impulse behind a proposal once made by the Party's executive for support to the U.N.P. and its candidates when Communist contestants were not in the field.

All these manoeuvrings rested on the hope that one day there would be a clash between the Ceylon capitalists and the British. The Communists, such was their political acumen, miserably failed to realise that there could be a peaceful achievement of independence; that independence could come without a clash of arms, that there could be a peaceful transfer of power. Now they label that event "collaboration with Imperialism."

There was more than one event of considerable significance at this Congress and this pertained to a criticism of the Indian Party Leaders' political behaviour during the time they tenaciously clung to the theory of "national unity for national independence."

MR. B. T. RANADIVE, one who is high up in Communist Counsels and the author of several books, criticised the past policies of the

party and said that the Party had failed to realise that the bourgeoisie had betrayed the freedom struggle and gone over to collaborate with imperialism.

I understand that an admission of grievous error was also made by one of the Ceylon Communist Leaders, who is the "brains" of the Ceylon Communist Party. He told his comrades that he, the Party's theoretician, had seriously erred in his analyses of the political situation and that consequently the line which the Party had hitherto followed was grossly incorrect.

Blind sheep led by blind shepherds, had none of them the power to question the wisdom of allowing such men to guide them in their political thinking? Couldn't Ramadive, who now realises the errors of his Party Chiefs, have earlier discovered into what political morass his comrades were being led?

These prophets are wise only after the event. These are the men who claim to know the processes of history.

An indication of future Communist Policy in India and a "fortiori", that gress from a message sent to them by gress form a message sent to them by the Soviet Union's Communist Party.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in sending greetings to the Communists of India wished them success in their "struggle for the unity of democratic and patriotic forces of the country for the consolidation of the national independence and sovereignty of India."

Note the expression "consolidation of national independence"—this implies that independence has already been achieved; it will no longer be a "fake independence." The task of the Communists will be to strengthen that independence.

Their line will be an attempt to win over "patriotic leaders in order that a "truly democratic Government" may be formed to "defend our national independence."

These are the slogans we may soon expect!

PITY THE CHILDREN

SAVE our children! That is the slogan that suggests itself after a tour of the backyards of Ceylon. But it cannot remain a slogan. It must be worked out. It is the crying need, and the responsibility of our leaders, now that we rule the land. Our children form the potential strength of Sri Lanka.

I asked a few youngsters (I won't call them urchins. That is hard on these poor victims of misfortune) what independence meant for them. They say it is "nidahasa" (freedom). But we don't know what this signifies, was a typical reply. They must be shown the benefits of independence by concrete facts—by making them "feel" independent. Let them be given all the amenities of life and let them lift their heads proudly and say: "I am also a useful citizen."

Juvenile crime was already dealt with in a previous article. Though reforming the juvenile offender is important, let us consider the other side.

Many young children turn dead-end kids through poverty, bad breeding and improper environments.

A plan has already been mooted to feed the school-children. Why not adopt the same idea in the case of these unfortunates?

Of course it is not so easy as all that—I know. But if a scheme could be formulated whereby these children are fed by the State (it will save a drain on the parents) then they will feel that they are really living.

Contentedness will tune them to the pitch where we could set them working. They could be tried as apprentices and messenger-boys and even as clerks after some education, instead of wasting their lives on the streets with an inclination for petty crimes: instead of selling "Race Results" (what an opening for a potential gambler!) or playing "pommay" or acting as decoys for dope-kings.

I HAVE in mind the American Scheme for such children—formulated by School Board's Bureau of Child Study in Chicago, Illinois. More than 10,000 children receive special attention in a comprehensive programme.

The United States Information Service gives further details of the scheme which may be well adapted to local conditions. I give it for the benefit of "U.N.P." readers:—

Established in 1899, the Bureau is the oldest public organization of its kind in the United States. Directed since 1936 by Dr. Grace Munson, the Bureau is now composed of a central staff of 33 trained psychologists and 29 qualified teachers. A field staff includes one adjustment teacher in each school, appointed by the principal and approved by Dr. Munson.

Since 1944, the Bureau has been consulted by nearly 100 social agencies in the country and by many school systems including those in New York City. It operates in conjunction with special school divisions for the blind, the deaf

By
Mohammed

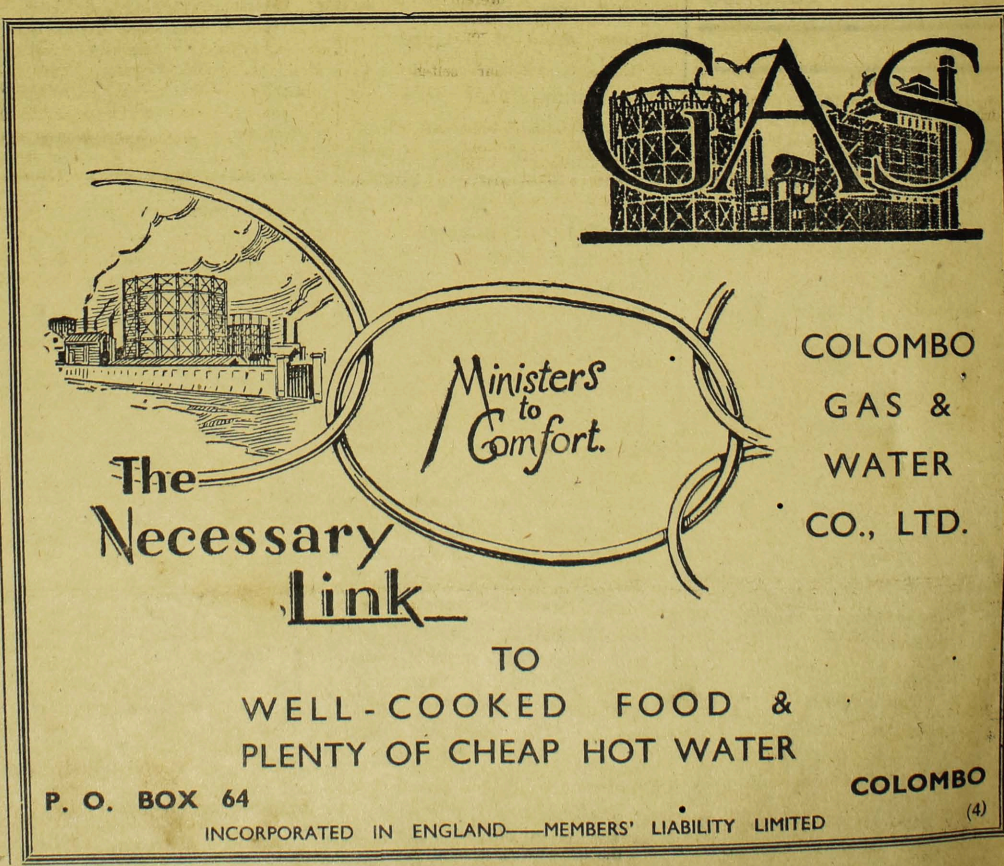
and those with other physical handicaps and with the Parental and other schools for pupils with personality or family background problems.

Dr. Munson believes that the sooner a child can be examined, the easier is his adjustment.

More than 50 conditions which might lead to delinquency were found among the 10,248 children reported on last year. Major conditions in each category: academic—interrupted school and poor reading; physical—defective teeth, vision, hearing, speech and left-handedness; psychological—broken homes. Habitual lying and stealing was noted in only 165 cases.

Although the number of cases examined has increased in recent years, the proportional incidence in most conditions has decreased, probably as a result of catching cases early.

By giving special and understanding attention to maladjusted children, the bureau believes, great benefits accrue not only to the children themselves but to the community in which they live.



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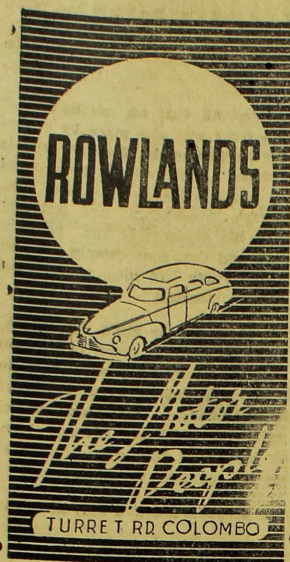
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Friday, 12th March, 1948

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

WE are greatly encouraged by the recent evidence of Cabinet awareness of our repeated appeals for positive action in order to implement the government policies we have supported in this journal. Only last Friday in an editorial entitled "Time for Action" we urged that we could no longer live on speeches and that we must get down to work and implement the policies to which we have been pledged. We also stated that we must call up all our resources of administrative skill and ability in order to work out immediately—and not in some distant future—a plan to meet the nation's fundamental needs.

One and a half months ago the Cabinet appointed a sub-committee consisting of the Leader of the Senate, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, and the Leader of the House of Representatives, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, to report on what steps should be immediately taken to put into effect the various proposals referred to in the King's Speech. That sub-committee has now reported to the Cabinet and some of its recommendations formed the text of Mr. Bandaranaike's recent speech at Anuradhapura which has become the subject of speculation in political circles. Now that the Cabinet has received the memorandum it requested Sir Oliver and Mr. Bandaranaike to prepare we would urge our Prime Minister to announce in greater detail the specific nature of the plans that he proposes to adopt.

Four months of the first financial year of the new Parliament have already gone by and some of the Departments which have to carry out new policies of the Government have not yet begun to wake up to their new responsibilities. There must be a vigorous shake up of those quarters which deal in pigeon holing progressive proposals. Our much advertised Civil Service must either do a job of work or be asked to show cause why it should be paid fat salaries and kept on to annoy the public with their old game of paper minutes and clock worship.

POLITICAL BANDWAGGON

By

Lakshman Seneviratne

AN American Liberal, writing in Henry Wallace's periodical in New York, "The New Republic," made an observation that is appropriately applicable to the intellectual's dilemma in Lanka today. "All that the politics of convenience can do for us is to make us reluctant partners in a world in which a capitalist Right worships property while a Communist Left uncritically enthrones power."

It is one of the cynical charms of local politics to witness Trotskyites worshipping political Power, and adding to their ownership of private property, till they can convert the entire State to that category. Capitalists who preach Socialism and nobody in that grandiose suburbia, that apes the cheaper aspects of Mayfair in London, Manhattan in New York, and the Boulevard St. Germain in Paris, why, the Cinnamon Gardens, of course, could equal the sacrifice of Sir Stafford Cripps who chucked a practice bringing him fifty thousand quid a year to go into British Socialist politics, would do well to hasten the day when they liquidate themselves economically, to introduce Socialist economic legislation.

In Britain, according to the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Quintin Hogg, P.C., M.P., a brilliant advocate of a politically deflated Toryism, the very rich, numbered 7,000 people in Britain with an annual income exceeding six thousand pounds in 1939. Last year in 1947, this class was reduced to only sixty persons.

CRITICAL supporters of the U.N.P. would want the electorates at the next General Elections to be presented with even more satisfactory economic data from local Income Tax sources to substantiate its claim to be Socialist. Meanwhile, the increased cost of living is hitting the working classes in Colombo severely. Only industrialization and a scientifically planned agriculture could so increase productivity to allow wages to overtake inflated living costs. A waiter in a chic restaurant in Colombo, orchestrated for my benefit, during my lunch, his economic woes and wanted to know what Independence had done for him. A fisherman, near Colombo, asked me, while I was enjoying, an opulent sunset on the beach, what the Crown Colony regime and the present regime had done for him. The emaciated bodies that gather in rural co-ops, Up-country are question marks on Socialism that must be wiped out immediately.

I find it easier to worst all brands of Communists in the dialectical materialist debate than to square my Socialist conscience, with the iniquitous economic legacy of the past that still persists, with some progressive alterations, at present.

And my economic sacrifice in propagating the benefits of the Socialist era of liberation for the people, entitles me to be heard.

Whether destiny is a stellar conspiracy or just an accidental sequence of events planned by ambitious minds, in gullible environments has puzzled philosophers and honest-to-goodness ordinary folk, down the ages. But one of the major sorrows of my life is that I couldn't meet Henry Wallace, as a fellow delegate at the World Fellowship of Faiths in Chicago, in 1933, to which I was invited through the appreciative inter-

vention of the late Anagarika Dharmapala, the first Sinhalese public man who captured my imagination on my return from Europe.

Henry Wallace's views on the American Presidential Election this year, which he is contesting, should dispel amateurish conjectures that certain local journalists have been inaccurately indulging in. Writing in the "New Republic" of New York, Wallace contends that Colonel Robert McCormick, the owner of the "Chicago Tribune" "thinks Taft is a great man and, so it is reported, is preparing to throw the weight of the MacArthur influence eventually to Taft after MacArthur has served his purpose in heading off Eisenhower and Dewey." Well, I thought, prior to reading this that Taft will win this year in this very paper. Wallace, of course is more accurate in his analysis of American domestic politics, than he is in his confused support of Russia's Red Imperialism in Czechoslovakia.

ON the Continent of Europe the struggle between Social Democracy and Stalinist Communism is farouche.

Capitalism is politically there not in the show, for the soul of Europe. Hence, one hopes that Colonel Kotelawala, and Sir Oliver, when they go to Europe, would tour the Continent, particularly France, which the Colonel knows well, to study the economic legislation of the "Third Force," of democratic socialism, which is a progressive middle way between American Capitalism and Russian Communism. The economic benefits of Communism, with the political and civil liberties of political democracy, without recourse to either Fascist counter-revolution or Marxist revolution.

They would also do well to visit Sweden and Denmark, whose per capita incomes surpass that of Soviet Russia. Sweden is a mixed economy of Socialism and capitalism, legislatively executed by a moderate Socialist party.

Among the numerous European, North, Central and South American races one met in Paris, socially and culturally, two of the most attractive types were the Swedes and the Danes. Their psychological make-up approximated more closely to genuine democracy, in spite of their Nordic origin, than either the Americans or the British one then met. What was most interesting to note about them was that they had no racial antipathy towards the coloured races. Which confirms one's belief that racialism has been a reactionary aide-de-camp among Nordics only when they exploited it for Imperialist ends.

Who does not know the National Liberal Club in London? One recalls the days when one had tea there with Lanka's present Premier, Sir Oliver, my contemporary Mr. Dudley Senanayake, and Hoggie Gunewardene.

(Continued on page 5)

SHORTER QUEUES MORE PROSPERITY

LOOK at the queues that form up at various spots in the country. They form a barometer of the country's prosperity. The shorter the queue the greater our prosperity. Strange reasoning, you will say. I will show how.

Each morning there is a scramble, opposite the Employment Exchange, which resolves itself into a queue, a long, long queue. That shows hundreds are jobless. What shall we do with them?

It is a pitiable sight to see the unemployed sit out in rain or sun, awaiting a call for a job. Out of the hundreds only a few are lucky each day. I know of a man who has stood this way each morning for nearly six months.

Regular army training has taught some of the unemployed the dignity of labour. Many ex-Servicemen, nowadays, do not mind doing jobs as gardeners, coolies, cooks, etc.—if only it is some job.

BUT there is a reluctance on the part of these men to be transferred to stations far away from their homes. Another objection to these remote stations is that many of them are malarial. Thus, the only way to get the unemployed work is to give them jobs as near as possible to their homes and in sanitary regions.

Irrigation works, flood protection schemes, construction of big blocks of buildings all call for men. But these are only temporary. "What are we to do after this is over?" they ask.

A feeling of security must be given to the potential worker to keep him happy and contented. It is only then that we can wipe off unemployment if not altogether, at least by instalments. So

By "Caliph"

the maxim shall be (1) Safe jobs. (2) Clean jobs. (3) More jobs.

THE queues at the co-operative stores show that foodstuffs are short. It is rice, or firewood or onions or something else. We must investigate these shortages. If food was plentiful no one would have worried to hurry and grab it.

I remember being told by a habitual drinker that he would never drink so much but for this queue system. "Because the liquor is short," he told me. "We rush in a queue for it. But if we knew that it could be got any time at any shop we won't be on pins to get it. I will be less of a drunkard."

The same applies to food. If food is available freely there will not be such a rush in the co-ops, when housewives, children and men join in a mad scramble for food.

Let us abolish these queues and let Lanka flow with milk and honey. It is our duty to fill the cornucopia to abundance.

THE other queues represent the trend of the country towards vice and gambling. Look at the school-boys and young men queueing up at a theatre at the hot hour of 12 noon for a 3.0 p.m. show or at 4.0 p.m. for a 6.30 show. Those long hours of wait could have been used for better purposes.

The racecourse and the toddy taverns represent a similar scene.

Yes, there is something wrong in the country—the long queues show it.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

(Continued from page 2)

the desuetude of the Etats Generaux; and few as their meetings had been in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they were discontinued entirely between 1614 and 1789. But their fire, if repressed, was still smouldering; and it burst into a triumphant flame with the coming of the Revolution. France recovered her heritage; and through all the vicissitudes of her life she has maintained it ever since. "Fluctuat, nec mergitur." The heritage of France is too precious—too precious for herself, and too precious for the world—ever to be submerged.

The struggle for liberty of the local estates in the countries which now are Belgium and the Netherlands is as old as the days of the Burgundian Dukes of the later Middle Ages. It was a struggle which rose to a noble height when they challenged the authority of Philip of Spain at the close of the sixteenth century. The Netherlands won: their liberty was acknowledged in 1648 by the public law of Europe; and the people of the Netherlands, with a grave and sober tenacity, built for themselves a house of constitutional liberty, and a home of toleration and of the free printing press which were the glory of the seventeenth century. That house and that home still endure: widened, strengthened and deepened, they are still the abode of a people which has never abandoned the cause of parliamentary liberty. Belgium was forced to sail stormier seas; but even under a foreign yoke the men of Brabant were still proud to remember their own "joyeuse entree." In the liberal days of the early nineteenth century—days since overcast by the storms and thunder-clouds which have again rolled westwards from Russia, but days which the spirit of man will inevitably renew—in those days Belgium too recovered her heritage (as

POLITICAL BANDWAGON

(Continued from page 4)

Well, Lord Simon, the former Lord Chancellor, who was a member of the National Liberal Club, expelled himself recently before the Club could do so, for helping a Tory candidate against a Liberal in last December's Epsom bye-election.

Paul Claudel, the distinguished French diplomat, who was a fellow member of the French Academy with Cardinal Baudrillart, wrote recently complaining of "the blockade of ideas" still existing, though the war is at an end.

THE spread of Stalinism in the Balkans, in Czechoslovakia, in China and Manchuria confirms this view of Claudel, who was recently the French Ambassador at Washington. Stalinism has infiltrated and captured the Trade Union movements in the Middle East, too; it is ready to step into Palestine, if given the opportunity by Britain and America. The dilemma of Democratic Socialism, is that it is automatically weak till 1952, when Britain and France, according to President Truman's five-man Air Policy Committee, expect them to produce it. And Socialism is still financially dependent on a Big Business dominated U.S. Congress. One was interested to read in the Duke of Windsor's Memoirs, of his love for the Bath Club in Dover St., Mayfair, where Yeats-Brown of "Bengal Lancer" fame, entertained be. It appears that the Duke spelt Lord Roseberry's name wrong in his Memoirs.

nations always will when the heritage is their heart's blood; and the Belgian Constitution of 1830, one of the great documents of liberty, is the century-old testimony of its recovery.

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Art & Letters

By Quintus Delilkhan

"MAGA SALAKUNA"

ALL lovers of national literature in Ceylon are under an immeasurable debt of gratitude to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Edmund Pieris, O.M.I., Bishop of Chilaw, for his enterprise in rummaging so closely in the Hugh Neville collection of the Oriental Section of the British Museum and lighting upon a palm leaf manuscript of 18 folia containing a Sinhalese poem from oblivion is particular valuable as all subsequent efforts by the Bishop to trace copies in Ceylon, though carried on since 1936 with his unsleeping zeal and diligence in matters of this kind, has proved altogether futile. Difficulties in the arrangement of the poem were got over, but as some words were in a condition faded almost to obliteration, works of a similar kind had to be studied to pick out the most likely words to fill the gaps. From the weighty and exact scholarship of the Bishop of Chilaw, his passion for preserving every vestige of the national literature on this and every other possible occasion, it is

a safe assumption that the work of rehabilitating this manuscript poem has been excellently done, and this edition will assuredly take its place among other Sinhalese classics of its kind as deserving of the highest esteem for the labour, insight and meticulous elucidation. In this work, the Bishop of Chilaw has also had the valuable assistance of another very competent Sinhalese scholar, Mr. M. E. Fernando, who has been a careful student of Sinhalese poetry with also an acknowledged reputation in all branches of the study of the Sinhalese language. His Lordship's introduction exhibits the searching, exact and dispassionate temper of the true scholar who, against the background of his classical culture, is able to weigh and appraise by legitimate comparative standards all issues that have to be critically determined, and the public will no doubt appreciate the priceless offering of a poem, released from "musty death" in the British Museum, as it is so expressive of the Sinhalese national genius and as its enjoyment is rendered all the

keener by His Lordship's wide and varied erudition.

★ ● ★

"MAGA SALUKUNA" is published by Ceylon Printers Ltd., and is priced at Rs. 2 per copy; and apart from the critical apparatus, there is also a translation of the Sinhalese text into English. The Bishop of Chilaw states in his Introduction that "there is no clear evidence, either external or internal, to determine who is the author of the poem; but when fuller information about the poetry and the literary men of the century is made available, it may be possible to venture a guess. It is however certain that the author was a scholar well versed in Sinhalese classical poetry and a master of his craft, with a first-hand knowledge of the route he described. The name Maga Salakuna means a road-guide or itinerary, and the poem belongs to the familiar class of Sandesa or Messenger poems. Each such messenger poem takes its name from the bird which is engaged in the flight but this poem deviates into innovation by direct narrative to a pious friend who wishes to make a pilgrimage from Badulla to the Dalada Maligawa. The route is from Badulla to Kandy, and covers a geographical area which is new as it is distinct from all other areas covered in other Sandesa poems now extant thus adding to its value as a historical record. Of the man names mentioned in the poem some are still on the map, others are unidentifiable and many names are completely forgotten. In getting a general idea of the route the maps provided are most valuable. Students of the Dutch and British periods will find the work of location most fascinating. It is interesting to note that Major John Davy who covered the route from Badulla to Kandy in 1819 provides many details which have a bearing on the place-names in Maga Salakuna. "On the 17th April," he says, "I ascended Dodanatu-kapella and proceeded over the mountains to Maturata, at a distance of 16 miles..... The views that present themselves from different points of the ascent of this lofty green mountain, thus far almost free from jungle, are various and magnificent, particularly of Upper Uva, almost all of which is visible and in the direction of Weyaloowa, the summits of whose mountains rising above a stratum of silver vapour, had a very singular and beautiful effect..... The hills over which we passed were of the liveliest verdure, ornamented with a profusion of rare and flowering shrubs, etc., etc."

joyous and keen sensibilities of a poet who appears to have loved intensely all that met this enraptured gaze. If Wordsworth and Coleridge and other poets so loved the scenery of England that they have made it live forever, it is gratifying to find that a like love of nature and rural life inspired the poets of this country to preserve for us a memory of the loveliness which their eyes actually beheld, adding to it all the coloured splendour of this country with its palaces, temples, nobles and commons, men and women, parks and gardens, troops of armed men, elephants, houses, streets and bazaars and all the multitudinous life which warms our hearts as we view these glimpses of departed glory through the poet's vision. Something must be allowed to the hyperbole of the poet but there must have been a large substratum of truth in the vivid, graceful and spectacular life which stimulated the writing of this beautiful poem, composed somewhere between 1612 and 1629 when Badulupura was at the height of its glory under the princely ruler, Kumarasinha Asthana.

★ ● ★

THE poet shares his diction and style with others who follow the Sinhalese classical models, notably Alagiyavanne. "But the author," says the Bishop of Chilaw, in a passage of notable praise, "is always his own architect and artist. He is accurate in his topography and describes persons and places with the precision of one who had sure knowledge of them. The 'speaking picture,' he draws of the jungle scenery between Dodanvaukapalla and Halgranoya is perhaps the most graphic and natural that we have of its kind, in the whole range of our poetry." This description occurs in verses 71 to 101, two of which in the English translation read:

These herds of deer abashed at their defeat
By the lustrous eyes of woodland nymphs
Search for tendrils to nibble them in anger
Fancying they be the fair femal lips.
Swarms of bees espying the thick moving brows
Of the fair maidens who haunt these woods
Out-graced and bashful seem to seek shelter
In sylvan foliage, but slink into lotuses."

The poet knows how to humanise his landscape and there is no doubt that a poem so rich and variegated in description, so graciously responsive to every mood of the beauty of nature, so much alive to the moving power of everything that is spectacular and so warm and quick to the love of his country will appeal strongly and instantly to all classes of readers to whom this discovery by the Bishop of Chilaw will be a worthwhile national gift at a time when our minds are most attuned to appreciate the literary glories of Lanka's past in our present air of spacious freedom.

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THE first Ceylon representative to the Olympic Games has been chosen and has already left for England. He is our bantam-weight boxing champion, **Albert Perera**, whose successful debut in British boxing last year made him an automatic choice. He has left Ceylon earlier than the others to enable him to have a tilt at the London and United Kingdom championships, which will take place before the games. Perera was joined later in London by two other boxers, who will be selected as a result of trial meets, which will be held next month.

Ceylon's Olympic representatives in athletics will also be chosen next month after the final trial meet which is scheduled for April 3rd. I understand that the present plans are to get together a team of four for the Mile Relay. The athletes, who are undergoing a special training for this relay, are **Duncan White, Dr. H. M. P. Perera, Oscar Wijesinghe and John de Saram**. This quartette of proved performers looks formidable enough to do something really noteworthy and, under Brant Little's expert coaching, may bring distinction to athletics in Ceylon. I also understand that **Shirley Thomas** will be selected for the Women's events. She has swept the board at most of the recent Meets and has still so much scope for improvement that an intensive course of training should bring her up to world standard.

Her selection will make up a team of five, which could quite conceivably be enlarged to six, if the C.C.A. coach acts as Manager of the team as well. This is quite in keeping with Olympic practice and has the primary advantage of enabling another athlete—preferably one from the field events—being sent.

The Government grant of Rs. 35,000 forms an excellent nucleus for the funds which will be necessary to maintain the team during their stay in England. Public support for the recent Athletics Meets has been very encouraging and the Association should be able to make quite an appreciable contribution to meet the expenses of the team.

THE school cricket programme last week-end was not so heavy as it was last week when as many as ten matches were played.

Both Royal and St. Thomas' rested before their big match, which starts today on the S.S.C. ground. This will be the 69th match of the series, in which Royal has a lead of one in the matter of outright victories. Both schools have done equally well this season but, taken by and large, I do think that St. Thomas' is the stronger side in spite of the fact that one of their best men, **Shanti Kumar**, is an absentee owing to illness.

WITH the approach of Easter our thoughts turn to Nuwara Eliya not only because the prospect of a holiday in the hills makes the present

weather conditions in Colombo a trifle less intolerable, but also because the Nuwara Eliya season this year is going to be brimful of good things in the way of sport.

The principal attraction is, of course, racing, which will take place in the Sanatorium after an interval of six years. Assistant starter **Pike**, who has been in charge of the Nuwara Eliya course since it was derequisitioned, has spared no pains in getting the track into its pre-war condition and, if only the rains come in time, the course will be ideal. At present, the track is very hard and trainers are compelled to restrict their work to the new sand track. Some rain did fall in Nuwara Eliya last week but much more rain is needed to ease the going.

OUR champion thoroughbred **Kunj Lata** accompanied by **The Eagle and Baldwin** have returned to Ceylon from Bombay where they did not do as well as we expected of them. **Kunj Lata** ran third twice while **The Eagle** won at his first start and followed it up with a second before he struck a bad patch.

I must say that I was greatly disappointed with **Kunj Lata** and console myself with the reflection that this great mare could not have been at her best in Bombay. None of these three horses are to run at Nuwara Eliya, as they are to be spelled.

In spite of their absence, the fields in all the Class I races will be well up to standard and we may see the dead-heating winner of the Madras Governor's Cup and the R.C.T.C. Cup, **Devilment**, making a bid for the first Governor-General's Plate to be presented in Ceylon. Apart from this blue ribbon of the Nuwara Eliya turf, there is another cup event—the **Tom Wilson Plate**, which is a mile affair for Class II horses. **Pactellan, Montrose Lady, Waitemata** and several others with good credentials will help to make this race an exciting one.

The entries for the Nuwara Eliya Meet close on Monday and I shall have more comments to make after the entries are known.

THE Colombo Tennis Tournament came to an end last Saturday on the Lawn Club courts when new champions were found in all the events.

The Men's Singles went to the elder **Ernst** after a fraternal duel, which was marked in the main by long baseline rallies. The Women's title was also a family affair, **Doris Fonseka** beating her younger sister in straight sets.

The well-known cricketer, **C. I. Gunasekera**, showed his versatility by helping himself to the Men's and Mixed Doubles titles in partnership with **N. de Costa** and **Mrs. Wijewardene** respectively.

The All-Ceylon Championships will be played as usual in Nuwara Eliya in three weeks' time and, although it will be the same old faces that we shall see on the courts, excellent fare should be provided. The champions will be all out to avenge their recent defeats while

their vanquishers will be equally keen to prove that their victories were no more flashes in the pan.

A RECORD field has been left in in the Lincolnshire Handicap which will be run tomorrow. The first leg of the Spring Double has a final acceptance of 63 but it is possible that there may be over a dozen withdrawals before the race is actually run. Even so the field is bound to be unwieldy, particularly on the "dog's leg" course at Lincoln. Last year when the field numbered about 40, the starters took their places in two lines, one behind the other, and those in the rear line were never in the hunt. This year too a similar state of affairs is likely and, consequently, picking the winner is going to be a very difficult task. The race has an added interest for Ceylon

in that our Home Minister, **Sir Oliver Goonetilleke**, is represented by his four-year old colt, **Bahadur Shah**, who won two races last year, one over 6 furlongs at Redcar and the other over 7 furlongs at Doncaster. He is by **Pherozshah** and in his first season was a real smasher. He hasn't been quoted in the ante-post betting but his chances are not quite as forlorn as all that. The Market call in the race is held at the moment by **Clarion** but he is more or less a nominal favourite as his price of 20 to 1 will indicate.

Coming as it does at the beginning of the season, form is at a discount in the Lincolnshire, particularly when there is no really outstanding competitor. The best half dozen in my opinion whom I would take against the field are **Cresta Cup, Vagabond, Philadelphie, All Red, Aigle Royal** and **Clarion** in that order.

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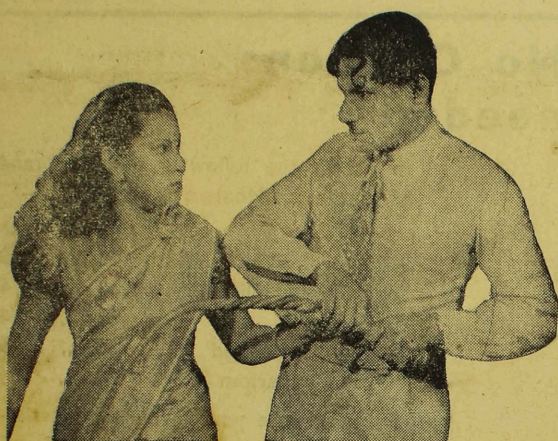
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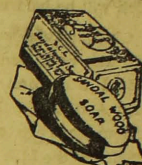
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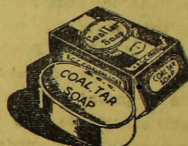
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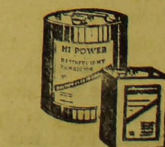
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