

can. Indeed, as Clement C. J. Webb (England) says, the Hindu gains ultimacy at the expense of intimacy. Another problem is that of the individual. Detached individuality does not seem to be a desideratum of the Vedantic mind and the Hindu, in withdrawing from social obligations, surrenders political responsibility. Still another problem concerns the possibility of ethics in an absolutistic philosophy. The Absolute, after all, smothers all distinctions, including the distinction between good and evil. Again, with his customary skill, F. S. C. Northrop (Yale) points to basic methodological differences between Eastern and Western thought, differences which continue to resist resolution. Finally, a metaphysics built on mysticism is itself an obstruction to the Western mind. What possible meaning can be ascribed to "existences dancing on the stillness of Pure Being," or to Radhakrishnan's eschatological assertion that in the end "cosmic existence lapses into Absolute Being"? Expressions like these, however sublime in a poetic sense, induce "the Gloomy Dean," W. Ralph Inge, to remark in his essay that "a journey through the unreal is an unreal journey, and leads nowhere."

Issues aside, we have here a brilliant collection of papers. In this book we can listen to the philosophers of the East and the West as they converse with one another about the most profound problems of human life and destiny. We can take comfort, and hope, from the fact that they understand each other even when they disagree. We can note with reassurance that their controversies do not divide them on Eastern and Western lines. There is music in the hemispheres.

THE AUTHOR: Of the possible rebuttals to that rusty saying about scholars living in ivory towers, one of the best is a lean, five-foot-ten, sixty-four-year-old Indian by the name of Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan—at once a diplomat and a philosopher. His diplomatic life would be arresting even for a man without a philosophy to his name. Twice, to single out a couple of high points in an international career that began back in 1931, he met with Stalin—in 1950, on taking up his post as India's ambassador to the Kremlin; and in 1952, on leaving it. He departed from Moscow on a note of hope, declaring: "There is no outstanding problem now dividing the world which could not be settled by discussion and negotiation." Back in New Delhi, Sir

By DOROTHY NORMAN

FEW contemporary Indian philosophers so positively refute the notion that Indian philosophy is negative as the energetic and dynamic Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. This might well be borne in mind during the current visit to America of this highly distinguished scholar, since one of our most persistent errors concerning India today springs precisely from our mistaken idea that its philosophy automatically and inevitably is both too passive and too negativist for its own—and the world's—good.

Dr. Radhakrishnan's presence also may help to explode a second assumption equally ill-founded: that virtually all Indian political leaders are pro-Communist, particularly so if they happen to disagree in any manner whatever with our foreign policy, or can be heard to utter a single statement that is even mildly critical (or simply objective) concerning the United States.

During a recent visit to India I found Dr. Radhakrishnan not at all perturbed by epithets momentarily being flung at him because of certain allegedly anti-Western remarks he was accused of having made in a speech covered in various ways by various leading Indian newspapers. (The released typescript of his remarks—he had spoken extemporaneously—differed appreciably from

the published press reports of what he had said.)

"Let them misquote me as they will," he stated calmly. "Let them try to accuse me of favoring totalitarianism, as they like. The fact is, I simply do not do so. I believe in democracy—that is, in living it. I believe in the cause of man."

"I have been interpreted as favoring Communism as opposed to democracy. Let those who wish so to distort the facts examine my entire life's work. Let them study what I am doing in India at this very moment. It should then be eminently clear that any such charge is completely false. I am, and always have been, unalterably opposed to those who, whether in the name of freedom or of anything else, are authoritarian. Indeed, everything in Indian culture is anti-authoritarian. There is a tolerance in India about all diverging ways of life; about all religious, spiritual, or political beliefs. One can live as one wishes, think and read as one desires."

"Moreover," he continued quietly, "one must realize that the ideas of nations, like those of individuals, must be seen as constantly in flux. One only can hope that many philosophies in which people believe today can be made to alter for the better. It is to this end that I devote myself. You might call me an idealist—certainly not a totalitarian."

"I am interested in peace," he de-

Sarvepalli was elected Vice President on the Congress Party line. He was unopposed. In his capacity as India's Veep, he is visiting the U.S. these days on a good-will tour. One of his first stops here was the U.N. headquarters in New York (he is UNESCO president for 1953); a *New York Times* reporter who trailed him through the glass building later wrote that Sir Sarvepalli "seemed a little disappointed that one room was not being put to more use: the meditation room." If there is one thing that Sir Sarvepalli is, it is meditative. He is widely acknowledged as his country's greatest living philosopher; as such, he has been "honoured," as the Indian Embassy in Washington puts it, as much abroad as at home. He has held professorships at

Madras, Mysore, and Calcutta Universities as well as vice-chancellorships at Andhra and Benares Hindu Universities. Sir Sarvepalli has

also been something of a globe-trotting philosopher, lecturing in England, China, and the U.S. He came here in 1926 and 1946—the first time, to deliver the Haskell Lectures at the University of Chicago; the second, to lecture at no less than fourteen universities. On his current trip, Sir Sarvepalli is taking time out to revisit some of the campus podiums from which he once spoke, before the long voyage home.

—BERNARD KALB.



clared. "I am passionately dedicated to attempting to do everything possible to help avoid the outbreak of war. I scarcely can see how this can be called siding with totalitarianism. I maintain that if Europe is wiped out through a war—if that great center of civilization is destroyed—then whoever brings about that destruction will be defeated, no matter who may be said to be the victor.

"It is not enough," he observed, "for the democracies simply to criticize totalitarian governments for the evils inherent in what they are doing. The democracies must themselves shed their own shortcomings. They must wage a war against that which is undemocratic in themselves. This is an essential problem with which the U. N. also must deal if it is to be true to its charter.

"If the democracies fail to dedicate themselves to wiping out the evils that continue to exist within their own domain, they will cease to be democracies. The Communists, by adopting violent methods in dealing with such problems as hunger and improvement of social conditions—as well as in suppressing the liberty of the individual—are abolishing the very reasons for living, in their so-called effort to create a better life. The principles of Communism must be altered radically if human liberty and happiness are to be safeguarded.

"If only both systems—Communism and democracy—can look at one another in a spirit of humility and understanding, then each will find scope for improvement. When the required changes will have been made on both sides, then at last will there be a possibility that the people living under the two systems can combine their efforts against the one common danger of an atomic war, thereby contributing to the happiness of all humanity. If, on the other hand, we insist upon playing like children, drawing a line and saying, 'If you cross this line I'll smash you,' we will fail to resolve that which keeps us apart.

THE alternatives in the present situation are not war or surrender. War is the expression of anger; surrender the confession of fear. What we need is a faith stronger than either.

"Let us realize that if we are in trouble it is because we are ourselves unprepared to implement the right principles we profess; it is because we have betrayed what is best in ourselves, and in our philosophy. The barbarian is in ourselves. This is the most important force arrayed against us. Not anything outside us. It is this
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ASIA

Peripatetic Justice in the Jungle

William O. Douglas's "North from Malaya" (Doubleday. 352 pp. \$3.95) records the Supreme Court Justice's travels last year through Malaya, Indo-China, Burma, Formosa, Korea, and the Philippines. Mr. Payne, who reviews it here, is the author of "The Revolt of Asia" and other books.

By Robert Payne

NO ONE who has ever been to Asia quite escapes from the spell. The eternal dusty roads, the ritualistic lives of the people, the sense of secret danger, and the knowledge that everything you see is as impermanent as a fairy tale: these things hold you and grip the heart, and you wonder, on returning, how you can ever make your peace with the corner drugstore, the neon lights, and the infinitely artificial world of the West.

Today, when the dangers arising out of Asia are only too manifest, and the impermanence of the ancient, ritualistic Asia is only too apparent, there is still something to be said for regarding Asia as though it was bathed in the light which hovers over fairy tales. There once again, remembered from childhood, are the evil princes, the dragons, and the embattled heroes in their towers.

You may say it is absurd to see them in this way, but the Asiatic revolutionaries tend to see themselves in this way, heroes at the mercy of their legends, actors in the blinding glare of the limelight, themselves repositories of the legendary qualities of their people. So Nehru anoints himself according to the practice of ancient Indian kings, and Mao Tse-tung behaves with the studied intransigence of the Chinese emperors, and in a hundred other ways we are aware of the legendary past grappling furiously with the merciless present. We forget that in Asia the past is real, almost tangible, a place one can walk about in. The wise men still cast charms of love; the prophets still prophesy; and the rage of the awakened people is directed as much towards the past as towards the enemies of today.

It is one of the merits of Justice Douglas's admirable new book "North from Malaya" that he is perfectly

aware of the weight of the past and of legends. In his recent wanderings through Malaya, Indo-China, Burma, Formosa, Korea, and the Philippines he saw the past everywhere. It was present in the Malay villages where the *pawang*s were at their work of casting charms against tigers. They still foretell the future by gazing for long hours into the mirror formed by their polished fingernails, their incantations deriving from a strange mingling of Islamic and Hindu songs. He saw it again in Indo-China where the peasants cling tenaciously to their village customs and still believe in the classical theory of the King's Mandate from Heaven. It was present again when he heard the Queen Mother from her palace at Hue declaiming in the unadorned accents of feudalism: "This is no time to speak of elections. It will be time to consider that when the Viet Minh are crushed." He saw the past, too, in the respect paid by the young Burmese revolutionaries to the Buddhist temples, and indeed he was a little astonished by the permanence of temples all over the East. The past obtrudes. You cannot, in Asia, slip out of it as you would slip out of a coat. And it is clear from his account that a great deal of our failure to understand the explosion of Asia derives from our abysmal ignorance of the Asiatic past.

"NORTH FROM MALAYA" is not, of course, a study of the past. Justice Douglas lives very much in the pres-

