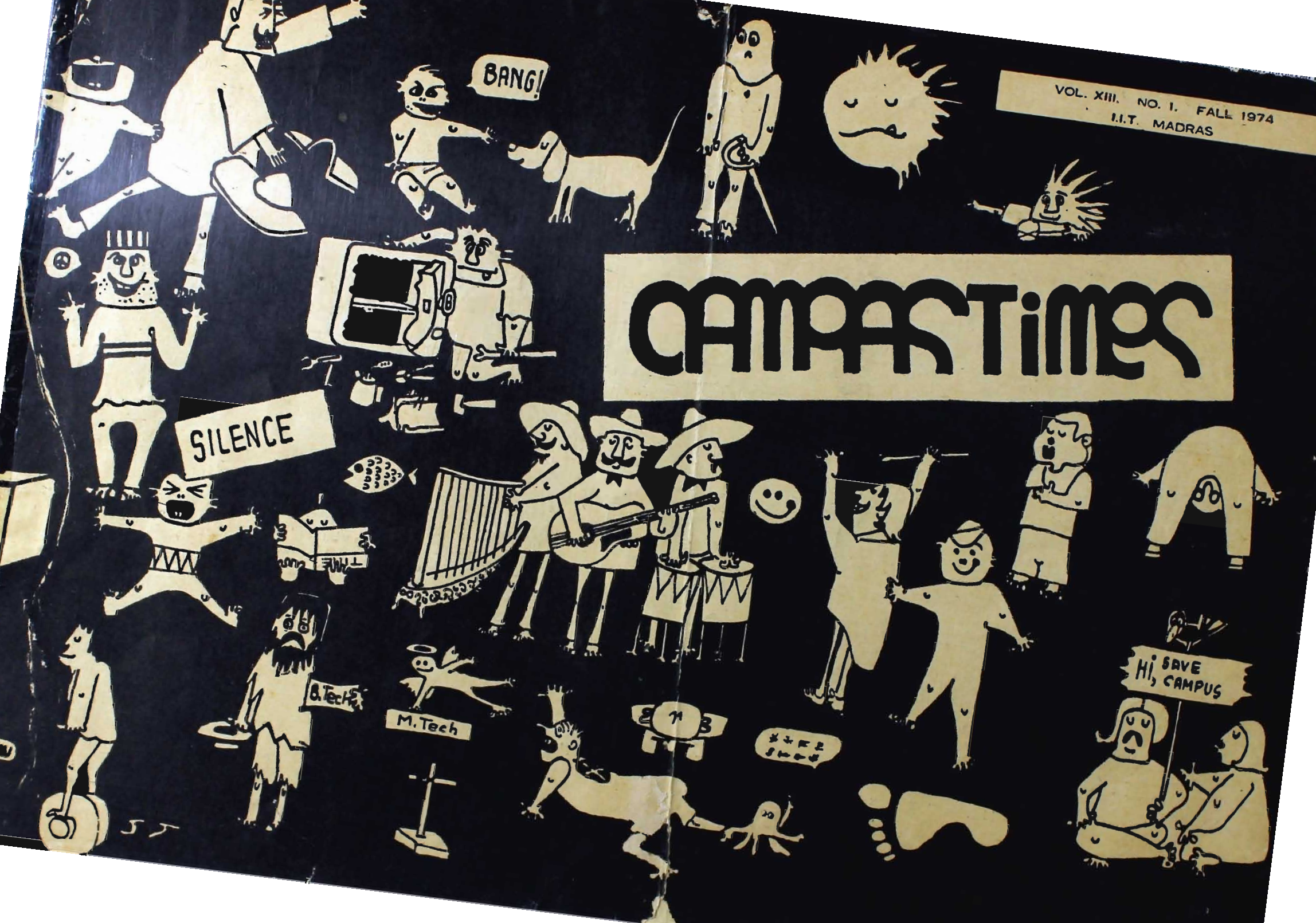
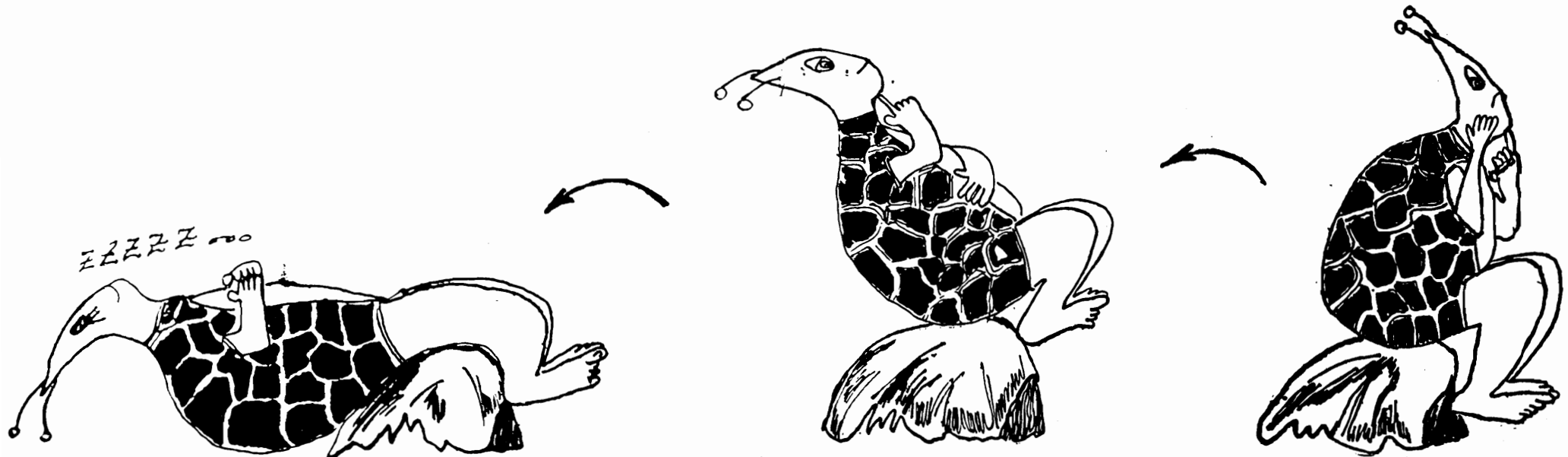


VOL. XIII. NO. 1. FALL 1974
I.I.T. MADRAS

CAMPUS Times



thought process.



PRISONER SEEKS CORRESPONDENCE

Editor, *The Observer*:

If at all possible please print the following words in your campus newspaper.

I am in prison and, being so, I am like an eagle without wings. I know most people are afraid of other people who are or have been in prison, but to those people I say, yes I committed a crime or mistake, whichever you chose, and I have paid for it a thousand times over. But does the fact that I committed a crime make me any less human? I am still a living, breathing human being.

My desire to correspond grows from my need of expression unified with my love and curiosity of and for people. Confined in prison around other men twenty-four hours a day, day after day, is making me become stagnate. Indeed, I need and must exchange ideals and ideology with a woman or at least someone who is not confined.

Maybe I have said too much, or not enough, so all I have tried to do is express my feelings for the need of correspondence with someone.

How unjust would it be for all to turn their backs to the sun and see only their shadow cast upon the earth?

Thank you in advance for all and any consideration, of writing me. Consider Writing A Prison, Why Not?

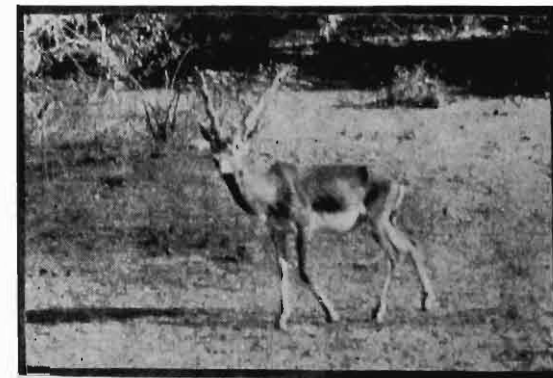
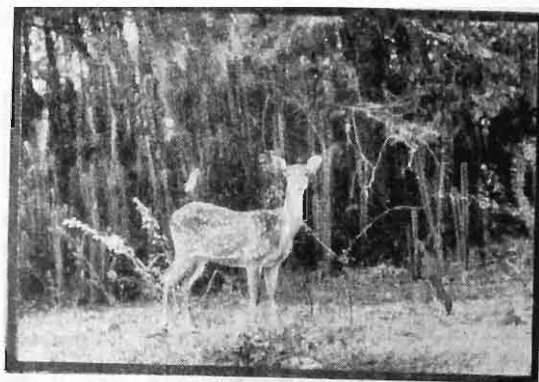
Sincerely,

MICHAEL O. WATSON 137-264
Post Office Box 787
Lucasville, Ohio 45648

(*The Observer* dated 10th September 1974—a student newspaper of Case Western Reserve University.)



This issue's cover has been designed by Wagle. Very imaginative, this guy has a lot of stuff up his sleeve. Poovy's New Physics lab is on page 8. Ramesh has come up with the 'Thought Process' and 'Anon E. Mouse'. The convocation collage was designed by Mayu. The photographic study of Mrs. Gandhi is by Mr. Gourishankar. Mr. Gourishankar is a free-lance photographer of considerable repute.



S. SITARAMAN

Reflections of an ex-i. i. tian

—A. Thyagaraja

It is with reluctance that I am putting down the following remarks on paper. It is not that the ideas are revolutionary and would result in my getting the sack should someone 'higher up' read it. Far from it, they would seem almost commonplace truisms. The reluctance stems from my experience with the expression of ideas and words in our country quite independently of their merit, no action follows, nothing constructive is done. Perhaps I am sanguine in expressing the hope that at least some of the readers of this magazine will ponder over these ideas and do something.

Quite deliberately, I wish to restrict myself to three problems in the academic environment at IIT. This is not because they are the most important by a long shot, but because I have thought about them for a long time and am involved with them directly. It turns out too, that I can suggest solutions to these problems which from my direct, personal experience, are found to work. There has been much talk here in India and abroad of the relevance of what is taught at the University to life. The question is a complicated one, as no easy interpretation of the word relevance exists. Further, what is not relevant today might be intensely relevant tomorrow. I am not interested in the question in this general form. I wish to ask, are all things taught to B. Tech. students (for example) at the IIT necessarily equally important or is there a subset of 'core' subjects which is critically important, the rest mere 'padding'? The reason I wish to ask this question (I must remind you that I am asking as the teacher of one of these subjects) is that, I feel personally (many of my colleagues would appear to disagree with my view) that the course is seriously overloaded. This overloading means that some six to eight subjects are taught per semester and the students are expected to work (in the classes and the labs.) for something like forty hours per week. It is my considered opinion that no student should be *allowed* to study more than five courses per semester and the total number of hours (including labs.) should not exceed thirty. Almost all scientific and engineering subjects require a lot of independent thought, discussion with others, and the working out of problems. I have been privileged to study at Cal. Tech. where even more stringent restrictions on the work load are imposed and I have not noticed that a typical Cal. Tech. B.S. is less able to cope with an engineering problem

than a typical IIT student. This must mean that large portions of the courses must be irrelevant or readily available information which the students can be trained to look up for themselves instead of grinding them for interminable hours in the classrooms. We can hardly expect any qualitative improvement unless this overloading problem is honestly tackled by the Faculty. By reducing the number of courses one can make serious efforts to impart instruction on the core subjects on a non-trivial level by making the students self-reliant and more confident in their ability to solve problems.

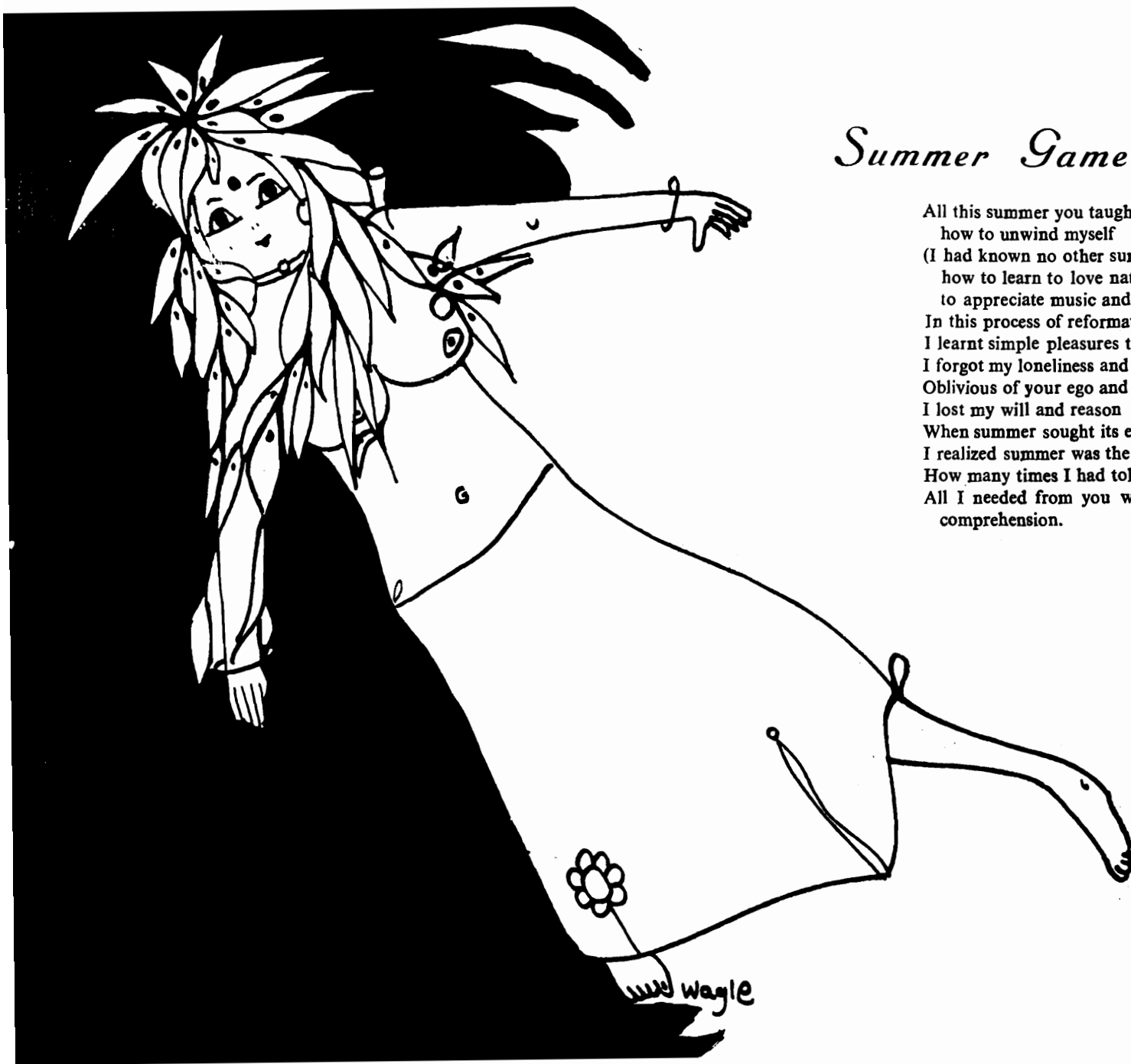
The second problem I wish to discuss is the question of attendance. I wish to question the proposition that the University is responsible to the parents of students in the matter of attendance in classes. The students must be *treated* as responsible adults (whether they are or are not) and must take the consequences of being irresponsible. As a student I have always felt that attendance was a meaningless tyranny, and as a staff-member, I feel that it is a meaningless waste of time. If a student can do what is expected of him (homework, examinations) without a teacher's help, why shouldn't he? Further, a captive audience is not the one best suited to efficient communication of technical information. Let me qualify my disapproval of the present antediluvian attendance system by saying that at labs. or workshops, the work *cannot* be done without the physical presence of the student at the appointed hour. Here, of course, attendance is essential for the work to be completed. To stop a student from getting a degree because he 'does not have the attendance' is unacademic and unbecoming of a University.

The final problem is less specific. It has to do with the 'miasma'. We appear to have a rotten 'miasma' here at IIT. The students distrust teachers and the teachers are indifferent and insensitive to students and distrust each other. As if this were not enough, the staff and the administration are constantly at each other. I have refrained throughout from saying 'when I was a student here, it was better' because in the main, it wasn't. However, it certainly wasn't worse. This constant questioning of the other man's bonafides, this loud and cacophonous dissent, this total disinclination to work seems to be a deep-seated malady. The question is, can we collectively, as members of the IIT community, do something about it?

To even begin thinking about this problem, everyone must decide clearly what he wants. The students must decide whether they just want the degree or want to learn useful things in the course of getting one and learn to enjoy doing useful things. The Faculty members must ask themselves whether they are deficient in some respects, teaching or research or just general sense of humour. If, of course, they tell themselves that they are perfect, nothing more is to be said, except perhaps they could ask themselves if they are honest. The staff and administration must daily remind themselves that the basic reason for the existence of the University and therefore themselves is the business of educating students. A question which we must all ask ourselves is how in the world are we justified in wasting tax-payers' (our own!) money and above all time in perpetrating the million inefficiencies we do perpetrate every day. What we do seem to be pretty good at is asking these questions with reference to *others*. This crucial difference is responsible for the miasma.

Suppose instead, we recognized our own limitations and extended the same tolerance of ourselves to others, we might even be able to talk to each other courteously. If we can for a moment reflect that another's interest need not necessarily be against self-interest, a meaningful dialogue is possible. Unfortunately everyone takes himself very seriously and cannot spare a thought for his human or natural environment. The only remedy I can suggest is that every member of the IIT community be given courses of humorous reading beginning with a study of P. G. Wodehouse. It might be objected that laughter is incompatible with the 'High Social Purposive Seriousness' which is called for in these difficult times. I think this is better than the students giving their famous imitation of sheep, the faculty of a snarling pack of wolves, the staff of a squalling baby and the administration of a block of wood.

A. Thyagaraja obtained his M.Sc. Degree in Mathematics from this Institute in 1969. This was followed by a Ph.D. from Cal. Tech., U.S.A., in 1972. A year later, Dr. Thyagaraja joined the Department of Mathematics of I.I.T., Madras, as a Research Associate and is now an Assistant Professor.



Summer Game

All this summer you taught me—
how to unwind myself
(I had known no other summer),
how to learn to love nature,
to appreciate music and timelessness.
In this process of reformation—
I learnt simple pleasures to fill my empty soul
I forgot my loneliness and followed your shadow.
Oblivious of your ego and intentions,
I lost my will and reason
When summer sought its end,
I realized summer was the shortest season.
How many times I had told myself I love him.
All I needed from you was a single gesture of
comprehension.

aries.

A Touch of Silver

A herd of cows was passing by in a slow, shuffling bunch, hooves kicking up a moving blanket of dust, and the girl stopped to watch them, thumb in mouth, two grimy books in a restless hand, her dark, coffee-coloured eyes so wide open that you may have found it difficult ever to ignore them. Nor could you look away from that elfin form, the dust-covered bare feet, a wispy, feather-floating quality that only a fairy can naturally claim. Even as she watched, one of the black cows made a deep, bellowing noise and broke away from the herd, running expertly at right angles to the path, straight into a grassy field, moving black against the green. Then, as the farm-boy shouted and ran after the adventurous cow, she drew her thumb away from her lips and laughed, peal after peal of sheer exuberant delight, thumping her knees with the books until the pages were in danger of coming apart from their moorings.

Soon the dust had settled back on the forgiving earth and one more lively facet of passing life was deeply etched into her colour-thirsting mind. Those moving limbs, those disorderly smudges of brown, black and white as they had tumbled past in the glorious sheen of dust-fogged sunlight, the eager bovine bid for liberty, the excited chase and finally, the recapture, each full of coloured wealth, were images that were growing so crystal-clear and photo-sharp that it almost began to hurt inside her head. She shook herself as though to get rid of these things and tried to focus her glazed imagination on a wood-pecker as it floated by in a sharp curve and settled down to begin a deafening, harsh staccato at the lower branches of a nearby oak. The bright orange of the plumage and the dark, shadowy base of the tree combined and suddenly flowed into a single burst of fantastic colours and she was caught up again on the edge of a familiar rainbow-like shell, a swirl of radiance so poignant in its mind-numbing loveliness that it made her want to laugh and cry at the same time. And as she stood transported there on the dust-road that was her way back home from school, a worried mother was fretting and waiting for her daughter with a cold cup of milk.

When the dairy-man passed along the path that evening, he was whistling snatches of a half-forgotten folk-song and madly struggling to make the horses trot in phase to the tune, and he was so engrossed in his task that he almost missed the recumbent figure on the boulder along the roadside, grimy, covered with dust and leaves, and fast asleep. Beside her, two equally dirty books lay flapping and open in the breeze. Exhausted by the big efforts to shake free the accumulated pressure of her images, she had simply curled up and dropped into oblivion. Now, as the

dairy-man reined in curiously, he let out a startled hoot. In all his twenty years of road-and-wagon experience, he had never come across a more sorry sight, and he was down on his knees beside the child at once, dusting the breeze-cooled arms and speaking gently as she stirred up from a dream-saturated world of her own. He swung her up into his huge, gnarled arms, and consoled her as she began to cry, much as he had often consoled his trustful horses when they had snapped tendons and cast shoes in hurtling him to some remote dairy-call on those stormy days when all the slush and debris of the earth seemed to accumulate on the roads. Being the worldly and understanding father of two daughters, he soon managed to put the girl at ease and found that her home was close by and on his route, or at least that was what he deduced from her vague instructions. Taking her to the wagon, he set her down on an empty milk jar with her books, patted her tousled head and made faces at her until she grinned and finally burst out in a shriek of laughter. The falling mantle of night was now drawing tightly around them, and singing brokenly, the reins hanging in limp catenary-lines from his fingers, the dairy-man rode on until the girl cried out for him to stop, then sprang out of the wagon and ran straight into the arms of her distressed mother, who was on the verge of a nervous collapse. She thanked him profusely and even invited him to share supper with her, but he declined politely and was soon on his way again, singing very lustily as he guided his horses into the night.

There was a gentleness in the sunlight as it splashed in broad yellow beams upon the untidy mess of canvas-sheets, planks, upturned bottles and bits of string spread on the floor of the open wooden cabin. Sitting crouched on a three-legged stool, the old painter waited with poised brush until his sun-warmed senses told him that the grand moment was upon him. Except for the long, high-pitched reveille of his pet rooster from some strategic perch outside, the painter, engrossed in harnessing the white luminosity of the morning-sun, was momentarily sealed in a mute chamber of pure light and shadow, colour and radiation and the countless sparkles and glitters that every one of us can see but very few can comprehend. As he sat there, squinting and drunk with delight, his huge, colour-splotched beard flew up in the wind and patiently, he worked upon this frozen drop of natural stillness, drew it upward in his breath into a turbulent pool somewhere in his chest and discharged it, gently, deliberately, through the fine, faithful bristles of his brush, upon the blank, barren emptiness of the canvas, his eyes dilating with pleasure as he watched the wonder springing to life before him.

The old painter looked up from his canvas. A woman stood at the cabin-door, holding a young girl by the arm. In the other hand, the woman carried a sheaf of papers.

'Come in, Senora. You too, my little one. I'm sorry I cannot get up from my work now. Once I sit down, I have to finish this without pause, otherwise it will never be whole in my mind.'

The woman nodded and moved to a corner of the studio with the girl. There was complete silence except for the chirping of birds outside. After an hour, the old man finished the scene to this satisfaction, and laid down his brush and palette with a sigh. He found the child standing beside him, gazing raptly at the canvas, and he was struck by the intensity of her dark eyes as they swivelled up and down. He took her into his arms and ran his rough, bony fingers through her mop of brown hair.

'You like it, little one?'

The woman, who had been watching silently and beaming at them, shuffled forward and waited until the amused old man had finished playing a traditional game of nose-rubbing with her child.

'Her name is Rusa, Senor. I am her mother. I have come to you because people told me that you are a great artist. You see, Rusa is not well in her mind, she stands at one place and becomes lost, or she goes to sleep in the middle of her classes, and some days she runs away and cannot explain where she has gone or where she has come from. I am frightened for her. The doctors, they say she is all right and laugh at me and tell me all children will be like that. But I know something is very different about my Rusa. So I bring her to you.'

The old man was silent for some time.

'I will help you, Senora. But tell me, I am only a painter, why do you think I will be able to tell you what the doctors cannot tell?'

'Because of these, Senor', she laid the sheaf of papers before him and watched him with imploring eyes. The old man put Rusa down and picked up the papers and unrolled them.

Only once, it is said, does an artist see in the course of his life a sudden stark revelation of everything that naturally comes to his dreams but rarely condescends to flow from the skill of his fingers and the warmth of his heart. When he opened the first sheet which the simple-minded woman had given him, the old man knew that this was his moment of revelation. In the scene that lay spread out before him were all the vistas and rolling stretches of colour, brightness, darkness, agitation, peace and joyousness and sorrow and a million shades of feeling too sharp to have a name, too plentiful to be numbered. And all these from a child, a mop-headed, playful little girl whose fretting mother was laughed at by pompous doctors for being so concerned about her daughter.

'Please, Senor, now do you see why I came to you?' her voice quavered and as she watched his face, the contraction of his brows, the sad and gentle expression on his face was

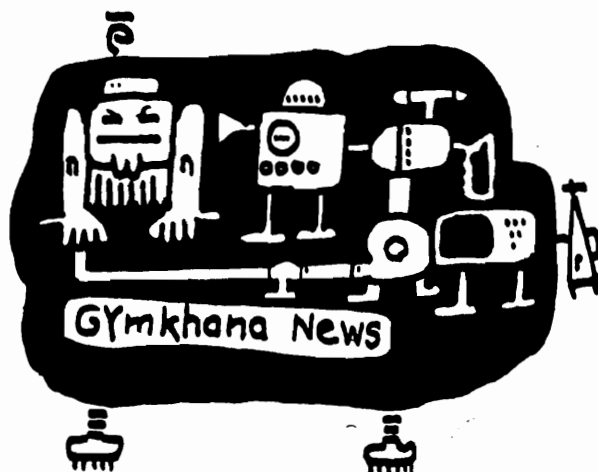
replaced by his smile as he turned to her. He took Rusa again into his arms and gazed into those sparkling eyes. Here he was, on old, decrepit, much-acclaimed painter who imagined that he had found for himself every possible nuance of beauty and wonder on his canvas, priding himself on his inspiration and understanding all these many years, and suddenly here was a mere child, a wisp of a girl, who could put him to shame and humiliation wordlessly and without even knowing what she had done.

'Yes, Senora, I can see why you have come. It is good that you have come to me, your Rusa has made me a humble man. Listen carefully to me now, for you may not understand much of what I will try to tell you, as you are a simple woman, but a wise one. There are young children in the world who, like your Rusa, have inside their souls, a touch of silver. These young ones may sometimes have sudden spells and lose themselves in their own imaginations because of the power with which they are drawn by their souls-forces. Many mothers think that their sons or young daughters are not right in the mind and their hearts are full of sorrow, especially if their stupid doctors tell them that nothing is wrong and laugh at them. Of course, nothing is wrong, but the child understands and senses everything too early and too strongly in visions. Sometimes these visions can make the child very happy, so happy in fact, that he or she will prefer to remain that way as long as possible. It is good if the child is left alone to be with his silver-touched happiness. Your Rusa is a vision-sensitive girl. She is lucky to be so. Even though I have struggled for so many years to infuse the world with my colours and my hard imagination, I would give anything to be like Rusa, but I cannot be so. I have to be content with myself and my weak pictures.'

Somewhat exhausted by this long exposition, the old man sat down and stared at his recently finished canvas. Rusa, who had been watching his lips move in articulating the words, sat on his knee, fingers of one hand in her mouth, the other hand holding on to his beard for support. A butterfly, large, yellow and mottled, caught her eye, and she gazed at it until the small black dot on its wing grew larger and rounder then changed into a huge field of deep purple like the sun when you look straight into it with closed eyes.

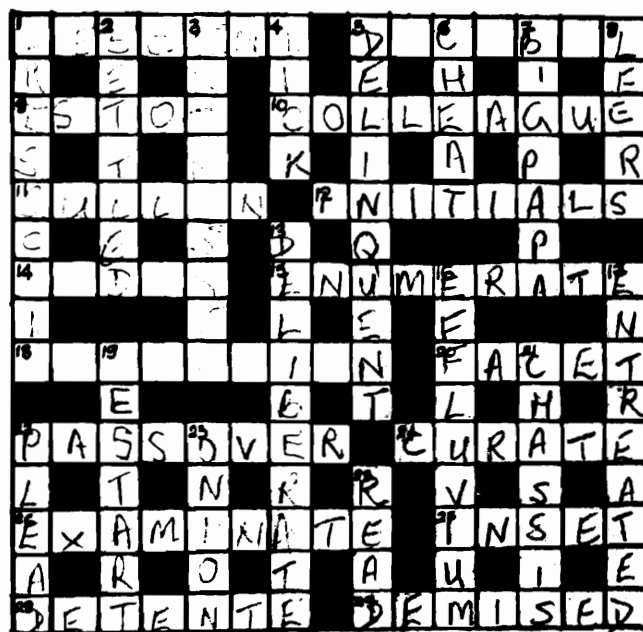
The old man ached for the mother, whose pained eyes told him that she had not absorbed much of what he had said. Why is it, he wondered, that such supremely gifted children are born to plain, unsophisticated people who, in their lack of wider understanding, would only suffer from misplaced delusions about the sanity of their perfectly created sons and daughters, mortals given an extra slice of the richness and infinite sublimity of this world.

T. Astatine.



As opposed to the steering committee, this year we have a Stereo Committee, bass and treble included.
But it still spells trouble.

RIVER RAT



CROSSWORD CLUES

- Across :
1. Come down into greater part of cedar dense mess (7)
 5. Tenth part with incomplete gong is a sound measure! (7)
 9. Preclude oriental mail mixture (5)
 10. Peer a bend in the University (9)
 11. Consul lenses contain sulkiness (6)
 12. They come before a name (8)
 14. Takes cover in animal skins? (5)
 15. Specify by giving numbers? (9)
 18. A good one reads the Bible everyday (9)
 20. Aspect of a top card in short foot (5)
 22. Finished after success-hand it on (4, 4)
 24. Priest the mongrel consumed (6)
 26. Aim a point at the Texan differently—and make him lifeless (9)
 27. Insert in onto a group (5)
 28. What Indo-Pak talks always aim at? (7)
 29. Granted the young lady mostly in the act (7)

- Down :
1. Attire smartly as the German Police is with the trouble come red chick endlessly! (5, 4)
 2. Colonised after having paid all the bills (7)
 3. Trains which were since with the newspapers. (9)
 4. Member of the very common Trio (4)
 5. Nothing coming back with short queue in the depression for the offender (10)
 6. Cold warmth gives a rogue (5)
 7. Idi Amin (3, 4)
 8. Reels somehow and has a seductive glance (5)
 13. Rebel and I in confusion are in appointment to meditate (10)
 16. Exhalation as half dozen follows the disease in different fume (9)
 17. Pleaded for an oriental banquet among the confusion (9)
 19. Begin all over again (7)
 21. Frame such as sister contains! (7)
 22. Beg humbly with a silent metal (5)
 23. On a charged particle is a plant (5)
 25. Study my love who is in trouble! (4)

OLD RARITY.

(Solutions on page 13)

VISITORS



*"When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?"*

From l. to r. Prof. B. Sengupto (first Director of I.I.T. Madras),
Dr. Pandalar, Prof. Nurul Hasan

Professor Nurul Hasan

Although the invitation read 2 p.m. 26th September '74 for discussions with Prof. Nurul Hasan, Union Minister for Education, we were able to meet him only at 3-00 p.m. for about half an hour. However, a few questions were asked and the gist of his answer is published here.

To a question about raising the Post-Graduate stipends to Rs. 400 from Rs. 250, and the undergraduate Merit-cum-Means scholarships from Rs. 75 to Rs. 150, Prof. Hasan said that this matter had been discussed at the council of IITs and *such raise was found necessary*—'something will certainly be done; I am hopeful' 'But Sir, what are the chances?' His reply was, 'You haven't taught me computer science. I can't make rational projections. I am an arts student and can only "predict the past"'

'Sir, the students feel that by recognizing the Mess staff as Institute employees the quality of their service might go

down' To this he said that although he wanted the employees to be benefited, sufficient funds were not available. He felt that the lack of money was the least important aspect of the whole problem, it was the attitude of the students towards the mess employees which was more significant. 'How are you going to deal with people whom you cannot hire or fire? You must learn to do this.'

Finally, regarding increased financial aid to Schedule Caste and Schedule tribe students—personally he was convinced that these students in the IIT deserved a better deal. He added there are some who feel that there should not be any difference between the aid given to Schedule Caste students in other institutions and those in the IIT. However, Prof. Nurul Hasan has been trying his best to convince the others about the need to give more facilities to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students in the IIT since the highest quality of education in the country was available here.

He left as abruptly as he had come.

Professor B. Sengupto

A fatherly figure who still earnestly believes that in the Institute the teacher takes the place of the father (/mother). Probably this is unbelievable in this environment where we even have to 'fight' for 'better' student-staff relationships. As for his views on *Campastimes*—'Nobody should be afraid of writing about anything that happens in the Institute; only don't hurt anyone's feelings'

Q: What was the nature of the charter you drew up for *Campastimes*?

A: I don't remember it now, but the general idea of it was that whatever happens in the campus should be reported by the magazine. Nobody should be afraid of doing this.

Q: But people are not afraid of reporting events. Rather, they are afraid to air their opinions, and one of

the objectives of *Campastimes* is to focus attention on problems concerning the students. Can this be done without hurting anyone?

A: In all such matters the code of the gentleman must be kept in mind. You should not try to hurt anyone's feelings. There is more than one way, of saying the same thing. Instead of saying 'You have done this work badly', you could say 'Well, there are better ways of doing this.'

Q: In your days as director, there was a lot of contact between you and the students. Is it possible to have such contact now without the director in any way appearing to interfere in our affairs?

A: Oh yes, I used to visit the hostels quite often and sit down for meals with my young friends without notice. And during these visits they would discuss their problems with me. Later I would meet my advisory committee and discuss with them the suggestions. I had received from the students. Then I would incorporate these suggestions whenever possible.

Q: Does this lead to overfamiliarity between staff and students in the class-room?

A: No, there is no such thing as overfamiliarity. All that I am doing is treating you nicely; and if I treat you nicely you will treat me well too.

Q: Since you were directly involved with the inception of the Institute, could you tell us something about the original aims of the Institute?

A: This Institute started purely as an undergraduate Institution. This is because no useful research can be carried on without a firm undergraduate base. There should be a continuous interaction between research and undergraduate work because it is finally the undergraduates who will carry on the research.

Q: There is a lot of talk about laying more emphasis on P. G. and research work in the IITs. Does this mean that the IIT is gradually being converted into a purely research organization?

A: No. I don't think so. *Teaching undergraduates should be the most important objective of the IITs.*

Q: But is there any motivation for better teaching since it appears that most teachers concentrate on research?

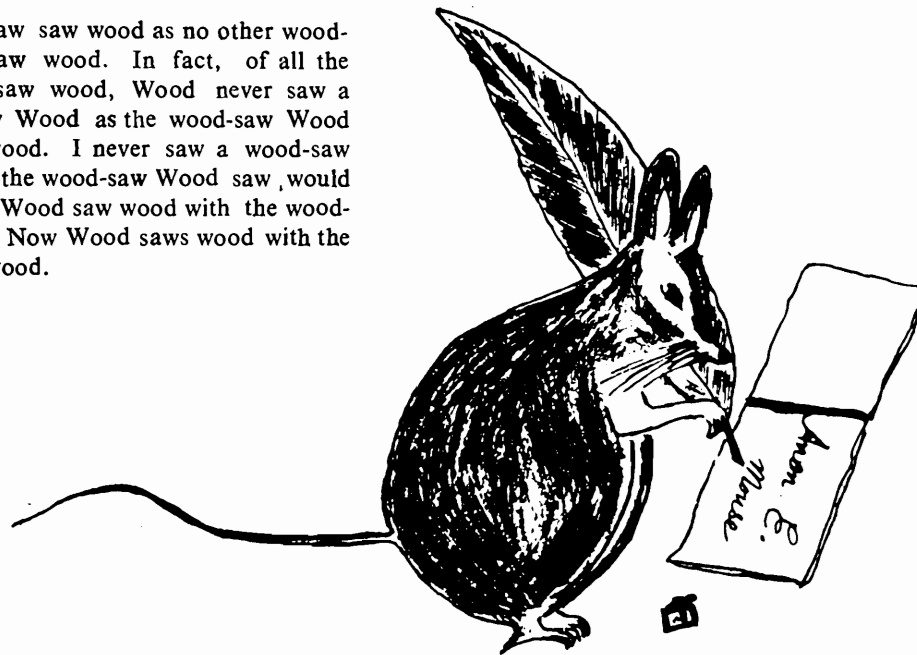
A: No, it is rather sad that we have always taken in teachers on the basis of their research potential and not on their teaching ability or aptitude. I think this attitude ought to be changed.

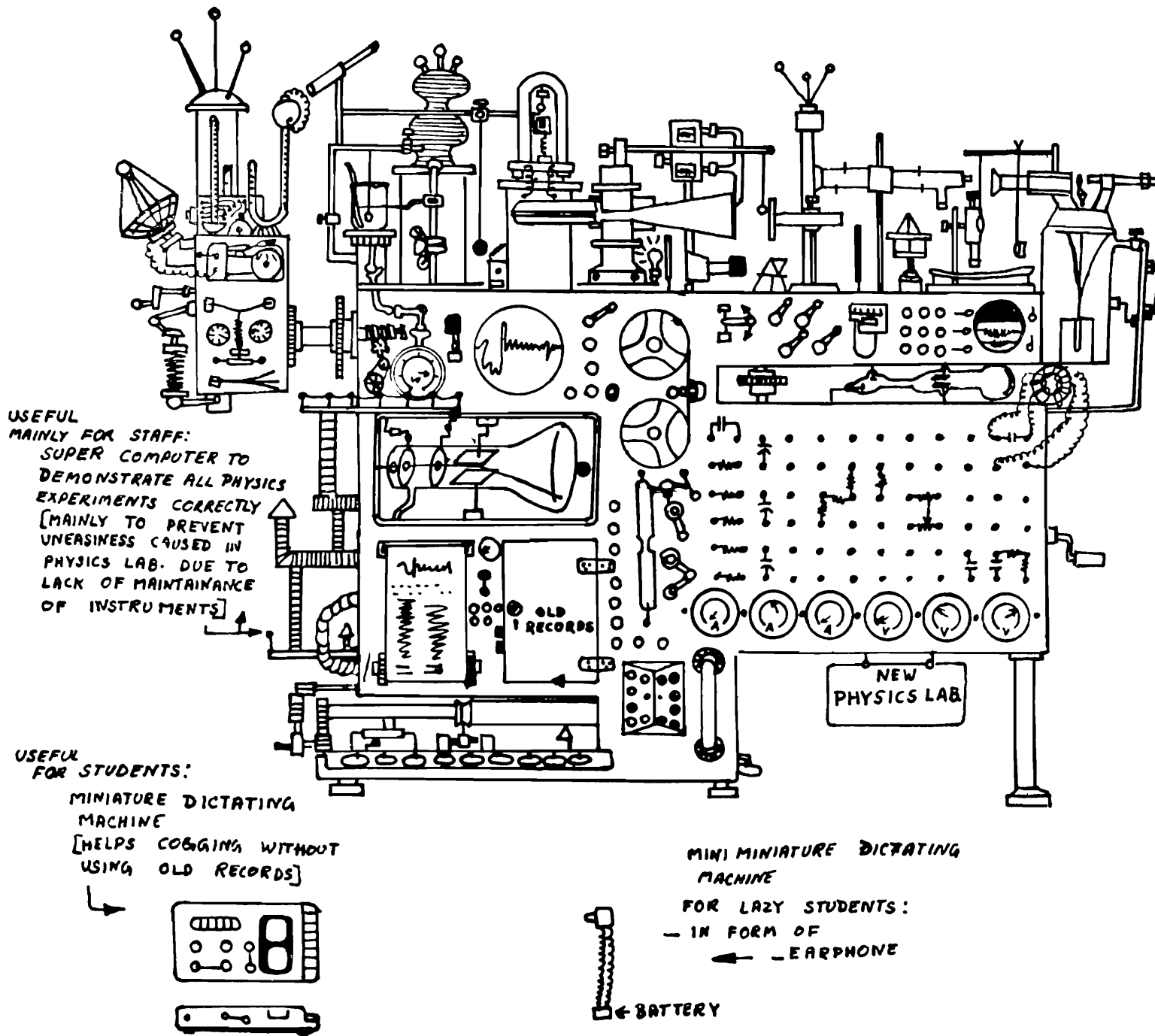
Much as we would have liked to ask him many more questions he was called away to some other engagement.

How Esau Wood Sawed Wood

Esau Wood sawed wood. Esau Wood would saw wood. All the wood Esau Wood saw, Esau Wood would saw. In other words, all the wood Esau saw to saw, Esau sought to saw. Oh! the wood Wood would saw! And oh! the wood-saw with which Wood would saw wood! But one day Wood's wood-saw would saw no wood, and thus the wood Wood sawed was not the wood Wood would saw if Wood's wood-saw would saw wood. Now, Wood would saw if Wood's wood-saw would saw wood. Now, Wood would saw wood with a wood-saw that would saw wood. So Esau sought a saw that would saw wood.

One day Esau saw a saw saw wood as no other wood-saw. Wood-saw would saw wood. In fact, of all the wood-saws Wood ever saw saw wood, Wood never saw a wood-saw that would saw Wood as the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood would saw wood. I never saw a wood-saw that would saw wood as the wood-saw Wood saw, would saw wood until I saw Esau Wood saw wood with the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood. Now Wood saws wood with the wood-saw Wood saw saw wood.





SO GET IT

Now if you happen to go to HSB one of these days you may see a few guys twirling pebbles at the end of a rubber band. Don't bother to ask what they are doing—they're finding the e/m ratio. Maybe you don't swallow this but if you have been in the 3rd year some time you'll know all about how to get measurements correct to three decimal places using an unmarked ruler. No fault of the students, though. We are given lenses and microscopes and meters that don't move. Get no result, you get no marks. So get it—by all means get it from last year's records which probably are straight from Galileo's or Newton's original sheets.

The Goat Getters,
(We are a pain in the neck.
Some people have lower opinions still.)

GET IT! OR ELSE FORGET IT

AN EXCURSION INTO THE VALLEY BEAUTIFUL

In these man-trampled times, any sort of escape from anything man-made means Paradise Re-gained. To me, much of Kashmir seems like this.

Time has never journeyed to this land,
Flowers and heather bloom out of date,
The rocks jut, the streams go singing on either hand,
Careless if the season be early or late,
The skies wander overhead, now blue, now slate,
Winter would be known by his cutting snow
If June did not borrow his armour also.

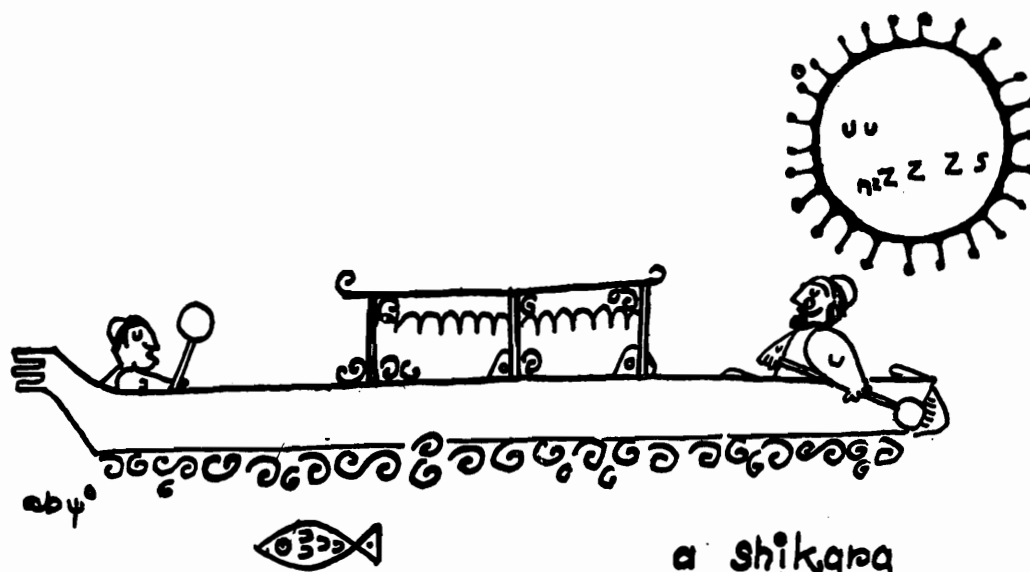
It was on a warm afternoon that our flight, right on schedule, touched down at Srinagar airport. Amidst the chatter of excited passengers and the clicks of safety-belts being unfastened, we were informed that the temperature outside was a cool 23 degree Celsius.

I was thrilled. This was my first visit to the place of which I had heard so much. And I was right here, in its hospitable capital.

The first impression that one gets of the airport is that it has a friendly look. The terminus has not been polished, plated and primed much and this gives it an informal and welcoming atmosphere. There is greenery everywhere. At what other airport can you find flowers growing right at your feet? A soft breeze shuffles about, and the blossoms bow as easily as geisha-girls, their fragrance accompanying you right from the tarmac to the terminus.

Our initial fears about transport proved to be groundless. A Volkswagen had been arranged for us and we were whisked away to our place of stay—a house-boat. On our way, I was conjuring up all sorts of boats, but the real one outclassed even my wildest conjectures. It seemed incredible to me that a house-boat could be so large and so handsomely furnished. It was an absolute pleasure to stay there, catered to by an ever-smiling face.

But we had come to travel around and see Kashmir and tired or not, we were not to be held back by anything. That very afternoon, after our arrival, we were told that the services of a 'shikara' belonging to the house-boat, were reserved for us. A 'shikara' is as long as a rowing boat but it has a canopy and cushioned seats, which make it much more comfortable. A paddle, and not an oar, is used to propel the 'shikara'. The boatman sits, precariously perched, at the stern and it was a constant source of wonder to me how our old coxswain and his very young son plied their paddles apparently unwearied, and prepared to go on forever.



We glided on into the distance, skirting the outer fringe of the lotuses, to our first halt at Char Chinar, the place of the four massive Chinar trees. Planted centuries ago these trees still stand four-square and aloof, on an island in the Dal Lake, the only four-square Chinar spot on earth.

At a 20 minute slow-rowing distance is Nishat Bagh. This 'Garden of Pleasure', built by Shah Jehan, is one of the many gardens for which Kashmir is famous. Built by Mughal emperors, who had an eye for beauty, these gardens have endured through the ages and remain, breath-takingly beautiful even today.

Understandably, in earlier times, gardens were considered to be an expression of love and affection, a classic example

of this being the renowned Shalimar Bagh. It was built by Jehangir and its beauty reflects his intense love for Noor Jehan, his wife. Her childhood name was Meher-ul-nisa, but the name Noor Jehan, meaning 'Light of the World', was given her by her beloved. Legend has it that both were extremely fond of beauty and one day, when on one of their annual visits to Kashmir, they chanced upon a particularly enchanting spot, Noor Jehan voiced her desire that a garden be built there and from that wish grew the reality of the most famous garden in the world. 'Bagh', incidentally, stands for 'garden'.

Busy gardeners work furiously to maintain the beauty of this place, which draws thousands of visitors even today. Every-

thing is as it was when built, except that Shah Jehan, the son of Jehangir, later added one more structure to it. As is typical of all gardens built by the Mughals, this one too has innumerable fountains to bathe the many flowers.

In this lovely setting, we saw the son-et-lumière which told of an episode in the life of the two lovers; of their quarrel and reconciliation. That we saw both, the Urdu and the English shows, speaks amply of the interest generated.

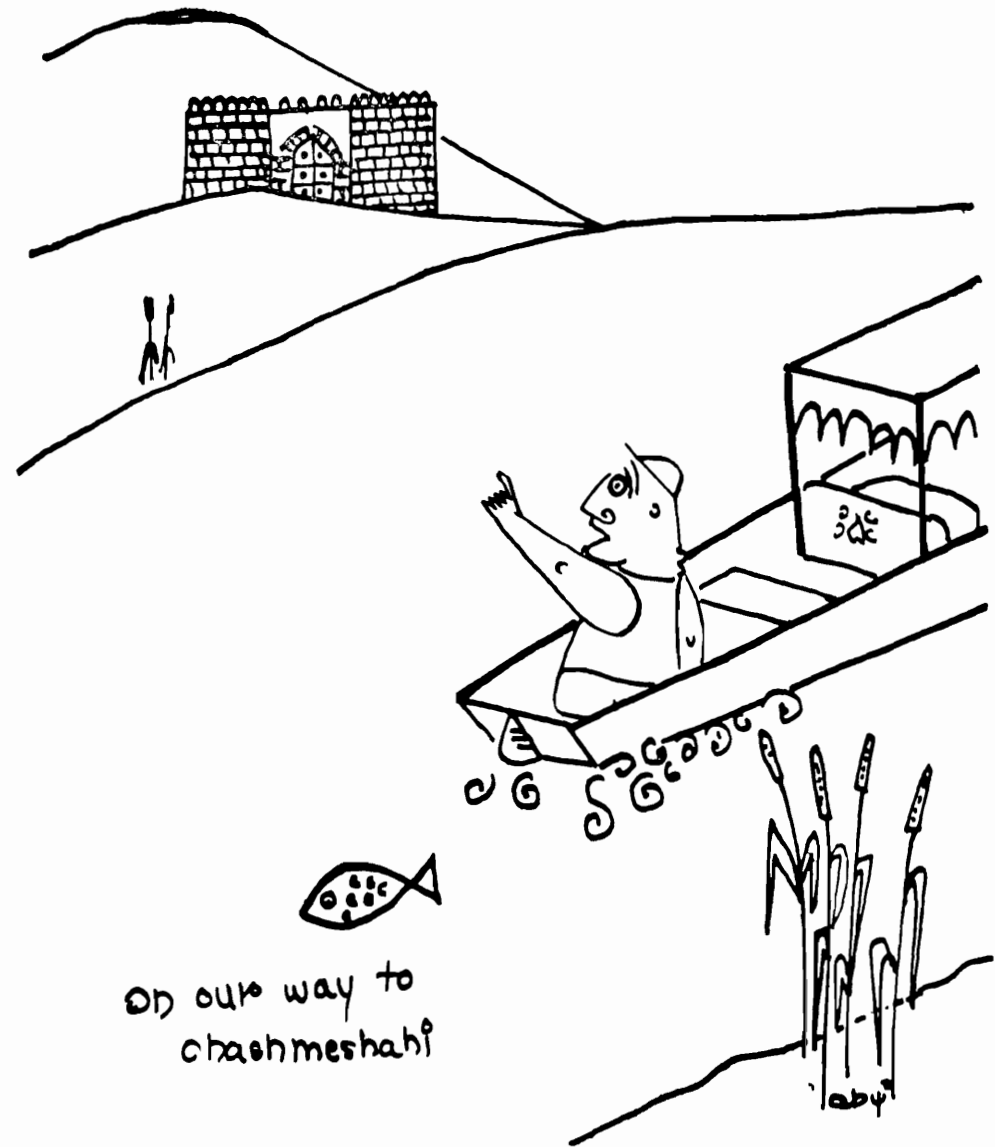
Chashme Shahi, or The Spring of the Kings, is another place of interest. In bygone days, the kings had a particular spot reserved exclusively for themselves from where they drew their drinking water and here, a garden and a monument have grown up. What makes the water fit to be drunk by kings is its apparently beneficial digestive properties for which I can personally vouch. Having eaten like a gourmand after sharing the privileges of royalty.

Gulmarg, or 'The Flower Valley' is at a shiver-inducing altitude of approximately 9000 ft. above sea-level. It is about 60 miles from Srinagar, our base, and about 10 miles from Tangmarg. An apt name because it is from here that the road narrows down. Whereas the road upto Tangmarg has a standing climb, after that it is a journey into space. One can go up in anything that moves on wheels or on ponies. My advice is never to take the latter - it means asking the Almighty for an infinite limit of tolerance.

In spite of its tremendous height, Gulmarg was surprisingly warm, but the weather there is said to be notoriously unpredictable. Gulmarg has a 1 km. rope-way system, but whereas in the Alps, closed cars glide on ropes, here we have chairs for two, dangling precariously 45-50 ft. above rocky terrain. The occasional shudders of the snail-pace chairs have, I am convinced, appreciably reduced my life span.

The people of Kashmir are predominantly Muslim. A beard that I then sported often deceived people who mistook me for a Muslim and a caustic-looking specimen cautiously enquired whether I was one. A reply in the affirmative saw a transformation. To add to the fire, I conspiratorily questioned him as to the whereabouts of the border, whereupon, assuming that I was intending to head out of town, he clamoured to come with me. Thoroughly enjoying myself by now, I agreed after a mere hint of discernible ponderance and we decided to leave the very next day as I was in a terrific hurry. Concerning the apparel, an argument ensued, for although we had to trudge through the snow, he insisted that warm clothes weren't necessary whereas I insisted that they were. Well, folks, came morn and that was the last he saw of me!

The people here live in abject poverty. Standards of living remain as they were 27 years ago, but the people seem blissfully unaware of the changing world outside. Kashmir has hardly any industries in the true sense of the word, the majority indulging in handicrafts of the most exquisite variety and in the weaving of intricate designs on shawls. This creative sense of beauty has come down through ages—from father to son to grandson. The government too finds



that it is something worth encouraging and if during any year there is a fall in visitors to Kashmir, everyone involved is duly compensated for the loss that they may have incurred. I sincerely hope that such incentives remain. It is not rare to hear someone say that that particular shawl is the product of his father's labour. The women, especially during monsoons and winter, also turn out some masterpieces. Busy, busy, busy, is the impression one gets of the people there. If not out in the fields, the women-folk are indoors weaving. Oblivious to the world outside their social sphere, they work tirelessly from dawn to dusk. There are quite a few furriers and taxidermists doing their bit of damage.

The rest of the populace has found its metier in agriculture. As is well known, Kashmir has a climate best suited for fruits and flowers, in which it has a booming export industry, the way to Yusmarg being bounded by vast expanses of orchards. Ideally, the fruits burst forth in countless numbers in the months between August and October, although some come out as early as June. Like old men, the trees hunch forward with the sheer weight of the fruit that they bear. Don't try to be kind and ease their burden for if caught by the owners, you'll be left wondering what hit you. They will invariably build a replica of Mt. Everest out of the mole-hill you inadvertently made. It's second nature to them.

I would ascribe the excellent health of these people not only to the salubrious climate of Kashmir, but also to the easy access they have to fruits. These fruits can supplement any diet and still be for the better. Healthy children frolic with an energy hard to control, and everywhere one sees vivacious kids darting after one another. It does the heart good to see that vicissitudes have not reduced them to creased brows and despair. For these lucky children, health and vitality are as natural as life itself.

The men wear a tight pyjama and a kurta, complemented by light foot-wear, a cap (which affords no protection from the heat) placed on top of the head and a little to the back, and a sober-coloured overcoat. Shepherds have foot-wear made of straw tied neatly in bunches, fibres being tied around the ankle to keep the thingumajigs in place. The men-folk have fine features. Many of them sport a beard and many others have a light stubble. The women dress in brightly coloured (and sometimes garish) clothes. Being fair of complexion, it is very rarely that one sees a woman with heavily applied cosmetics. Their fresh, natural beauty renounces the need for any rouge or mascara and the like. Bangles, anklets and trinkets are very commonly used. Some of the women still remain behind the 'purdah' and in black robes. But Kashmir too seems to be discarding old traditions. It was not uncommon to see a segregation of women sitting in the gardens listening to 140 db music with their purdahs removed from their faces. The children too dress gaily, but their chatter and innocent stares make them so lovable; whereas I would have warded off a man, I let these sweet

kids sidle up to me and examine my camera. After being subjected to close scrutiny I would watch them laughingly run off to spread the word. I didn't see a single kid come forward to beg.

The vendors have a prodigious capacity for being mendacious and their honorificabilitudinitatibus is always in question. Where purchasing is concerned, I can safely asseverate that any commodity bought by you would be worth at least half the price paid. Once you have been discreetly sized up as well-to-do, they will tenaciously cling to you. It's so hard to turn them down once you see their upturned 'innocent' faces. As much as a glimpse is enough to unsettle you, so just close your eyes and bark at them to vamoose, or else.

Pahalgam, the Valley of Shepherds, too had something in store. It had one of those regular insistent sellers, but with a difference. This time it was a medicine-man. Whether I should call him a petty doctor or brand him a quack is left to the reader's discretion. Anyway, this old chap gave me a little oil. He asked me to gently rub it on my temple and to simultaneously twiddle my toes. I must have looked a weird sight and I studiously avoided the curious gaze of the tickled audience. This extraordinary man claimed that the same oil would find its way out of the feet where a healthy person was concerned but would be occluded somewhere along the body in the case of an ailing one. Imagine my astonishment, and relief, when oil actually did come out from my foot. Here I do not wish to accentuate my good health but the fact that oil whizzed from head to foot! Triumphant (at having demonstrated his powers?) he held up the oil imprint on paper but sadly said that I was healthy enough and that none of his (expensive?) medicinal concoctions were necessary. Was it only a trick? I don't know, but I wonder how many bought his medicines out of sheer panic. The speciality of yet another was to rub oil on the palm and 'make it' come out from the back of the hand. Wonder what they'll do next with the bally oil.

Saffron, or Kaysar is also cultivated in plenty in Kashmir. But beware! Kaysar is of two types. One variety is called 'Mongra' and the other is called 'Lacha'. The flower from which saffron is extracted has five petals. Four are yellow in colour and one is red. It is the red part that is plucked out and used in the making of saffron. Obviously this is pure saffron. Most enterprising people give the yellow petals a red hue. This is then mixed with the pure form. Thus one flower yields one unit of mongra or five units of lacha and hence a neat 400% profit. Pampore has a climate best suited for the cultivation of saffron.

Kashmir comprises three districts. One of them, Srinagar, is the capital. The previous capital was Avantipore, but now it is a neglected place with a dilapidated temple as its only showpiece. Built in the Pallava times, it has an indecipherable writing on some stones. Which shows how good the Pallava code was.

Strangely enough people in Kashmir do not bother to

'pasteurise' the water before drinking it. At first I would very gingerly apply my lips to a glass of water, but finding it apparently safe I overcame my initial inhibitions. Perhaps it is better not to boil the mineral-rich water; the deposition of carbonates on the vessel being still more undesirable. So much for chemistry.

What about Srinagar? We made it our base because of its advantages. It lies at the most central place. Pahalgam, Gulmarg etc. lie in completely different directions and each is accessible only via Srinagar. I was one day cornered by a person from AIR Srinagar, and to the blasé listener I gave my impressions of the wonderful place.

We travelled widely and saw as much of Kashmir as we possibly could. Inevitably, the place is becoming less of a Paradise as far as escapists are concerned. Tourism is rapidly expanding and human proliferation taking its toll of wild-life. But vestiges of bliss still remain to attract everyone in search of beauty and that rare commodity called Peace of Mind.

A sinking heart and an ascending aircraft simultaneously left that glorious place. The former was inside me, and I was inside the latter bound for Delhi.

RAVI BAHAL

Know Then Thyself, O Teacher

(With apologies to Alexander Pope)

Know then thyself, presume not student to scan,
The proper study of teacher is teacher, Man.
Placed on this isthmus of middle state
A being darkly wise and rudely great,
With too much knowledge for sceptic's side,
With too much weakness for stoic's pride,
He hangs in between, in doubt to act or rest,
In doubt to deem himself a god or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer,
Born but to die and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such
Whether he thinks too little or too much,
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused,
Still by himself abused or disabused,
Created half to rise and half to fall;
Great Lord of all grades;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled,
The glory, jest and the riddle of the world.

JAFFAR MOHIUDDIN.

IS THERE ANY WATER
IN THE POT?

PEREGRINATIONS

From far and near they came. IITK's annual cultural festival is a kind of Woodstock, only a little more conventional and organized. For those eight or ten colleges of Delhi, it is an annual pilgrimage which begins with a clamorous train journey to Kanpur. This year IITM also joined the bandwagon. A hundred and twenty of us (including hangers-on from IITD) had crammed into a compartment for seventy-five (the chicks in the group never had it so good). Somehow everyone got through intact to Kanpur.

Nice place, this IITK. The Yanks have been as generous there as the Germans here. The structures there, unlike ours are the work of architects. The campus itself isn't a patch on ours and on those hot, dusty September mornings, looked dreary and listless.

With the experience of eight years behind them, the organisers had planned well and showed that they had learnt their lessons well. But on the first day the combined brains of IITM and IITD beat their apparently foolproof set-up in a curious show of wits. Sorry, details can't be divulged here but everything ended up in good humour and levity. In their anxiety to organise well the IITK people gave the whole show a little too formal outlook. There were none of those musical shows under the trees as we had here for our Mardi Gras (they have plenty of trees, mind you). Everywhere there was this air of rigidity and formality. In the mess, we were assigned tables and subjected to scrutiny (there were plenty of hangers-on from IITD). The grub was more than just edible but Oliver couldn't ask for more. Have you ever heard of anyone pining for Saras or Narmada grub? It may seem incredible but this was precisely what Mahesh and Anil Gadi were doing after the second day. Back home things weren't, after all, that bad.

The schedule was tight. Plays were staged late in the evenings on three days and quite a few were laudable. IIT-KGP came up with a long drawn out one ('Bandi') which ended up as a test of patience for the audience. The best play was from Xaviers, Bombay. This play was an experiment by the director (can't recall his name) and as it progressed it changed his image from that of a commonplace pseudo-brain to that of a genuine thinker. He projected onto the play his conception of life as a game and depicted the many facets of man-woman relationships according to that conception. The same guy had won the 'Just a minute' contest at IITD a few days earlier. The whole show was very impressive indeed but if we had staged our play 'Luv' (rejected as late entry) we would have matched the prize winning 'Theatre game'.

Our quiz team of Ramkumar and John Louis lost to IITK, 14 points to 24 in the preliminary round. Lady

Sriram College of Delhi, a virtual onlooker, managed 4 points. IITK were good but 45 minutes is too brief a span to qualify a quiz as an accurate test of knowledge. The bell saved IITK from us. During the quiz Ramku proved he could say if a painting was done by Rembrandt or not and Louis showed that he had taken last year's psychology course seriously. IITK eventually won the final round.

The western music programme was good but the sultry atmosphere of the pandal did it harm. Mainly soft numbers were done and one singer from IIT-KGP impressed everyone with his vibrant voice. Our guys, Eddie (with his Woodstock numbers) and Randhir Naidu were good but one look at the field and you'll forgive them for not bringing home any prizes. Randhir had the misfortune of being pre-empted to both the songs he had been so well prepared with, by singers before him. He sang one of them 'One morning in May' and clearly excelled his predecessor.

We found time to go around the Institute. Their library is something. We learnt that their academic programmes require a lot of hours of study in the library. Would you believe that in some subjects each student is issued with a copy of the prescribed text-book by the library for the whole semester? IITK surely have the edge over us in academic matters and we have much to learn from them. There is, of course, quite a bit to their TV Centre and the closed circuit network. The Computer Centre looks much more impressive than ours and houses five systems but when we were taken around it superciliousness was written all over us. Everywhere we heard this tribute to our IBM 370 system.

Ravichandra played for us on the Veena in the Indian music (light and classical) competition. He is really good but up north people couldn't tell the difference between a veena and a sitar and poor Ravichandra languished in obscurity. Even we weren't of much help to him. The singers chose their renditions well.

In the elocution contest, Gadi, our sole representative, was off color. But he more than adequately made up for it in the extempore debate where his wit earned him a round of applause. Mahesh for his part, analysed the topic 'Life is absurd', well but the delivery lacked its usual punch. The contest was a close one and the judges had a difficult job deciding, against us. The whole story repeated itself for the debate and we came out empty-handed. The topic had something to do with God, his house on earth, people and stones.

Now coming to the literary events at IIT Delhi, Mahesh did very well to finish third in the 'Just a minute' contest (if you don't know what this is, listen in to the BBC). He can score as well with his gab as with his bat. The writer's performance was mediocre and he was eliminated in the preliminary round. But Mahesh lost his touch in the Mock session (this is a frivolous business which measures how

crazy one can get) and was literally carried out by 'armed men'. There is not much to say about IITD except that it has an imposing Students' Activities Centre. One wonders why they don't win the Inter-IIT meets.

This coverage is for only half the period of the trip, for, the other half was spent in the train. We have returned only to find ourselves in the quagmire of periodical tests, labs

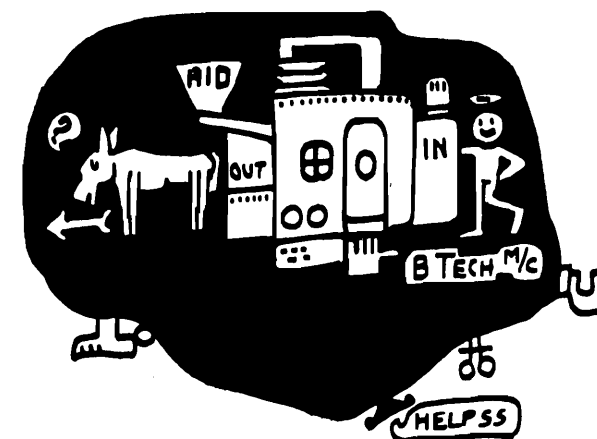
—SUDHIR.

Mailer on Physics and Engineering

Conceive of a sinner who is a Catholic and devout. What complexity in his feeling for the Church, what pieties of observance live between his sins. He has to make such intricate shows of concealment to his damned habits. Yet how simple is the Church's relation to him. Extreme Unction will deliver his soul from a journey through hell.

So it is with physics and engineering. Physics is the church, and engineering the most devout sinner. Physics is the domain of beauty, law, order, awe, and mystery of the purest sort, engineering is partial observance of the laws and pattering with machines which never work quite as they should work; engineering, like acts of sin, is the process of proceeding boldly into complex and often forbidden matters about which one does not know enough—the laws remain to be elucidated—but the experience of the past and hunger for the taste of the new experience attract one forward. So bridges were built long before men could perform the mathematics of the bending moment.

An extract from: *Of a Fire on the Moon*,
by NORMAN MAILER.



Pointers to the Placement Section

(i) Time and again pleas have been made for the appointment of a full-time Placement Officer but these have yielded no results so far. A very strong plea was made by Mr V. Ramakrishnan, the outgoing Alumni Secretary, on the Alumni Day, in view of the conditions in the Placement Office last semester. Due to lack of staff, the show was run almost entirely by students (at a cost for many of them in terms of classes, periodicals etc.). The administration as usual was slow in reacting to the situation.

I don't think I need to go again into the reasons for this demand. It has been repeated too many times right from Bhatla's days and by now, I'm sure everyone is familiar with them. What we need is the appointment of a full-time Placement Officer at least of the rank of an Assistant Professor. He could work under the guidance of a senior Professor in the Institute. His duties apart from Placement could be liaison work for the Institute now that the ICC has been established. Such a person would also be a formal channel of feedback from the Industry as to their requirements relating to the outputs of the Institute (viz. Engineers and Consultancy Services). Needless to say, such a feedback is absolutely necessary. This feedback will help us modify our programmes to suit the needs of Industry. This person could be designated Public Relations Officer or Industrial Liaison Officer or Placement Officer. Of course, this aspect doesn't concern us very much as long as we have someone in the Placement Office.

(ii) I think we students would greatly appreciate it if the departments could lend a helping hand in the placement process. Up-to-date the Management Department is the only one which has placed everyone of its students, and to a certain extent, the Aeronautical Engineering Department too. Each Department has liaison with Industry in its particular field. It should not be difficult for the Heads of Departments and the staff to place at least some of their students. Also, this personal interest on the part of the staff of the welfare of the students would go a long way in strengthening staff-student relationship.

RAVI.

KANNAN.

Flowers Never Bend with the Rainfall

It began as stories often do—once upon a time (when I was young and handsome), I floated on a wispy cloud of cotton-candy, looking down upon the world with rose-coloured spectacles. I knew that the world was pink, so the spectacles weren't really necessary but I never bothered to take them off—they were rather comfortable. You feeling hungry brother? Help yourself to cotton-candy, sit back, relax. Dream of castles in the air, never-never land and, of course, fairy princesses. (Ms's please read fairy princes.)

How does it feel to lose one's faith? I fell into a bottomless well, a yawning chasm that gaped suddenly before me. I grappled with the blackness that invaded me from within and without—but in vain. It filled me and spilled over into my mouth leaving behind a taste of old shoes and rain-water. Endlessly I fell, spinning towards nothing. Silence—a ringing, terrible silence shrieked at me and I had nothing in me to fight with. Slowly I came to rest and as the light slowly broke in the darkness I saw a desolate waste instead of the comfortable security of cotton-candy clouds.

Pretty words strung together meaning nothing in particular.

When someone, whom you respect and look up to, lets you down—then that ranks as the biggest betrayal of them all. Judas, you ain't seen nothing yet.

Look around son, and watch the way the world walks. Walk with it, it's easier to swim with the stream. It's not time to make a change—relax and take it slowly. 'I don't want to walk barefoot in the mud or sleep in the rain Charlie, so I'm off the Cincinnati to carve myself a niche in high society—and the rest of you be damned.' Let us mark this a festive occasion, my friends; and dignify it with speeches. Let us go forth and win laurels for this institute, dressed up and gilded as men and quaking at the emptiness inside.'

Quote: 'Well I'm all for leaving and that being done, I've put in a request to take up my turn in that forsaken paradise that calls itself "Hell"—where no one has nothing and nothing is well, meaning, fool, pick up thy bed and rise up from your gloom smiling.

Give me your hate and do as the loving heathen do.'

Walking the city streets at night, I came upon a pavement flower seller. She sat beneath the mercury lamp, the better to display her pitiful wares—the small pile of flowers faded and choked by the fumes of the traffic that thundered by. Her face was a mask of exhaustion and—resignation. What

touched my heart was the bundle of cloth beside her; a child sleeping trustingly on the pavement—trusting in this country to provide her with a future. The vision filled my brain and as I walked I sought desperately for an answer; trying to assuage my guilt for being what I am? I don't know. Confusion.

Then suddenly I saw the solution plain before my eyes—a banner across the road—Welcome to Prime Minister.

Quote again: 'The mirror on my wall

Casts an image dark and small
But I'm not sure at all it's my reflection
And I'm blinded by the light,
Of God and Truth and Right
And I wander through the night without direction
So I'll continue to continue to pretend
My life will never end,
And flowers never bend with the rainfall.'

—PHILIP

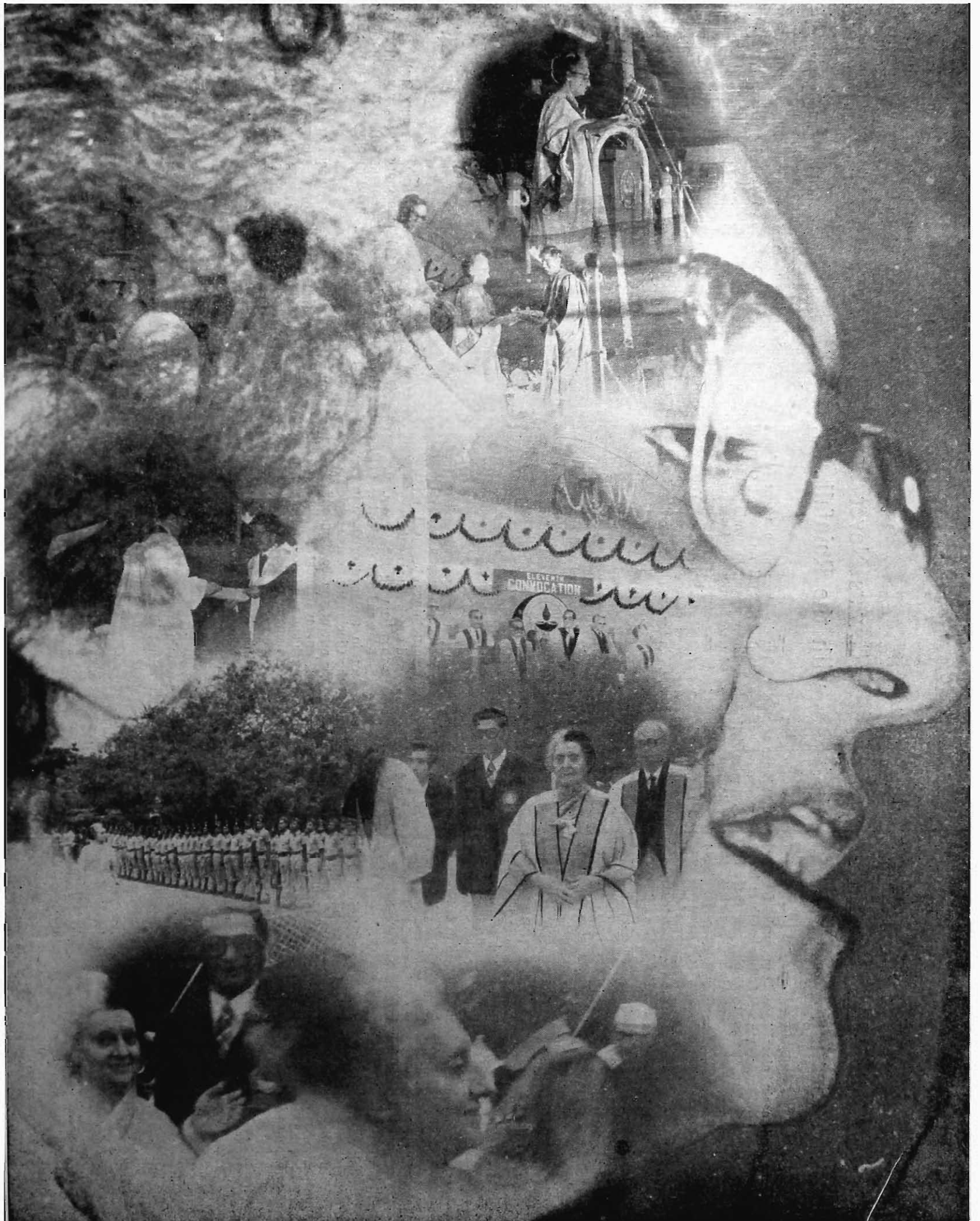
SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

Read.
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CHESS

8RQBI.KR5; 9RNI.
4BNich, Kany; 5RNI, KQ2, 6RK1, KB3, 7RQ1, KN4;
(b) 1 RN5ch, NN3, 2B x N, RR7ch; 3KN 4 RXB;
mate.
or BB3, 2QKBS. If 1.. PN6, 2NN6ch, P x N; 3QR3
(or QR7). If 1... BB6 or BQ3; 2QO3. If 1... BK4
(a) 1QKB1 BN7 or RP moves, 2QON1 and 3Q x RP



CONVOCATION '74



'It was good of you to change the date of your convocation. . . .'



'I must confess that my heart leaps up when a new achievement comes to light.'



'I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say that, compared to the number of scientists, we are entitled to greater expectation.'



' . . . our science is inhibited by administrative procedures.'



'I am also concerned that so much of our scientific work is derivative and imitative.'



'For years I have been urging . . . our scientists . . . to improve . . . the wheel of the bullock-cart.'



'When I have spoken of making greater use of Indian medicine and herbs, our doctors have smiled.'



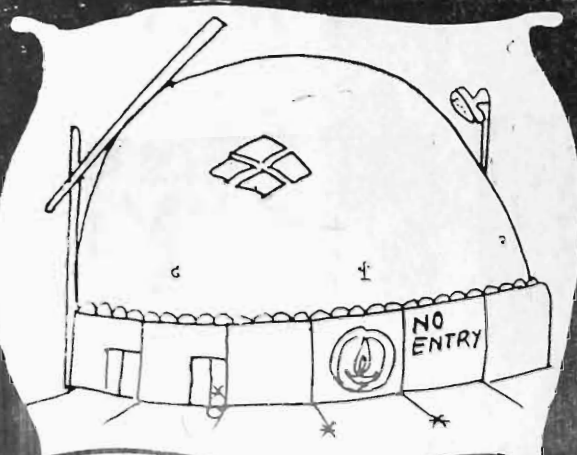
'Intermediate Technology . . . will make rural people more science-minded.'



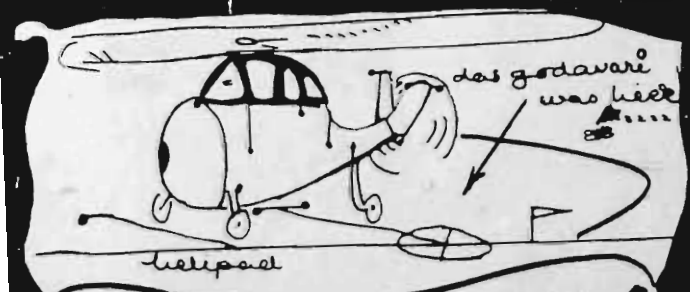
'Let us not forget that our most important resources are the men and women of our country'



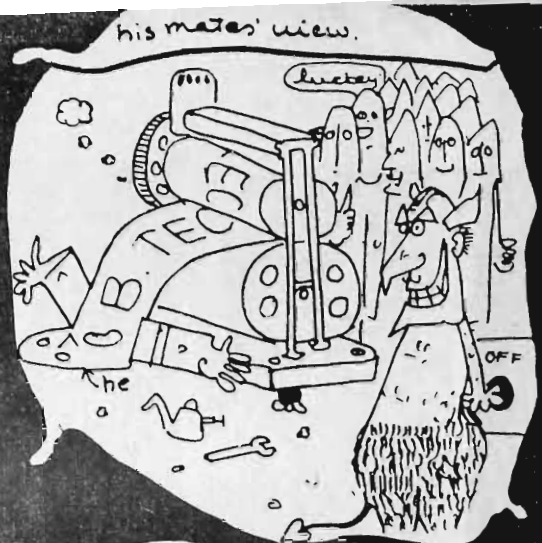
'My good wishes to the new Graduates. . . .'



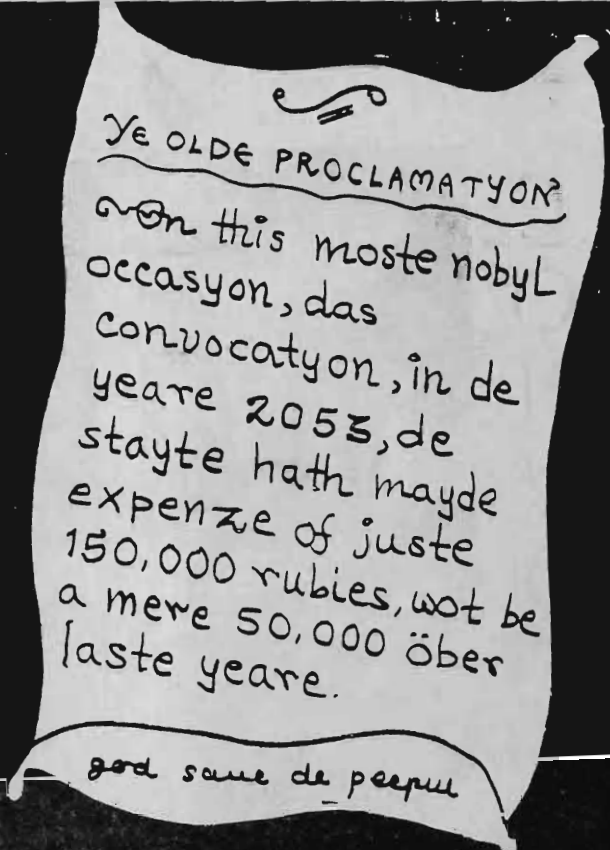
view - Bubble cap dome
for CACT (closed air
conditioned theatre)



press man's views from Saras.



CONVOCATION



1. D.D's Medal
2. Registrar's trophy
3. it's not a trophy



The end of elected charisma and
the beginning of multiformity

Once upon a time, secretaries were rare birds (long-legged, snake-eating birds of prey according to my dic) who tended to bring to their bird-ship a kind of personal flair that carried them several cuts above the rabble. Post-election wings would sprout and the awed populace would watch them eagles dare. You sighed as you thought of the justice of everybody's collective choice and the jazz of big-bird charisma which these creatures would project to the expectant world as they spearheaded various migrations for various occasions and brought home their booty in pagan splendour. It was a grand experience while it lasted, and one look at the steering flock we have now will serve to strengthen the deliberate need for all the nostalgia and reminiscence. Of course, one cannot do much about dull and uninspiring birds if there is no better plumage from which to choose. Unfortunately, we are a pathetically docile lot. There are very few on the campus who would care to be assertive when given the opportunity and the medium, care to separate their individualities from the engineering rut and care to see that responsible posts are not monopolised by a motley bunch of ulcers (with one or two exceptions, maybe) who would look more elegant if hidden away.

And to top it all, we have two head-birds, each more exquisitely insufferable than the other, a kind of blustering biumvir that makes one begin to wonder whether this can truly be the fascinating representative sample of what our institute produces. But never mind, the tribe has chosen its schizoid messiah well. Maybe we deserve no better for letting the

lopsidedness of our election system do its insidious magic, where the deserving are trampled and the crude are frothed out and given a free hand to indulge in a spell of visionless, hypocritical finger-flexing. It is a sad commentary on what was once supposed to be a tradition of judiciousness and good sense. There may just be one big consolation in all this: only a greater degree of commitment and awareness (on the part of those who have not yet washed their hands of any kind of involvement here) will ensure that what they do get is what they would like to have: certainly not a multiform rash of say, half-a-dozen secretary-generals that even the UN would shy away from.

Economising on rituals is strictly for dream-time

They tell me that we are living in an age of enlightenment. Witness how sensitive everybody is to population, pollution and the economic crisis. And here, on this campus, we produce tokens to this reduce-serve-and-economise spirit such as a five-day-week and measures to consume less paper and so on. But when it comes to ritual-time, out go these scrupulous affectations and the big administrative wheels churn away to concoct brilliant multi-thousand rupee pageants that could easily out-dazzle the trappings of a mogul durbar on the eve of the emperor's coronation. Who do we conduct these super-decorated annual convocations for? Those who travel all the way here to be handed that glorious scroll for which they had to go through a five-or seven-year marathon are hardly impressed by the fanfare and display. Their families are interested in seeing them get the scroll anyhow. The straggling mass of those on-campus are hardly bothered about the grandiose occasion as long as the holiday follows. The chief deity for the occasion goes through the process with mechanical obsequies for the odd hour and half. So where is all the feverish need for such an extravaganza? Maybe the gods have to be appeased and the burnt sacrificial offerings have to be placed on the altar of protocol and the glory of institution, but would it make any difference if we had no convocations at all? Many other universities have rid themselves of these essentially ostentatious spectacles and it simply goes to prove that at least some institutions have the courage to kick hypocrisy where it needs to be kicked most, namely, in the rear. But as far as the administration here is concerned, everybody seems to have frozen feet (let alone rears).

The need for inventing an adaptive, outgoing, future-oriented education

Out of the hundreds of those here who are supposed to be undergoing a great spell of technical indoctrination, there are very few who would care to pause and examine the value or methodology of the framework they find themselves in. It requires only a few minutes of reflection to see that the stuff that we derive from this so-called educative process is less than mediocre, has no enlightening qualities, produces no blaze of that sheer fanatical zeal which higher

educative structures are reputed to foster and often leaves one with a vehement distaste for science in any form. This is chiefly because we are trussed up in an out-dated, outmoded and moribund technical system that tells one nothing of the steady world-wide progressions in experimental modes of communication, future-oriented research and processes of adaptation to change. And if the various disciplines out here are badly geared to absorb and nourish these progressive academic trends, it is no wonder that our understanding of the engineering sciences is beginning to get so rudimentary, static and haphazard that the best of our graduates entering the mainstream of their respective fields are discovering that they are just beginning to get educated, all over again. It is all very well to boast of having a sophisticated computer and a lot of so-called inter-disciplinary departments, but it must be recognized that it is only through an organized revitalization programme of the disciplines already existing can we hope to achieve any realistic educational structure. It is not enough to maintain that a founding in classical engineering fundamentals can serve as a spring-board into the change-oriented world of the present. What we essentially lack in our educative set-up here is an organized approach to keep adaptive processes working on the curriculum. A few changes are seen now and then, but these are more or less random gestures. No significant advances are ever observed in the attitudes of those among the teaching faculty, shackled as they are to an absolutely bland, uninspiring approach to their respective subjects and instructional methods. It is true that there are a few among them who make bold attempts to keep pace with the challenges of change, who try to diversify and stimulate the mobs presented yearly to them, but then, these are definitely the exceptions. It is important to realize that the process of adjustment to change and a deliberate consolidated effort to usher in the future (the name for this is prognostics) are becoming vital and relevant features in all major academic centres the world over, not merely because it is the fashionable thing to do, but because the highly accelerated and hectic nature of change on the immediate material scale has made it essential to hold education in a state of flux if it is to be prevented from becoming totally retrograde and meaningless. And if there is any sense in calling an institution of today a center of advanced learning, it can only come from a sincere attempt from the part of those responsible for the structure of education there to ensure that what they build up will be adaptive, outgoing and future-oriented at every level and in all circumstances. To this end, it may be a good idea to set up a section or department of prognostics and progressive understanding which could serve to inject a certain measure of life into the decaying disciplines we see all around us now. Would anybody from the humanities department (also part of the general decay, incidentally) care to follow up the suggestion?

ULLEOGRAMBAXE CRIB

The editorship, or how to make mincemeat as dinner for papa

There was, a short while ago, a magazine which took shape with a streak of rebellion and managed to absolve itself from what seemed to be an inevitable collapse, but in the process it also managed to absolve itself from its primary readership, namely the odd two thousand of us here, and papa, gifted as he is with all-encompassing wisdom, decided quickly and firmly that the time had come to exercise his publishing prerogative and duly dumped the matter of the editorship into a limbo, having brushed aside a few inconsequential nominations. *Campastimes* was once supposed to be a free-style, independent, student-based publication with papa acting as cheer-leader on the side of the tracks; the editor was not put under obligations (because he happened to be the whim of some golden elected boy), but then, you see, free-wheeling is a luxury that cannot be indulged in on this campus, not as long as the almighty papa and his brood continue to display the iron fists beneath the velvet gloves. When do we ever get out of the dark ages?

For the very many among us who do profess to be strongly opinionated about the things that we sense and observe on this campus (but are rendered impotent due to a strong distaste for the insane gamut of the so-called electoral system here) this magazine could be an instrument of strong and meaningful expression. But this can only come about if we see to it that the editor is not bound by compromises, contracts and obligations thrown upon him by papa and his handpicked treasure-chest of committees.

Elected representatives (who are, in general, pleasantly devoid of both imagination and literary inclinations) have no business setting up either the editor or his associates. A magazine can be truly, critically and fruitfully assertive only if it is aggressively independent. The moment its structure is abused and distorted by strictures and policies framed by papa's chosen ones the essential meaning of its existence is lost.

What each editor has to think about is not merely how best he can compile the four odd issues in his annual tenure (and leave the magazine half-cocked for the wolves) but also how best to ensure that what he has started is properly carried over and perpetuated. And to this end, the least he can do is to point out that as outgoing editor, he is the only person who can be in any position to assess the degree of involvement, the personality and the potential of the next editor. And to ensure that, he should have the confidence to put his nomination down in print in the last issue he edits, and hope like hell that papa honours it.

This is pretty obviously the only way to ensure that this magazine can become emphatically assertive, vital in its qualities of self-perpetuation and spiritedness, anticipative, educative, compulsively readable and very very beautiful.

T. ASTATINE.

THE BUS-WALLAHS

My beard might turn flaming orange overnight—I wouldn't be as surprised, I might even strike oil in my kitchen garden while digging for earthworms—I wouldn't be as happy; it might even be that this article will get published in *Campastimes*—even this wouldn't bowl me over as the bus-wallahs did that fine morning.

That particular morning had all the ingredients essential to the making of a rare day. The sun was mellow; there were a few friendly clouds around, not the overfriendly ones which begin to cry over your shoulder the minute you greet them, 'how do you do?' But what really did portend a happy day was that my shirt hadn't been debottoned by the overconscientious dhobi, the air, for once, was not burdened by the gross sounds of the tea-shop radio; and the footpath was free of vagrants and dangerous dogs. There was a fair chance of a fine day ahead. Except for the bus-wallahs.

It was still a full five-minute leisurely walk on a fine morning (and a two-minute walk if it has been a warm one)—at this critical distance when I was undecided between preambulating slowly, inhaling the morning air and putting out what passes as my chest and muttering to myself—'this is going to be a fine day' ten times, as suggested by the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale, and trotting to the stop before the next bus could roll past me oblivious to my frantic hand waving. It was such a distance and such a day that I decided to give the Rev. Peale a chance—poor man, hadn't he given so much of his time trying to imbue in me vitality, verve and an unflinching confidence in life and hope in a richer future? (Only he got the richer by a million copies at Rs. 7 a piece and I was the poorer). It was at this juncture—just as I was through my ninth repetition—'Everything will go fine by me today', when I sighted the red monstrosity. Why dull red, I have always wondered. Why not blue and cream candy horizontals or why not blue polka dots on a flaming orange background?

It was quite full and I really didn't expect the bus to stop at the bus stand and anyway not near me. But I did wave my hand! I was a bit early that morning and if I took this bus I would be at work a little too early, which I didn't want to be. I wished to be a little late today. I would get the opportunity to have a small tiff with my training supervisor—'Can't get a bus these days sir! Bus never stops'. You may wonder why anyone would want to quarrel on such a fine morning. Ah! it is here I have to expatiate on this art which, I have watched others practise on some innocent prey. It is not anything like a quarrel you pick up on a grouchy day with someone who does

your honour wrong (so you think) when he yells at you and you yell back (and there is so much heat all around that you could bake a cake), and everyone around looks at both of you and sniggers to his heart's morbid delight. Nay, you are sorely mistaken if you take this 'fine morning tiff' to be such an affair. On such a fine morning you don't 'just pick up a quarrel' but you 'CREATE ONE'. 'I hope the subtle distinction is not lost', (Incidentally this is one of the stock phrases to be used when creating a tiff). The altercation starts on a low key—both parties stating their opinions not absolutely opposed but having some undefined common ground which if identified can resolve the conflict. But you don't allow your opponent to identify this, since all is then lost. So you raise our voice a note up the scale. Your opponent, unless himself a past master of this art, will go 3 or 4 notes higher. This means all is well. You have successfully ensured blinding him to reason. Next raise your voice a quarter note higher. This small excursion from your normal pitch will tempt your antagonist to screech his lungs out. (At this stage you might even mildly advise him that his voice box is liable to damage.) By now you have attracted enough attention. All you have to do now is to lower your voice suddenly to something just about a whisper, leaving your poor opponent yelling his head off and generally inviting a lot of unwanted attention. And then you can start sniggering (inwardly of course, open sniggering is a sign of coarseness and likely to be construed as ugly and rustic). A fine morning once again. If your opponent is your supervisor, he will wish you the very best in your future and give you the month's wages and maybe deny you all the overtime you claim to have put in. But for this sort of precipitous action on the part of your opponent due to his utter lack of humour and to his having chanced to be in a station in life superior to yours (which you always felt he never deserved), this is the best way to start a fine day.

As I said, I was still some distance from the bus stand when I waved my hand at the approaching bus. Why did I wave my hand? Because it was a fine day and on a fine day one does things which will not stand the scrutiny of logical reasoning and logical reasoning would have it that I would create a quarrel on a fine day (see definition of fine day given earlier and repeated here for convenience—a fine day is a day on which you create a tiff for no reason at all) and this logical reasoning meant I should not wave my hand. Hence I did wave my hand. Q.E.D. (this is something similar to what I read in the preface to a book—'What Philosophy Is'—where you go round and round the logical merry-go-round till you reach a logical conclusion). So by now I had waved my hand, but did not expect the bus to stop. Lo and behold, praise be to Allah, the dull red monster applied its 'Caution, air brakes', and screeched to a halt right in front of me. I was perplexed, I was dismayed, I was

astonished, I was angry. How can he stop when I wave my hand. Now I couldn't curse him, damn him and generally send him in the direction of hell.

Kindness is born only in a soul which has known kindness. I have known no kindness from bus drivers and anyway I have no soul. I lost it the other day when I traded it away for a ripe mango. I came to the conclusion (a weighty one at that)—it is indeed a rare day. I was satisfied with this. But I still hadn't decided what to do. Should I run away from all those leering simians and their smirking faces. But for all I know the entire busload may crawl out and run after me. Why should they do a thing like that? I know my maths pretty well and my probability theory better, and logic of course is my forte. Combining the three as follows (one table-spoon full of each), I made my decision. If I ran away, what was the probability that they would chase me? You cannot answer this unless you have performed the experiment any number of times (ideally) till your legs ache from running and your heart is just one beat from bursting. So I didn't know the probability. It could be 1 and then God save me. Thus I dialecticised with myself and concluded it was safer to board the bus, and board it I did, with a heart burdened with fear and a brain weary from overuse. I looked at all the people in their seats and all the people clinging to those shackles on the ceiling, presided over by the conductor at the top step leaning casually on the bannister. I boarded the bus. I was on the second step. The conductor blew his whistle. He blew it shrilly into my ear. My mind went berserk, but even in that instant I saw it all before me clear as Moses saw the commandments—the conductor was even more vicious than I had given him credit for; he was going to trip me and push me off the bus. I couldn't jump off because the driver in collusion with the conductor was now speeding. So I jumped into the bus, and jumped smack into a not so elderly female. I looked around fearfully. But no one seemed to even look at me (except myself); the conductor was all smiles and asked me very politely where I wanted to go. He even accepted my ten rupee note for my 20 paise ticket. He didn't order me off the bus; he didn't ask me why nincompoops such as I didn't carry 20 paise on them. He just accepted my ten rupees.

I was so dazed I forgot to ask him for the change; which I realized only after getting off the bus. So now I cursed him squarely and roundly (and also rectangularly too).

It was a fine morning after all. I didn't mind the loss since they (driver and conductor) were bound to be struck down by the plague if it hadn't by now got them.

S. P. RAJ.

JUST FINGS

I have an unabashed admiration for the Seasoned Traveller—the kind of person who, in a Western epic, dozes easily in the stagecoach, oblivious to the heat and the flies, while lesser mortals make frequent and painful contact with the woodwork behind them. One occasionally comes across the modern version of the type on a train. This person uncurls himself from his foetal posture on the middle berth, casually climbs down without rapping his head or barking his shin on numerous sharp projections, and announces with just the right amount of weariness that we ought to have reached Itarsi forty minutes back. The whole thing is magnificently done, rather like Jove's descent from Olympus. I nurse various bruises and look on in envy.

It's not one of those things that comes with frequent travel. I've travelled around quite a bit and still jam my thumb when I try to pull down the shutters. Whereupon the seasoned traveller tells me kindly that I'm doing it the wrong way. I invariably go through the traumatic experience of seeing the soap slip out of my hand and go through the little hole they have in the toilet.

I fumble for my tickets while the examiner's initial distrust turns to dark suspicion, and finally locate them just as he's reaching for the handcuffs. The seasoned traveller meanwhile hands over his ticket for inspection without even looking up from the book he's reading. His book has an inviting blonde on the cover—the only reading material I have is Galbraith's *The Affluent Society*. And after the long grimy journey, I draw a porter who has two-inch fangs and is prepared to use them. The seasoned traveller saunters by, carrying just one air-bag and looking like the proverbial daisy.

There's no place like home, really.

The last week was something of a revelation. Even the normally godfearing succumbed to the urge. The old oak chests were emptied. Stray coins counted. Armed with the just rewards of a lifetime of moderation, the most sober of the junta made a beeline for Coronet. For when one is forced, willynilly to go on the wagon, the desire to step high, wide and plentiful, to go on one last memorable bender is irresistible. And so it was that crowds of the happy drunk, the fighting drunk and the merely drunk waited for the 10-35 at Adyar every night. Defying all known laws, the mountain had come to Mohammed,

that genial dispenser of happiness at Coronet. Armed with a bottle-opener and a smile, he watched indulgently as they mixed exotic concoctions, exchanged uproarious jokes and, if the mood was upon them, sang in ragged chorus. And if some of the regulars stopped to shake his hand as they staggered out, who would blame them? In some indefinable way, he was the symbol (as was the opener) of a good time that had come to an end.

One of Wodehouse's minor classics is about the Wily Pathan. It appears that while you're shading your eyes and looking for him on the *pahaar*, he sneaks up behind you from the maidaan. I always thought we were the only people who cribbed about the way things are run in this institute. All the while, some enterprising staff reporter has been creeping up from the maidaan with his typewriter between his teeth. Mud has been slung. Charges have been levelled. The flick-knives are out in the open. And Zeus has revealed a ghastly sense of humour. When the dust finally settles, the *Campastimes* Editor will still be wandering around for articles. Only everybody will be too busy skirmishing in the newspapers, to write. . . .

One feature that the average IITian has in common with that estimable pig, the Empress of Blandings, is the ring he wears in his nose. But while the ability to be led in any given direction is admirable in a pig, the same ability hardly reflects to the IITian's credit. A goodly number signed the petition protesting against the unnecessary expense on the convocation. Having done their bit for the cause they sat back, and waited for results. Zeus thereupon issued a proclamation that the binge was costing us only thirty grand. At this point, one would have expected any normal thinking person to say Izzatso? Instead of which the average IITian sallied forth to listen with monumental patience to a series of dreary harangues. The prize item was undoubtedly the one about the bullock cart. It appears to me that the logical improvement to the BC era that yet remains to be made is for us to develop an improved Mark II bullock giving, as Badri says, about 1.5 bullock power. However, that isn't the point. The address was duly delivered in a neutral monotone, rather like a litany. For thirty grand, you are entitled to expect people to have something to say. We got instead, a ghost-written speech that only narrowly escaped being ghost-read.

MAHESH.

On Pressure Cookers

The court building stood massive and frowning; it was an ugly red, rather an intermediate colour, neither truly red nor truly orange, a half breed of dubious parentage. Hardly had I entered this building than I was pounced upon by a scrawny little man with a balding head, resembling a hi-dome pressure cooker. I was uneasily shuffling my feet about, it was my first visit, you know, and I was as nervous as a young bride on her honeymoon. I was also reminded of the rich, titled Englishman, who anxious to bag a tiger on his first safari, broke out into a cold sweat at the first snap of a twig and shouting tiger fired at every single moving object until the exasperated mahout was forced to knock our knight of the garter on the head to prevent him from shooting himself in his excitement. Anything remotely smelling of the law increases my pulse rate and this specimen reminded me of some vague character I had come across in one of those 'Inspector goes West, East, North or South' stories.

I am sorry I have strayed. This is a common failing of most writers. After all, how else can you fill up 600 pages—you have a character in mind, his character unfolds, and then rather belatedly you think of his aunt and then of her lover dead since 10 years, whose feet she hears treading the path outside her window even today and there are policemen, a clan depicted as nincompoops and good-natured idiots and various characters and poor relations who drop by once in a way to speak something inane and get bashed up by the villains for their pains. These villains of course, are large, massive and ugly, with long deep scars running all over them; their noses are usually crooked, their eyes glassy and flecked with yellow, their teeth broken, stained and numbering twice thirty-two; if only they had red horns and a mouth belching fire they could qualify as Lucifer's lieutenants.

Well, this hi-dome, on seeing that I was in trouble, rubbed his hands in glee, knowing he had landed a sucker.

'You want to see somebody, Sir?', he asked. Startled by this unexpected cordiality I told him I wanted to see a first-class magistrate. He pursed his lips in surprise and clucked sympathetically. He looked so sad that I wanted to pat him on the head and give him a feeding bottle.

'Well, you see, sir, that's impossible. Before you see the first-class magistrate, you have to go through the doorman, the clerk, the local lawyer, the P. A. and finally, if you have survived these obstacles, you come to the great man himself.'

Meeting god would be easier, I thought. It was now my

turn to look sadly at hi-dome. In fact both of us would have put our arms around each other and cried our hearts out. 'But sir, I have an idea'. The sun started shining again, the mists rolled away and I looked at him hopefully. He led me aside, winked at me broadly and suggested we have a cup of tea with a friend of his. Not a bad idea actually, a tea is welcome at any time of the day, but I had a sneaking suspicion that my pockets would be considerably lighter after this tea.

'Does the magistrate come to this place?' I asked innocently. Hi-dome gave me a scorching stare and I swallowed hastily and looked sufficiently apologetic.

Well we walked up to this tea-wallah and on the way my companion smiled at me slyly and said 'May be I can help you'. I looked at him happily and gave him a resounding slap on the back. Hi-dome tottered and blew steam with the typical low speed jet noise announcing that rice was ready. He sneezed so hard that a one-eyed crow feeding innocently on the remnants of a stinking rat uttered a screeching cackle and flew straight into the wall. It took me quite a few minutes to calm down Pressure Cooker, he was about to burst. His friend joined us at the tea stall and there was a long dialogue on litigations and of a case where a woman was suing her husband for refusing to support her because she was pregnant; she insisted the baby was his, he insisted it was not and stupidly enough told her he was sleeping with somebody else, whereupon madame exploded with fury and clawed one of his eyes out while firing away the most superlative and highly descriptive expletives which adorn the Tamil language; this gave the one-eyed husband two causes to sue her back, one for assault and the other for trying to con him into believing the child was his, for now the woman, having spent all her energy no longer insisted the child was his and was further unable to name the probable husband. This was related in great detail by my two friends until my ears were singing and I was forced to beg them to stop and drink their teas.

'About the magistrate', I began, and my friends turned around to look at me. The newcomer was dressed in lawyer's clothes; white pants and a black coat and looked officious. He looked down solemnly at me with his spectacles on his nose, and his eyes above it.

'Well, young man, what do you want?' I asked him and gave him the form expecting him to sign it so that I could go. He looked over it upside down and then said in an unctuous tone, 'You know courts involve expenditure' and he looked hungrily at me. Hi-dome's mouth was salivating; both of them were ready to clean up the shop. I am very

slow on the uptake but even my mouse-brain could handle this wavelength. I slowly pushed the chair back ready to sprint. 'It will cost fifteen rupees; records must be maintained, official stamp has to be issued, and then the magistrate will sign.' It seemed like the ratification of the Simla pact.

'But I don't have that much money.' Hi-dome looked at me fiercely. Something had gone wrong with his plan. I had looked a rich sucker and here I was cribbing about a measly fifteen rupees. The oily bastard was giving Hi-dome an even tougher look. We were all set to explode when Hi-dome gasped 'How much money have you?'

'None, you —' and I uttered one of those lovely Tamil words which Hi-dome had used ten minutes back. I grabbed the form from the other crook's hand and thumped Hi-dome on the back with all my might. This time he took off and hit the ceiling. His sneeze broke a few cups and saucers and caused a minor earthquake. A few tiles slid off the roof and crashed and the irate owner grabbed a kitchen knife and advanced menacingly towards Hi-dome. In the general confusion I aimed a hearty kick at the other rascal's shin and bolted from the scene.

—K. LAKSHMANAN.

The People Versus Mr. Bing

Tremors shook this world of ours
It happened all because of flowers
That Mr. John gave to Miss Holly Penz
(P. S. Both were elephants.)

Whose words are these, I think I know
It came in a mag, some time ago,
He will not see me cogging them
And recycle them for dough.

SEVARAM SATSANGH.

CAN CAPTAIN COOK ?

PROMINENT FIGURES AND OTHER PERSONALITIES

PORTRAIT OF A PEERLESS PEGGY*

* A Small Warbler of various kinds

The IITian audience and the IITian caricaturist are two of the most predictable of their respective species. If at O.A.T. the former simply adores mushy songs of first love or lost love, a caricature, the latter believes, is never complete without the 'all said and done folks, he/she is one of the nicest people you can ever meet.' Now, I wouldn't say anything as ominous as that. Besides, with a subject like mine, it hurts too much to say so.

It was July '72 when I first met her. Walking unsuspectingly down the road, I espied this funny-looking kid walking (would you call that a walk? Well, for want of a better word) a little ahead of me. Suddenly, she stopped. A little monkey (busily looking at himself in a dirty puddle) held her attention. He was facing away from us and before I could say 'scram, you epigram' she had tiptoed up, slapped the monkey real hard and was running back with a whole troop of monkeys chasing her.

When we finally got out of the mess, she explained herself with 'But how was I to KNOW his people were around? And it was SUCH a temptation!' And then, with an air of absolute dejection, 'And I don't know why, but such things keep happening to me' Now that I know Liqa Raschid better, I don't doubt that for a minute. That's one advantage of having perspective.

True, there's absolutely no situation you can possibly think of that Liqa cannot get herself/anybody else/both into, and more often than not, get you to get her out of. Strangely enough, sooner or later you'll find yourself making 'heavy concessions' for her. The sanest (imagine) of Sarayuities have at some time or the other played a part in one of Liqa's innumerable misadventures. If it isn't walking right behind her all the way from H.S.B. because she has torn her pants, it's standing next to her while she's on the phone and screaming for her so she can end that 'unfortunate conversation' with 'Listen, somebody's calling me, so bye' etc. Coming to think of it, I'd have to start a serial on this subject if I were to list all such occasions. (I'm going to call it the Mad-Hatter's Other diary.)

While our lives were thus affected, the guys had long given up whistling at any girl who appeared near their hostels, for want of breath really, since Liqa biked up and down too often and didn't make the scene only to vote for a class rep. There were probably two many milk-boys going around already. The lecturers found themselves addressing here as 'Liqa' instead of 'Miss' the way they used to. Why, there was this day when a grim-looking Prof. looked grimmer than ever. As he went past on his vehicle, we

saw light. There was Liqa, perched on the pillion in her favourite pair of shorts and the inevitable T-shirt. It wasn't surprising that the Professor was going at top-speed, for Liqa was shouting into his ear through a mouthful of ice-cream. The Prof. was on leave the next day. He'd suffered a mini-nervous breakdown.

In some ways Liqa is quite a conformist. Sometimes she is too much of one. In their first year, most girls seem to believe that if there's any change in venue for a lecture the guys would know about it. So all you've got to do is take some time getting out of the classroom and follow them blindly down the corridor. It's a plan that's never failed. That doesn't deter Liqa. She can still show it's not fool-proof. 'It was simple,' she said, 'all I did was follow this group of guys and whenever they entered a classroom, I generally stood outside.' On one occasion, she stood there, I believe, for twenty whole minutes. When the guy she'd been peering at through the window couldn't stand it any longer, he walked up to her and said 'If you wish to sit inside, you are welcome.' 'But the point is,' said Liqa, 'where is the classroom?' 'Oh, I don't know about that,' said the guy, shaking his head sadly, 'we're here for a meeting of the Photographic Club.'

But all this fades in comparison with what happened to Liqa during the strike. There was this day when after a power-failure, the lights finally came on at Sarayu. Liqa heard a gentleman outside say 'So everything's O.K. I guess.' She happily presumed that this guy was responsible for the lights coming on. Soon after he pushed off, the lights went off too. Feeling it her duty to fetch the saviour back, she broke into a run. The guys working at the transformer behind Sarayu, meanwhile, saw Liqa, screaming 'Help! Help!' and running for all she was worth. You know how panicky people were those days. These guys were no exception. Sensing disaster, they ran after her with 'What, Who, Hey, Relax, Tell us all!' Now Liqa isn't such a dumb kid, really. One look at them and the transformer and she guessed right. In an effort to really get away with it, she turned around and ran straight back. The guys thought she was too troubled to know where she was going and followed her. Now the crowd in front of Sarayu saw a white-faced Liqa (if that is possible) followed by a couple of guys and they glared at the guys. The guys gave up trying to understand what was happening.

A lot of people, while agreeing that Liqa's great fun the way she is, have made the sad prediction that at some stage of her life, she'll sober down and have normal thought-processes. But I can only visualize a lady who suddenly dashes across the road to stare hard (and most obviously) at the strange material of a shirt or to say 'Hello' to a baby in a pram. If you do come across such a specimen, folks, try yelling 'Ado, Hoo' (which seems to me the Singalese equivalent of 'Hey'!) and if she turns around, God bless you, you've met HER. Yes, you've met Liqa, the Unique and Inimitable.

V. G.

Academic Forum

The Academic Forum is a body, comprising staff and student representatives, which deals with problems pertaining to academics only. It acts as an advisory body for the Director, suggesting proposals for action and has no executive powers.

In its first meeting of this semester, the Forum discussed the following proposals:—

(1) Punishment for malpractices in examinations should be made very deterrent.

If a student is caught employing unfair means in a periodical test, he will be debarred from attending the course for which the said periodical test was being held. The student will be deemed to have failed that course.

For a similar offence in the semester examination, he will be debarred from pursuing his studies for a year.

(2) A proper set of rules governing the postponement of periodical tests must be evolved. In the case of a power failure, periodical may be postponed only if the failure is of more than an hour's duration.

(3) A student will be expelled from the Institute if he is unable to clear the first year in two years on the first two years in four years.

All class-representatives and the General Secretary Mr. Sabhanayagam are members of this Forum. So, you could convey your suggestions to them.

—Ed.

Management Made Merry (For those of You Who Plan to do the ATGSB)

The five main tenets of management are, or so we are led to believe, summed up by the acrostic-cum-acronym-cum-mnemonic (very important ATGSB words, look 'em up if you want to be a good manager) OSCAR. Unfortunately, only those managers who can't manage, teach, and the impression they give of the subject is understandably exaggerated. Here is what management is—we shall start with OSCAR.

Organisation

This is what makes the management tick every second and cuckoo every hour like a cuckoo-clock. Before an organisation can tick and cuckoo it must have its AIMS and OBJECTIVES clearly defined. These usually consist of ensuring that the chairman, his son, his wife and mother-in-law are happy. Happiness is not difficult to define, especially at that level, papa chairman wants cigars to chew, son chairman wants to play ice hockey at Harvard and sow his wild oats at Radcliffe, mama and mama-in-law chairman (not char woman please!) want hundreds of trappers hunting for sable and mink to keep them warm in winter in spite of central heating, electric furnaces and holidays in Bermuda.

Specialisation

The S in OSCAR—this means knowing everything of nothing and nothing of everything. The more you know of nothing, the less the chance of you being asked to work on anything else. This is the guiding principle of most modern managements and it took F. W. Taylor to realize it. It is also the most difficult principle to pick up and it costs anywhere upto \$6,500 to find out at the Harvard Business School.

A good manager-cum-specialist never has to do anything except when something turns up in his field, and if he is any good then his field will be something in which nothing turns up. So a good specialist ends up doing nothing, just what he has been trained to do. There is one snag though—getting jobs—he must convince his employer that there is enough of nothing going around.

Co-ordination

Why the 'C' comes after the 'S' in OSCAR probably shows that managers forget their alphabets easily in business school, what with Greek and Latin and numerals in Hindu Arabic and Roman—anyhow CO-ORDINATION comes third and it is essentially the art of playing poker during office hours while top management play bridge (they call it in-

basket games) and line and staff play the Numbers Game (they call it Gambling). Co-ordination is very important, if you are not careful you might find yourself left alone at the East end of the bridge table with North, South and West missing when the chairman walks in unexpectedly.

Authority

This comprises in possessing the right to get your subordinates to buy you coffee. The higher your authority the more people you can get to buy you coffee and the further the distance you can get them to walk to Knick-Knack and back with larger flasks of the decoction.

Authority filters downwards like gravity, the ship's captain takes it out on the officer, the officer on the first mate and so on till the cabin boy kicks the ship's cat if one such feline is fortunately available, to say nothing of what the cat does to the ship's mice and rats.

Responsibility :

The right to say 'It's not my fault' The higher your responsibility, the more often you have to say 'It's not my fault' Responsibility is indispensable in any organisation. Without clearly defined responsibility, everybody will be making mistakes; now at least nobody makes mistakes that anybody knows about.

Besides OSCAR there is a thing or two you ought to know if you want to be a superior manager. OSCAR is enough for those managers whose intellectual pretensions and memory space stops at the Hollywood level. One of them is :

Span of Control :

This represents the greatest distance you can get between the tip of your thumb and the tip of the little finger (both must belong to the same hand of course). The world record is 15 ins. (38.15 cm. for the metric enthusiast) held by a certain manager—understandably he wishes to remain anonymous—he dislocated his thumb in the process of setting up the world record—now he has five fingers on his right hand and no thumb in apposition to it and finds it somewhat difficult to eat extra large sandwiches.

The greater the span of control of your managers, the thicker the files they can carry and that helps save on filing costs.

Motivation :

Is what's given to you for doing what you are not supposed to do—its called acting beyond the call of duty.

Control :

This ensures that employees do not do what they should not do in office hours. This is a most important subject to managers, after all they are there to see that what they plan not to do is not done at all even if what they plan not to do is not what should not be done.

That's management as merry as I can make it without mixed metaphors. If you can get the hang of it may be you will make a good manager. If you can't, do not despair, all is not lost as you can still try the ATGSB. The ATGSB weeds out the good material and sends only the rest to the business schools.

GANGAN PRATHAP,
B. Tech., 1974.

CHESS

Said Dr. Tarrasch. 'I have always a slight feeling of pity for the man who has no knowledge of chess, just as I'd pity the man who has remained ignorant of love' Chess pieces obviously have knowledge of chess. They are not bad at the art of love either. (a) 5N1k, 5Ppp, 8, 8, 2Q3 pl, 8, 8, b6K. 'Mate' in 3. Try this and see how lustfully the Queen goes after the Bishop. 'The Love Chase' is one of the Sam Lloyd Classics. (b) 3k4, 8, 2P1P3, 8, 7p, plplp2P, P1P1P2P, b1K5. W to play and Win. Here it is the King who reciprocates the Bishop's love! (Death in Venice) : 1Kd1, Bb2; 2Ke1, Bc1, 3Kf1, Bd2, 4Kg2! Be1, 5Kg1! (and now the King takes over) Bd2, 6Kf1, Bc1, 7Ke1, Bb2; 8Kd1, Bal; 9Kc1, Bb2Ch; 10Kb1 (c) lknB4, 8, 7p, 4R3, 7K, 8, 3r4, 7B. W to play and Win. In this study by A. A. Troitski the Rook chases, and eventually corners, the King. Into the solving of this a frightening amount of time can be sunk.

Whenever Ravisekhar (National Junior Champ) met me he never failed to enquire about two IITians, Prabhakar and Kaleem. In his famous game (Staff Club Tourney, January, '73) Kaleem had 2 knights against 2 knights plus 2 pawns of Ravisekhar. Kaleem's knights wonderfully manoeuvred and sacrificed their lives for those 2 pawns. His monarch was saved. for two knights can't mate a King. We have lost an ever-smiling chess enthusiast.

Bertram :

An interesting ending is given below :
Round No. 5. W. G. Sreekumar (IIT) Bl P. B. C. Sekar.
8, 1K5p, PR4pl, 4kp2, Plrlp3, 8, 8, 8. 1Pa7, R x P. 2 Ra6,
R x R, 3K x R, Kf4; 4Pa8=Q, Kf3; 5Qb7, Pf4; 6Q x P(h7),
Pe3; 7Qh3ch, Kf2; 8Qh4ch, Kf3; 9Qg5, Pe2; 10Qg1Pg5,
11kb5 and won.

K. AIYASWAMY

(Solutions on page 13)



Well! Another new semester. Guys have come and guys have gone (mostly gone), but the Meet goes on forever. So how are the teams shaping up?

In athletics, we've taken a body blow, seeing as how half the team seems to have passed out. David Roby, Chandran Paul, Ashok Chanda, Jakes. Sigh! However, there is a silver lining. Fresher Lobo is a hat man in the sprints, and there are rumours that one darn good athlete may be coming into Industrial Engineering (thanks there, Dr. Anantaraman). Another consolation is that no other IIT has a really strong athletics team—Delhi have lost individual champion Upadhyay and the terrible Daljit, so that's last year's champions out of the running. We seem to be strong in the throws this year. Indesa, John Louis, Benjamin, plus a couple of newcomers like Chandi and Kasbekar. Chou's back, so the triple jump gold is in the bag, perhaps along with both the hurdles. Then there is Venky and Bahal in the sprints, Javed in long distance, Jayasingham in high jump, Chinnathambi and Sageer in Pole Vault, Karl for long jump and triple. Activities started pretty late this year, and the non-medallists meet wasn't any thundering success. Still the outlook's fair. Call it a probable silver.

Basketball—well, that trophy's been with us so long that it has practically grown roots here. This year's no exception, either. The team roster is a nice, comforting one; looking at it, one can feel the gold in the kitty already. Chandran Paul's gone, but in spite of that the team is still extremely strong. Dayal, Gopal, Krishnakumar, PK and, of course, the evergreen Krishnan. Same team that wrapped up five major tournaments last year. No problems here.

Footer has an unenviable record. The hard fact remains that we haven't scored a single goal in any meet so far. We

Campastimes deeply regrets the sudden demise of Mr. Kaleem (5/v Electronics) and Mr. Ravindran (Research Scholar, Chemistry).

might be able to change that situation this year. The new captain—Satish—is good, uses his head as well as his feet, unlike some people I could mention. The team seems to have more enthu this time, despite losing to Thyagaraja (tough guys) in the inter-collegiate. One good newcomer is Chandra Mohan from Guindy. Meet chances? Let's be pessimistic and call it a bronze.

The hockey team of yesteryear has practically disappeared. Raghu, Chikki, Raj, David, and Kannu are out, practically every good forward we had. Defence is solid, with Suri and dependable D'Soo, Bozorgi and Savant. Chandoke is a newcomer (and a good one) in the forward line, with vet Jayakumar. The team is good but inexperienced; they've made it to the semi-finals of the inter-collegiate so far. Should chalk up at least a silver at the Meet.

In gymnastics, we've lost Badami. The number of gymnasts in the team has been increased to six this year, from four last year. Pratap, Abdullah and Royo form the backbone. Gymnastics has been Delhi's forte for quite a few years, but this year three of their top people have passed out. Kanpur is coming up, though, and we'll have some stiff competition from them. Our team made a bronze last year; we have good chances for a silver this time. It may be recalled that there was quite a storm about 'partial judgement' at the Bombay meet; this year it has been decided that the judges' decision will stick, impartial or otherwise.

Tennis has taken a setback with the loss of Prof. and Ramkumar but Captain Dani rates our chances for a gold as very high. Only team likely to give trouble is Bombay, who still have Fazalbhoy. Our doubles pair is the same as last year's Dani and Sekhar. Sekhar, incidentally, made it to the semi-finals in the Bertram Tournament, going down to Krishnan Jr. The doubles combo made it to the semis in the Bertram, too. In the inter-collegiate, we've won so far and should top in our zone. A bit of tough luck that participation in the inter-U is out of the question, the dates are fixed as Nov. 5th and 6th, smack at the beginning of exam time.

The table tennis team is unchanged, last year's champions, they're a cert to make it this time too. Rajagopal, Ravi and Parthasarathy are as good as ever. The gold's as sure as in basketball.

In shuttle, Eddy's gone. A serious loss which can't be laughed off. Frank and Kumar are still there from last year. Our chances are uncertain, but a silver would seem to be a reasonable (if slightly optimistic) prediction.

The outlook in volleyball is good. Despite the fact that we've lost four of last year's players, the spikers are still there. Under Linus the team has a pretty good chance of winning through to a gold, not a silver like last time.

Weightlifting has always been a Madras speciality and this year (with a little bit of luck) it should stay that way. Though we've lost three good men in Shidore, Apte and Gunda, newcomer Rustom (heavyweight) shapes up well.

Overall? Well, we hauled out the slide rules and did a little bit of figuring; crossed our fingers and figured some more. Approximate total comes out at about 65 points, which should get us the championship for the fourth time running.

Hopefully.

As far as non-meet items go, cricket is first on the list. Half the team's gone here, too—Gouri, Murali, Dipankar, Kakes, and Ramesh. Bharadwaj and Rajamani are the two freshers. There seem to be quite a few problems regarding equipment, here as well as in hockey. Chronic shortage of bats/sticks, even this late in the season. Needs a bit of looking into. Cricket chances in the Inter-U—end of the year—are uncertain, with only Mahesh, Kasbi and Naxi to fall back on.

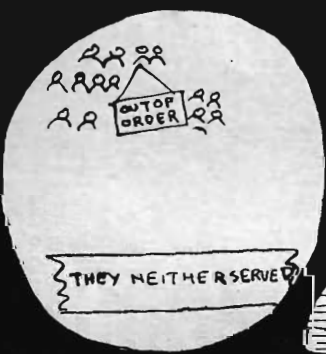
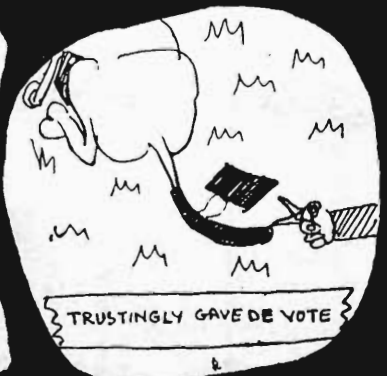
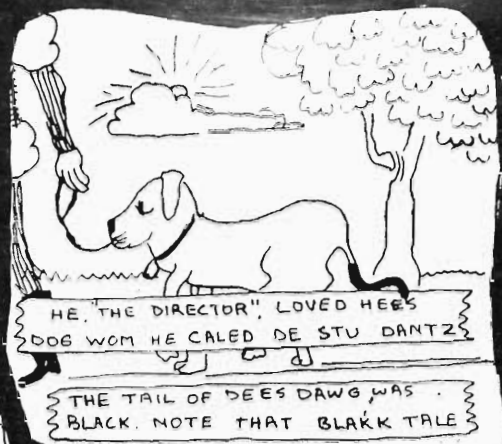
The swimming team's coming on well, despite the fact that the pool *still* isn't ready. We had individual medallists in open meets last year, and should be able to repeat the performance this year. Efforts to have it included as an inter-IIT meet item died a quick death.

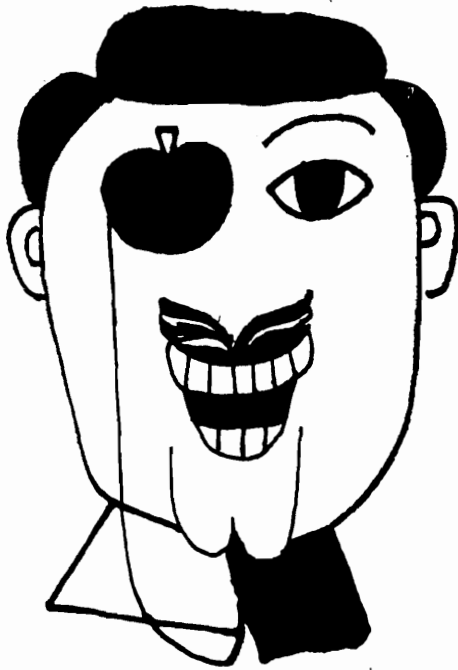
The ball badminton team (yes, indeed—we *do* have one) has done fairly well in outside tournaments, but the captain is screaming about equipment shortage. It's a regrettable fact (nonetheless true) that nobody takes this game very seriously. It's a situation that needs to be remedied.

As for Chess and Bridge, the standard is fair. There is no formal Institute Bridge Team, but we do have several good players going. The Chess team has lost KK, but Sudhir and Aiyaswamy should put in a bit of good work.

SRIKANT.

De Dog Terse Dilemma





Editorial

It's amazing the amount of power educational institutions exercise over their students. Take the case of the IITs. By a system of rules that the authorities have concocted, they decide who is and who isn't good enough to get in. If he is lucky, the aspiring candidate is certified as a worth-while credit risk. He steps in, smugly complacent of his bright future, full of hopes and dreams and of the aspirations of his parents. Five years later he steps out, metamorphosed into a disillusioned cynic.

During these five years he is evaluated on the basis of how well he has played the academic game, how well he has observed the rules. Rules over which he has no control. For instance, his grades play a decisive role in determining his future prospects, yet he is in no position to question the mode of evaluation. His teachers to a large extent decide his worth as an engineer, yet he can neither question their ability to teach nor the relevance of what he is being taught. Treated like a child, he is kept in a perpetual state of intellectual subservience. He is the object, more of attention than of understanding, more of authority than of control.

Consequently the IITian often finds his work lacking in meaning. He does not have an emotional involvement in his work because he feels he has no control over it anyway. Everything is decided for him.

This lack of emotional involvement has, at times, intensified into an almost truculent indifference to things that are dangerously awry. Take the case of the final year Mechanical batch. They did not have a Computing Techniques lecturer for the first six weeks of this semester. Yet there was barely a murmur of complaint. Why? Because there is a growing conviction in the campus, and not without justification, that even legitimate complaints have an uncanny knack of bouncing back.

There is yet another reason for this reluctance to protest. Fear. The IITian finds that the rewards for conformity, obedience, and docility are great and reliable while the absence of these qualities is often punished in blatant or subtle ways. So he keeps out of trouble. Without annoying the professors, it's considerably easier to get the degree. So, withdrawing into the comfortable isolation of the niche that he has carved out for himself, the IITian says, 'Why stick my neck out?'

The characteristic feature of the IITian psyche is a deep-seated privatism. He is forever busy doing his own thing. In matters concerning the larger community he finds himself helpless. Yet, it is fatally dangerous to acquiesce to this feeling of individual helplessness because of the immense power available to the administration and the professors, over the individual student. Unless the IITian is willing to break out of the shell of his own personality and to question every single rule that he so willingly obeys, unless he loses that sense of settled response and begins to probe for the truth, education in IIT will gradually become a meaningless farce.

In this editorial I wish to focus attention on two aspects of the undergraduate education—the relevance of the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

Any form of education must have clearly defined goals. This requirement is all the more desirable in a technical institution. So if IIT expects its students to submit to its authority, it would be a good idea to let them know why. It should start by clarifying its values by putting things into perspective and by ensuring that its students are working for goals that are genuinely held as primary. I have raised this issue because a lot of stuff that is taught to the IITian seems to be irrelevant to engineering. For example, should every IIT student be subjected to such extensive courses in Atomic Physics? He is made to go through so much of Schrödinger's Wave Equation and Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle that he becomes uncertain of even the second law of thermodynamics. Atomic

Physics may be a very beautiful subject but the activity of pursuing knowledge for its own sake is pointless. It is only one's profit from it that gives it meaning.

Lab-work, as it exists today, is yet another example of time spent in a worthless cause. Why? Because, after having forgotten the original aims of lab-work, some teachers redouble their energy in emphasizing its nonessential aspects. This was amply demonstrated in one of the undergraduate labs, where the lab-incharge refused to explain the correct method of calculations for a particular experiment but spent a considerable amount of time insisting that the lab-report must be submitted in A4 size lab-sheets, that the name must be written on the top right-hand corner and that the report must appear only on the obverse side (a strange proposition, considering the fact that lab-sheets are very expensive and very scarce).

In other words, academic life at IIT is beset by a great deal of rituals and phoniness. It is commonly believed that if certain prescribed acts are properly performed, that is, if certain rituals like lab-report-writing are carried out, something important will result, although no one really knows how.

The second point that I wish to focus attention on is the quality of teaching. The relevant role of any University is to teach. It is only in this way that it can make a significant contribution to the community. Yet teaching seems to be the most neglected aspect of the education at IIT. Just the other day, the Chairman of the Academic Forum, Prof. Sampath, informed us at the Forum meeting that it is not easy to remove an incompetent lecturer. Does this mean that the administration is willing to compromise the future of fifty or sixty students for the sake of a single teacher? It's about time that the IITian was wearied of these plastic explanations. It's about time that he did something.

Those who were here during the employees' strike will recall the tremendous enthusiasm it generated and the massive student involvement. Why can't the IITian have the same degree of involvement now? Does he always need a crisis to egg him on?

