

The Man of the Week

(Launching the "Shankar's Weekly" on May 23, 1948, Prime Minister Nehru told Shankar "not to spare him". Between May 1948 and May 1964, Panditji 'appeared' in nearly 1,500 cartoons and was chosen 'The Man of the Week' on more than a hundred occasions.)



JAWAHARLAL Nehru must have been naughty as a boy — obstinate, perplexed, chivalrous and cheerful. He

has not changed. If he were not a political leader or Prime Minister, he would have discovered India more, written more books and gathered good royalties. If he were not writing books, he would have kept himself busy swiping flies and catching butterflies. At 17, York Road, there is no lack of either flies or butterflies. They come in endless succession, from morning till late in the night. The more he swipes the flies, the more they come to trouble him. The smile changes into a frown, the chin stands out more dauntlessly! He looks perplexed and thoughtful. But he asks the world to hit him hard because he is still the naughty boy who can take it. And it is safe to hit him hard because he never hits back.

Jawaharlal is not true to type. His smiles and frowns are not typical. Politicians think he is too honest to be one of them.

On the verge of sixty he is the boy of Harrow, dreaming of great things for his country. It does not matter to him that his dreams may be unreal. He keeps his freshness of heart — the dauntless boy, intent on his butterflies, willing to be cheated but incapable of cheating. (May 30, 1948)

BENJAMIN GUY HORNIMAN was British by birth but for about forty years he was the Bayard of Indian journalism. In his love of liberty, without distinction of race, he excelled even Henry W. Nevinston and in his love of a subject race, he excelled Hume, Wedderburn and Charlie Andrews. As a defender of the freedom of the Press, even when he was thrown into the gutter by the cheap-jacks of journalism, he left far behind the whole caravan of all-India editors.

Horniman meant compassion for the underdog and courage against odds; he waged unceasingly the liberation war of humanity, humanity in its most downtrodden form, tortured with homilies and

cheated with Acts of Parliament. He seemed to make amends for his race and in that penitential service, in a profession where security is scarce long and in a country where journalism was perilous, he lived dangerously. He paid court to no newspaper proprietor, never compromised his conscience, preferred work to career, scorned the art of tight-rope dancing. He made India his home as no other Englishman has done, his workshop, his battlefield, his castle.

Horniman was a man of action, the foremost among Home Rulers, the first among Gandhi's associates, the man to be deported. On his return to India in 1925, he reverted to his role of debunker

SARDAR K. M. Panikkar who returns this week to India from Nanking is India's ace Ambassador. While Panditji's other nominees invariably were creaky misfits, Panikkar took to diplomacy as a duck to water or water to oil, with a serene sureness about his capacity to float and without any tinge of fear about getting wet. His brains were an asset and his beard an invaluable afterthought but it is not even on them that Panikkar has successfully banked in making his mission to Nanking a success. He has the diplomatic temperament, the élan that extracts confidences and the glorious guffaw that can make a vague reply sound a brilliant reply. His job in Nanking was to execute an about turn and he did it so gracefully that not even the Foreign Department was aware of it till it had been managed.

The glory that was Chungking had to be bust and in its place a new understanding had to be created. Being a lucky man circumstances favoured him but it is not only on luck that Panikkar counts. The versatility that helped a college don to rough it out in a newspaper office and a Malavya mauled

editor to play Bismarck to a series of Indian Princes, came to his aid and he assiduously read Marx when he was not translating Kumara-sambhav or guessing when "Peanut" would do the rope trick out of Nanking. He did all of them well. Particularly the guessing, for he was one of the earliest in the capital to know when it actually happened.



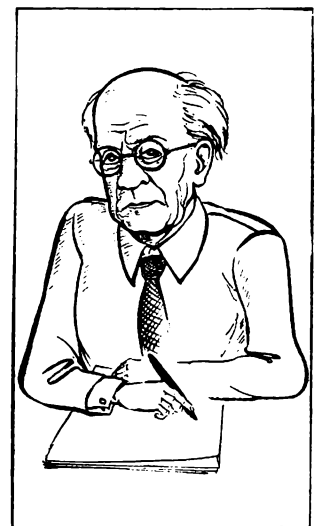
Panikkar is born for success and his next job is always more intrinsically interesting to him than the one he holds down.

(October 30, 1949)

of democracy and after many chukkers, the Grand Old Man was as youthful as ever at seventy-five.

He was the journalist's journalist, the acknowledged and unacknowledged leader of the Press till the day of his death, acknowledged by the aspiring and unacknowledged by the ruling cliques. He had to live in penury but he was a millionaire in his achievement. He practised the prose of uncompromising candour, not the snappy circumlocution of Anglo-India. Horniman was our greatest tradition, our banner of freedom, our school of journalism.

His epitaph should be England's greatest—and perhaps the only real—gift to India.



(October 24, 1948)