

India's Anthem

To The Editor, "The Times of India"

Sir,—There used to be three candidates for the distinction of India's National Anthem, but Iqbal's *Hindustan Hamara* seems now to have dropped out of the running. Very recently, Tagore's song has been given interim preference, leaving the final choice between it and the famous *Vande Mataram* to the Constituent Assembly. Though all these are fine pieces of literature, it is generally admitted that none is really suitable. Obviously, Government cannot call for suggestions from the public as is done with stamps and coinage. But what is wrong with our poets, and where have they gone? All their fervour seems to have left them since the advent of independence. Surely, here is a chance for somebody to gain immortality with a score of lines. Aggressive nationalism and frank (or even veiled) militarism should be avoided at all cost, so also maudlin sentimentalism. There should be less of geography and much less of past glories. The stress should be laid on the present, and the aspirations—for all-round development of the national character. It should bespeak harmony and not aloofness, synthesis and not separativeness. Not only should it give offence to none, but we should create something which all can adopt—a song for humanity. Otherwise, it is best to have no anthem.

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