

## FROM THE EDITOR

### THE TIME PAST AND THE TIME AHEAD

THE HERITAGE completes one year with this issue. It is time we speak to our readers of our experience and our future scheme.

We had expected THE HERITAGE to be received well despite warnings to the contrary, and it has been received well. Those who warned us were well-meaning people. They were afraid that no cultural magazine will sell unless it carried pictures of filmstars and reports, reviews, gossips on films, if not on politics. Their fear was based on reality; the taste of a generation of readers had been corrupted, treated in a systematic way with obtuse and silly stuff-so called film-reviews in the name of culture, vulgar and moronic stuff in the name of literature. This observation applies to the world of mass circulation English periodicals in particular. There are still some good magazines in different Indian languages. Even there the trend is unfortunate. Many of them are inclining to compromise with churlish stuff. "People demand it," is their convenient argument.

It is futile to debate on the issue whether the readers corrupt the magazines or the magazines corrupt the readers. The fact is, life is greater than cinema and politics and while the readers will read things written on these subjects, they must read much more.

THE HERITAGE was an attempt in projecting this larger view of life. And people have accepted it.

Some of our well-meaning friends now advise; Cinema is a powerful means of reaching the people with any message. You cannot forestall its influence. Why not try to review it constructively?

We admit that the cinema is a terribly powerful influence on the society. But let us not mince words:in recent years that cinema (be it through the wider screen or the TV), with all its paraphernalia, the street hoardings included, has done the maximum harm to culture and dignity of man. Often blatantly vulgar, it sometimes sports the legend of realism and social truth. But its influence on human thought and behaviour has been pernicious.

Some constructive criticisms are made from time to time. They are no more effective than a squeal to rouse the snoring Kumbhakarna. THE HERITAGE need not add to that squeal. For the time being THE HERITAGE will prefer to record its protest against this situation by totally avoiding any write-up on films.

But THE HERITAGE is aware of the fact that protest of this nature will not change the situation either. What will change is the people's interest in alternatives-in worthier alternatives. THE HERITAGE will do its best to contribute in that direction.

### New Features

We had said in the editorial in the 1st issue (January '85): "We believe that man's future will be the culmination of not all that is bad in him, but of all that is good in him... Our heritage is not a matter of the past, it is the stuff from which we work out our todays, as much as the tomorrows will be built out of the todays."

This is our faith.

All that is past is not glorious, not is all that claims to be modern, progressive. If we highlight some of the ancient places, institutions or traditons, it is because they are our roots. While sounding their depth, what is important is to aspire for a meaningful future.

We are planning for a series of articles-giving new ideas in science and humanities and reporting other creative endeavours round the world, opening up new vistas for the future. This will

be a new feature in addition to the section *Reflections* and *Focus* which will always present thought-provoking issues of contemporary relevance. Besides, there will be special features to mark special occasions. Articles in THE HERITAGE will be topical in a wider-Sense, and of lasting value at the same time.

In our November issue we introduced a new series, *Museums and Archives of India*. The major ones apart, India has several museums of specialised nature. We believe, the series will be exciting, -informative and new too.

Another addition will be *The New Leaf* a section that will introduce a new writer, in many cases hitherto unpublished, each time, through a story or an essay or poetry. This section will carry, whenever space permits, guidelines on good writing and answers from established writers to questions from aspiring ones.

From time to time, there will be focus on unusual personalities.

The section, *Literary Panorama*, will be rich in variety, with items that make light reading.

The existing sections will continue: *The Other Experience* giving supra-physical, supra-sensory revelations from authentic sources; *Fables and Parables for Adults*, presenting gems of wisdom; *Memorable Episodes* recording dramatic encounters in real life; *The Little-Known India*, unveiling the wonder that is India, the book review and the rest.

It may not be possible for each issue to accommodate all the sections. Sections similar in nature, like *Roots* and *Museums and Archives*, may alternate.

### Postscript

A reader asks: "In my small town, I was the only subscriber to THE HERITAGE (by post). Now I see the magazine available in two stalls. Does this not indicate its prosperity?"

Prosperity is a relative concept. The reader perhaps thinks that THE HERITAGE has become financially well off. It is not so. The publishers give tens of thousands of rupees loss every month.

Yes, it is read by more and more people. Our readers have given us precious information: (i) the per-copy readership of THE HERITAGE is more than that of any other magazine because the articles do not get dated, (ii) THE HERITAGE is generally not available in shops selling old magazines because those who buy it do not like to dispense with their copies, (iii) in most of the stalls THE HERITAGE sells very fast, because those who buy the magazine are a decisive lot.

But we are yet to receive a bunch of advertisements befitting the magazine's format. That is why the loss.