

FROM THE EDITOR

THANKS, DEAR READERS

THE HERITAGE heartily thanks those readers who took the trouble of answering the elaborate questionnaire the magazine carried in its July and August numbers. It had been issued by the Indian Market Research Bureau, the country's foremost organisation in conducting such surveys.

The IMRB has just completed computing and analysing the data. It is our duty to share with our readers some of the salient observations made by them. The following starred items are quoted from the "Summary of Main Findings" in their own language:

* 90% of The Heritage readers buy or subscribe to their copy; only 10% borrow it from various sources.

* Readers of the magazine are very regular; 67% of them have seen or read all the last four issues.

* An issue of The Heritage is generally read more than once by its readers; 44% reported that they read each copy 3—6 times and a further 37% 1—2 times.

* 45% of The Heritage readers spent 4 hours or more in reading a copy; another 36% spent 1—3 hours on it.

* The Heritage is usually read in depth, rather than cursorily. 40% of readers read it cover to cover and another 42% read more than half the magazine.

* Over 90% of The Heritage readers preserve their copy in one way or the other; 60% reported that it formed part of their library at home.

* Almost all the features of the magazine were rated as being 'interesting' to 'very interesting' by over 70% of the readers.

* Half the sample readers hold a post-graduate degree or a professional degree or diploma. A further 30% were graduates.

It appears that THE HERITAGE is unrivalled in enjoying the trust and support of a steady readership. This is a discovery that encourages us most. We know, there are thousands beyond the present readership zone of THE HERITAGE who would like the magazine. It may not be possible for us to trace them and put a copy of the magazine in their hands. We request our well-wishers to do what we cannot do, for every new reader THE HERITAGE gets is a fresh vote in favour of healthy literature.

ON THE TIDES OF TIME

THE PYALA AND THE PYALA

It was an elitist guest house in Delhi for 'Members Only' of the club or their guests. I was the guest of a member.

On the third day of my stay the management politely asked if I would move to (another room for the night, for the room I occupied was their best room and they would like the guest of the club to have the room. It was the club's anniversary night. The guest was a well-known singer, one who sings nothing but devotional songs. I too had respect for him. I shifted and then went out to keep my appointment in the evening.

It was difficult to enter the guest-house when I was back. An important minister was there to grace the occasion and security was strict. And the crowd was very large — made up of members, their families, their guests and the latter's families. I was pleasantly surprised that there were so many lovers of devotional songs among the wealthy and the influential.

I went to my room on the upper floor. From there I could see the tastefully decorated platform from which the star singer sang. But I was surprised to see islets of crowds formed around small kiosks set up on the sprawling ground. These kiosks were selling whisky and other alcoholic beverages. The greater part of the gathering drank on while the singer went on with his "Pee ley pee ley pee ley pee ley Harinam ka pyala" (Drink from the cup of your devotion to the Lord) and "Mein nehin makhana khayoi!" (The child Krishna protesting to his mother that he had not consumed the butter.)

This was in early September. On the 6th of October (delayed flights have their blessings) I ran into the famous Dagar brothers at Madras Airport. Ustad Nasir Zahiruddin Dagar and Ustad Nasir Faiyazuddin Dagar have been among the best of our cultural emissaries abroad. Warm and humble, they were in a mood to reminisce over events and experiences small and big.

"This happened in 1978 in France, during one of our concerts," recollected Zahiruddinji — missing clues provided by his worthy -brother as he went on with his narration. "We gave eight concerts in Paris. A member of the Peter Brook Theatre Group, Michelle Collision, made the introductory remarks during the programmes. As she sat listening to us, she felt so deeply involved that she requested us to teach her music. We tried to convince her that it was not possible to impart the art of classical music in a few sessions. But she insisted on learning from us whatever little she could. She started coming for lessons. She went on repeating only the scale of Raga Bhairav and she found that so enthralling that she would come whenever she could have some free time. After three or four days she disclosed to us that she used to drink rather heavily in order to get sleep. But since she began listening to the recorded versions of our concert and practising the lessons, she never felt like touching alcohol and she could enjoy peaceful sleep without the beverage. The spirit of Indian music and drink just did not go together! Later she gave up even smoking and she was very happy about it."

The Ustad concluded with some satisfaction, "Some years later she married Graham George, the son of a Canadian friend of ours. We believe that it is the spiritual power of music that brought her the peace of mind she needed and she did not need any artificial aid for that. "

I told these celebrated brothers, "This small anecdote reveals what a volume cannot. I must share this with our readers." Long Live Indian music; long live Dagar brothers and their like.