

Stories of Indian Life

SHORT STORIES. By Manoj Das. Triveni Publishers, Rs 4.50

Here are eighteen stories of real life, many of them reflecting the transition from British rule to Independence. Change of fortune wrought by time besides the general transformation in living conditions offers a fruitful theme for humorous and satirical treatment. Elections in the new democracy and the rise to power of all sorts of men attract the pen of the story writer. Sri Manoj Das writes also touching stories of domestic affection.

"The Intimate Demon" treating of paternal love for a child brings out also the irony of life, of unconscious endeavour at cross purposes. "The substitute for the Sitar" is of the characteristic jealousy of children when rival claims appear for the parent's affection. "The Rest of the World" is a pretty story of two girl friends whose fortunes in life are reversed as they grow into womanhood. There are other stories of sport and adventure in the pick-wickian style. "A Song for Sunday" is a pathetic narrative of a man of steady habits turning mad, by the monotony of his existence. "Of Man and Monkey" is another touching story, of the attachment of a circus clown to the monkey that played tricks under his guidance. Much shrewd observation is evidenced in these pages, and the author shows a grasp of the art of the short story which must lead him to greater achievement.—
P.R. KRISHNASWAMI.