

Pacific from his balcony. He was the late 1960s, which he crossed the South American of Kenjiro old Japanese lay 1962 from loop with 88 is of fish for miles away? motor nor any unication. As are beyond those present is gone for spect that he ore than a 93 days Ke-Francisco. ven he him-ook on his

r, the gifted inds me of se adventu-his month, outside Ke-the national Akacemi, oes not con-e and work. ure started ago at the of the Mala-and he is set no goal oes he care t of poetry He is con-on that he s of beauty.

lo family, iless very wa reciless habits, he ever since. ars in San-s not able se of study. a of many poetry tur-strongest He is still

that poetry ey to the claim own-ot 'his poe-it on a ise and is e the post-form, no-him, nor once he s precious unt to be

e title given no doubt rove him of ruin in cares for, nantment in ure poetry. as compo-est devotio-Malayalam d in praise at Guruva-that he is nd is not it. But it label him f devotional sciously' or s no place poets' when the y is unacr-formations. led discus- however, dissertations h is thereby e plaything estheticism. is primarily to be con-edium of o been for-

ayalees this man Nayar s true and in the cla-today. His rimous that out of his books have nd lost for-64 that the ight out a pcems un-n', contain-ning to 480 m has list-lications of as poetical ble to see books; I one out of that during o fortnight my having read and

realms of the ultimate reality. For has not the Upanishad declared:

Hiranmayena paatrena
Styasyaapihitam mukham.

But he appears to be supremely satisfied with the adequacy of the approach he has chosen.

What does he write about? What is the special merit of his poetry? I wish I could answer these questions. This is poetry which is, honestly, untranslatable. It is inextricably bound up with the cadences of the Malayalam language, the sights and sounds and smells of Kerala's rain-drenched soil, with the culture of our ancient people, the triumphs and tribulations of our history, with the joys and sorrows and disillusionments of human life. He is proud of his heritage and his words acquire the power of soaring eloquence when they dwell on it. He is convinced that India has fallen into decay in modern times and nothing can disabuse his mind of this overpowering obsession. He dreams of an age long gone by and believes that it had the lustre of pure gold. These propositions may or may not be true, but the fact remains that when we have finished reading his composition we feel

is poetry.

He loves nature almost to a fault. His infatuation with the beauty of his native land may assume the character of a fetish on occasions, but there is no doubt at all that it is genuine love and that he enjoys it fully, and what is perhaps more important, he is able to convey that joy to his readers in undiminished measure. The secret of this success is the purity and spontaneity of his inspiration. There is no conscious or uncounscious labour for effect. His mastery of the art of poetic composition is so complete that it appears absolutely effortless to us. The treasure house of Malayalam and Sanskrit vocabulary is open to him and the most beautiful words of these languages are always at his command. This invests his verse with a mellifluous quality and he succeeds in conveying the incommunicable — the soulentrancing beauty of feeling. After all, poetry is not literature in the strict sense; it partakes of the character of music and that is why great poets are called singers and their creations songs. It is however the music of words, not of pure sounds.

We in India have forgotten for a long time that poetry is written

properties of those magical things called words and that their other attributes are as important to the poet's art as meaning. Perhaps our long association with the English language and its marvellous literature was responsible for this; I do not know. Though we have poets who still cling to this delusion, it is a fact that the most remarkable change that we see in the character of English poetry today is that it is struggling to liberate itself from the age-old semantic straight-jacket into a sort of surrealist art of pure sensations, of almost physiological experience. This transformation too has produced imitators in our country who think that we too need a metamorphosis of this kind in our own languages and produce a concoction of words devoid of meaning as well as feeling. They call it the new poetry.

Kunhiraman Nayar has escaped both these delusions. He has had little acquaintance with Western literature, either of the older or the newer variety. He is the poet of feeling, the architect of beauty expressed in the magical words of his mother tongue. The lowliest flower that blooms in his native soil sends him into raptures and a whole world of beautiful ima-

compositions; home in the ticularly the Some of his like 'Soundar' in the latter. 'Bhadra Deep' spiritual odys The life of ti strel has bi central Kerala world watered zha, so rich i gend and his be considered his art. It h mined so mu ten.

There is no Kunhiraman N ed with the b and again we in his works poetry rises t ing the effulgi experience. H world, the su stars and the the eastern h under his very fulfilment for and when all is all that n drawn-out dre

— Dr. K.

New dimension on the cultural fr

TRY trapping quick silver with your fingers; it will dissipate in all directions with bewildering quickness and fascinating fluidity. The task of "Mali" has taken upon himself is much more difficult: to pin down and chain the attention of youngsters, for one a half hours at a stretch: youngsters, hardly in their teens with exuberant physical energy and range of interest that change every second practically

Yet this is the scene that presents itself every Sunday at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Ernakulam, between 10 and 11.30 a.m. when Mali, the inimitable story teller and story writer too, for children, pins down and holds the mercurial minds of more than 200 children, boys and girls, and waits them to the variegated world of fiction in which fundamental moral values are also embedded.

The Balakathavedi, as it is

known, was inaugurated on August 22 and the number of child members have swollen to over 200 now. The story session by Mali is only the first step towards the formation of a children's club to promote their literary and cultural activities.

Mali has succeeded in reviving an art which died with the death of time honoured tradition of gran- nies telling puranic stories to children. His current series of stories, in two parts, Mahabharata, and the contemporary story "Circus", woven out of his own imagination, have been going down splendidly among the highly impressionable youngsters.

He has remarkable empathy by which he is able to bridge the big generation gap between him and young children. And this is the secret of his success, which has great implications, in that he might be the pioneer to start a new cultural movement that would shape and develop young minds.

He does not resort to theatricals and rhetoric. In well modulated tones, with just and inflexion here, a hint of an excitement there, to highlight the calm progression of the narrative. Mali weaves his gentle personality into the hearts and minds of the children.

After his retirement as Station Director of All India Radio, Mali has taken up the self-imposed assignment, to entertain and elevate children, with all his heart and soul and with his undoubted skill and knowledge. He is very



V. Madhavi known as Mali

well read and of writing to thakali play staged more Kerala.

His author various aspect and like sub red regularly papers and country.

But among treasures his the children: "Mali Bharate wa:ham" and containing a story types f his own imag and, in the children's sus



Mohini in possession of the 'amrut', trying to divert the attention of the Danavas.

Scintillating dance-drama

AN impressive and eye-filling dance-drama "Ksheera Sagara Madhanam" in the rich Kuchipudi style was presented by the Andhra Cultural Association at Cochin last week in connection with the visit to the city of Mr. M. V. Krishna Rao, Cultural Affairs Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

The dance-drama opened with the court scene of Gujapathi Maharaja to whose forefathers it was dedicated. The court dancer enumerated the details of the story to be performed.

The story begins with the Devatas pleading with Lord Vishnu about the woes and sufferings meted out to them by the Danavas and seeking His help in overcoming them. Lord Vishnu after a patient hearing advises them to seek the help of Lord Siva and to undertake with their cousins, the Danavas, Ksheera Sagara Madhanam.

The Devatas go to the Danava King Bali to seek his help in their venture and succeed in mustering his support.

Thereupon the Devatas and the Danavas start the Ksheera Sagara Madhanam with the mountain Mandara and the serpent Vasuki as



Devatas offering prayers to Lord Siva in Kailasam.

performance of such a fine show.

The presentation was slick and the settings eye-filling. The Kailasa setting and the mountain Mandara with serpent Vasuki en-

tion, Cochin, with 140 members drawn from the Andhra community numbering over 200 families, has made a big impact on the cultural scene in Cochin.