

My Patches of Disquiet

Waheedul Haque

down into the water on all sides. This was the government arboricultural nursery now buried under the Sarak Bhaban. The nursery served as the springboard of the only generously laid out single park developed in the midfifties by the ideas of leadership of MA Jabbar, the then PWD chief engineer. The only place that somewhat resembled a park before this coming of the Ramna Greens or Park was the Victoria Park, later to be called, for very cogent reasons, the Bahadur Shah Park (patriots of the Great Mutiny of 1857 were hung from the trees of this place). The Ramna Park very well served the needs of a snowballing city populace. But the things worked out the other way round — the Ramna Greens generated in the Dhaka populace a thirst for open space and fresh air and an ambience all green and quiet.

Come liberation, and we got an adjunct to the Ramna Park — for once the appendage being larger than the main body. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gifted the nation the Suhrawardy Udyan, named to perpetuate the political mentor of the great leader, the guru incidentally leaving nothing to do with either the independence of the nation or the liberation struggle that preceded it.

This gradual greening was being regularly offset by development of the city, meadows and trees yielding place to tarmacadamised roads and concrete buildings. Suddenly, out of the blue came down the bolt and hit the noble treelines adorning the New Town of yore. The rumored reason was that an army dictator had the idea that the tall trees of gigantic spread could block the view of advancing hordes of a counter-coup maker. I personally was never misled by that canard. Soon enough it was proved beyond doubt that the powerful small man in question had a personal preference for garish neon signs and sodium lights rather than trees which reminded him of rusticity and a bucolic milieu.

The state vandalism had particularly the huge raintrees or koroj as its victim. And once this was out from Dhaka, the viceroys ruling the districts

lost no time, in felling all the koroj lining the highways. The tide of tree felling stopped only when it was suggested that Ershad's proposed cosmetic surgery on Dhaka city could mostly mean the killing of the remaining green cover over the city. The suggestion was made by this writer in an English language daily and was repeated in the largest circulated vernacular making the owners of the vaunted papers to spending some sleepless nights and one of them lecture this poor pen-pusher on 'Do you know why the trees are planted?' — to cut them when they grow'. Ershad himself over-reacted to the printed lines and put a complete stop on any kind of tree cutting in the city. But however a fear-some dictator he might be his flat did never extend to the diminishing forest lines — it continued happening even as King Canutes waves came on rolling. And that wonderful organisation the Birdem or Diabetic Hospital struck down one of the noblest raintrees in this city of raintrees and their various kindred species. They justified the crime with the same logic put forward by all myopic state vandals — development.

Luckily for us all in Bangladesh a world trend has in the meantime been set for planting more trees and arresting tree-cutting. Bangladesh stood very badly in need of such action for being faced with all-round desertification approaching fast and almost rounding the corner. But the need so far is being paid at best a lip-service by government leaders as a part of their official schedule and none of the political parties taking any greening programme to be carried out by their cadres. Some NGOs and, of course, some forestry officials are sincerely exerting themselves for planting more trees and ensuring its nurture. Advertisement in both the print and electronic media on the problem of tree and environment are vying for the most attention with that of family planning. Sheikh Hasina scored over the Prime Minister by going to press on the urgency of the needed action on the exact spot of time — World Environment Day.

I am convinced that this horror ensconced between the Suhrawardy Udyan and Ramna Park would in a decade's time cover the whole of the once lovely ramanija, that is Ramna or The New Town. My fear is driven deep into my subconscious every time I have to travel to the Dhaka international airport. What are those big hoardings appearing every furlong or even less doing there. Promoting products to whom? Tourists? People going out for an spell of foreign marketing? No. The huge things are doing only one thing. Screening out our wonderful countryside from the view of whoever passes through the airport or travel farther afield — to Mymensingh and beyond. What is the compulsion? Advertisement yields money. Who gets the money for all acts of vitiating the view of Dhaka or the countryside? And how much money is that? Is it worth selling the sky for?

Khaleda Zia to offset that lead, made an extra effort at speechmaking on the need of growing more trees. Such was the scenario when a new phenomenon was silently overtaking the greenery of Dhaka city.

The best views of the greens are increasingly being covered by hoarding and billboards — mostly of the most vulgar kind. Even patches of open space — say the Dhanmondi field on Road Number 8 is hidden from sight from the busy road for which such a view could be such a welcome relief. The mindless crime has hit the ultimate in the area from Tennis Complex to Engineers' Institution. The Shishu Park straddles over a sizeable part of the Suhrawardy Udyan and has wiped out together with the Indra Mancha a valuable and glorious part of our history of liberation. Now proceed towards the Engineers' Institution leaving the Ershad Tennis Complex and Zia Shishu Udyan. On your left the view of the idyllic Ramna Greens in mostly blocked by billboards. And on the right, luckily this side of the road hasn't all been covered by billboards and the sky banished from sight. But there is every reason to fear that very soon the gaps between those vulgar things would be filled up. Then this wonderful stretch rejuvenating Dhaka for every moment of its existence would become the most stifling of places maybe fit as an instrument of third degree torture.

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LAST Week's drama "Shesh Porjanto" was once again based on problems of the couples. This time it was the dowry issue which, however, remains a serious social problem in our country. Shanu takes a defensive stand against her colleague whose marriage is broken on the wedding day because dowry was not paid to the groom's family. Shanu argues with the groom's family and tries her best to allow the marriage to take place, but no, the marriage does not take place. Shanu on the next scene reveals nostalgic moments and the flashback highlights events from her past life: After romancing Shanu and Amin got married, but with the passage of time problems cropped up and the reason was that Shanu's family, who came from a poor background, could not keep Amin's family demands and their relationship worsened each day. One day Shanu, not able to bear any longer, left Amin. She chose a profession which was still unheard of and unconventional, and would raise the eyebrows of both the liberals and the conservatives in our society — the unexpected job was to become a truck driver of a pharmaceutical company! This drama has highlighted the problem of dowry and the role of Shanu played by Tarana Halim seemed convincing in raising the consciousness of the masses against dowry.

Tele-View

by Kaiser Parvez Ali

2 The importance of environmental hygiene is being emphasized in skits during peak hours by BTV. This is a good idea indeed as it brings into focus what harm dirtiness can do and the diseases it can bring, due to one's carelessness and laziness. As a considerable number of people have access to television sets in residences and clubs, community centers, and they habitually gather before the sets to watch their favorite programmes, the positive effect of such programme is enormous and is very likely to improve and upgrade and raise the importance of, hygienic conditions.

3 "Bhora Nadir Banke" with host Mustafa Zaman Abbasi is an entertaining programme and at the same time provides the viewers with an opportunity to view the areas they have never visited or may not visit in future. This time the place chosen was Comilla, and the countryside had breathtaking scenes. Many types of enchanting songs were presented by various singers of that area. The revealing part of the programme, which I am sure many viewers did know, was the famous folk singer of the

subcontinent. Late Sachin Dev Burman grew up in Comilla and along the river bank where he used to sit and sing. The compare of the programme even mentioned that the late singer had desired to visit his birth place sometime, but with his death it could not be materialized. Some of his folk songs were presented and the invisible presence of the singer was even very much felt as his voice (of his songs) engulfing the area itself. Some popular songs of our revered folk singer late Abdul Alim were also played. There are many unexplored areas of our country which need to be approached through this programme, and BTV must ensure that no such area of interest is overlooked and also that the programmes such as this are never stopped.

4 It seems to the tele viewers that both the current drama series "Tathapee" and "Eeteekatha" are running neck to neck in their attempt to attract as many viewers as they can. "Tathapee" had many new developments in one episode with plans to go on expanding as much as possible and now it is the turn of "Eeteekatha" to go for expansion with new de-

velopments. This week's episode had Yusuf, the foreign returned grandson of Chowdhury, trying to secure release of the arrested handloom workers from jail; his mother warning the villagers not to allow her son to visit them any more; Majeed's sister Maya dying after illness; the handloom workers released on bail; and Bepari's plan to keep the assault case active in the court. Veteran actress Ferdous Mazumdar has more scopes to act in this episode and seems to have ended her slumberiness taking charge of the situations, and making decisions, which were earlier made by Dadu who seems to have taken a back seat in daily household affairs. Torture on his daughter by her in-laws and the strike by the handloom workers has affected him otherwise.

The serial presents a true picture of village politics and an example was Bepari bribing witnesses to give false statements in his favour. The image of police officer in the village was somewhat funny as he kept chewing pan and spitting as much as he could and also keeping parts of cucumber in his pocket, wearing civil clothes in thana on official duty and playing mouth organ to pass time. Both the drama serials are turning more and more serious with no more funny scenes, which the viewers may prefer to watch after facing a day of realities of tough life.

Why not Laugh and be Positive?

by Emran Wasim Khan

IT was a coincidence, a rare one! Kelly Lindley (of CWCCC) got me into this as she invited me to moderate one of the Oklahoma Correctional Association (OCA) conference sessions; I was to introduce Lynn Hester. For some reason or the other, it turned out to be Jim Fite who I was going to introduce. What a coincidence. Lynn was Jim's "little sister".

Just as I was through with Jim's session, it was time for Lynn's session next door. This gave me the opportunity to attend both sessions. For the one's who were there, well, you already know them! And here's for the one's who missed out on them!

Besides marketing and management, Jim is a specialist in business development. He is also the Executive Director of the National Clown

and Laughter Hall of Fame, Inc. Staff writer Peggy Gandy was right about Lynn — "her blithe spirit spills over on everyone she comes in contact with." Lynn, the community development director of the Oklahoma Healthcare Corporation, doesn't know me personally, but her light-hearted approach to life, wrapped with the spirit of laughter and hope through the message of positive living, has touched me! I must admit, I, too, enjoy and thrive on maximizing individual potential. Lynn Hester also serves as chairperson of the National Clown and Laughter Hall of Fame.

What I learned from both is what I believe in and the sessions presented by the brother and sister, to me, makes up for all I may have missed attending.

Some messages are worth repeating and I think Lynn and Jim shared plenty of those in their eloquent speeches.

In my introduction, I remember quoting Ford, "whether you believe you can do a thing or not, you're right!" How right he was. There cannot be a better habit than making resolutions and forming the habit of keeping them. It's music for my ears when I hear that each individual has infinite possibilities of success, because that's true. How true depends on the color of glasses we look through. There may be times when we "don't see the forest for the tree" these may be times when we need to step back and take a look at all we have out there and be able to recognize opportunity as an opportunity and take action. I couldn't agree more with Jim if you want more, give more.

There may be times when we need to keep the so-called role models from bringing inactivity when they say "don't touch that thing, you'll break it!" Do not believe in their shortcomings because their ineptitude can lead you to believe what's not true. Have you ever taken a moment of your life to ask, "How do I talk to myself? Would I want to be a friend to somebody who talks like me? acts like me? Would you?"

Be a risk-taker! Seek out your vision! Challenge the world — just like Columbus did

when he challenged the then reality of a flat world! That's what Ptolemy and Galileo did when they challenged the notion of the sun rotating around the earth. Socrates said "The life which is unexamined is not worth living".

We are taught early what we can't do, isn't it worth learning then what we can do. We can laugh if we want to, can't we? Laughter can change chemical components of our body. Laughter releases endorphin, the body's natural painkillers. Humor in Latin means fluid. Fluidity allows us to choose our perspective; and the way one looks at it determines how one lives their lives. In order to change what you believe to be true, you have to believe in yourself. If you don't believe it will happen, it won't happen. If you expect little, you achieve little. Perception is everything!

Bertrand Russel emphasized that "it is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it true". Change the negatives of what you believe to be true about your marriage, health, organization, etc.; when you do, you have incredible power. Our thought processes work consciously and sub-consciously. Our subconscious stores. Store the right thing and plenty of it so you can dispense the very best!

We all learn to walk, talk, drive and breathe and once the walking, talking, driving, breathing is on, we perform automatically. You don't think that "I am going to breathe today or I am going to act like myself today", you do it naturally. "The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience." Why not train yourself to act upon the right thing?

Laughing, too, is a learned behavior. Make it a point to laugh every day. The more you do it, the easier it gets. The more you look for things to laugh at, the easier it gets. If self-fulfilling prophecy has to come true, profess; its like me to be a loving husband/wife; its like me to be a good mother/father, its like me to be a good neighbour; its like me to be the best one I can be. You have to act like the positive you!

We use between 2 to 6 per cent of our brain. Our brain's

have about 100 billion neurons — microscopic nerve cells.

New information reaching our brain from the senses is stored, analysed, and acted upon by means of electrochemical impulses passing from neuron to neuron through the dendrite connections. It is known that brains remain active to some extent round the clock, and that each day it triggers hundreds of millions of impulses — more than all the worlds telephone systems put together. Like deep relaxation (meditation, yoga, biofeedback, repetitive prayers); if practiced regularly, can strengthen the immune system and produce other beneficial physiological effects. Self-talk can help maintain our positive self-image, which then effects our self, our performance. The cycle is completed when our performance effects our self-talk.

Take a bad situation and turn it around. Take an uncomfortable situation and turn it around. If you are going through a crisis, look at it as a window of opportunity. Why don't you take a moment; take a deep breath; take a look at not what or who you can blame the situation for, but look at all the alternatives to make it positive.

Learn to relax. Learn to refresh and revitalise your body and the mind. Leisure is an essential counterbalance to work. Don't programme your near and dear one's (including yourself) to fail. Why would you programme one to fail?

Beware of how you make decisions. Don't let people degrade people's selfimage. Don't be part of "bad-mouthing". Would you want others to be little you? Don't say anything negative. Monitor your own thought process thermostat.

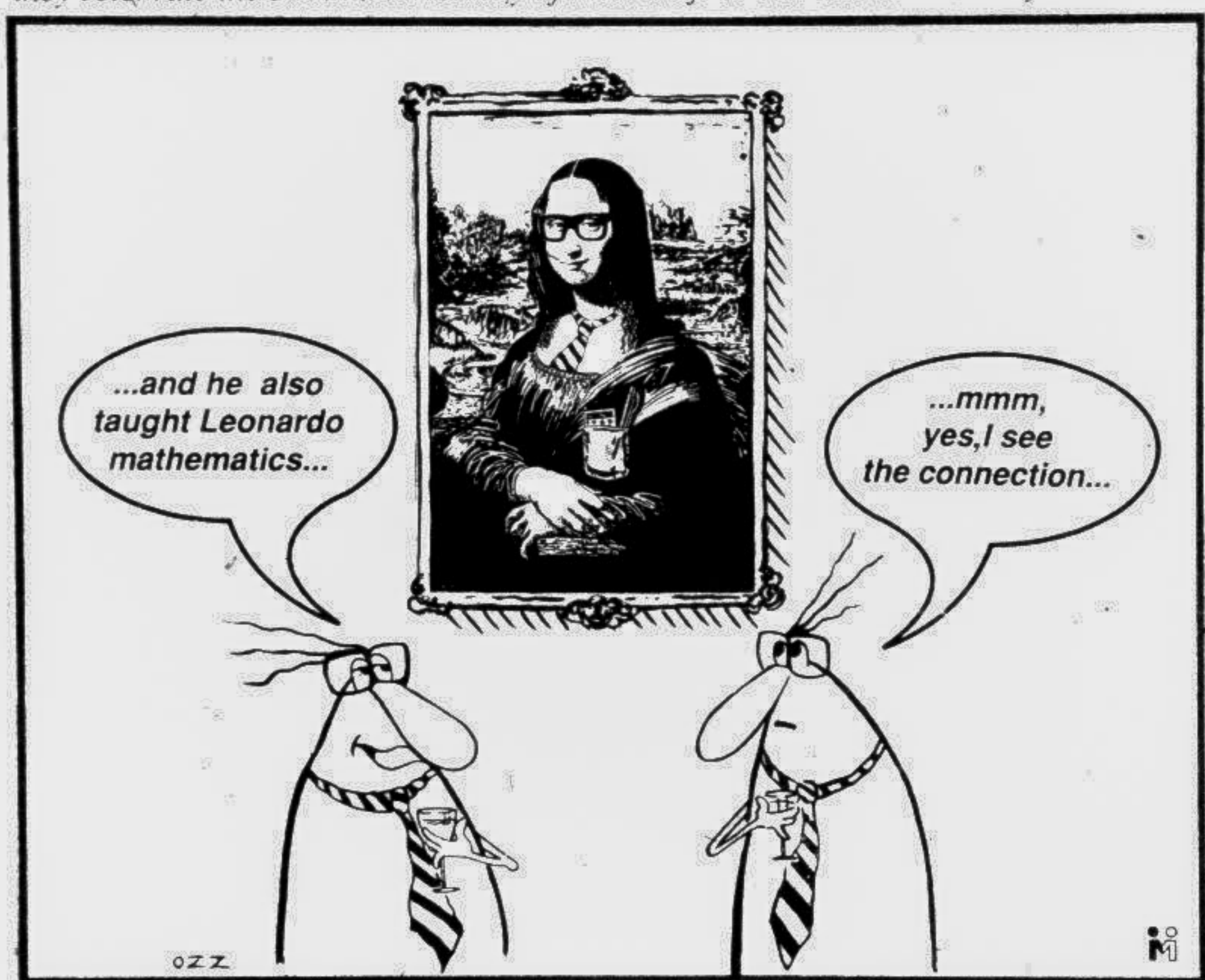
Success begins with an individual's mind and the will to followup. We may not be able to control everything, but we can control how we react. Be enthusiastic. "Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm; it moves stones, it charms brutes." Take a step, today! Now! Turn something around! There is no time like the present. Choose your purpose and pursue it wholeheartedly. Do it now.

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Loosening Ties and Returning to Renaissance Roots

Nancy Hart writes from San Sepolcro, Italy

Tired of their reputation the world over as a profession for bores, accountants are fighting to change their image. Gemini News Service joins the number-crunchers as they celebrate the 500th anniversary of their craft in true Renaissance style.



Accounting, there are also Italian cooking lessons, crossbow demonstrations, ice-cream-making contests and the Pacioli World Cup Renaissance Bocce Ball Tournament.

"With all these accountants we have no trouble keeping score in the tournament," says Weis.

Weis and Tinius are the brains behind this accountancy adventure, but they are the first to admit that it all began as a joke. Eight years ago, they were on a skiing vacation in Austria, decided to visit the hometown of the man they had read about in textbooks and invented a story about shooting a video so they could get into museums that were closed. And, they confess, the whole thing was a great excuse to drink some red wine.

Now, many trips to Italy and many bottles of red wine later, they have established the quintessential Quincentennial. There is Luca Pacioli Society with a membership of "less than 5,000," a Pacioli newsletter, Pacioli T-shirts and coffee mugs, and they have even produced and star in a \$100,000 video Luca Pacioli —

Unsung Hero of the Renaissance that is shown in 1,000 universities around the world.

But the real profit-taking of the entire adventure is the San Sepolcro celebration. Accountancy notables have come from 12 countries for the festivities. So have British and Canadian television crews. The Economist magazine predicted "armies of unsober accountants" would be attending.

"This meeting is extremely important," said Professor Greenwood. "It illustrates that accountants have a tradition dating back 500 years, with history prior to that date. I believe we accountants should be adopting a Renaissance spirit."

"We have too much bottom line in our lives. Pacioli wouldn't have wanted us to do that."

Pacioli believed that education should be available to everyone and wrote his Suma in everyday Italian rather than Latin so anyone could read it. He was said to be the friend of three Popes, a pupil of Italian painter Piero della Francesca and taught maths to Mona Lisa

painter and inventor Leonardo da Vinci.

"In fact, Leonardo bought a copy of Luca's Suma," notes Bryan Howleson, a professor at the University of West Australia, who delivered a paper on Pacioli's Suma and Antecedents of Accounting Principles. "When I went back to the Suma, I was surprised that the processes of book-keeping have been the same for 500 years."

"The Renaissance was a period that linked art, spirituality, mathematics and practical skills," says Bernard Winchester from London, who teaches accounting and auditing to students from developing countries. "With the practical skills came learning how to be good merchants. They needed to know if they were making a profit."

So what is the profit from a meeting like this? Well, in the final deduction, it is a chance for accountants to return to their roots, see the environment in which their profession was born, and soak up some culture and red wine. And of course for most, like New York accountant Frank Regear, it is a business trip which means it is also a tax write-off.

NANCY HART is a US journalist based in Rome.

Memories of Debussy, in Saint Germain-en-Laye

by Philippe Chevalier

"SOME people see me as a man from the melancholy North. Others consider me to be a representative of Provence, tralala. I quite simply come from Saint-Germain-en-Laye, half an hour from Paris". Claude Debussy was fond of saying.

He was born in a narrow building in rue au pain in the heart of the little town. It was one of those houses, built in the 17th century, to lodge tradesmen and shop-keepers at a time when a large court flocked to Saint-Germain around King Louis XIV.

The house, which was acquired by the town and became a museum, is listed as a historical monument. However, very little remains of that sumptuous period. The only thing left is the little inner paved courtyard and the elegant staircase with its turned wood banisters, but one feels an intimate, poetic atmosphere as soon as one goes in.

The Debussy family came from a modest background. The composer's father, a



former sailor, sold porcelain. He had a shop on the ground floor of a building in which the family occupied one of the three floors.

Little Claude Achille, in fact, only spent the first two years of his infancy there, but the child and, later on, the young man, often returned to spend his holidays at his godmother's in Saint-Germain.

His favourite pastime, at around the age of 6, was to watch the trains arriving in the railway cutting, Saint-Germain was the first town to be linked to Paris by rail. A cloud of steam would rise from the rumbling, spewing engines and swallow up the child, filling him with delicious terror.

The Debussy museum, in the proper sense of the word,

takes up the first floor. The setting in which the musician worked has been recreated with the help of furniture and objects that had belonged to him. Most of these come from donations and bequests by family and friends, in particular from Debussy's daughter-in-law, Madame de Tinar.

There is his work table, "that friend to whom one can confide everything," he said. Near the lamp with its large cooper shade, by the light of which he wrote Pelleas et Melisande, stands a fat, wooden toad, the musician's mascot. In front of the fireplace, the laquered Japanese screen inspired the Poisson d'Or suite.

Further on, in display cases, one can see the hand-written score of Five Poems by Baudelaire, put to music by Debussy, a text written by Colette who found that he had a face like a faun, and his daguerreotyp portrait by Nadar.

Among the various photographs, there is a picture taken by Igor Stravinsky showing Debussy and Satie going for a walk. Near his death mask, there is the moving letter in which the composer's daughter described his last moments.

All this memorabilia makes it easier to grasp Debussy's character, his tastes and his artistic affinities. Step by step, we follow the itinerary of the inventor of a rich aesthetics of subtle suggestions and contained emotion, from his artistic awakening to his major compositions and including his stay at the Villa Medici in Rome and his journey to Russia.

Debussy added: "Who will know the secret of musical composition? The sound of the sea, the curve of a horizon, the wind in the leaves and the cry of a bird leave a diversity of impressions in us. And, suddenly, without one's consenting to it the least in the world, one of these memories flows out of us in music".

— L'Actualite en France