

P. L. Deshpande at 60

November 8, 1979 was P. L. Deshpande's sixtieth birthday. P. L. is a household name in Maharashtra. His plays, particularly *Tuze Ahe Tuze Pashi*, his one-man performances, specially *Batatyachi Chal* (where he stands on the stage alone, his voice, his gestures, the expression on his face bringing to life the whole atmosphere of an old tenement) have endeared him to playgoers of varied tastes, of different ages. Though his eyes and his comments, readers of his travelogues have made the acquaintance of Europe, of America, of the East, *Vanga Chitre* introduced to them the Bengal that P. L. loves. His writings (and most of all his character sketches in *Vyakti ani Valli*) are the product of a keen and observant eye, a sharp ear for the nuance of speech, and a genuine interest in people. Everything that P. L. has said and written expresses a warm-hearted concern for the predicaments of the humble and a satirical thrust against the pretensions of the arrogant and pompous. It is this impulse which sparks off his humour and wins a response from every section of society.

P. L.'s gifts have found recognition in the Sahitya Akademi Award conferred on him in 1965, the Sangeet Akademi Award which he received in 1967. He was elected President of the Golden Jubilee Session of the Marathi



Sahitya Sammelan; he was Vice-President of the Sangeet Natak Akademi. He is a member of the Council of the National Centre for the Performing Arts. The Rabindra Bharati University in Calcutta has recently conferred an Honorary D. Litt. on him and the Municipal Corporation of Bombay will honour him this year.

But recognition, honours and monetary rewards are for P. L. only some of the many paths of reaching out to people. His earnings, placed in

trust by his wife Sunita in the P. L. Deshpande Foundation, have been distributed among a Blood Bank, a Hospital Wing, a *Muktangana* in Pune. His generosity has prompted him to contribute to various causes, the Anandvan, a centre for the rehabilitation of lepers, to the Lokmanya Tilak Mandir at Vile Parle, where he spent his childhood and youth. But more important than financial help is the manner in which P. L. has placed his time, his energy and name at the service of democratic ideals. His role, during the last elections, in defence of the individual's right to free expression and against the forces of oppression is proof of his awareness of the artiste's debt to the society in which he has grown.

For many P. L. is known as a musician, to others as a dramatist, actor, director. Some remember the films he made when he was relatively young. Thousands feel close to him through the rich humour of his books. But for all of us his is the warm, genial spirit which has lightened life's burdens.

Obituaries

Dr. Lalmani Mishra

Dr. Lalmani Mishra, who died on July 17, 1979 was Professor of the Music and Fine Arts Department of the Hindu University, Varanasi. Known for his deep knowledge of Indian musical instruments, he was the author of *Bharatiya Sangeet Vadya*, an authoritative work on this subject.

Acharya Kailasha Chandra Deo Brihaspati

Acharya Kailasha Chandra Deo Brihaspati, who died on July 30, 1979, was an authority on Braj Bhasha, Sanskrit and *Dharma Shastra*. His main contribution was in the field of music. His works include *Bharatka Sangita Siddhanta*, *Sangita Chintamani*, *Mussalman aur Bharatiya Sangita* and *Dhruvapada aur uska Vikas*. He was for several years Chief Producer, Hindustani Music, AIR. The Akhila Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya conferred on him the title of *Sangita Mahamahopadhyaya*. He was also elected Fellow of the Sangita Natak Akademi.