

Letter from Moscow

## Angle on the Tangle

Samar Sen

**THE** Hall of Columns in the Central House of Trade Unions was packed. Merry students, elderly dons and fishy correspondents tried to get rid of their overcoats as soon as possible in order to occupy vantage positions. The occasion was important -the official inauguration of the Friendship University. But that in itself did not explain all the expectancy and impatience of the audience. Most people had a hunch that the initiator of this unique university would himself come. And what an ovation he received, both when he appeared and when he spoke. It was apparent that he had become an idol to the students from Africa, Asia and Latin America, all whose expenses would be borne by the Soviet Government. They went into raptures over Comrade Khrushchev. And the Soviet Prime Minister knows how to captivate the young and the old.

We watched him with interest. Does he show any signs of strain? For the fact is, a tense ideological warfare has been going on since the Revolution Celebrations came to a close. The chief protagonists are Soviet Russia and China. Before the Communist Summit started, people on the periphery of the Party were optimistic that the Chinese would budge, they would not press their opposition to the 'easy-going' ways of the Russians in international politics. For the Chinese believe that the Russians have softened their revolutionary zeal for the sake of temporary ease and comfort, that they lack the fire which Lenin lit. The Russians, on the other hand, excuse the Chinese of misreading Lenin, of being sectarian, of giving a handle to reactionary forces in Asia. To think, as the Chinese do, that war is inevitable may not be the same as assuming a warlike posture but such a conception involves far-reaching questions of strategy and tactics, the validity or necessity of which the Russians are not prepared to admit. For instance, the Russians are unhappy about the border obsession of the Chinese.

The discussions have lasted much longer than expected. People taking part are maintaining the strictest secrecy. Ask them when they

propose to leave Moscow and they will just turn to another topic. Meanwhile, there is no end to speculation. Will the Chinese force a rift? Even if a joint declaration is issued at last, will that mean a change in China's attitude? She has long felt isolated because of her exclusion from the U N. Will that sense of isolation increase after the Moscow Conference?

Khrushchev showed no sign of stress or tension when he spoke in the Mall of Columns. He seemed as confident as ever. He is backed by the vast majority of Communist delegates.

### GOLDEN ROUBLE

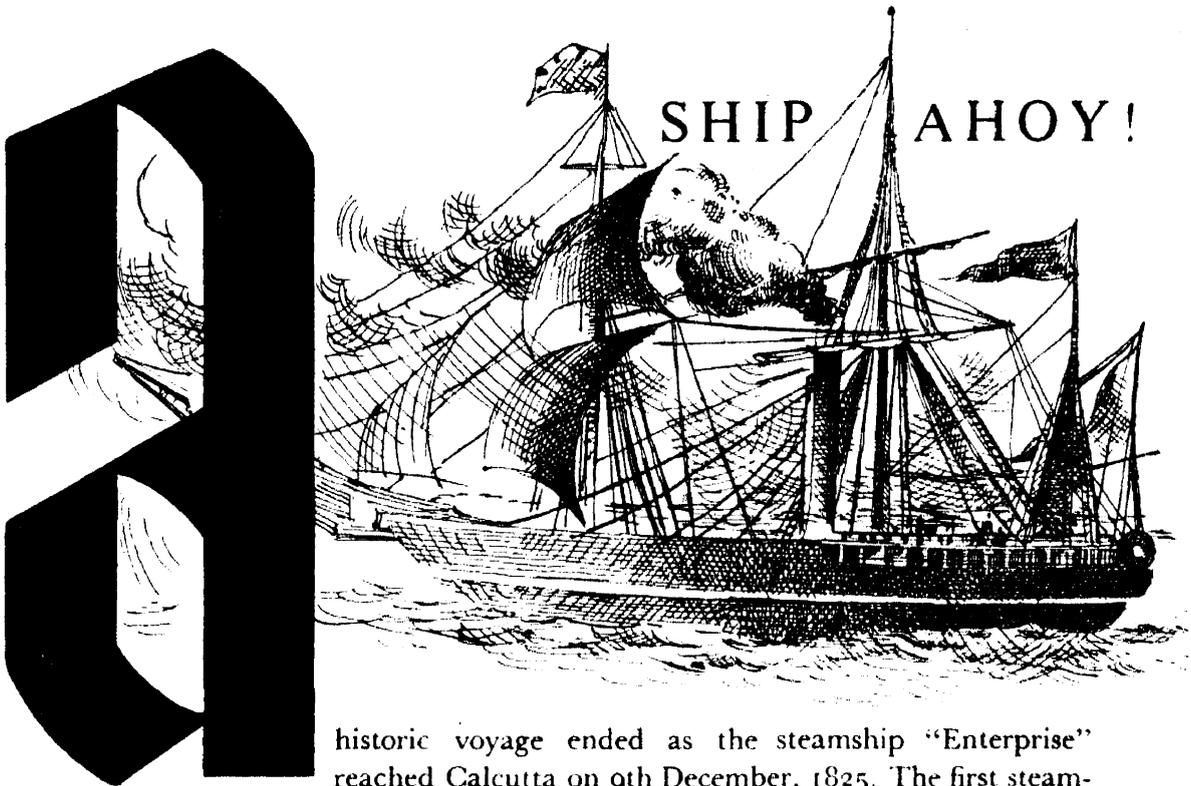
As announced a few days ago, the gold content of the rouble will be increased from 1st January from 0.222168 grammes to 0.987412 grammes and there will be a simultaneous increase in the exchange value of the rouble in relation to the currencies of capitalist countries. The increase, it is stressed, reflects the achievements scored by the Soviet Union in its peaceful competition with capitalism. Between

1950 and 1959 the Soviet volume of industrial productions increased 180 per cent, whereas in the USA the rise was only 41 per cent and in Britain 20 per cent. During the same period the Soviet national income rose 150 per cent; In the USA and Britain the rise was 32 and 18 per cent, respectively.

It is also pointed out, that the Soviet rouble is now the only monetary unit in the world whose value in gold is greater than at the time of the Gold Standard when banknotes were freely exchanged for gold. The new gold content of the rouble will be 27.5 per cent higher than in 1913, whereas the gold content of the dollar has dropped to 59.1 per cent of what it was that year; the pound sterling has gone down to 34.0 per cent of the 1913 figure.

The increase in the gold content and the exchange value of the rouble will not affect the material interests of other countries. The lower exchange rates of other currencies in relation to the rouble will be accompanied by a corresponding reduction in foreign trade prices expressed in roubles.





historic voyage ended as the steamship "Enterprise" reached Calcutta on 9th December, 1825. The first steam-powered vessel to make the England-India run, the 500-ton "Enterprise" won a cash prize of Rs. 100,000 offered by Calcutta's trading community for this truly pioneering achievement. Her captain on the hazardous voyage round 'the Cape' was James Henry Johnson, Commander, Royal Navy, and a hero of Trafalgar.

Though the "Enterprise" was the first ocean-going, partly steam-propelled ship to arrive at any Indian port, small steam-powered craft were being built in Calcutta as early as 1823.

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