

Selected International Articles on the Great P.C. Sorcar (1913-1971)

P.C. SORCAR: OUR ROTARY CLUB MEMBER

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India's Ambassador of Magic, Protul Chandra Sorcar, more popularly known as the Great P.C. Sorcar, TW'sGM (The World's Greatest Magician) was then a name already well-known to us all, as he was touring throughout the world with his inimitable Magic Show IND-DRA-JAL. He was earning fresh laurels for our Motherland by breaking theatre attendance and box office records throughout the world and above all by earning valuable foreign exchange for our country. A man of erudition, amiable nature and pleasing personality he was giving talks in the Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs and various travel clubs all over the world. I happened to be present during one such talk on 'Magic in Many Lands' in the Rotary Club of Calcutta in the Grand Hotel and once again at the South West Calcutta Rotary Club in Kidderpore and the idea flashed in my mind that he should himself be a Member of our Rotary Club. A man of resource, integrity, having a name well-known everywhere and having his business all over the world specially as a Top man in his Vocation or profession, he should have no difficulty in joining any Rotary Club. Within a few months we found him as an Active Member of the South West Calcutta Rotary Club under the Classification "Recreation; Magic ... Entertaining". His most familiar picture with feathered turban was seen in the Roaster of the club as P. C. Sorcar ... "the World's Greatest Magician". At that time Rotarian Nitish Chandra Laharry amongst many other veteran Rotarians of Calcutta highly complimented us on having this fabulous SORCAR as a Member of the Rotary, as he will inevitable prove to be an asset of our world-wide organisation. Next, when I was the president of the South West Calcutta Totary Club, we were glad to appoint him as the Chairman of International Contacts Committee, which post he serve most creditably.

Sorcar took great interest in our organisation. He regularly attended our weekly meetings and tried to keep up his hundred per cent attendance records as far as possible by attending the Rotary Club meetings in the different countries on tour. As we go through our Minute Books we find that he has toured Middle East, East Africa, Europe, America and Japan after he joined Rotary and he has attended Rotary Club meetings in each and every country he has visited. He received Rotary Club banners from all parts of the world and later presented them to his home club in Calcutta by dozens to the utter delight and amazement of his fellow members. Our meeting room is now full of the colorful Rotary banners that he has brought from all over the world. He has presented us Rotary Club banners from Chicago, New York, Las Vegas, Paris, London, Hong Kong, Tehran, Nairobi, Mombassa, Kampala Dar-es-Salam etc. and even from the Rotary Club of NEW YORK WORLD's FAIR 1964. He has brought Rotary banners from Japan bydozens including the ones from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sorcar became the Guest Speaker in the Rotary Clubs in all the five continents. In India we heard him speaking amongst others in the Rotary Clubs of Calcutta, South West Calcutta, Burdwan, Barrackpore, Budge Budge, Behala, Garden Reach, Amravati, Bombay and many others. Sorcar failed to give talk and bring Rotary Club banners from only one country, through he stayed there for more than one month with his Magic Show, on State invitation in a Cultural Exchange Programme. It was the Soviet Union which he visited in November and December 1962. On enquiry the answer he gave was quite simple. There is NO Rotary Club in the Communist countries.

Sorcar is noted for his persuasive talks and ready wit. In this connection one can easily refer to the incident at the Rotary Club of Chicago. After attending the World Magic Congress session (July 6-9, 1960) Boston, U.S.A. as the Chief Guest and Judge, Sorcar went to Chicago and attended the Rotary Club of Chicago in the following week. The election fever was already there and the Rotary Club of Chicago was playing host to the entire Republican National Committee who assembled at Chicago in connection with the choosing of their nominee for the United States Presidency. Mr. Sorcar, himself a Rotarian, was watching the deliberations when the meeting requested him to perform his most favourite trick. the request took Rtn. Sorcar unawares. But then he smiled significantly at the array of Republican party leaders and said that it was hardly an ideal place to play his favourite trick because in the first place he had arrived there fresh from Boston and secondly because his most favourite trick

was the 'Vanishing Elephant'. That remark brought the house down. It was greeted with no less a thunderous applause than any of his remarkable feats of magic would fetch. It may be noted that the Elephant in American politics traditionally means the Republican party. And Boston is the home town of Kennedy, the Presidential nominee of the rival Democratic party. The Republicans, of course, enjoyed the joke instead of enjoying the Vanishing Elephant trick. The idea of their being vanished, or even vanquished, was hardly enjoyable anyway, specially when 'a guy from Boston' plays the trick. In the past eight years (he became Rotary member on 13th November 1958) Sorcar has served our Rotary Club in various capacities. Last year he was our Director, International Committee, and member, Rotary Foundation Committee, in the current year he is the Chairman, Membership Committee of the Rotary Club of South West Calcutta.

The Rotarian, magazine of the Rotary International, published from Evanston, USA, in its issue of May 1963, page 47 published an excellent illustrated article about Rtn. Sorcar under the heading "MAGIC MAKER". "There are tricks to all trades, but my trade is all tricks", says Sorcar. Working on the idea that it is possible to fool all of the people all of the time Sorcar successfully presents his magic all over the world. So trickery must not only be done, but must be seen to be done sometimes.

Sorcar's programme of 'Magic' leaves the impression that what seemed illusion might have been fact; that one would like to see it all done again. As a brilliant showman, he knows how to conjure up all the thrilling mystery of the unfathomable East; and as an entertainer, he is making money at it. As a brother Rotarian, we are proud of Padmashri P. C. Sorcar, a most enthusiastic member of our Rotary Club.