

The Scope of Happiness

A Personal Memoir



Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

"... charming, well-written and informative book.

Earl Mountbatten



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PREFACE

For many years my daughters have been urging me to write this book. I have hesitated partly from laziness but mainly because I lacked confidence in my ability to do so. Or perhaps the time had not come? Even after I began I might never have reached the end but for the help given to me by my eldest daughter, Chandralekha Mehta. In spite of her duties as an ambassador's wife, she found time to do all the research needed for the book as well as the typing of the first draft and correcting the final one. Besides this, her infinite patience with all my moods and her clear memory were of the greatest assistance throughout. My daughter Nayantara Sahgal made time from her busy schedule of work as a member of the Indian delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in the fall of 1978 to edit the manuscript. My daughters and I understand one another and they know my feelings for them are too deep to require words of thanks.

My nephew Ajit Hutheesing has taken time off from his own professional responsibilities to advise me on matters I could not have dealt with alone. In India a nephew is like a son, so I do not have to be formal with him either.

The final draft of the book was typed by Shri Balbir Chand of the Indian Embassy in Mexico. I am grateful to him for the speed and efficiency with which he accomplished this task and, above all, for the devotion he put into it.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

The Scope of Happiness

Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's life has been as full as the momentous times she has lived through and in this book she unfolds it in all its richness, human, political and diplomatic. There are intimate portraits of a veritable gallery of giants, of her father Motilal, and her brother Jawaharlal Nehru, of Krishna Menon, Winston Churchill and many others.

Altogether, a very fascinating first person account by one who has so much to tell, and tells it with candour and grace.

"...eminently readable memoirs... there is much in the book which will make pleasant reading. She has a lively and lucid style."

The Times of India

"Commended... makes fascinating reading"

Tribune

"... marked by dignified restraint... a beautifully written book."

The Hindustan Times

"... a charming... evocative and nostalgic account which brings into sharp focus the tempestuous and opportunistic present... Mrs. Pandit's metier is decidedly the snub, the back-handed compliment."

The Statesman

"... a fine book, far superior to its predecessors gives many insights into the (Nehru) family psychology and the makings of three generations of India's leadership. She writes with more sorrow than anger."

Sunday Standard