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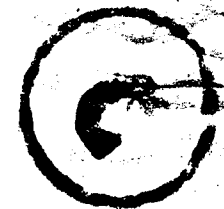
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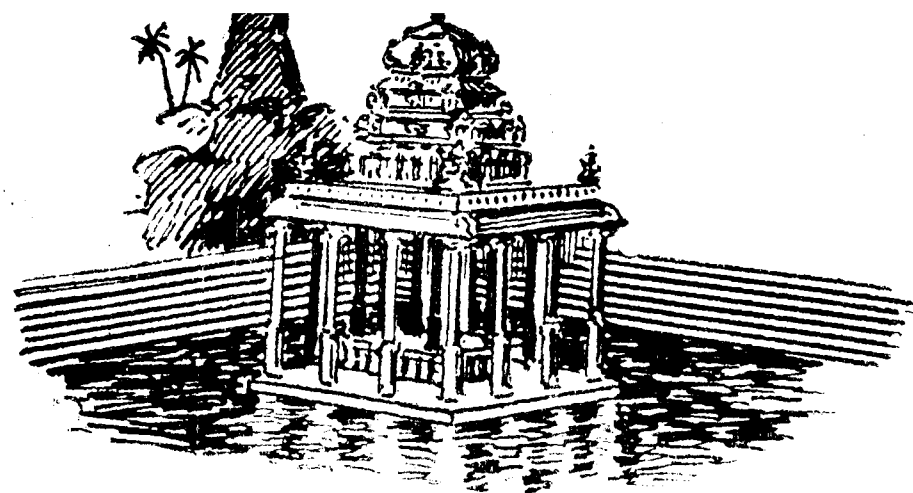
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No. 8

Thiagaraja

By M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L., L.T.

[N.B. The opening portion of the "Life" has been enlarged and, in part, rewritten; and that portion alone is republished for the benefit of our readers.—Editor E. R.]

THIAGARAJA! A great name. Great as, if not greater than, that of Handel or Beethoven. India—especially South India—knows and loves him well. Perhaps too well. In reply to an address presented by the people of Tanjore, during one of his tours, His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore, Visakam Thirunal (1880 to 1885) observed: "I rejoice that I stand to-day on the soil that has produced Appayya Dikshithar and Thiagaraja." Reader! attend a music party in South India and the Sangitha Vidwan will electrify you with Thiagaraja's Krithis;¹ enter a marriage house and the blooming bride will enchant you with Thiagaraja's Kirthanas;² join a Bhajana Goshti; and the devoted Bhaktha will treat you with Thiagaraja's Divyanamavalis; get into a transit carriage and you will hear

¹ For explanation of *Krithis* and other terms—see my *Modes of Music*.

² For difference between *Krithis* and *Kirthanas*—see my *Modes of Music*.

your fellow-passengers hum the same Thiagaraja's songs on the highway ; or go even to a bazar street and you will find the self-same Thiagaraja's snatches greeting you again, though now from a beggar. Thus, from the erudite expert down to the veriest tyro and from the ruling prince down to the lowliest beggar, Thiagaraja has been invariably an entertaining philosopher, friend and guide.

Even the Europeans and other foreigners would have long ago got to know him, but for the regrettably misleading negligence of some erratic missionaries, the chief of whom was Abbe Dubois. The ambitious author of *The Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* was—he it noted—a contemporary of Thiagaraja; for, he lived from 1765 to 1848 and (what is more?) resided in India from 1792 to 1823. Again, the place of his residence was, neither Peshawar in North West India nor Shillong in North East India but very near Thiagaraja—Seringapatam. Hence, he who proposed to convey to Europe, and elsewhere, a historic perspective of Hindu Music, amidst other things, ought to have the assurance of his information doubly sure by original research and direct observation, but not by mere studies in his closet, however indefatigable they might be.

Let us not here be misunderstood that we proceed to dilute the unstinted praise lavished on him by Prof. Max Muller or the unrestricted respect paid to him by the Duke of Wellington. That is not our present purpose ; nor is it our purpose to criticise his book as a whole. But so far as his music portion is concerned, we emphatically assert that it is a complete travesty of facts, even which we would, full fain, pass over if it did not lead the way for foreigners to systematically misunderstand Hindu Music.

While, as we shall show in these pages, Thiagaraja left a vast legacy to his successors and rendered national service by considerably altering or extending the scope and possibilities of Hindu Music and preventing it from being drowned in the boisterous ocean of musical technique ; the idol of the Duke of Wellington and Prof. Max Muller, shut up by the waters of the Cauvery, chose to rather listen to the insipid chirping of the poor grass-hoppers of the island than cross the river and avail himself

of the festive carol of Thiruvaiyar's nightingale ; delighted himself in the moonshine of fiction and wrote in the plenitude of his ignorance : " Hindu Music to-day (that is in the time of Thiagaraja) is the same as it has always been and has undergone no alteration. The charming art is in its infancy. The Hindus are no further advanced in it now than they were two or three thousand years ago." While, as a matter of fact, Indian Music did move from the stage of its "infancy" and develop itself through such stages as, for instance, Bharatha's *Natya-sasthra* of the 6th century, Sharangadev's *Sangitha-ratnakara* of the 13th century, Lochanakavi's *Raga-tharangani* of the 14th century, Pundarika Vittala's *Sadraga-chandrodaya* of the 16th century, Venkatamakhi's *Chathurdanaprakasika* of the 17th century, Muhammad Rezza's *Nagmut-e-Asaphi* of the 19th century, and Bhatkhande's *Lakshya Sangitham* of the 20th century ; and while on its practical side, it had been raised to the highest pinnacle of glory by Tansen in North India and Thiagaraja in South India ; the statement of the French Missionary, quoted above, must be deemed to be as bold and unabashed as if we were to say that England, in spite of her Labour Success (nay, Labour Cabinet) and Protestantism, is to-day as uncivilised as she had been when her body was enslaved by the barons and her soul by the clergymen.

Our chief aim in writing this book is to show how the dharmic life of Thiagaraja served to point a moral or adorn a tale ; to sketch the various phases of his musical progress and point out how they were connected with the development of his religion and ethical notion ; to inquire into the state of music prior to his time and find out whether and, if so, how far he improved it ; to show how he consolidated the whole of Madras in the 19th century, much in the same manner as Dr. Rabindranath Tagore does the whole of India (may we say of the World?) in the 20th century ; and also to enable the followers of Abbe Dubois to realise that Thiagaraja so successfully developed the melodic system of Indian Music as to prove to the world at large that, amidst other things, Indian Music is like the night—pure, deep and tender : while European Music is, like the day, a

flowing concourse of vast harmony, composed of concord and discord and many disconnected fragments; that the contrariety of their spirits cannot be helped; for, at the root, Nature itself is divided into day and night; that to complain there is no harmony in Indian Music is tantamount to complaining that there is no Sun in the night; that each system has a beauty of its own, just as day and night have each its own; that both the systems must be kept and studied apart, without any idea of their fusion; for, experts have recognised that, from the point of language and climate, Indian Music is destined to be metrical rather than rhythmical, vocal rather than instrumental, individual rather than concerted, and (what is important?) melodic rather than harmonic; and that therefore to glorify the one and vilify the other must be attributed to ignorance or arrogance.

Since the genius of India, till recently, revolted against History and left it, as it thought, to low ambition and the pride of kings; we are constrained to seek, for our *Life of Thiagaraja*, the help of traditions and anecdotes which we hasten to faithfully record here, just as they were faithfully handed on to us, by disciples of Thiagaraja in the direct line, as well as by those who had the rare privilege of actually seeing the gifted musician of Thiruvaiyar, lest otherwise those traditions and anecdotes should, by a further passage of time, lose the ring of genuineness they now possess. We need hardly remind our reader that even "traditions and anecdotes" have a value of their own. They carry a greater amount of truth in solution than the volume which purports to be all true. Indeed from out of them, we get the expression of the life of the time (which they relate), of the manners, of the movement, the dress, the pleasures, the laughter and the ridicules of society. Can the heaviest historian do more?

The first source of our information about Thiagaraja was a Tamil Pundit whom we casually met at Poonamalle in 1895, when we paid there a holiday visit and was the guest of our good maternal uncle, Mr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyar, District Munsif of Poonamalle. The Tamil Pundit was a native of Kovoor, near Poonamalle, for three or four generations. He related to us, amidst other things, all about the

interview between Thiagaraja and Sundaresa Mudaliar, just as he had got it from those actually present at that interview.

Early in 1896, we had to remain, for a time, at Thiruvaiyar where our father, Mr. M. Subbier, was District Munsif; and we availed ourselves of that opportunity to sit at the feet of Patnam Subramanier and learn from him very many of Thiagaraja's and his own Krithis, not excluding his impressions of Thiagaraja's life. Maha Vythinathier had then been dead; and we were able to meet only his brother, Ramaswamier, the author of the well-known *Peria Purana Kirthanas*, who also contributed to the stock of our knowledge about Thiagaraja.

In 1903-4, we were at Trivandrum, prosecuting our Law studies. There we got the acquaintance, which soon ripened into friendship, of Mr. T. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar, an Ex-Judge of the Travancore High Court. He was then 80; in the enjoyment of sound health. He and his father, Mr. Sulochana Mudaliar (the builder of the Tinnevely Bridge) had been to Thiruvaiyar and seen Thiagaraja with their own eyes. It was in 1843, five years—as we were told—after the grand historic meeting of Thiagaraja and Govinda Marar, Nalla Thambi Mudaliar, who accompanied Marar, was Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar's paternal uncle. We could not see the uncle; but the nephew Mudaliar told us, in addition to his own impression of the Musician, all he had heard from his uncle, regarding the famous meeting. Some particular portions of the conversation Mr. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar and ourselves had, are very important and will be found recorded elsewhere.

Another source was the late Narasimha Bhagavathar who, while at Madras, gave us a mine of information about Thiagaraja, whose works he was then, that is in 1908, editing for the first time in a systematic form.

Still another source was Walajapet to which place we had been, in 1910, to learn Thiagaraja's Krithis as well as some details of his life. We got all that was available there.

We had also the advantage of going through two interesting sketches of Thiagaraja—one by Mr. C. Thirumalayya Naidu and the other by Mr. T. Lakshmana Pillay; as well as through

Sangitha Sampradaya Pradarsani (which contains a short memoir of Thiagaraja) of Mr. B. Subbarama Dikshithar; *Travancore State Manual* Vol. III of 1906 (which contains a cursory account of Thiagaraja) of Mr. V. Nagamayya; *Dakshinathya Sangitham* (which contains a fragmentary account of Thiagaraja) of Mr. C. R. Srinivasa Aiyangar; *Thiagaraja Hridayam* (which contains a discursive account of Thiagaraja) of Mr. K. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar; and also *Thiagaraja Charithram* (which looks like a historical novel) of Mr. Panju Bhagavathar of Thiruvaihanam.

Other sources, too numerous to mention, stood us also in great stead.

The large number of these sources has the same merit and demerit of a large number of witnesses in a court of law. They at once enlighten and confound the truth-seeker. We shall however enter the dim region of Thiagaraja's Life, try to fix beacon-lights from place to place and enable any future adventurer to make deeper explorations. But which beaconlight will guide us to that solitary region but the emancipated soul of our beloved daughter, Lakshmi Bai who was born at Bangalore on November 30, 1911 and died at Dharmapuri on September 10, 1919; and who, just three months prior to the shuffling of her mortal coil, electrified an enlightened audience of Madras with Thiagaraja's *Thelisi Rama* and elicited therefrom a well-merited applause for the first (alas! the last) time of her life? Yes our daughter, like the Polar Star, will guide our lonely way: and it is to her sacred memory that we fondly dedicate our *Life of Thiagaraja*.



SRI Thiagaraja's life like, Dr. Tagore's, does not abound with adventures. The fame of both the personages was acquired, alike, in solitude. Any detailed account of their actions would be dry and scarcely distinguish them from the rest of mankind. But the world regards them with love and veneration, because when they came out of their cells, one gave it his unrivalled *Gitanjali*, and the other his unparalleled Krithis.

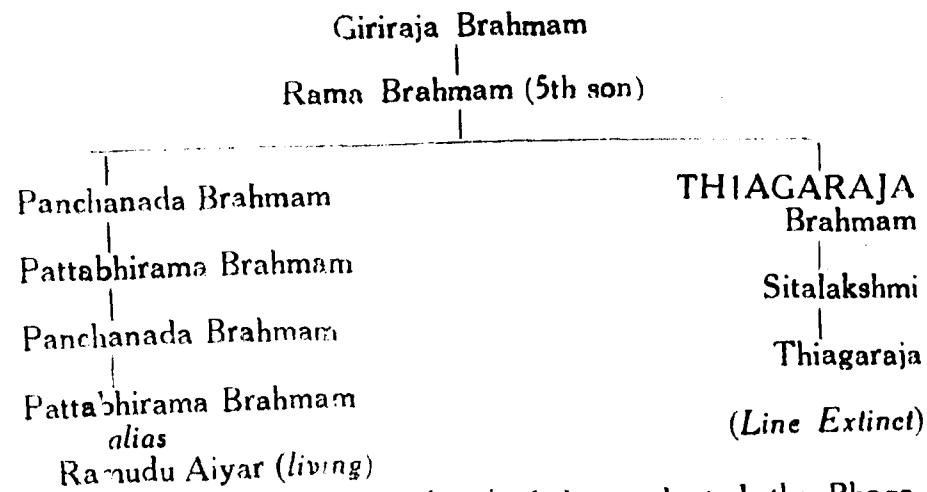
Krithis, in South India, are nowadays the mainstay of a musical performance. You may dispense with Varnas and their paraphernalia; you may dispense with Padas, Javalis, Thillanas, Themmangus, Thiruppuhals, and other kinds of songs which, by sufferance only, dare to peep in at the fag-end of the performance; you may dispense even with Alapana, Pallavi, and Swaras. But dispense with Krithis you cannot; inasmuch as they form the keystone of the concert, while all other species of singing (except perhas *Pallavi*) are so many minor stones playing only a subordinate part. On a further consideration, it will appear that even 'Pallavi' is essentially a part of Krithi-singing, for it is nothing but an elaboration of the Pallavi-portion of a Krithi. Hence it is right and natural for us to tarry a little and strive to get a glimpse of the crystal source of Krithis, our Thiagaraja; for more than a glimpse we cannot get.

Giriraja Brahman,¹ a learned Muruginadu Thrailingya Telugu Brahmin of Bharadwaja Gothra, was our musician's grand father. He was a native of Thiruvalur, now a Junction of South Indian, and Tanjore District Board, Railways, 15 miles to the west of Negapatam. He was well-versed in Sanskrit, and Telugu and a good musician to boot. His vedantic songs were appreciated even by the then Raja of Tanjore, Sahaji, who patronised him well. He had five sons, the last of whom was Rama Brahman.

This Rama Brahman had an innocent wife, Shantha by name, who bore him two sons—Panchanada Brahman and Thiagaraja Brahman, our hero.² The following tree illustrates the pedigree of Thiagaraja's family:—

¹ Giriraja Brahman was duly immortalised by Thiagaraja in his Bangala Krithi, *Girirajasutha*, though in an indirect way. Some are of opinion that Giriraja was our hero's maternal grandfather. But if, as I am told, "Brahman" was a family title; the inference would become strong that he was Thiagaraja's paternal, rather than maternal, grandfather.

² In a Bilahori Krithi, *Thoraguna*, mention is made of Thiagaraja as being the son of Rama Brahman.



Rama Brahnam, our hero's father, adopted the Bhagavathar's profession and eked out thereby a fair livelihood.

He regarded himself as the legate of the skies, his theme divine, his office sacred, and his credentials clear; and he delighted to think that he had the rare privilege of being a negotiator between God and Man. He might well be proud of his (Bhagavathar's) profession. For, if the whole of humanity be regarded as a big army marching towards the goal of salvation; Bhagavathars may be said to lead the van, while Judges of Law Courts may be said to bring up the rear. While the functions of both are, alike, to lead man to the right tract; Bhagavathars can perform them with greater success than Judges. Murderers may be hanged; but murder will never cease. If however positive maxims of advice are timely advanced by the preachers, O! how many crimes will disappear from the world! Indeed the Bhagavathar's mission is noble, and their function is sacred; they establish the strong, restore the weak, reclaim the wanderer and bind the broken heart.

By an irony of fate, the first son of this model man (Rama Brahnam) was from his tender years mature in dulness and stood throughout confirmed in full stupidity. He claimed fraternity with Shadwell and would never deviate into sense; nor would he allow his genuine night to be mixed with any alloy of light. But his second son, Thiagaraja¹ was:—

¹ Bhagavathar, means a Religious Preacher.

² Devotees delight to regard Thiagaraja as Valmiki incarnate

"An awful, reverend and religious man;
His eyes diffused a venerable grace,
And charity itself was in his face.
He drew his audience upwards to the sky
And oft with holy songs he charmed their ears
A music more melodious than the spheres."

The cobra of poverty, which Rama Brahnam nurtured, while it retained the purifying gem on its own head, gave out even on the slightest irritation the poison of envy, jealousy and other kindred passions. The younger son took the gem, while the elder the poison.

Thiagaraja, like his contemporary Muthuswami Dikshithar, was born at Thiruvallur, a sacred place noted, from time immemorial, for a Siva temple. Tradition has it that once Indra had been to Vishnu and asked him for help against the Rakshasas. The God gave him an image of a God, called Thiagaraja, which acted as a talisman and secured victory to him with a warning that he should not, under any circumstances, part with it. In a subsequent fight with another batch of Rakshasas, he sought the help of the King of Thiruvallur, Muchukunda by name, and forgetfully handed over to him the image by way of consideration. Muchukunda defeated the Rakshasas, built a temple at Thiruvallur and established the image of Thiagaraja there. But Indra fell down and was born a Pariah as a matter of punishment. Even to-day a Pariah is permitted at Thiruvallur to precede, as a matter of right, the procession on all festival days, holding a white umbrella, one of the symbols of Indra, from whom he claims to be descended.

The date of Thiagaraja's birth is not so accurately handed on to us as that of his death. Mr. Panju Bhagavathar wrote, in his *Thiagaraja Charithram*,¹ what he had learnt from his guru, Ramiengar, one of the direct pupils of Thiagaraja's; "Thiagaraja died in 4948th year of Kali Yuga, Parabhava, Pushya Bahula Panchami." Messrs. Narasimha Bhagavathar,² Rama-

¹ Vide its Edition of 1917—page 52.

² Vide the Introduction to his Edition (1908) of *Thiagaraja's Works* p. 16.

nanda Yogi,¹ Adi and Co.,² K. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar,³ P. V. Krishnaswamier, B.A., B.L.,⁴ and Nagaraja Bhagavathar⁵ have each referred to the same year as the date of Thiagaraja's death. Further, Thiagaraja's *Aradhana* (that is Anniversary of his death), that has been regularly taking place year after year, used to be calculated from the self-same date. Hence we may take it for certain that Thiagaraja died in 4948th Year of Kali Yuga, Parabhava, Pushya Bahula Panchami, according to lunar reckoning; or Parabhava Panchami just prior to Thai Amavasya, 24th of Dhanus or Margali, according to solar reckoning; both of which, alike, correspond to Wednesday, January 6th, 1847.

But, in his *Thiagaraja Hridayam*,⁶ Mr. K. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar wrote: "Thiagaraja died in 1846." His mistake is evidently due to the fact that the Indian Year, Parabhava, corresponded to two English years 1846 and 1847; and that he chose 1846 as the most probable year, without however taking trouble to refer even to an ordinary panchangam. At any rate, he is near the mark. But far away from it, ran Mr. V. Nagamayya, when he stated, in a responsible Government publication,⁷ that "Thiagaraja died in 1842!" A reference to Mr. Ramudu Aiyar (the only surviving member of Thiagaraja's family) or the well-known way of calculating our musician's "*Aradhana-Day*" would have set right the Dewan Peishcar's view. Why, the very person—Mr. T. Lakshmana Pillay—from whom Mr. Nagamayya admittedly⁸ got all his information on music for his *State Manual*, correctly wrote:⁹ "Thiagaraja died a very old man in 1847."

¹ " " " (1910) " " p. 11.

² " " their " (1916) " " p. 12.

³ Vide the Introduction to his Re-Edition (1921) of *Ramanand Yogi's Thiagaraja's Works*—page 30.

⁴ Vide his *Essay on Thiagaraja*, published in the Fourth Quarterly Report (1913)—page 32 of Tanjore Sangitha Vidya Mahajana Sangam.

⁵ Vide his *Essay on Thiagaraja* in the same Report—page 53.

⁶ Vide its Edition of 1922, Vol. I, page 8.

⁷ Vide *Travancore State Manual*—Vol. III (1906)—page 254.

⁸ Vide the same *Manual*—page 252. Footnote.

⁹ In his *Essays*—page 140.

Surely, the State Officer was too proud to be imitative, though right; and preferred to be original, though wrong. Further, his statement (viz., Thiagaraja died in 1842) becomes all the more incredible, in view of the fact (which we shall presently learn) that his neighbour Mr. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar had an interview with Thiagaraja, next year, that is, in 1843. The right date of Thiagaraja's death is, as mentioned above, 6th of January 1847.

Can we ascertain the date of his birth from the age at which he died? But, while Rev. H. A. Popley¹ gave Thiagaraja only 50 years of life, Mr. C. Thirumalayya Naidu² gave him 75; Mr. B. Subbarama Dikshithar,³ 77; Mr. T. Lakshmana Pillay,⁴ 80; Messrs. V. Nagamayya⁵ and K. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar,⁶ 82; Messrs. Narasimma Bhagavathar,⁷ Ramananda Yogi,⁸ and Adi and Co.,⁹ 88; and Mr. C. R. Srinivasa Aiyangar,¹⁰ 89. How are we to get out of this difficulty?

Weighing, however, the balance of evidence, the testimony of Mr. Narasimha Bhagavathar and his followers is entitled to our credit; as it at once gets itself corroborated by that of Mr. Panju Bhagavathar who be it remembered, was a pupil of a direct pupil of Thiagaraja's and who alone, of all our musician's biographers, ventured under a right inspiration to record: "Thiagaraja was born in 4859th year of Kali Yuga, Bahudanya."

Now, Bahudanya to Bahudanya gives us 60 years; and Bahudanya to Prabhava gives us 28 years. In all, therefore,

¹ In his *Music of India* (1921). Mr. H. A. P. gives, as Thiagaraja's date 1800 to 1850.

² Vide his *Tyagayyar*—page 8.

³ Vide his *Sangitha Sampradaya Pradarsani* (Life of Musicians) page 24.

⁴ Vide his *Essays*—page 153.

⁵ Vide his *State Manual* Vol. III, page 254.

⁶ In his *Thiagaraja Hridayam*, Mr. K. V. S. gives, as Thiagaraja's date, 1764 to 1846.

⁷ Vide his Introduction to *Thiagaraja's Krithis*—page-15.

⁸ Vide " " " " —page-10.

⁹ Vide " " " " —page-11.

¹⁰ In his *Dakshinaihya Sangitham* Mr. C. R. S. writes that Thiagaraja was 15 when his mother died in 1773.

Thiagaraja lived, according to Mr. Panju Bhagavathar, for $(60+28=)$ 88 years. To the same 88 years the result of our own investigation points. We said that there were some important portions of our conversation with Mr. T. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar which we should like to have recorded here. Here is one of them :—

Ourselves :—In what year did you meet Thiagaraja ?

Mudaliar :—1843.

Ourselves :—How old was the Musician then ?

Mudaliar :—He was then as old as I now am, perhaps a little older. He must be 84; for, I remember my uncle having told me that he had heard Thiagaraja giving his own age to be 79 in 1838¹.

If Thiagaraja was, according to Mr. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar 84 in 1843; or according to himself, 79 in 1838; the date of his birth must, by mere arithmetical Calculation, be 1759.² We may now safely state that our great musician-saint lived in this world, for 88 years, from 1759 to 1847.

While 4 or 5 years old, Thiagaraja was placed under the ferule of a pial School Master—the same ferule as his elder brother had enough suffered from. Every morning therefore he would go to the school as a murderer to the place of execution; and every evening he would run back with the unbounded hilarity of an escaped convict. A miserable thatched building in a dirty lane; a heart-rending scene of half-famished infants groaning under the lashes of their dwarfish teacher; the reddening of his eyes if some of his pet boys failed to furnish him daily with snuff and on festive occasions with cakes; the hasty and the breakneck speed of teaching lessons, if the teacher had to run to a neighbouring village to receive his *dakshina* at a funeral

¹ That Thiagaraja and Govinda Marar met in 1838 and that Mr. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar saw Thiagaraja with his own eyes at Thiruvaiyar in 1843—are both confirmed by Mr. T. Lashmana Pillay whose source of information seems to be the same as mine. As to how Thiagaraja gave his own age to be 79 in 1838, see below.

² Mr. K. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar's date of Thiagaraja's birth (viz. 1764) is obviously wrong.

ceremony; the slipshod and half-sleeping way of hearing the boys repeat their old lessons, whenever there was no call from outside; the curious custom of caning the boys even when they behaved well, on the still more curious ground that they must often be put in mind of what they would receive, if they might err; the wretched cudgan leaves to read; the chilling sand to write; and the iron thorn to prick from below, if a delinquent boy (probably a snuff or cake defaulter) happened to slip down, while hanging with his hands tied to a beam above; these were the early surroundings which the infant Thiagaraja had to face.

The fear of his first son's going astray necessitated Rama Brahman to shift to Thiruvaiyar, bag and baggage, and give at least his second son the benefit of a college education available there. So, within a year of Thiagaraja's educational career, the father migrated along with his family from Thiruvallur to Thiruvaiyar—a place noted for a Sanskrit college and a salubrious climate and situated on the left bank of the cauvery, about 6 miles to the north of Tanjore.

Thiruvaiyar, rendered more holy by its association with Thiagaraja's name, had been, all along, itself a holy place of pilgrimage. It is regarded as the Punjab of South India. Why, its Sanskrit name is Panchanada, for five rivers, viz, the Coleroon the Cauvery, the Kodamuruti the Vettar and the Vennar—all run in nearly parallel courses within a distance of six miles from it. The sanctity of the town is so great that there is a saying :

காசிக்கு ஷீசம் அதிகம் திருவையாறு.

(Thiruvaiyar is holier than Benares by one-sixteenth)

Once a Brahmin, who was going to Benares to throw his father's bones into the Ganjes, halted a night at Thiruvaiyar on the way. When he awoke in the morning, he found that the bones had assumed the shape of a *Linga*, Siva's emblem. He at once deposited them in the Cauvery and stopped his journey to Benares. Many aged Brahmins thence forward resorted to Thiruvaiyar in the hope of dying there. That it is blessed to die there is explained by a legend of a boy who was

killed by Yama, the God of Death, while worshipping the God of five rivers, the latter God, Panchanadisa, thereupon killed Yama but restored him to life on condition that he should not molest those who died at Thiruvaiyar or within sight of the smoke of the incense burnt at the temple there. In a great pit, in front of the southern gate of the temple, incense is continually burnt to the God Alkondar and a statue of the deity represents him as a colossal figure crushing Yama under his feet.

Again, the temple of Thiruvaiyar is the chief of seven neighbouring shrines, called Saphasthanam, all within three miles' radius of Thiruvaiyar: the legend says that the bull Nandi was married under the auspices of the God at Thirumalavedi and taken in procession round these seven places ending with Thiruvaiyar. The Blue Books describe the place as a seat of Sanskrit Learning and also as the sanatorium of the Rajas of Tanjore. The two modern celebrities Maha Vythinathier and Patnam Subramanier lived there quite recently.

To this holy place it was that our future musician was brought even during his infancy; and in this new place of settlement, Rama Brahman experienced no difficulty in establishing his name as a first-rate Bhagavathar. Yet, he felt himself unhappy; for, the same pial-school as he wanted to avoid in Thiruvalur stared him in the face even at Thiruvaiyar. Lo! the same kind of teacher was there with—

“The indented stick, that lost day by day,

Notch after notch, till all were smoothed away.”

Teaching was only one of his many-sided activities; for, he was at once a money-lender, astrologer, purohith, and cardsplayer. Yet by himself or proxy, he successfully kept all his boys throughout the day from mischief at home; and that was all the parents wanted.

The innate shrewdness of Rama Brahman, with a painful memory of a former failure, now whipped him to take up himself the work of ‘First Aid’ in education to his dear Thiagaraja. He therefore taught him the 3 R's and soon initiated him into the high principles of morality more by his own example than by precept. For, he learnt by bitter experience, consequent upon

the ruin of his first, school-exposed boy, that the most telling way of teaching moral principles was to make them felt betimes in the midst of a well-regulated family where the child, seeing them put into actual practice every day, would form moral habits, so that when he reached years of responsibility, those habits would be already ingrained in him to such an extent as to incapacitate him to fall a prey to any kind of temptation whatsoever; and his conscience would have no need to argue but would cry aloud against the temptation with the revolt of invincible disgust.

After five years of home-education, the father proceeded to get his boy admitted into the Sanskrit College of Thiruvaiyar. But the mother, Shantha, insisted that her dear Thiagu (for, so Shantha called Thiagaraja) should be brought up in the family profession of Bhagavathar. Thus with regard to the future of Thiagaraja, his parents happened to take different views; and their further conversation showed that the mother alone, more than the father, had the instinct to foresee the son's future greatness,

Rama Brahman :—Why should I not break the tradition and train our boy for a teachership in the college?

Shantha :—A teachership in the college! No, my dear Thiagu should be, like Purandara Das of old, a teacher of our country.

Rama Brahman :—But Purandara Das was a rich man and a gem-merchant too. He could afford to travel from Pandrapur to Rameswaram and from Rameswaram to Udipi and leave, behind, the stamp of his Githas and Kirthanas which the people received along with the money he presented.

Shantha :—I do not know all that. A few months back, I happened to teach Thiagu a few Kirthanas, some from Purandara Das and some from Rama Das, which I had learnt from my father. To my surprise, I found he had such a nice voice as to make me think that he might, if God willed, eclipse both the Dases.

Rama Brahman :—This is too early an estimate. Ever since my bubble-castle about Jyappesan (for, so Panchanada

was called by his parents) was blown-up, I learnt a bitter lesson that boys were, at best, but pretty buds unblown, the scent and hues whereof could only be guessed but not known.

Shantha :—True ; but the blowing-up of your bubble-castle was due to your mistake, to which I confess I was an abettor, of applying yourself to Jyappesan's own disposition which, when unfurled, showed—like the sail of the boat whereby we went to Rameswaram—all its rents and patches to us. Generally speaking, parents in their first inexperience commit the same mistake with regard to their first-born son. A younger son, like a second wife, is commonly fortunate. Pray, let us avoid our first mistake and bring up our Thiagu, according to our own disposition.

Rama Brahman :—What objection have you to get our boy admitted into the College ?

Shantha :—What nourishment is there to feed Thiagu's growing mind but verbs conjugated and nouns declined ?

Rama Brahman :—O ! that's inevitable. Myself passed through that stage. But in this College there is a happy diversion, namely, the teaching of Puranas and Ithihasas in the Vernacular, side by side with Sanskrit teaching.

Shantha :—Then, let our boy go. But in the heart of my hearts I would see him rather a pleasing musician than a boring teacher. Something in my mind tells me that he will ere long be what I wish him to be.

The College, which Thiagara now joined, was—we are told—founded by Govinda Dikshithar, Prime-Minister of Achyuthappa Naik, at the end of the 16th century. With a high ambition of having all the ancient Universities rolled into this College, the Prime-Minister introduced, into his Institution, the Medicine of Taxila, the Logic of Nalanda, the Astronomy of Ujjain, the Tanthra of Vikramasila, the Dramatic Literature of Kanouj, and the Vedantic Literature of Benares. He even wanted to make due provisions for vocational instruction and fine arts ; but his life was cut away. In the hands of his successors, the college began to mark time ; and, when the Nawab of Arcot interfered with the affairs of Tanjore, it came

to be uncared-for and degenerated into a factory of literary drudges. At the time, however, when our Thiagaraja joined the College, the tone of the Institution was a little improved and the subject of instruction comprised the two Epics and Bhagavatham in Vernacular and Vyakaranam, Logic and Vedas in Sanskrit.

Within four years of his College career, the young boy managed to master, amidst other matters, the contents of the *Ramayana*, for which he somehow formed a special attachment. If a truant class-mate tempted him to take French leave for a day and go in for a dog-chase, he would reply ; “ I am already engaged in accompanying my Rama in his chase after the golden deer ”. If a desperate bully advised him to create a scene of lock-out in the College, he would retort : “ Has there been a more cross and peevish teacher than Viswamithra ? And what a docile and obedient student he had in my dear Rama ? ” And if his brother's courtesan went whether of her own accord or under inducement, to mislead the budding musician, he would forthwith tell her : “ Do you remember what became of Surpanaka, when she teased Rama in season and out of season ? ”

Thus when his friends and fellow students were, in addition to various forms of mischief, stuffing their memory with the Aorist forms of third conjugation roots and other substitutes for true knowledge, Thiagaraja was familiarising himself with every detail of the long story of Sri Rama and laying, unknowingly though, a storing foundation for the subject-matter of his remarkable krithis, yet to be composed.

His initiation into music, for which he is now more remembered, came about—as it were by chance—as seems to be the case with most great men. England, for instance, could not boast of a heaven-born General and Founder of the British Empire in India, if Richard Clive had not shipped off his son, Robert, to make a fortune, or to die of fever, at Madras. Scotland could not boast of a prolific Novelist, if Lord Byron had not driven Sir Walter Scott from the field of poetry. Germany could not boast of the author of *Messiah*, if the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels had not persuaded the elder Handel to transfer his son, Handel,

from Law to Music. India could not boast of the author of *Sakunthala* if the disappointed suitors had not revengefully conspired to dupe the learned but haughty Princess Vidyakrosa into marrying a veritable dunce of Kalidasa. Similarly we could not boast of the author of *Krithis*, if Sonti Venkatramanayya had not allured Thiagaraja from Literature to Music.

Opposite to Rama Brahman's house, there happened to live a Vynika, named Venkatraman Das *alias* Sonti Venkatramanayya son of Sonti Venkatasubbayya, under whom many a pupil was learning music. To listen to this Palace-Vidwan's songs, our little boy would steal an hour or two from the rigid time-table imposed on him both at home and in the College. Such, however, was the love he acquired for the Art and such was the warmth he felt for its pleasures that he contracted a positive hatred for the Logic of Tharka¹ and the dreary subtleties of Vyakarana, wherewith his college atmosphere was surcharged.

In this respect, he resembled Voltaire of France. Both of them neglected severe studies and loved pleasurable arts. The punishments of the Academy and the exhortations of their elders were, alike, insufficient to influence them. Anything that wore the face of industry they carefully avoided; and wherever pleasure presented, they were foremost in the pursuit. In conducting these two boys of so refractory a disposition, any one else would have redoubled his punishments or discontinued his care. But Poree in the case of Voltaire and Rama Brahman in the case of Thiagaraja perceived that all their attempts to thwart nature were of no avail; and they resolved to indulge the genius of their respective boys in their own favourite pursuits, literature and music, respectively.

Soon did Thyagaraya leave his *Alma Mater* with the character of an old unaccountable fellow that had a great deal of learning. Quite instinctively did he decide to dedicate his whole life to Music, not as a means but as an end in itself, not as a recreation but as a serious life-work. For, as Ruskin rightly

¹ Note Thiagaraja's Query: *Vada Tharkamu Ela* in his Kalyani Krithi "Bhajana Sayave Manasa."

observed, "Art, properly so-called, is no recreation; it cannot be learnt at spare moments, nor pursued when we have nothing better to do; it is no handiwork for the drawing-room, no relief of the ennui of boudoirs; it must be understood and undertaken seriously or not at all"

Rama Brahman heartily congratulated his wife on the fulfilment of her prophesy and properly and most willingly introduced his self-willed boy to the Palace-Vidwan, Sonti Venkatramanayya. The guru soon found that his new pupil had already with him a good stock of Kirthanas of both the Dases and proceeded to work upon those materials. In other words, he polished those Kirthanas and taught them again to the boy on up-to-date lines. Thiagaraja learnt thus to sing in a sweet voice many a devotional song. When Patnam Subramanier queried in his own krithi, *Dhanyudevvado*: "Who indeed is the blessed person that worships you, O! Dasarathi! with the sweetest music based upon pure and unalloyed swaras and accompanied by superior madala, thala, thambura, vina and murali?" he had evidently Thiagaraja in his mind. It seems that our musician sat at the feet of one more guru who taught him the science of Music, as contained in a treatise called *Swararnavam*. Tradition says that this guru was Narada himself who, in guise of a sanyasi, met Thiyagaraja, heard him sing and was so pleased that he taught him Tharakamanthra, presented him with 'Swararnavam' and initiated him into the mysteries thereof. The matchless Krithi, *Swararagasudharasa*, forms a fitting acknowledgment of Thiyagaraja's indebtedness to 'Swararnavam' and his *Varanarada* in Vijayasri, a happy expression of his gratitude to Narada.

'Swararnavam' seems to have been a very ancient treatise on Indian Music; for Thiyagaraja refers to its contents as having been taught to Parvathi by Parameswara. It is a pity that the treatise has been lost to us. Could it have been thrown into the flood of the Cauvery along with Rama's Idol, of which we shall hear later on? If so, Panchanada Brahman should have been worse than Newton's dog; for, the latter, unlike the former, could not realise the consequences of its mischief. All that we, therefore, can know of the book, now, is that—even as its name indicates—

it deals with Swaras, their nature, their forms, their varieties and their prastharas. Thiagaraja assures us he has mastered the book and asks us to tread in his wake, with unremitting faith in the efficacy of Swara-learning.

We are glad to see that Thiagaraja anticipated the two burning questions, viz :—

(1.) Is Swara-Learning after all necessary ?

(2.) Can it not be altogether avoided ?

—questions that have of late been causing much anxiety in South India, in as much as they have emanated from high quarters and attempted to shake the very foundation of Indian Music. We are further glad to note that our musician answered the first question in the affirmative and the second question in the negative.

The truth is that most Manager in schools and most parents in households are obsessed by the idea that every Music-piece must, at every stage, be capable of, and be ready for, show and display to casual visitors and friends. Surely Swaras and their paraphernalia are not adapted for such popular show but are intended to illustrate the principles enunciated in Text-Books on music. The idea of caring for the visitors' vapoury satisfaction must not be allowed to prevail against the substantial and necessarily slow development, especially, at the initial stage, of Musical knowledge in the pupils. "The early steps of any art," observed Florence Wickins, "are and must be slow at first; and these beginnings should on no account be hurried or avoided. For once the elementary lessons are thoroughly and clearly understood and grasped by the pupil, the rest of the teacher's work is easy." It is those that are impatient of the necessarily slow progress of the early steps of the Art, that would generally sympathise with the objectors of Swara-Learning.

Just as a man with a mere bone-frame is disagreeable, but a man with flesh and blood is agreeable, to look at ; so, the songs which form the flesh and blood of music are agreeable to hear but not the swaras as forming the mere bone-frame, thereof. The on-looker may be satisfied with the sight of the flesh and blood; but the possessor thereof must take care of his bone-frame as well:

for the stronger the bone-frame, the healthier the flesh and blood. How can you have a strong bone-frame without attending to its growth and development ? And how can you attend to its growth and development without knowing the component parts thereof and the laws of their growth. In Indian Music, the component parts of the bone-frame are Saralis, Alankaras, Githas, Varnas and other 'idioms' of swaras. A learner, therefore, cannot with impunity dispense with them.

This Thiagaraja knew ; and hence he emphasised the importance of Swara-Learning.

Nay, he himself plodded through all preliminary processes. After, in a short time, mastering Saralis, Alankaras, Githas, Varnas, Ragamalikas and Kirthanas; he learnt, with the help of a Vina, that:—

(1) Swaras emanated out of Sruthis, the former being *Notes* and the latter being *Intervals*

(2) Though Swaras and Sruthis formed, alike, a matter of sound ; yet there was a difference between them both. Just as Tanka (sword) differed from Kirita (crown), though both of them were made of the same gold; so, Sruthis differed from Swaras, the former being measuring things, and the latter, things measured. Indeed, Sruthis were to Swaras what inches were to feet, or minutes to hours.

(3) Sruthis and Swaras were so intertwined that Narada observed: "Sruthis come out of Swaras as the butter comes out of the curd."

(4) Though, as a matter of fact, Sruthis were *Anantha* or endless; there had been a consensus of opinion from the time of Bharata down to his own time (and even to-day) that they were 22 in number and that it would be easier to weave them nicely into a composition than exhibit them individually.

(5) Ahobala thought that the Vina of 22 strings was rather unwieldy and that a smaller Vina of even 12 frets could be made to produce all the 22 Sruthis by increasing the tension of the strings. But his successors became, in the course of time, satisfied with the 12 notes coming out of the 12 frets and allowed the rest to get into disuse.

(6) Finally Venkatamakhi codified the 12 Notes and gave, unconsciously though, a death-blow to the 22 Sruthis.

(7) Swaras had been 7 in number; Ri, Ga, Ma, Dha, Ni, having emanated out of the five faces of Siva. Viz., Satyojathai, Vamadeva, Aghora, Thathpurusha and Isana, respectively and Sa and Pa from Shakthi.*

(8) These Swaras, when classified into Prakrithas and Vikrithas, developed themselves into 12,

(9) When each of these was shaken and made to vibrate along with any other swara or swaras; the result, arrived at, was *Gamaḥ*; and there were 15 such Gamakas, viz., Thiripa, Spuritha, Kamgpitha, Lina, Andolitha, Vali, Thiribhinna, Kurula, Ahatha, Ullasitha, Plavitha, Humpitha, Mudritha, Namitha, and Misritha.

(10) Vadi, Samvadi, Anuvadi and Vivadi formed part of the Theory of consonance. Vadi was the *sonant* Note; Samvadi, the *consonant* Note; Anuvadi, the *assonant* Note; and Vivadi, the *dissonant* Note; Swaras between which there was an interval of 9 or 13 Sruthis were Samvadis to each other; and those between which there was an interval of 20 Sruthis were Vivadis; and the rest came under Anuvadis.

(11) 'Graha' meant the Note commenced with; and 'Nyasa,' the Note ended with, 'Amsa' once meant a part of a whole and was indifferently used with *Anga* (now, a name of the letrachord). *Amsa* therefore originally connoted a letrachord and, later on, the important note thereof (the *Jiva* note). Its aesthetic effect was to define the tessitura. Almost all the text books confirmed that *Amsa* was invariably Vadi. These old distinctions between Graha, amsa, Nyasa were all obliterated by all of them being rolled into the modern Shadja Key-Note; *Apanyasa* (a Halt in the middle) alone being retained as a separate entity.

(12) The 10 kinds of Ragas, prevalent during the time of Sharangadev, became reduced into four, and then to three. Venkatamakhi overhauled the ancient theory by his new Melakartha Chakra.

(13) Thalās were as important to music as discipline was to any well-established Institution; there were 7 thalās of 5

* cf. Nadathanumanisam.

Jathis each. The 7 thalās were:—Eka, Thripata, Rupaka, Jampa, Ata, Matya, and Dhruva. The 5 Jathis were:—Thisra, chathasra, misra, Kanta, and Sankirna. Besides each Thala had 10 pranas, viz, Kala, Marga, Kriya. Anga, Graha, Jathi, Kala, Kaya, Yathi and Prasthara: of these 10 Pranas, Graha deserves a special mention: there were 4 Grahas, viz., Sama, Aragatha, Vishama, and Athitha.*

Thiagaraja, did not feel himself bound by the fetters forged by his predecessors, broke them all and cut a way of his own. He recognised only such ragas as were based upon the All-World-Twelve-Notes; and in this respect he differed from Venkatamakhi, though, curiously enough, perhaps for the sake of recreation or diversion, he chose to tread even on the forbidden ground. He brought many forgotten Ragas to the forefront and gave the world a hitherto unknown species of song, viz., Krithis.



* All these 13 points have been explained in detail in my *Lectures on Indian Music*.

The Child's Puzzle

(Translated from the Bengali of Rabindranath Tagore).

By L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L.

I
THE sorrow-stricken man returned from the Shmashan after the performance of the funeral obsequies of his wife.

At that time his seven-year old child, bare-bodied and gold-complexioned, was standing by the window-side as if lost in a reverie. Like the rainbow on a cream-tinted horizon, a garland was dangling round his shapely bosom.

Gazing at the sky, the child himself knew not what was agitating his mind.

The rays of the morning sun were playing at hide and seek amidst the leaves of the Neem tree in front of the opposite house and the usual hawker was shouting out in the streets, "Mangoes! Green mangoes!"

The father came in and silently kissed the child on his cheeks; the child asked, "Where is mother gone?"

The father pointing his finger upwards, replied,
"To heaven! my darling!"

II

Pangs of anguish startled the father out of his weary sleep many a time that night.

The fitful light of an old lantern faintly lit up the leaping lizards on the wall.

At this time the little child quietly crept into the open terrace.

All around, the silent sleeping houses looked like the guards of some demon—God of Daityapuri.

The little child anxiously turned his eyes towards the heavens and looked on, as if his perturbed mind was questioning someone, "Which way leads to heaven?"

No response satisfied his yearning heart.

But the tear-drops of silent darkness merely glittered as stars on the vault of heaven!

Rabindranath Tagore

By K. S. Ramaswamy Sastry, B.A., B.L.

A Study of His Later Works, III

I MAY refer here to the excellent description by Mr. Subramania Iyer of his interview with Tagore which occurs in February (1919) issue of the *Mysore Economic Journal*. Tagore stated then that in Universities the routine work should be done by Assistant Professors whereas the Professors should be men of originality and leaders and directors of thought who should be paid high salaries and should further be under an obligation to produce some original work within three years. The specialising scholars should be in close touch with such Professors and should also be giving travelling scholarships. The medium of instruction should be, as far as possible, the Vernaculars of India, and the adoption of this principle should be gradual. Instruction in fine arts is an urgent necessity. Women must have similar educational courses in the Vernacular. *All educational development must proceed from within outwards.* The aim must be to develop not only the individual aspect of the mind but also the universal or the spiritual aspect. A sound educational system should provide for the development of variety without losing the hold or the basis of spiritual unity. India must organise a university of a new type where the best intellects of India and even of the world outside could be induced to meet and impart their knowledge to the public. "It will help to kill racial, sectarian, caste and other prejudices and be a real fountain of universal light. It is only Hindu States, whose rulers have in their veins flowing the ancient Aryan spiritual culture, based on unity and universality that can realise its importance and organise a real university of this type, which will be India's educational contribution to the world's progress."

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore went to Benares on 30th March and delivered at the Hindu University from the 1st April 1919, three lectures, the subjects being *The Centre of Indian Culture*, *The Message of the Forest*, and *The Man of My Heart*.

I may mention here that in 1919 came the Amritsar tragedy and the

Panjab repression. Tagore was full of sorrow and indignation at the reign of repression and renounced his knighthood in a famous letter to the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford. In that classic letter he said: "The accounts of insults and sufferings, undergone by our brothers in the Panjab have, trickled through the gagged silence, reaching every corner of India, and the universal agony of indignation roused in the heart, of our people has been ignored by our rulers—possibly congratulating themselves for imparting what they imagine a salutary lesson. The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation; and I, for my part, wish to stand shorn of all special distinction by the side of those of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer a degradation not fit for human beings."

On 11th April 1920 he delivered at Bombay a great address on *The Mission of Youth*. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar who presided on the occasion paid a glowing tribute to Tagore as the premier poet of India and the maker of modern Times. Dr. Tagore said in his address that students must realise their youth and recognise that it is their duty to find out the truth for themselves and to build the new age with their lives. In this world which is the expression of the Infinite, old age is an illusion which must vanish and make room for the young who come with their mission of renewal. Therefore it is the proud privilege of youth to question and to enquire and to experiment at all times and to fight against even Truth itself in order to know for certain that it is Truth. Youth starts on its quest and its adventure of unquest with boundless aspiration. The races rich in such aspiration achieve the mastery of the world. It is such aspiration that has made Europe great. The spirit of youth is the spirit of progress. The manifestation of Truth is in its eternal movement, and to achieve Truth it is necessary to follow her onward progress. To remain stationary is to miss Truth altogether and to reduce life to beggary and make oneself dependent for knowledge and health upon the fortunate nations who are on the road of progress." After the address was over the President presented on behalf of the audience to Dr. Tagore a purse of Rs. 500 for his school at Shantiniketan.

On 16th April 1920 he delivered a lecture on education under the auspices of the Bombay University, Sir Chimnal Setalvad, Vice-Chancellor, presiding. He emphasised the great defect of Indian Universities as being their adoption of the machinery of foreign universities without the assimilation of their spirit. He further stated that if India wished to be great, she must solve the question of the *lingua franca*. He further said: "When they saw a foreign university, they saw only its smaller thought, its buildings, its furniture, its regulations and its syllabus, but as the kernel of the cocoanut was in the whole cocoanut, so the universities of Europe were in their society, in their parliaments, in their literature, and in the numerous activities of their corporate life." He said also that our education, especially through the

medium of English, making it "so nebulously distant, so different from all their associations of life, so costly in time and health and yet so meagre of results" has been to us "like a carriage to a horse the dragging of which merely served to provide it with food and shelter in the stable of its master." He put in a passionate plea for creative activity as opposed to imitative effort.

Another important activity is the inauguration of the Bharata Kala Parishad, or Society of Indian Art, at Benares, under his presidency. Its objects are: (1) opening a first-grade school and studio for teaching Indian music, painting, sculpture and other Indian arts and crafts; (2) establishing a gallery and museum to contain old and modern Indian paintings and other *objects d'art*, also a library dealing with art and allied subjects; (3) encouraging the study of such arts by providing scholarships, honoraria, and such other assistance as may be necessary; (4) promoting public interest by organizing popular lectures, conversazione, exhibitions, etc., etc., and by bringing out suitable literature and art reproductions; and (5) preserving the individuality of Indian arts and crafts. Any person interested in the aims and objects of the Parishad is eligible for membership.

VIII

IN the course of 1920 Tagore went on his fifth foreign tour. On 24th July 1920 the union of East and West organised a delightful function in London to welcome him. The Caxton Hall was filled to overflowing and Mr. Charles Roberts welcomed him as "our guest, through the magic of whose poetry the world has been brought to sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not." Miss Carrie Tubbs sang a cycle of four of Tagore's shorter poems set to music by Landon Ronald. The address of welcome to the poet consisted of five or six verses by Laurence Binyon, the last of which ran as follows:

"Rivers of India, populous wide plains,
From lips of boatmen and of villagers,
Singing amid their labours, hear these strains
Of lovely solace: India knows them hers.
Thames, too, has heard and welcomes him that sings,
Our silver Thames, of poets loved not least;
And, listening to that music, England brings
Her laurel to the singer of the East."

Tagore said in reply: "Honour, like the tombstone, is for the dead, whilst love, like the sunshine, is for the living, and your welcome has given me the abiding joy of grateful feeling that I have won true friends in a land where I came as a traveller, but where I hope to retain my seat as a guest, and that not so much for any literary skill of mine, but for some simple service of the heart, some harmony of the spirit, which comes from the humanity I share with you, in spite of the differences between us, which are accidental and on

the surface." In England he delivered great and eloquent addresses on Indian Education and the village Mystic Poets of Bengal. He pleaded for the establishment of a new type of university which should revive the memories of Taxita and Nalanda, a university, which while adopting all that was best in the western model, should be pre-eminently indigenous to the soil, preserving the ancient culture of the country, and contributing in a better way to the future glory of India!

Dr. Tagore wrote to the *Asian Review* about his experiences in England. In it, he deprecated the mendicant policy that induced India to expect and pray for gifts by England. He delivered an address before a large gathering of Indian students and others under the presidency of the Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, Minister for Education. He pleaded for the creation of a centre of indigenous culture in India. He said that the Western university is an organic part of European civilisation and cannot be transplanted wholesale to India like so much luggage. To strive after a material completeness which did not belong to the essence of a university is to squander money on mere money-bags. Indian education is barren and lacks idealism and inspiration. A proper educational system must provide for a continuation of the home atmosphere. The adoption of English as the medium of instruction has led to cramming and mere memory work and to the existing mental divorce between the educated classes and the masses. The question of vernaculars no doubt presents difficulties but these must be faced and solved. Every true civilisation is built upon the bed-rock of difficulties.

On the whole he found that post-war England gave him and his noble message but a faint hearing and a cold reception. Face to face with the grim realities of war and life, a hardening of the inner fibre had taken place. England was busy with internal politics and international politics and we know exactly what such a thing means. Life in England is the modern, selfish, and strenuous life at its height of modernity, selfishness and strenuousness, and has no room for the real refinements and graces and sanctities of existence.

He felt oppressed by the mental and moral atmosphere of the West during this tour. In one of his letters, which was written on 14th May 1920, he says: "I feel we shan't be long in Europe—I am not in a mood to face the world and answer its questions. I am longing to go back to those days of my youth which were not burdened with usefulness—that is to say, I want to be born again in the arms of the eternal. One grows old to discover that spontaneous simplicity of life is true life—but where is the time and the opportunity to realise it?" In another letter he states: "Our hearts are strangers in this region and even the atmosphere of this place looks askance at us. The people here want us to fight their battles and supply them with their raw materials, but they keep us standing outside their doors over which is written on the notice board 'Trespassers from Asia will

be prosecuted.'" In another letter he states: "My overstay in England has been wasted, except for the revisions I made of my Mss, and the negotiation with the Macmillans."

On 4th October 1920, Tagore read in the *Palais De Justice* at Paris his great address on *The Meeting of the East and the West*. Mr. Gaston Denys Perier described thus Tagore's gestures and tones: "His movements were rare, but each one had a touch of character.....The voice of the Hindu sounded clear and distinct, it spoke the Truth. Everyone could follow the words spoken, from the farthest end of the Hall to the platform itself." He said further: "In a touching comparison, this Christ of India traced the course of the two civilisations,—the East and the West, flowing side by side without ever meeting. For oppression prevents communion". Tagore said in his great address that western imperialism with its portmanteaus and prejudices never touched the heart of India. He exhorted Europe and America to raise Asia and Africa to the joys of western science and progress. He said "Be afraid to leave them to their weakness. The very strength of that weakness passively threatens to set up a barrier to civilisation and to compromise that Peace to which the universe aspires."

While in France Tagore met the great French philosopher M. Bergson whose thoughts have shaken and fired the world. Bergson told the poet that to him it appeared that the European mind was more precise while the Indian mind was more intuitive and said further: "But you, in your *Sadhana* and *personality* appear to have arrived at your conclusions by direct intuition. The power of the Indian mind, in this direction appear to be particularly great." Tagore wrote about this interview in a letter in which he says: "The great philosopher Bergson came to see me and we had a most delightful talk. He has read my book 'Personality' and what he said about my work was beyond my expectation." Mr. C. F. Andrews has recorded the details of the interview between the two great men in the issue of *Modern Review* for January 1921. I may also record here that one of Tagore's plays was staged on 27th November 1920 at Frankfort-on-maine.

Tagore, in a conversation with Dr. Foru Newton, expressed his view that the League of Nations is a "league of robbers". He said: "It is founded on force. It has no spiritual foundation. Humanity is not yet ready for it. A new machine is of little advantage if it be run by the old power and for the old ends. Organisation is not brotherhood.....The great war was one of the blows of God, seeking to break down our materialism, our selfishness, our narrow nationalism. It made a dent, but only a dent in the crust. Other blows will fall betimes. Until we learn to live together by the real law of our nature—the law of love—a veil will hide the beauty and wonder of the world, leaving us to wander alone on struggle together in confusion and strife.....All imperialism—except the imperialism of love is wrong. It brings little nations and various races together like chips in a basket, but they

do not unite. They are simply held together. There is no bond of union. Henceforth my life and all that I have—which is only a little—is to be devoted to establishing, first in India and then elsewhere if possible, a university in which the better minds of all races, to whom we must look for leadership, may mingle, and the culture of the East and the culture of the West may be united in fellowship.....In this way, long after I am gone, when in the purpose of God the time does come for a real League of Humanity, there will be men large enough to see the human race as a whole, who understand that good of humanity as a family actually exists, and we shall not suffer such a bankruptcy of constructive faith and vision as we have in our day."

Mr. C. F. Andrews in his record of Tagore's stay in Holland published in *Modern Review*, March 1921, says: "In England, last summer, he had found disappointment and disillusionment, except among those who had been from the first, among his literary friends. The attitude of the people in general, especially the upper classes, towards his own country and towards Ireland, had left upon him an impression of gloom. In France that gloom was lifted, and he felt himself at once at ease among those, who had no relation to India, such as that of ruler and ruled,—a relation which destroyed all hope of pure friendship. The French also, he found, had no racial pride separating them from Asia. Rather, they revered Asia, as the mother of civilisations. Thus, in France, the Poet's letters became brighter and happier than those he had written from England. But it was in Holland as I have said that Rabindranath Tagore was most deeply touched of all." Dr. J. J' Vnder Leeuw says of Tagore and his reception in Holland: "In Holland, Tagore is considered as one of the representative men of the New Era; his works in English and in Dutch translations are widely read and appreciated. *The Spirit of Tagore* is even an expression used to denominate a certain attitude in life, which is becoming more and more universal, as time goes on.....What struck us in him was the spirit of beautiful wisdom and simple joy in life, which made his very presence a blessing." Tagore delivered addresses at Amsterdam, the Hague, Rotterdam, the universities of Leyden, Utrecht and Amsterdam, and at the school of Philosophy at Amersfoort. In Utrecht he was received with a welcome speech in Sanskrit which is taught at all the Dutch universities. In Rotterdam he was invited to speak from the pulpit itself. He spoke there on *The Meeting of the East and the West*. Mr. C. F. Andrews says in the same article: "Rabindranath Tagore is proposing to come back from America to Europe in April (1921) and to visit the different countries of Europe during the summer months of this present year. The most cordial invitations have poured in upon him from every side, and he is hoping that his new purpose to found at Shantiniketan, Bolpur, an international university,—a meeting place of East and West,—may be carried

one step farther forward by his visit to the continent of Europe this summer.

In America he was able to impress upon the people the need for love and harmony and the importance of India's mission in the world. Mr. L. T. Nicholls published in the New York *Evening Post* an account of an interview with Tagore. Tagore told America that he desired to make his Bolpur school a university which will be "the clearing house for the culture of the East and West, the first adequate attempt to give to every other country what India has had so long, and to bring into India the thing which she needs to-day, namely science in its many Western kinds". He said further in the interview: "Not only is money needed but the understanding and co-operation which will make possible, as time goes on, a steady interchange of professors and students and a vitalisation of intellectual intercourse and sympathy between India and the rest of the world." He said about the existing universities in India that they were not representative and lacked in all those things which Indians have most wanted to know. He said: "Those universities have been artificial, not bearing fruit. Last year I founded the nucleus of an indigenous Indian University." In America he delivered on 10th November 1920 an address at Brooklyn on *The Meeting of the East and the West*. During his stay in America he lectured also on the ideals on ancient India as manifested through ancient classical literature, on the poets of religion, on some village mystics of Bengal, and on the ideals of education in general.

I may make here a special reference to Tagore's brilliant lecture in April 1921 on *The Spirit of India*, at the Indian Students' Hostel, in Gower Street, London, Sir Francis Younghusband presided. Tagore described the place of the forest and the hermitage in the life of ancient India and the love of nature resulting therefrom as exemplified in Indian dramatic poetry. In the Western drama, on the other hand, the human characters drown our attention in the vortex of their passions. In Shakespeare we see the gulf which exists in the poet's mind between nature and human nature, and the clash of passions in their fury and self-assertiveness. In Shakespeare there is no real kinship between nature and man. India, on the other hand, whilst not denying the superiority of man, emphasises his comprehensiveness and sympathy. India gains the world through worship, through communion of the soul, and this is part of her heritage from the forest sanctuary. The idea of Indian freedom is based on the realisation of spiritual unity. Tagore said: "It is India's duty to be loyal to this great truth and never allow it to be extinguished by the storms of passion which sweep over the world. The liberty for which the soul of India stands is neither communal nor national. What she needs is not merely self-determination but self-conquest and self-dedication." The London correspondent who described Tagore's address in a letter to the *Hindu* told us about Tagore's "magic sentences," "mellifluous periods" and "overwhelming eloquence." On the day of the abovesaid address

Dr. Tagore was entertained to luncheon at the House of Commons by Mr Arthur Henderson, Mr. T. R. Chynes, Colonel Wedgwood and other labour leaders. Tagore left some days later by aeroplane for Paris.

In the same month he delivered a lecture at the Y.M.C.A. Hostel for Indian Students on *The Meeting of the East and the West*. The Chairman was Mr. H. W. Newinson. The London correspondent whose letter to the *Hindu* was published on 5th May 1921 said: "But how dull is the printed page when compared with the effect produced by the personal magnetism of the poet!" He referred also to "the restrained passion, the penetrating tones, and the kindling eyes of the speaker." Dr. Tagore said that machine was destroying man and that materialism was crushing out the souls of individuals and of races. Western civilisation has introduced into the East the shock of passion, the cult of commercialism, and the power of wealth. Its principles were domination and destruction not idealism and creation. Dr. Tagore emphasised that there is a freedom of the soul independent of machines, Governments and systems.

On 21st April 1924 Tagore delivered in Paris his address on *The Folk Religion of India*. On 24th April 1921 distinguished publicists of France came in touch with Tagore at the dinner given in his honour of *Cercle Interallie* at Paris. At Musee Guimet Tagore was presented with a medal of *Republique Francaise* by Emile Senart, a member of the *Institute de France* and the president of the *Association Francaise des Amis de l'Orient* (Paris). Tagore said in his addresses during his stay in France that Asia is to-day the continent of repressed nationality and that from an atmosphere of repression we can only expect an explosion. What the world wants is not a League of Nation which is a League of Powers but a League of Peoples. At his lecture at Musee Guimet under the auspices of the *Amis de l'Orient* he discoursed about democracy in popular Hindu life. The lecture dealt with the element of personality and love in Sakyasinha's teachings, the doctrines of *mahakaya* and *bodhipridaya* in the Mahayanism of Nagarjuna, the sons of Jnanadasa the medieval poet, and with the refrain of Vaishnava poetry which declares God's love as finding its finality in man's love. Tagore said that the supreme sacredness of the individual in his relations with the Deity is the first article in the rights of man as enunciated by the folk-mind of India. The principal theme of Tagore's lecture at Musee Guimet was the Bauls of Bengal. The Bauls are actors of folk-poets who are even to-day in existence and who are seekers of the Eternal Light. Eagan, the unlettered young post office peon, was one of this camaraderie in whose song on *The Man of My Heart* Tagore finds the great message of democratic consciousness which is India's permanent contribution to human development.

(To be Continued),

Marriage by Arrangement

As Told in a Series of Letters

By Rajaiah D. Paul, M.A.

I

19, Vengai Amman Koil Street

M. MARGABUNDHU IYER, Triplicane, MADRAS.

Broker and Commision Agent. Dated 1st Feb. 19.....

Dear Sir,

You might remember that we met each other at the marriage of Sivarama Sastri's daughter at Madura. I took care to get myself introduced to you as I am always anxious to cultivate the friendship of all good men. You will remember also that our conversation centred round a topic most dear to our hearts. You were telling me of your dear daughter Rajambal; who, I realised, must be a very accomplished young lady, and I all but envied the fate of the young man for whom she is destined. Since then I have been, for friendship's sake, on the look out for a young man who will be worthy of her. Having recently come by one such, I venture to intimate to you the fact. I shall not interfere further in the matter, unless you are pleased to requisition my poor help. I need hardly assure you that my humble services are always at your disposal.

The young man is no other than the eldest son of Natesa Iyer of Tirumani. The boy has just passed his B.A., and intends, I am told, to go to England to be called to the Bar there, provided circumstances are favourable. May I suggest that you should get into correspondence with Natesa Iyer and make all arrangements. I will only express the hope that this will end in the way it ought to.

I subscribe myself,

Yours sincerely,

M. MARGABANDHU.

II

TIRUVALUR,
10th Feb. 19.....

Dear Margabandhu Iyer,

You did me an injustice if you thought that I would have forgotten you. I am so thankful to you for the kindly interest you take on behalf of Rajambal and for the information you have given me. I hasten to bespeak your active and continued interest in the matter till all is settled. I am however writing to Natesa Iyer direct, and also request you to drop a line to him about us and our family. I enclose herewith my daughter's photograph and horoscope. I shall be glad to have the boy's horoscope through you.

Assuring you that your kindness will never be forgotten.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

K. R. GOPALA IYER.

III

TIRUVALUR,
10th Feb. 19.....

Dear sir,

It is with some hesitation that I have begun to write to you. I daresay you know one Margabandhu Iyer of Triplicane, Madras. He has been good enough to write to me about you and your family: and has informed me of your fortune in possessing a son, of whom you are naturally very proud. I am also told that you are anxious to see him well settled in life. I daresay he has also told you of my daughter Rajambal. I should not say anything about her lest I should be thought boastful; but this much I can safely say that she is a girl of whom any man can be proud. She knows English and Sanskrit; and is a musician of no mean ability. She is a past mistress in art needle work; and as a housewife, few girls are equal to her. I have sent her photograph and horoscope to Margabandhu Iyer.

Hoping to hear from you soon regarding this matter.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

K. R. GOPALA IYER.

IV

TIRUMANI.

1st March 19.....

Dear Sir,

Your letter was an agreeable surprise. That I should have had the honour of getting a letter from one of your position is nothing but the result of the good deeds of my past life. I know Margabandhu Iyer only by hearsay. But what little I have heard of him has not been, unfortunately, to his credit. I am not therefore anxious to bespeak his help, as I am told that in such matters he is more anxious to fill his pocket than to push forward the interests of his clients. However, as you seem to be on friendly terms with him and have evidently confidence in him, I shall not be averse to making use of his services when necessary.

I shall be most pleased if a relationship is created between your family and mine. I have heard of your noble father.

My son has just passed his B. A. He is a very ambitious young fellow. He is ever thinking of going to England for higher Education; but our circumstances will not permit any such ambition. He has been trying ever since he passed out, 10 months ago, for an appointment, as a stop-gap; but so far he has not been successful. He was for three months a clerk under Binny; and was then ousted. He did not like the work: and the work did not like him, so to put it. He tried to get into the Imperial Police, but his short-sight was in the way. He also tried the Provincial Forest Service but his physique was against him. If however he could go to England he can try for the Indian Civil; and if he does not succeed, he might be called to the Bar. Just at present he is a clerk in the Taluk Office at Ankoram in a short vacancy which will expire 15 days hence. I am asking him to take to teaching, the noblest of professions: but he is too ambitious to heed to my suggestion. As we have almost impoverished ourselves by his education, we shall be glad to have some money for the marriage expenses. I shall put down the figure at Rs. 5,000 which is, I think, the prevailing rate. Of course we shall expect

about Rs. 3,000 more in the form of jewels ; and the usual dowry in the form of clothing and vessels etc.

I shall be very glad indeed if the match could be arranged.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

T. NATESA IYER.

V

TIRUVALUR.

5th April 19.....

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter, and thank you for the detailed information about your son and your demands. The latter are so exorbitant, even in these days of exorbitant demands that I can hardly hope to satisfy you ; and must therefore request you to let the matter drop. Your son may be dreaming of the Indian Civil and Imperial Police ; but as it is, he is not able to get a job whereon he may keep his own body and soul together, much less support a wife. I shall look out elsewhere for a husband for my daughter who deserves better.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

K. R. GOPALA IYER.

VI

TIRUMANI,

10th April 19.....

Dear Sir,

Your curt reply to my last came as surprise, That you should be so ready to drop the matter which, you yourself started, is indeed surprising.

It may be that my demands are slightly above the usual rate ; but I would point out that my son is a full blown graduate and is sure to rise high in the world, if circumstances are favourable. You must also consider the fact that we have been hard put to give him his education. That your daughter is quite an accomplished girl, I have no manner of doubt. But that hardly helps

us. I did not write to you that I myself have two daughters ; for one of whom I am on the look out for a suitable boy. My son must therefore help me to give her a suitable dowry.

I did not also write to you that I am getting many offers for my son. It was only the other day that Sub-Judge Subramania Iyer sent word to me about his daughter. He has also a son, so that he suggests an exchange of brides and bridegrooms between the families.

I, however, leave the matter to you with this final stipulation that the dowry in cash should not be less than Rs. 4,000, other things being the same.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

T. NATESA IYER.

VII

TIRUMANI,

10th May 19.....

Dear Sir,

I am surprised that not having received a reply to my last letter. I am sorry that you should have been so ready to drop the matter. But I am not so ready to leave it off as you are. I am anxious to contract an alliance with a good family ; and hence my anxiety about the present proposals. I shall not say any thing more for the present.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

T. NATESA IYER.

VIII

TIRUMAMI,

15th May 19.....

Dear Margabandhu Iyer,

I am sorry I did not reply to your first letter to me. As you yourself suggested Mr. Gopala Iyer and myself have been corresponding with each other and have been trying to arrange things. But the matter has not progressed much.

Considering my son's qualifications, abilities and future prospects, I made what I am convinced was a very mild demand of dowry. You know dowries are the order of the day, and no man can expect to get a suitable bridegroom for his daughter unless he is prepared to give a handsome dowry. The higher the dowry, the more eligible the bridegroom is. That being so, is it anything unusual if I asked for a cash dowry of Rs. 5,000, besides Rs. 3,000, in jewels? Mr. Gopala Iyer evidently took offence at this and writes that the matter had better be dropped. But I am unwilling to do this because from all reports the girl is quite an accomplished girl, and the family a good one. Mr. Gopala Iyer needs to be convinced that if he thinks that any one will have his daughter without a dowry simply because she is beautiful and accomplished, he is mistaken. Such things do not happen now-a-days. I hope you will be able to persuade Mr. Gopala Iyer to consider my reasonable demands.

I hope the horoscopes agree.

Yours sincerely,
T. NATESA IYER.

IX

TIRUVALUR,
25th May 19.....

Dear Margabhandu Iyer,

I have received your letter, and thank you for your kind interest in the matter.

It may be true that in these degenerate days one has to buy bride-grooms for one's daughters. But even so how can you expect us to pay more than the proper price? If the whole thing depends on the money, why then, let us come to terms. Here is a young fellow who has just managed to scrape through his B.A. I have not been furnished with any information as to how many years he took to do it. He has, to all intents and purposes, been found unfit for any sort of work. He has been trying for numerous jobs but has not succeeded in getting any, except an acting clerk's place in a Taluk Office, at Rs. 35-a month; and what is worse, even this is precarious.

How can I trust him to support my daughter and keep her in a position to which she has been accustomed in my house? That is the main consideration. The dowry does not matter. I shall of course be prepared to give a suitable dowry; but wish it to be left to my pleasure. I shall give a dowry suitable to my position and shall give my daughter all the jewels which a girl of her social status usually wears. I shall say nothing more. If Mr. Natesa Iyer can be made to understand my point of view, I shall have no objection to proceed with the arrangement.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
K. R. GOPALA IYER.

X

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS,
29th May 19.....

Dear Mr. Natesa Iyer,

I enclose Mr. Gopala Iyer's letter to me for your information. You must admit that what all he says is true. You cannot expect a stranger to look at your son with a parents' fond eyes. To him his money-making capacities are naturally the most important; and in that we must admit that your son is poor. Mr. Gopala Iyer knows that going to England and all that is pure bluff; and so we had better drop it. Nor can Mr. Gopala Iyer be persuaded to finance such an undertaking.

I do not think you will be prepared to consent to Mr. Gopala Iyer's stipulations that the amount of the dowry should be left to his will and pleasure. Nor do I think that it should be. If left to him, the amount will certainly be inconsiderable and that is but natural. We must therefore make a definite arrangement. There is nothing like definiteness in such matters. Shall I put it down at Rs. 2,000 cash and Rs. 2,000 in jewels? I do not think that Mr. Gopala Iyer will consent to part with more. If you agree to this, I shall try my best to make Gopala Iyer agree.

I find that the horoscopes agree beautifully,

Yours sincerely,
M. MARGABHANDU IYER.

XI

TIRUMANI,

31st May 19.....

Dear Sir,

I am surprised that you should think it necessary to cut down our demands to so poor a figure as Rs. 2,000 plus Rs. 2,000. My principle is that the demand should be so high that it cannot decently be cut down to too low a figure. Hence my demands are Rs. 5,000. I think we ought to get at least Rs. 2,500 plus Rs. 2,500. Please try and make the other party consent in this.

I am glad the horoscopes are so agreeable.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

T. NATESA IYER.

XII

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS.

4th June 19.....

Dear Sir,

Your last letter was so reasonable that I sent it in original to Natesa Iyer for his perusal. He needs to be reminded that his son is one of a thousand graduates who are floating about; who can do nothing in particular and hence are wanted by no-body.

But there is also the fact that girls have to be married in time; and in these evil days, you have, as you put it with commendable frankness, to purchase bride-grooms for them. So you cannot help giving a dowry—to use the word in this misapplied sense. I have persuaded Mr. Natesa Iyer to come down to Rs. 2,500 plus Rs. 2,500. The thing cannot be left to your will and pleasure. I am sure you will agree that it will save a lot of future trouble if all details are absolutely settled.

Please let me have your opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. MARGABHANDU.

XIII

TIRUVALUR,

June 6th, 19.....

Dear Margabhandu Iyer,

I hate this sort of bargaining, as if young men are animals, and the two parties have to wrangle about their price as for a bull in a shandy. However, as you say, this has got to be done. The amount that I have fixed for my daughter's dowry was Rs. 2,000. This and not a pie more shall I give. I shall not be made to consent to your fixing the value of jewels. My daughter has already on her person ornaments worth Rs. 2,500; and I think this ought to suffice.

Please write to Mr. Natesa Iyer that if he consents to these terms, the matter can proceed further. If not, he is at liberty to accept any of the thousand and one other offers he wrote to me he is getting for his son.

Yours sincerely,

K. R. GOPALA IYER.

XIV

TIRUMANI,

June 13th, 19....

Dear Mr. Margabandhu Iyer,

I have received your letter. I am very unwilling to consent to such a low sum as Rs. 2,000. Even School-Final men, now-a-days, demand as much, and get it. But my son, who has seen the girl's photograph has been taken up with it, and is anxious for the match. And as you have written, the family is a very good one, and the girl accomplished more than the average run of girls. So then I shall consent; but with this further stipulation that Mr. Gopala Iyer should undertake to support Radhakrishnan at the Law College for the B.L. course. I have already told you that my son has always been anxious to take up Law. Mr. Gopala Iyer, as District Munsiff, knows the value of a law degree in these days. So, if he will undertake this I shall be glad to make the necessary arrangements for the ceremony.

Yours sincerely,

T. NATESA IYER.

XV

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS,

15th June 19.....

Dear Sir,

I write to inform you that I have persuaded Mr. Natesa Iyer to consent to our terms (Rs. 2,000 plus 2,500). But he makes one other stipulation. You know that the boy, as he is, is unfit for any work. He may, with some luck, get a clerkship in some office; provided you move in the matter. But we can hardly contemplate such a future for our Rajambal, as being the wife of a life-long clerk. It is therefore to our interest to see that the boy becomes qualified for some more lucrative profession. As you know, just now Law offers attractions, both mercenary and otherwise, which no other profession offers. It may be that it is a bit crowded; but, as some one said, there is always room at the top. Mr. Natesa Iyer suggests that you should undertake to educate the boy for Law. My humble opinion is that it is to our interest to do so. I should therefore request you to consent to do so. If you do, please send me a wire, as the marriage ceremony will have to be arranged before the expiry of your vacation, and some days prior to the opening of the Law College.

Yours sincerely,
M. MARGABANDHU IYER.

XVI

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS,

1st July 19.....

M. MARGABHANDU IYER,
Broker and Commission Agent,
Letter No. 1327.
(Match-making Department).
Re: Gopala Iyer—Natesa Iyer arrangement.

Dear Sir,

I enclose a bill of charges for services rendered, and shall be glad to have an early settlement.

BILL

Amount demanded Rs. 5,000 plus 3,000 = Rs. 8,000	0	0
Amount arranged „ 2,000 plus 2,500 = „ 4,500	0	0
Deduction	3,500	0 0
Commission at 3 % (bride's party rate)	105	0 0
Add postal charges	0	11 0
	<u>Rs. 16,105</u>	<u>11 0</u>

Yours faithfully,
M. MARGABHANDU.

XVII

To
K. R. GOPALA IYER, Esq.,
District Munsiff, Tiruvalur.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find my bill of charges for services rendered. An early remittance will greatly oblige.

Yours faithfully,
M. MARGABHANDU.

Bill

Amount offered ...	Nil.	Nil.
Amount arranged	Rs. 2,000 plus Rs. 2,500	
Law college expenses	1,200	

Total Rs. 5,700

Commission at 2 % (Bridegroom's party rate) Rs. 114

To
T. NATESA IYER, Esq.,
Land Lord, Tirumani.



The Religion of the Ancient Tamils

By the late Mudaliar S. Sabaratnam G.G., J.P.

Part I. Chapter V. (continued.)

Their religion according to the literature of the Sangam period.

III. The Vedic Sastras.

Kalittokai

1. ஆற்றி யந்தணர்
2. வயக்குறு மண்டிலம் வட மொழிப் பெயர்பெற்ற
முகத்தவன் மக்களுள் முதியவன் புணர்ப்பினால்
ஐவ ரென்றுல கேத்தும் அரசர்கள்
3. இமய வில் வாங்கிய வீரஞ்சடை யந்தணன்
உமை யமர்ந்துயர் மலை யிருந்தனனாக
ஐயிரு தலை யினரக்கர் கோமான்
4. எரிதிதழ் கணிச்சியோன் குடிய பிறைக்கண்
உருவமலை போல்

(These passages refer to the six Vedangas and allude to various entities from the Puranas and Itihisas; and the Sanskrit language is distinctly referred to).

Purananuru

வடாது பனிபடு நெடுவரை வடக்கும்
தேனாதுரு கெழு குமரியின் தெற்கும்
குணாது கரை பொரு தொடு கடற் குணக்கும்
குடாது தொன்று முதிர் பெளவத்தின் குடக்கும்
கீழறுமுப்புண ரடுக்கிய முறை முதற் கடின்
நீர் நில நிவப் பின் கீழு மேல
தானிலை யுலகத்தானும்
அலங்கிணைப் புரவி ஐவரொடு சினைஇ
நிலந் தலைக் கொண்ட பொலம் யூந்தும்பை
நரைம்பதின் மரொடு பொருது களத் தொழிய
கார் நறுங் கடம் பின் பாகிலைத் தெரியின்
சூர் நவை முருகன்

(Reference is made here to the Mount Meru of the Vedas and the Puranas, to the Puranic story of the formation of the ocean by Sakara, to the Agamic theory of the upper region of kine, to the Mahabharata war as well as to the Puranic story of Subramaniya overcoming the Asura known as Sura Badma).

Tirumuruguttupadai

ஐவருள் ஒருவன் அங்கை யேற்ப
அறிவர் பயந்த வாறமர் செல்வ
பார் முதிர் பனிக் கடல் கலங்கவுள்புக்குச்
சூர் முதறடிந்த சுடரிலை நெடுவேல்

(The Puranic story of the child God Subramanya having been carried by Varuna and fed by Kartikai maidens and of his slaying Sura in the centre of the ocean is referred to here).

Silappadikaram

விண்ணோ ரமுதுண்டு சாவ வெரு வரு முண்ணாத
நஞ்சுண்டு மிருந் தருள் செய்குவாய்

(The Puranic story of Siva swallowing poison and the gods eating ambrosia are referred to here).

Manimekalai

மாதவன் மடந்தைக்கு மாதுயரெய்தி
ஆயிரஞ் செங்கண்மார் கோன் பேற்றதும்

(The Puranic story of Indra falling in love with Agalikai and being cursed therefor is referred to here).

These passages show clearly how the Puranas and the other Vedic Sastras were accepted by the ancient Tamils.

IV. Caste Distinction

The critics are very vehement in attacking the Hindu system of caste distinction, and they think that this system was not in existence among the ancient Tamils but was only borrowed by them from the Aryans quite recently. This surmise, I should say, is altogether unfounded. The ancient Tamil classics would not land any support to this view, but on the contrary, they fully disclose the fact that caste system was as much the property of the Aryans as of the Tamils. Brahmins were given great religious prominence and the other Varnas were fully recognised in these classics.

Kalittokai

ஆறிய ந்தணர்

முட முதிர் பார்ப்பான்

ஒத்துடை அந்தணர்

Purananuru

ஆவு மானியற் பார்ப்பன மாக்களும்

பார்ப்பார் நோவன செய்யார்

Tirumurugattuppada

இரு பிறப் பாளர் பொழு தறிந்து நுவல

Sirupanattupada

அரு மறை நாவின்ந்தணர்க் காயினும்

Perurupanattupada

மறை காப்பாளருறை பதிசேப்பின்

Maduraikanchi

ஓதல ந்தணர் வேதம் பாட

Kurinchipattu

அந்தி யந்தணராய

Silappathikaram

கோவியன் வீதியுங் கொடித் தேர் வீதியும்

பிழைகைத் தெருவும் பெருங் குடி வணிகர்

மாடமறிகையும் மறையோரிருக்கையும்

மங்கல மறையோ ரிருக்கை யன்றியும்

பாப்பு நீர்க் காவிரிப் பாவைதண் புதல்வர்

இரப்போர் சுற்றமும் புரப் போர் கொற்றமும்

உழ விடை வினைப்போர் பழ வீறலார்களும்

மன்னர் பின்னோர்க் கென்னிலை யுணர்த்தி

நால்வகை வருணத்து நலங்கேழ்

Manimekalai

நால் வேறு வருணப் பால் வேறு காட்டி

Kural

மறப் பினு மோத்துக் கொளலாகும் பார்ப்பான்

பிறப் பொழுக்கங் குன்றக் கெடும்

Acharakkovai

1. எச்சிலார் தீண்டார் பசுப் பார்ப்பார் தித்தேவர்

2. ஐம்பூதம் பார்ப்பார் பசுத் திங்கணியிறு

தன்பூத மெண்ண திகழ்வனெல்

3. இரு தேவர் பார்ப்பாரிடை போகார்

Inna Natpathu

பார்ப்பாரிற் கோழியும் நாயும் புகலின்னா

Iniyavai Natpathu

1. அந்தண ரோத்துடைமை யாற்ற மிக வினிதே

2. ஆ வொடு பொன்னீத லந்தணர்க்கு முன்னினிதே

(These passages clearly show that caste distinction was in full force among the Tamils and that the Brahmins were always given a prominent position in a religious sense.)

Non-killing and Temperance

I will now quote a few passages from the ancient Tamil classics to show that non-killing and temperance were strictly observed as moral laws by the ancient Tamils.

Kalittokai

நறவினை வரைந்தார்க்கும் வரையார்க்கும்

(This passage shows that although drink was prohibited, it was still used by some)

Purananuru

புள்ளொறு புன் கண் டீர்த்த வேள் வேற்

செம்பியன் மருக

புறவி னல்லல் சொலியக் கறை யடி

யானைவான் மருப்பெறிந்த வெண் கடைக்

கோனிறை துலா அம்புக் கோன் மருக

(These passages make reference to the anecdote of the Chola King saving a dove from the hands of the hunter and offering his own flesh in its place. This will strongly impress the importance of non-killing).

Perumpanattupada

மறை காப்பா ளருறை பதி சேப்பிற்

பெருநல் வானத்து வடவயின் விளங்கும்

சிறு மீன் புறையுங்கற் பினறு நுதல்

வளைக்கை மகடுஉ வயினறிந்தட்ட

சுடர்க்கடைப் பறவைப் பெயர்ப்படு வத்தஞ்

சேதா நறுமோர் வெண்ணெயின் மாதளத்

துருப்புறு பசுங்காய்ப் போழொடு கறிகலந்து

கஞ்சக நறு முறி யனையிப் பைந்துணர்

நெடு மரக் கொக்கிறை வடி விதிர்த்த

தகைமாண்டியின் வகைபடப் பெறுகுவிர்

2. தண் டலை யுழவர் தனிமனைச் சேப்பிற்
 ருழ்கோட் பலவின் குழ்சனைப் பெரும்பழம்
 வீழி ருழைக் குழ வித் தீ நீர்க்
 கவை முலை யிரும் பிடிக்க வுண் மருப்பேய்க்கும்
 குலை முதிர் வாழைக் கூனி வெண்பழந்
 திரளரைப் பெண்ணை நுங்கோடு பிறவும்
 தீம்பஹிர முனையிற் சேம்பின்
 முனைப்புற முதிர் கீழங்கார்குவிர்

(These verses clearly show that the articles of food for the Brahmins and Velalas were grains, fruits and vegetables. The Poet in giving a description of the diets of the Kshatriyas and low caste men, makes mention of meat and liquor, but in describing the food that could be obtained for the Brahmins and Velalas, he carefully omits them and makes mention only of fruits, grains and vegetables. This is a strong proof that the Brahmins and Velalas were vegetarians).

Tirukkural

1. அவி சொரிந்தாயிரம் வேட்டவி னென்றன்
 உயிர் செகுத் துண்ணுமை நன்று
2. தன்னுயிர் நீப்பினும் செய்யற்க தான்பிறிது
 இன்னுயிர் நீக்கும் வினை
3. கொல்லான் புலலை மறுத்தானைக் கைகூப்பி
 எல்லா யுயிருந் தொழும்

Iniyavai Natpathu

1. உணைத் தின் னானைப் பெருக்காமை முன்னினிதே
2. கொல்லாமை முன்னினிது

Inna Natpathu

1. வலை சுமந்து வாழ்வான் பெருமித மின்னா
2. புலை யுள்ளி வாழ்தலுயிர்க்கின்னா
3. கள்ளுண்பான் கூறுங் கருமப் பொருளின்னா

These passages will, I am sure, convince any one that the ancient Tamils were total abstainers from meat and drink with very few exceptions. I must lay some stress on the authorities of Tirukkural, Iniyavai natpathu and Inna natpathu, as these form the moral codes of the Tamil nation from a very early period. A practice to assume the shape of a moral precept must necessarily have been in force for a very long period, and the reader

may therefore draw his own conclusion as regards the age of this practice among the Tamils.

I know the critics take advantage of the few passages that are found here and there in the Tamil classics which refer to meat and drink, and try to argue that they were among the ordinary articles of food of the Tamil nation generally. But a careful reader of these classics will not fail to notice that the reference made therein to meat and drink refers only to the practice obtained among the Kshatriya classes and some lower orders of men, who, I admit, seem to have contracted this practice evidently from some foreign source. If non-killing and abstinence from meat and drink were not a general rule, they would not have entered into the moral codes of the Tamil nation and would not have been observed by the purer classes of men such as the Brahmins and Vellalas were. It is very significant that in describing the food of these classes, the poets studiously avoid any mention of meat or drink.

I will not enter here into the vedic practice of animal sacrifices because I have explained these at length in my book on Hinduism. Aimal sacrifices in *Yagnas* are only allowed as exceptions, and exceptions cannot be pointed out as the rule of any nation.

Can we say in the face of this overwhelming testimony that the religion of the ancient Tamils was different from the Vedic or what is sometimes known as the Brahminic religion of India? The critics may say that they refer to a period prior to the age of the ancient Tamil literature now available. I will only ask them to say if they have any authority to maintain that the Tamils of the pre-historic age had a religion different from the religion of the classical time. They have none. They cannot draw from their imagination in matters of such importance. But I say, and I say so with some authority, that the age preceding the period of the existing ancient literature was much purer. I think Tholkappiam supports me in this view, and it may be gleaned from the existing literature itself that the period it speaks of was the tail-end of a certain civilisation of the Tamil land, as the land seems to have been governed in these days by petty

kings and feudal chiefs instead of by Emperors and Monarchs such as the Pandyas, Cheras and Cholas were at one time. Religion seems to have been very much neglected during this period, and the Kings and Chiefs were bent upon material enjoyments and pleasures. Tamil poets of course received some encouragement, but it cannot be said that education received any encouragement worth mentioning. Even the encouragement given to the poets must be said to have been with a view to enjoy and not to promote knowledge. The pernicious practice of nautch dance was greatly encouraged and to add to this enjoyment, meat and drink seem to have been introduced into the tables of Kings and Chiefs evidently as a result of foreign influence. However, their religion was not given up, although it was neglected and disregarded. Their religion even then was the religion of the Hindu Vedas and Agamas.

(To be continued)



The Depressed Classes

By P. V. Aghoramier, B.A., B.L.

THERE are about seventy millions of the Depressed Classes in India who belong to Hinduism. They constitute more than a fourth of the total Hindu population. They form the lowest strata of Hindu Society. In political parlance they would be the lower ten in our country. The origin of these classes is lost in obscurity. But of one thing we are certain: that many old Smrithi-writers have marked out these people as unfit for association with the caste Hindus. A good many evil qualities are imputed to them and the Smrithi-writers lay down the injunction that the rest of society should keep them apart on that account. The injunction rests on a religious ground according to these smrithi-writers, and the object would seem to be to segregate the contamination of these depressed classes and to maintain unimpaired the purity of the caste Hindus.

I hardly think it worthwhile for me to declare my faith in this matter. Nor do I want to attempt to support my position by independent reasoning. I shall concede that with reference to the conditions of the society they lived in, the Smrithi-writers laid down salutary injunctions. I refuse to believe however that they intended to perpetuate this evil, if it is so, in society. If however, it be found that the smrithi-writers, did not hint the exercise of ameliorative power for curing human ills we must with respect to them, go a step higher than they have done and solve the problem in the spirit of humanity. In doing so we do not really violate their injunctions, but go to the logical conclusion of their reasoning. But it is certain that there is no use merely flirting with these writers.

It is obvious that we, who belong to the present generation and are in the midst of the struggles that Humanity is going through to make the human race happier and more enlightened than it is to-day, cannot look at the question exclusively with the eyes of our ancestors. Humanly speaking, the means of communication between country and country have advanced beyond the dreams of the ancients, and the trade routes generally form channels of communication for thoughts too. No community or nation could remain shut of communication with the rest of the world. In a very proper manner each community is trying to absorb the better features of the others. The present age has moreover witnessed an appreciable advance, through the efforts of cultured men, of the idea of Humanity. When science was making giant strides and seemed to unravel every mystery in nature, religion, particularly in the West, seemed to be dislodged from the minds of men. Those who represented the healthier influences of religion in life answered the onslaught of science by saying that humanitarianism found its truest impulses in religion. It is inevitable then that questions of sociology would be considered from all these different points of view.

It may be remembered that the ancient law-givers were dealing with rules applicable to group life. There were no questions of an external or permanent character here. They were just

dealing with a difficulty in social life from the point of view of the ideal cherished by the best men of that society and in the light of the highest knowledge they possessed. To think that these rules were intended to be of universal or eternal application is to deny them a knowledge of the fundamental fact that society is in a state of constant flux, that the knowledge of one age may be proved to be the error of the next age, and that the faith of one age may be the superstition of the next age. I am humbly but firmly of the opinion that the great moral men of every age who sum up in their lives the highest aspiration and achievement of their fellows have to fearlessly tackle the problems of the men of their times and ungrudgingly give that light and guidance by which the boat of society may be steered straight ahead. No age which applies its mind devoutly to the consideration of the problems which are peculiar to it is necessarily tracherous to the memory of its ancestors. On the other hand true loyalty to our ancestors requires that we may not helplessly lean on them and do nothing ourselves. I am anxious to remain true to the standard of my forefathers who advocated plain living and high thinking as the goal of social endeavour. I am equally anxious to do justice between man and man, and to see that no man however mean or low born shall be deprived of the means of his attaining to his full estate of man. I have not the heart to see any considerations of ceremonial purity intervene to make a barrier between me and my panchama brother and prevent a free flow of life's healthy influences between us.

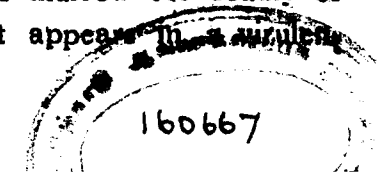
The universal prevalence of these disabilities of the depressed classess throughout India makes us aware of the fact that Hindu Society has functioned throughout the country on more or less the same plan. In the midst of these diversified elements in the Hindu social order we seem to be realising our fundamental unity in certain respects. Pilgrimage as an institution flourishes to this day from end to end of the land. Mendicancy as an institution is known throughout India. In spite of the hard times on which the Hindus have fallen, with true Eastern courtesy and hospitality the mendicant is

honoured everywhere. But curiously enough untouchability too as an institution flourishes throughout India. The untouchables suffer more or less similar disabilities everywhere. In Malabar alone the evil is aggravated by the existence of unapproachability. So numerous are the stratifications among the depressed classes themselves, that in that region custom has assigned different grades of unapproachability to them.

These untouchables are hardy tillers of the soil. They sweat hard for the society and for the state. They produce much of the national wealth. Their usefulness in the social order is immense. They are generally unsophisticated and simple. Except in the metropolitan centres and the civic areas they are ignorant of the 3 R's. Their faith in the honesty of the caste Hindus and others who throw at them some of the necessities of life is pathetic. They may not bargain to sell their articles and buy their necessities on as profitable terms as their more fortunate brethren in society. Neither the state nor the society of which they are members makes any provision worth the name for even a rudimentary education for them. They may not draw water from public wells, pass along public roads, worship at public shrines and bathe at public tanks and streams. They may not sit together with their caste fellows at public schools or at public functions. They are reminded that their touch pollutes the caste Hindus and that they are too impure to approach them. They are told too that it is a curse that has descended on their lives and that no purification can rid them of it. At times the orthodox are kind enough to tell them that rebellion is foreign to the genius of Hinduism and that the untouchables must meekly submit to the lot which by birth has been assigned to them. In one word in the socio-religious polity of Hinduism the fact of birth is an insuperable barrier, and a community is good or bad, pure or impure, according to the place that caste and birth have assigned to it.

This is the disease of the assumed superiority of one community to another which has prevailed in one form or another in the course of human history and has marred the beauty of human life at all times. In our day it appears in a lurid

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form in the attitude of the white race towards the colored races. The question is one which involves the conflict between nature and nurture. Who is there so bold that he would maintain that prenatal conditions are so strong that the best training cannot cure the deficiencies of nature? The Indian Vedantin will be denying the fundamental position of his philosophy to say that man is born in sin and iniquity. The modern scientist is aware of nothing else than the constant amelioration going on in human life in which the ever ready resourcefulness of man is at work. If nature is powerful as a factor to determine the bent of mind of each life, nurture is more powerful still to mould life. It follows clearly from this that we cannot with justification helplessly look on the growing deterioration of the depressed classes on the ground of a supposed primordial curse on their lives. Nurture shall absorb the gehenna and chaos. Then again why is orthodoxy so insistent on ceremonial purity? Higher Hinduism is strong in its warning against an undue attention to formae. Why should the spiritual childhood of the race be indefinitely prolonged and the kindergarten of ceremonial absorb our lives entirely? Why cannot the cultured elements in society take a bold step forward and find the much sought purity which is the goal of us all, in a gesture of generous acceptance of the untouchables to spiritual comradeship? Shall we for ever blow through our noses and cut angles with our faces and say that the purity of the Hindu race is intimately bound up with the traditional observance of untouchability?

The bulk of the educated Hindus to-day desire the immediate abolition of this cruel ancient custom and if they alone constituted Hindu society we would long ago have purged ourselves of untouchability. The majority of Hindus have not received any modern education; nor have they any intimate knowledge of the old system of thought and the rationale of our usages and beliefs. They do not count for anything, and if to-day, they more readily take sides with the orthodox against the Hindu reformer, they would rally to the latter's standard if they realise the obvious advantage of reform. Removal of untouchability is really opposed not by them, but by the priestly

class, by the pandits and Matapathis of the old school. They represent the brain of the orthodoxy. The acuteness of their intellectual power and reasoning must be freely admitted though they get rutted and groovy; they cling with tenacity to their doctrine. They smell red ruin and anarchy in the reformer's attempt to bring about a more cordial unification of forces in Hindu society. They foresee the annihilation of Hindu Dharma in reform. The reasons they advance against the removal of untouchability, I shall try to categorically state and I shall make a humble attempt to persuade them that the reformer's way is not wrong; that is also the God given way.

(a) The past age was an age of superior wisdom and illumination. Down the current of time, Hindu society has progressively deteriorated and the Kali age is fast taking us downhill. The beauty of the old life has long since left us and we are giving up part by part, our Dharma and incur the wrath of Providence whenever we leave the old moorings. We have neither the character nor the resources to think and judge for ourselves on these ultimate questions of social well-being. Though we may not make our own contributions to the wisdom of the race, we may not light-heartedly tamper with the plan of the old masters.

(b) The Hindu institutions are peculiarly sacred and divine being the handiwork of God and Godmen. Men of the present age who cry for change and reform are laying impious hands on them and frustrating the divine plan. There is nothing that the ancient writers or ancient custom have sanctioned which can bear being interfered with by the society-breakers of the present time.

(c) One of the essential features of Hindu Dharma consists in the unflinching observance of untouchability under given conditions and circumstances. The observance does not involve the idea of superiority in one and inferiority in the other. A wife who is unclean is not approachable during the three days she sits out; we may not, whenever we like, enter the chapel for worship. We are at times too pure to be touched by others and at times too impure to be touched by others.

(d) The depressed classes are the descendants of promiscuous

and unlawful unions in the old Hindu society. This community was segregated in order to preserve the purity of the rest of the race.

(e) Whatever merit there may be in the modern reason for reform in this direction, we cannot as pious Hindu set at naught the express injunctions in the Sastras; Sastram is *pramanam* to us; we are upholders of tradition and authority; we think the inspiration of the ancient better guidance than the reason of the moderns.

May I remind my orthodox brethren, that no age is too good to be the light and guidance for the many difficulties that beset a succeeding age and that no age is so bad that it has not native wit and enough men of probity and character to deal as God-fearing men would do with its own problems. Truth remains the same and eternal, but its application to changing conditions must vary according to the conditions. The question of adjustment is always one of detail and the men of each generation must make their own adjustments. The living soul of man is greater and mightier than the dead ghosts of old books, precious though they may be, and no book has authority to appropriate and absorb the life of man. Fortunately the Hindu religious books are good enough to lay down that we must experience and realise more than we believe. Nothing can be more extraneous to Hinduism than to hold that we must not think deeper than the levels of our ancestors. Society is not a fixed unit. It is vastly changing; no society remains hermetically sealed. No book of ours regulates our relations with Christians nor other non-Hindu people. If truth be told we are asked to leave the country which is ruled by Mlecha kings; we have not done so. We must be bold enough to face the question of the depressed and not hide our heads in printed texts. I think that the origin of the depressed classes given in some of the decadent books of Hinduism is an impious lie. Assuming it will be true, it is irrational to visit the sins of parents upon children. It is not the law of any religion. The analogy of the wife who during her uncleanness does not go near anyone in the house, is in my opinion, dishonest reasoning. The wife is not by

her birth or by her act eternally untouchable and it will be a pleasing speculation to consider the fate of orthodox husbands, if they should suddenly discover an obscure printed text in Hinduism making woman eternally unapproachable by man. I am far from suggesting that the good healthy habits which have descended to us from a distant antiquity and constitute what I may for want of a better word call habit-culture should be swept from this land. I object to making a fetish of them. I object to the idea that they constitute the hall-mark of Hindu culture and that the caste Hindoos must as a matter of right insist upon them as a point of distinction. To me the society which does not promptly and honestly deal with the disability like the one we have is like a body, which constantly nourishes a poison and must be killed by it. We would not be so callous if we had a proper social conscience. The point that is missed by all orthodox thinkers is this: by permanently keeping apart a portion of society, as unfit for decent association with their brothers we are putting a brand of inferiority on their foreheads. We are casting an unmerited slur on the manhood of a portion of society. We are exercising an insidious form of social tyranny. The position is more or less akin to that in which the Negroes found themselves in U.S.A in the 19th century. They were shiploaded from Africa; they sweated for the white man there and cleared the country for him. The reward was social and political humiliation and disgrace. In some respects the case for the depressed classes is stronger than the case for the Negroes; for the depressed classes are of us.

I do not think that the most energetic propaganda will suffice to manumit the depressed classes. Propaganda is met by counter propaganda. Some form of ennobling, courageous action conceived in a spirit of humility and faith will melt the heart of the orthodox and draw them to the reforming line. It has crystallised into satyagraha. Blessed be they who can suffer in the cause and whose suffering assists the social emancipation of the depressed classes. Even imperfect Satyagraha undertaken in good faith is better than the best propaganda. There is certainly no justification for apathy towards the depressed

classes. The present attitude of the orthodox is bound up with some of their beliefs. Non-Hindus actively interfering in the matter will stiffen the orthodox opposition and hurt the cause a great deal. The orthodox are of us and we are of them. We require each other for renewed life. We ought better to understand the delicacy of sentiment involved in the change of view of the orthodox. We would hurt the cause a great deal more by confounding it with the complicated questions of interdining and intermarriage. We must be clear as to the issues. No wholesale social reform enthusiasm, however well intentioned, will solve the problem. Let not the enthusiasts of interdining and intermarriage crowd the platform of the removal of untouchability.

The religious history of India makes it clear that the lives of the lowest of the low have been raised by the steady infiltration of religious ideas into them, and by the evangelical missions undertaken by the great prophets. Buddha was the first teacher in Hinduism to break the monopoly of learning and piety and teach the truths he had discovered fearlessly to all. The era of Buddhism is the era of democratisation of religious ideas. There have followed other prophets in Hinduism who have drawn men irrespective of their caste and their place in society to a Godly life. Acharya Ramanuja and Shri Chaitanya have brought about these changes in society. The followers of these prophets formed themselves into a new group by themselves. The advaita philosophy of Sankaracharya becomes reinforced and gets a new practical vigor from the incident relating to the chandala in the life of Sankaracharya. The community has made its own rich contribution to the religious culture of Hinduism. Nanda whose name is constantly on the lips of the Brahmins was no other than a pariah. His insight into life and his realisation of the divine consciousness was profound. Thiruvalluvar, the author of the Kurah has given thoughts to mankind on the subject of religion, politics, domestic life etc., which mark the deep piety, and the invincible integrity and the purity of the man; Chokamela the saint of Maharashtra was so fervent a devotee of God that his devotion touched the

heart of caste Hindus and swept away their prejudice against the pariahs. To this day in Pandarpur all Hindus irrespective of caste and creed can worship in the innermost shrine of Panduranga. Lal Guru of Hindoostan was so great a gnani that he raised the life of the community to which he belonged and each generation of his adherents dedicates the life of a few good followers to Thyagam and a life of self-surrender. Hrishikesh has her mehtar Tyagis who follow the yoga sadhanas like the sadhus who belong to the high castes.

It must be remembered that the crowning glory of Hinduism is the attainment of castelessness and creedlessness, not by pulling down the distinctions, but by transcending them. Why are the social virtues of the Hindoo Dharma made so much of and the supersocial not even whispered about to-day? Why should Hindoo society salute at a respectable distance the Vairagi now? Have the social virtues any intrinsic value apart from their leading to the super-social? This ripe product of Hindooism is as much the result of the labor of caste Hindus as of the depressed classes. Why have not the common achievements helped to knit the ties between the different communities closer? Why should we think that the retention of the existing barriers is a religious necessity?

It is true that Hindoo philosophy has not obtained a firm hold on the minds of all Hindus. The majority of men are ritualistic and want a concrete form of religion. Barring the bulk of the people in every society to whom religion is a mysterious means to a wordly end, there is a section of the people who adhere to ritualistic usages out of conviction. The observance of untouchability is a matter of religious necessity to them. It would be improper to sweep them away. No reform can compel them to give up their cherished beliefs. We must make peace with them and tell them with humility and assurance that their faith will be left unmolested.

The great need of the time is a re-emphasis of the moral laws in preference to the priestly injunctions. There are universal moral laws to which the allegiance of all mankind is due. There are also the rules framed by the priests in every religion. Life

is so short and time so fleeting, and our resources so feeble, that few have neither time nor ability to regulate life by all the considerations mentioned by the priests; our system of ritual is moreover highly complicated. The sovereignty of the moral laws means that men shall be judged by what they are more than by what they have. There is chance in God's universe for all to become good if they have the will. Heaven lies in accomplishing the moral good of all.



Marriage and Personal Freedom. III.

By S. Sathiavagiswaran, M.A.

THIS takes us on to the conditions of India and the basis and functioning of Hindu marriage systems. In general terms it could be said that our existing system of marriage has ruthlessly smothered love—love which only justifies marriage. It introduces not a particle of respect from the young man to the young woman whom he is going to make a life-long partner. It treats woman with a ruthless and indefensible cruelty by subjecting her to the travails of early motherhood, economic helplessness, and the enforced widowhood or single blessedness in case of judicial separation. It keeps woman eternally in the clutches of a hard masterful tyranny. By its antedated eugenical principles and stagnant metaphysical conventions, it is fast leading the Hindus to a suicidal policy of decay, devitalisation and extinction. It stands self-condemned at the bar of humanity by its support of sex-parasitism.

Let us first take its sacramental character. Public opinion among Hindus is strong in making marriage an indissoluble tie lasting for the life-time of the parties. Divorce is not allowed among the three higher castes, no, not even by law. Although

statutory law validates widow remarriages, society is still under the spell of its old tyrannising memories. The case against our existing laws, customs and opinions is pithily and vigorously stated by Lajpat Rai in this way.

"The devotion of Hindu wives to their husbands is something sublime, superb. But after all it is the devotion that is born of a feeling of helplessness. The economic dependence also is a factor. On the other side the man also finds that although legally he could marry another woman, yet a second marriage would bring such an amount of social obloquy in its train and besides would be economically so costly that the very idea is unentertainable.

"So in good many cases the man decides to make the best of the situation and eventually the devotion of the wife completely wins his heart and he, in his turn, makes a fairly good husband. But it is a fact that in an equally large number of cases the parties fail to adjust themselves and live in life-long misery. In each case the loss of happiness and satisfaction involves and leads to much waste and wickedness which effectively tells on the efficiency of the nation. There are however cases, few though in number, in which the man sets aside his first wife and marries another, leaving the first to a life of enforced widowhood. Now, the very existence of these cases however few makes it necessary that in this respect the position of the man and the woman should be equalised. A law which affects injuriously and unjustly even one human being is bad and must be changed. But the change of the law mends the freedom of divorce. The freedom of divorce however, is an absurdity where there is no freedom of marriage. Forced acquiescence in a marriage in which the parties to a marriage or at least one party has no voice is a denial of that freedom which is the fundamental right of every human being. It is a serious handicap to the development of the personalities of men and women and as such reprehensible."

Freedom of marriages, therefore, could be attained in India only by dissociating marriage from its pseudo-religious or extra-sacramental character; by stripping the caste of its dictatorial majesty and by a simple calculation of eugenical principles, and above all by educating woman into a sense of her importance and necessity to society from a social and sex point of view. The institution of marriage arose tantamount with a sense of woman's importance in family life; and now, to discard it would be untrue to the traditions and necessities of marriage.

The latest attempt at statutory reform of Hindu marriages,

perhaps not the most effective, is Dr. Gour's Civil marriage Bill. But it is extremely doubtful that a good number would be prepared to benefit by this legislation, although it removes some territorial disabilities, adds legal sanction to love and eugenical marriages outside of caste and encourages inter-marriages for purposes of nationhood; society has not advanced *paripassu* with the advanced social reformer. But it is not purely from the point of view of the social or legal reformer that freedom of selection in marriage is advocated. It is on the highest principles of ethics and eugenics and individual welfare that a more enlightened public opinion is invoked to aid in this process.

The defender of caste retorts that restriction of marriages within castes is based upon the highest principles of eugenics and that therefore our argument is not valid. Further it is contended by critics of eugenic marriages that eugenists wish them all to be "forcibly married by the police and that they want to substitute for human marriage and parenthood the methods of the stud-farm." In either case therefore the argument advanced in favour of freedom of greatest possible choice in marriage is defeated. So runs their arguments.

As regards the first objection, it is true that the Hindus had long ago in their own way anticipated the modern Eugenists and made a practical application of genetic principles to their own population. They adopted measures both for the extinction of the criminal and the degenerate and for the persistence of strains regarded as desirable. The ancients realised that if the social good were the supreme end, as it is in a colony of ants and bees, the greatest differentiation of individuals for particular kinds of service would be desirable. Since in a complex society all types of service are needed, so the ancient Hindus placed the good of society as a whole above the personal interests of the individual and perpetuated division into four stocks based on social efficiency by breeding i.e. by restricting marriages to members of the same caste. But conditions have changed enormously to-day. The castes do not any longer represent hereditary occupations. In our present complex social organization many more classes are required than four. Also we have

no right to condemn certain classes of people to perpetual serfdom. The great American writer Professor Conklin says that modern ideal individual is not the highly specialised unit in the social organism, as in the case of the social insect, but an all-round type of individual. For such a generalised type the methods of in-breeding or close-breeding used by the breeder of thoroughbreds are inappropriate. On the other hand the individual of the modern generalised type must include the best qualities of many types and races; and Mendelian inheritance shows how it is possible to sort out the best qualities from the worst. In modern times it is being increasingly acknowledged that interbreeding does not secure the desired purity of line. It is certain that it tends undoubtedly to weaken the constitution and, if long continued, to partial sterility. Even apart from it the biological inefficiency caused by marital maladjustments owing to the hampering restrictions of caste is terribly expensive for the Hindu race. Further this inbreeding is more rigorously observed at the top among high-caste Hindus. This is unfortunate because there is a considerable amount of truth in Herbert Spencer's generalisation that reproductivity decreases as individuation increases. By individuation we mean a high social and intellectual efficiency born of higher education. These classes more rapidly imbibe the qualities of hyper-untiation, selfish celibacy, and selfish non-maternity; also they rule out love-marriages more effectively, all of which lead to reduced fertility. Are the higher classes, say the Brahmins of to-day, judged from this standpoint decaying by this process of individuation? Or by this process of in-breeding? There is enough justification to show that the constant creation of separate connubial groups do immense harm by narrowing the circle of selection in marriage, intellectually cramping the energies and morally by destroying mutual self-confidence and habits of co-operation. Kannyia Brahmins suffer most from this. Generally Endogamy and Hypergamy are responsible for endogamy to a large extent. Kulinism is another consequence of this. The rapid increase in the Muhammedan population in Bengal contrasted with the steady deterioration in the case of the Hindu is to be noted.

But the partisan of individual liberty says that if we claim to be released from the tyranny of caste on the word of the eugenicist, then it is equally necessary that we must yield to the eugenists demand of "police" arrangements made by the state for marriages among citizens. Such schemes are spoken of in Europe and even practised to some extent in France where the Government try to manage it by creating a new official decoration called the French Family Medal. The Eugenicist stands upon the ground that impulsive and instinctive unions as often happen between degenerates and perverts, are most frequently the worst as regards progeny. What we want is wise selection and less sentimentalism in marital affairs. There are certainly many wild legends spread about eugenists. To define eugenics as the science of human breeding is unjust and misses the issue. Eugenicists do not pretend to have evolved a science but concern themselves with questions of practice such as our social customs and laws, our cherished notions of love, marriage etc. Their twin gods are nature and nurture. All present day social legislation is based on the assumption that better environment means race progress. Says the eugenicist, it is more correct to say a genuine race-progress will result in a better environment, and that improvement in social conditions will not compensate for a bad hereditary influence. But without going to an analysis of the eugenical theories, it must be admitted that their programme does not generally interfere with the normal course of the wise individual. Further it must be granted, that even in the interests of highest social efficiency, the good of the individual is not entirely to be forgotten. The Eugenicists certainly stand for marriages between parents healthy and fit in all respects.

It is clear that true marriage is therefore rare within the limits of the Hindu marriage system. It is not possible within the narrow vinculum of caste. True marriage implying a life-long union, friendship and companionship is barred by artificial restrictions. Marriage by parental arrangement is of doubtful happiness. Also the progeny resulting from such arrangement are biologically inferior to those of love marriages.

Another question to consider in respect of freedom within

the limits of marriage is the right of divorce. Professor Wester Marck in his History of Marriage says that progressive tendency is towards divorce by mutual consent. Certainly divorce has both its rights and wrongs. It is condemned on the ground that its concessions are often abused, that it leads to the disintegration of the family and that as a consequence of the parties separating, there is a state of semi-segregation, so far as one party is concerned. Naturally the feeling of father, mother and child are reciprocally de-naturalised. This leads to the breaking of the family bond and very often leads to alcoholism and final extinction. The looseness and abuse of divorce law are taken as a positive proof by some of the barbarous sensuousness of the Western people. I do not believe it is so. Or even if it is true, I think that its barbarousness is not in any way more offensive than the barbarousness of the existence of sex-parasitism of women on which we, the Hindus, have reared up our huge edifice of society. By the sex-parasitism of woman is meant the condition of dependance for support in the performance of her sex-function alone or even on "her mere potentiality in the direction of a duty which she may never fulfil". Hence it is that to-day our marriage system is based on the fact that woman is eternally bound to be only a devoted wife and good mother and nothing else. Whereas she is as much in need of individuality, freedom resourcefulness, initiative, courage, economic independence and intellectual growth as man. The ethics of divorce may not satisfy the highest demands of Platonic love. Its ethics may even be questionable but it is perhaps the only ethics to which mankind is equal to-day. Under modern economic conditions happy marriages are becoming rarer, and until we approach a better ordering of society, the right of divorce must attach itself to any system of marriage. We must face facts in view of the grave risks of marriage in a good many cases. But if marriage is not to be a martyrdom, it must be based on mutual respect and must promote it. But in cases where it is impossible, the individual parties must not be sacrificed to preserve the tottering foundations of mere formal marriage bonds. Our marriage system is not so free from anomalies and inequalities as to dis-

pense with this necessary evil—the right of divorce. As a matter of fact our vaunted sacramental marriage gives the right of the essence of divorce to the injured husband who remarries and lives happily while resigning his first wife to languish in enforced single blessedness. Our Hindu law allows separation on various grounds which include the five grounds of Lord Buckmaster's Divorce Bill. This unequal treatment of woman as against man is often defended on the ground that the requirement of chastity should be less stringent in its application to man. Because a woman cannot physically be the same again if she has been a mother, whereas a man is physically unaffected by becoming a father. This is certainly not a human argument and, as pithily said, is "at once too abstract and too canine." The Mahomedan marriage is purely and even notoriously a civil contract though many of its incidents are regulated by positive law. Though a short prayer is read; there is properly speaking no religious ceremony and the Moslem husband's unlimited powers of divorcing his wife are proverbially notorious. But this right is held in check by allowing the wife to make terms, during marriage time—not opposed to Islamic law. The woman has her remedy to some extent.

In England the holy wedlock is subject to the incident of divorce only to a limited extent. The anomalies of English divorce law have been completely exposed by B. Russel in his "Principles, of social Reconstruction." Though the Britishers often regard their marriages as the result of true comradeship based on knowledge, understanding and love, the orthodox marriage there is of a different type. This is seen in the opposition offered to the Divorce Reform Bill both from the clergy who would not permit the infringement of what "God hath joined" and from English ladies of position who oppose this measure of relief. The 5 grounds mentioned in Lord Buckmaster's Bill are (1) desertion for 3 years (2) cruelty (3) incurable insanity (4) habitual drunkenness (5) imprisonment for life—conditions so obviously reasonable that the opposition given to severance of close bonds on these grounds must only lead to one conclusion that there is little of true comradeship in all such

marriages. The United States law is more liberal since incompatibility is often the only reason for legal dissolution of marriage ties. The anomalies of modern divorce law show that mankind is prepared to bury justice under the sterile accumulation of a fixed superstition.

An analysis of tendencies in the reform of marriage law would show that we are going forward to regulate marriage with a view to the 'natural selection' of those who are to continue the race. In western countries many anomalies are due to the fact that in spite of the movements of Renaissance and Reformation, the mediaeval idea of authority has not completely broken down and hence, even to-day, there is not much adequate scope for the growth of the individual as there ought to be in a scheme of organic society. Much of mediaevalism still persists in the marriage institutions of the West. Mr. Russel says it is very harmful to give to the state the power to determine the law of marriage and inheritance. It is also in the West that many reforms in marriage laws are called for.

We shall end this article by calling attention to a characteristic demand, put forth by advanced European thinkers, which more fully indicates the real basis of marriage viz., love. The rising school of opinion says that the issue of even illicit unions should not be looked down upon, that every child that comes into life is sacred and pure, and that the prevailing social ideas which brand some children as illegitimate and bastard is barbaric. Children should not be treated cruelly for the folly of their parents. What the incontinent lovers have done is to spoil a very fine thing, but it does not merit ostracism or lasting obloquy. It is however true the ancient and widespread social infamy of the bastard is due according to Prof. G. A. Thomson to 2 reasons (1) first the psychological element is wanting and then there is no marriage at all, but mere pairing of the lower sort (2) second because mating physical and psychic can only be full and true when it is permanent.

Dr. Johnson said that there would be more of happiness in the world if every marriage passes through the hands and with the sanction of the Lord Chancellor. That was in the 18th century. To-day it would be nearer the truth to say that if the Lord chancellor keeps his hand off marriages the world would be the happier for it.

Life History of a Law Suit

By S. N. Venkatesa Iyer, B.A., B.L.

II

NOW begins another stage in our precious history, i.e., the stage of adjournments. It is true that this period is not marked by any battles or even an attempt at one, being mostly occupied with skirmishes, but this does not in any way detract from its importance. Your battle (decisive or otherwise) can never be fought without its period of preparation. It is in this period that your wise general reconnoiters; takes stock of the combating forces and duly arranges the plan of operations. Likewise, this is period when both sides try to collect their evidence documentary and oral (to use the legal language). Your vakil who has a thorough grip of the art of 'taking time' is the one wanted here. The various and ingenious reasons for which a suit is adjourned will well fill a volume by itself—provided that you can make out "the notes-paper" of the judge. (N.B. You are not to infer that they are purposely illegible). The amount of ingenuity and tactics displayed in this branch of the work, is something marvellous, a thing of which a mere outsider can have no idea. No doubt generally the absence of the witnesses or sometimes of the vakils forms the 'lion's share' of the reasons assigned; but this becomes stale or ineffective after a time. But courage! there is no reason to despair. The post and telegraphs are requisitioned and letters and wires come pouring in (1) of the death of relatives, at which the inevitable presence of the parties is a fore-gone conclusion, (2) the serious illness of near relatives i.e., sons, ... daughters and brothers-in-law (3) the illness of the parties themselves. The number of people who are dead and resurrected, in the course of a day in the law courts is nothing short of the incredible. The plaintiff, who was seriously bedridden for the last adjournment is happily recovered; only his

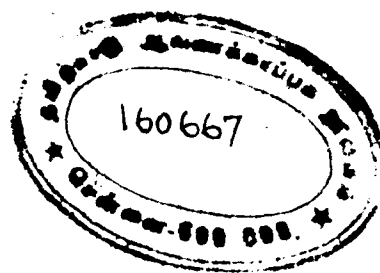
"serious illness" has now been transferred to his witness. If the signs of "illness" are not particularly traceable, it is only due to the sudden recuperative powers of these people. I know of a case where the plaintiff died; and just out of spite the defendants died; then came the turn of the legal representatives until at last, at the actual trial itself (some three years hence) all were happily re-born and (just to oblige the court) sufficiently grown up to give evidence. It all turned out to be the usual; "mistaken instructions." In fact my sincere advice to a "sick man" is do not go in for doctor this or doctor that. "Do not go about the country trying one doctor after another (even if retired district judges advertise the doctor's fame and their miraculous ayurvedic cures), but just file a decent suit or if you have nothing of your own do get an assignment a transfer pendente-lite as the lawyers say; there are heaps of such—and then you will marvellously recover or if you don't the fault is not yours but that of your lawyer. There is nothing that seems to revive "dead or dying people" as a good, well-contested law suit. Your American and Ayurvedic patent medicines cannot hold water. Then, there are compromises—those elusive, intangible things that always may happen but rarely ever do. It is always an axiom that "given sufficient time"—any suit can be compromised and if suits are not compromised, it is because "man's life on earth is limited." Compromise is but a plant of slow growth and requires very delicate "nursing". Some people have committed the mistake of thinking that because the parties are agreed, therefore a compromise is possible. There is no such thing. The parties do not count; his private legal adviser is the one, whose advice, the prudent counsel, will follow; else he may find "all his good intentions come to naught." As a weapon of "adjournment"—"compromise" requires very delicate and careful handling. The Presiding officers' views on the subject have to be studied beforehand. Generally unlike your Benjamin Franklin "used key"—it is the worse for being constantly used. Your novice in the trade, bungles the matter through, rises up in a hurry as soon as the suit is called and blurts out, "Your honour! in this case, the plaintiff and defendants are talking of a compro-

mise ; some time may be given " which invariably results in the Court calling the parties where-upon each party is sure that he has no knowledge and probably the *other party* is talking of a compromise. The end of it all, being that the Court is anxious to dispose of the case being an old one etc., etc.,—and *not* simply because the Court thinks the parties are not ready and so it can make "an easy disposal". (as some people are uncharitably inclined to think). Your trained artist, in such a case is not so easily taken in. He begins by re-counting the facts of the case, how the litigation is founded upon enmity (always a safe statement to make) and how he has exerted his personal influence (a thing generally of unknown value) and secured X—a big man of the place—(how big—we are not told) to interfere in the matter and how owing to a marriage (or a funeral—it is all the same for the case) he is *un-avoidably* absent and how an adjournment would fit in exactly and work out things alright in the end. This, by the way—is not the only formula—it is ever subject to variations of time and place—the only certainty being that an adjournment always would enable "all things to end well." Now that we are on this digression, I cannot better close this subject than by re-counting one or two funny incidents that just come to my mind. What I re-collect is that, in a certain suit, the vakils on both sides had exhausted all their "Grounds" for adjournment ; the non-existent witnesses had been called out, the official three times—a process which by itself, is likely to mystify an outsider (e.g.) the bench clerk wrongly reading Peyandi Thevan for Palaniandi Thevan—which communicated in a *diplomatic whisper* to the "peon" next him was shouted "Mayandi Thevan"—which in turn came out as "Muniandi Thevan" and understood by the outsiders as "Mariappa Thevan"; the suggestions of a motor bus accident ; even a probable settlement outside court etc., etc., had all been referred to in vain. The situation was getting interesting and desperate when the vakils rose equal to the occasion. As if inspired the suggestion was put that, at *any rate* the documents on both sides might be marked *that day*. The Court was one remarkable for marking documents. Dame

Rumour had it that sometimes the same documents had been marked, re-marked and sur-remarked as A; AA; AAA, etc., The idea was catching with the result that the court attended to the other "postings" for the day and the notes paper for the day remarked, "The vakils on both sides request time for marking documents. Suit adjourned for trial. (N. B;—Documents marked on both sides—*Nil*) But this is by the way. Another reference and this topic must close. An adjournment in one court was requested on the ground that the vakil had gone to a distant outside station, having a case posted there for that very day. The court naturally asked "Why could he not have *Conducted* his case here and asked for adjournment there?" to which came the innocent reply, "Well; Your Honour, he has gone all the way only to get an adjournment there." This sense of impartiality and fair play was really so touching that it effected its purpose. This all too brief reference to a subject—admittedly "oceanic" in its vastness—is only intended to explain to the wary reader that the entrance of your smooth-orthodox judge on the scene did not produce much of a commotion in the life history of our suit. On the other hand, it looked as if the centre of gravity had shifted from the "Bench" to the "Office"; (in other words) if for instance, you wanted an injunction restraining your grand-mother from dying or your mother-in-law from pestering you with her ubiquitous presence, Nay, even if you wanted a *madatory* injunction restraining your neighbour from entering a land in *his* own possession or celebrating his daughter's marriage with your other neighbour's son—well! if you wanted some such *urgent* reliefs—all that you had to do, as a sensible man, was not to go about here, there, or every-where asking, "Shall I engage a lawyer Mr. MSS. or Mr. Q. E. D? Is Mr. S. or Mr. N. the greater friend of the judge.? Does the judge very often ask for the loan of lawyer Mr. Y's car? or Is Mr. X—the constant companion of the judge in the cosmopolitan club? Etc., etc., No! don't do any such thing—it may be that the constant club companions of the judge are very often "Bores" whom the judge tries *in vain* to avoid etc., etc.,—

simply go and placate the office and you will have no cause to complain. As for the vakils and their long-winded arguments—have you ever caught the judge looking up at any time—not to speak of listening or vouch-safing a reply to them. You had—better *look up* to the office and everything will be alright. And after all, all things considered, there is not much harm done either. If Sodalamuthu Thevan has got a dozen injunctions or arrests before judgment to his credit—why! his friend and opponent Peyandi Thevan has an equal number also or at least might have and if he has not, why, he has himself to thank for it. I do not think therefore, philosophically speaking, there is anything to be said against. It is a case of six on the one hand and half-a-dozen on the other and if one or two *sick* judgment-debtors (invariably sent to jail) complain—well—who-ever, ever heard of any judgment-debtor who did not complain? The world is too full of grievances (imaginary and real) and it is not to be expected that a philosophic judge would look up and make exceptions however deserved they may be. But it is a true saying that even “Homer Nods”—Once indeed, it *was thought* that “his honour” did look up. The occasion was so historic in the annals of the court that “fond memory even now still loves to linger on the scene”: but that is a different story.

(To be continued).



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