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# THE SCHOLAR

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO  
LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ART.

Vol. I

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## JOINT EDITORS

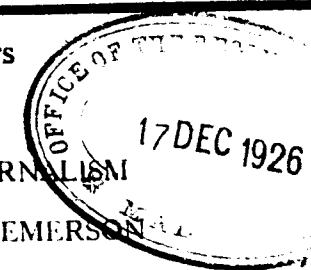
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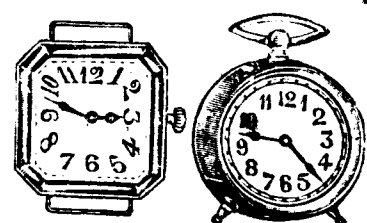
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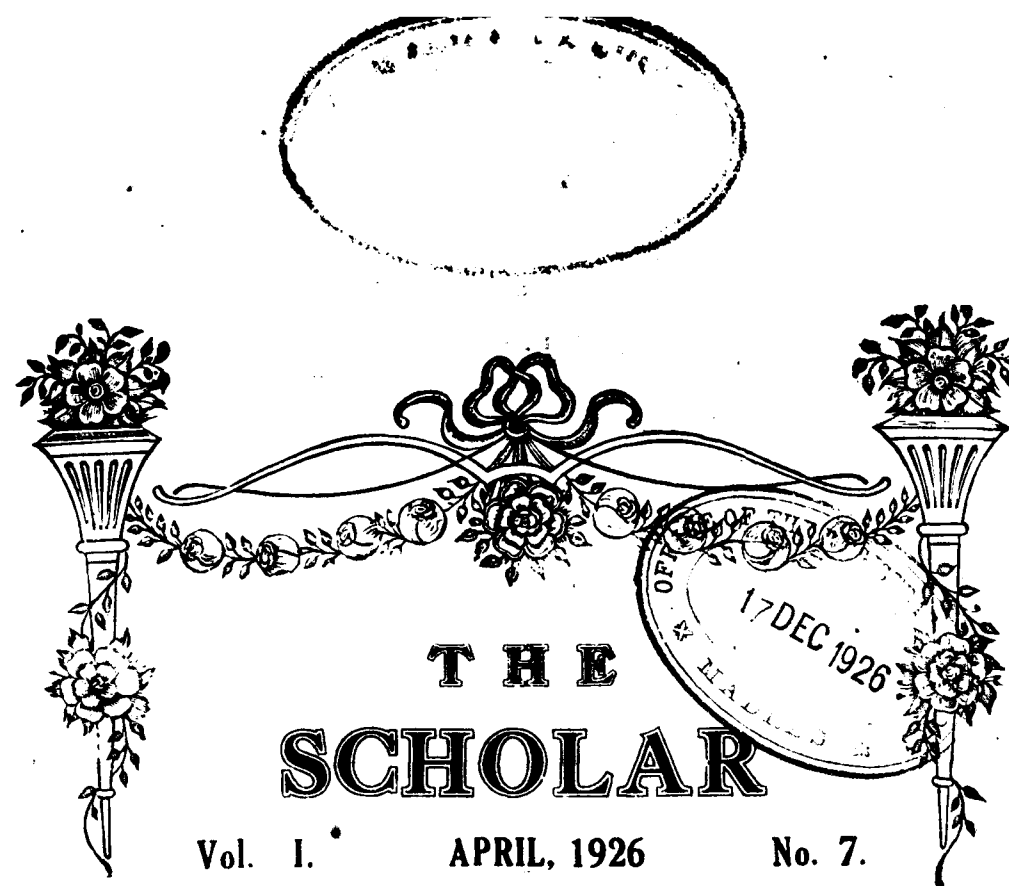
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## Studies in Journalism

(By a Student of Journalism)

### VI. INTERVIEWING.

WHILE dealing with reporters and reporting, reference was made to the qualifications and nature of the work of the reporting staff who formed such an important entity in the newspaper office. But there is one other province where all his tact, resourcefulness, enterprise and intelligence are called into full play, and that is in the realm of interviewing. Within recent years, interviewing as an art has become a distinct feature of modern journalism. It had its origin in that land of wonderful and ever new innovations, America, where it has been developed to its utmost possible extent—nay even if reports are true, with scant respect to the demands of justice, accuracy and fair-play. We are told that the American Journalist is so fond of this method of gathering news, that he often-times does not scruple to punish a person who, for one reason or other refuses to give

But, while it does not fall to the lot of the reporter to do the regular interviewing on all occasions, he has nevertheless to be a good interviewer if he wants to be a good reporter. For even in his daily, routine duty of gathering news, the element of interviewing plays an important part. Whether it is an accident that he has to report or a function that he has to record, the reporter has to secure the details for constructing his story through the

The next step is for the reporter to equip himself for the task by understanding something about the person to be interviewed and considerably much more on the topic about which he wishes him to speak. Indeed the success of an interview

depends very largely on the way in which the reporter approaches the gentleman to be interviewed, and he who trusts himself to the inspiration of the moment to start the conversation is only making a bid to make an ass of himself and hopelessly minimises the chances of getting all the information he wants. His proper course would be to prepare a list of questions to be asked and use it intelligently adjusting it to the lines of argument and the trend of the conversation. At the same time, he cannot too sufficiently guard against the possibility of seeming to parade his knowledge by becoming too personal. This would naturally exasperate the gentleman interviewed and provoke him to send the reporter about his business to advertise his knowledge to other folks.

Having gained all the information required, the next process is to put the interview into the proper form. If the reporter has taken his notes verbatim in shorthand, the task becomes easy enough. But if, on the other hand, he has taken down only the main points, he has to be exceedingly careful and he must exercise all his memory and keep as much as possible to the thoughts and actual expressions of the person interviewed. Not only that, he has to exercise plenty of discrimination in deciding which parts of the conversation are to be left out and which to be incorporated. For, it is quite likely that in the course of the private conversations words or sentiments might have escaped, which the gentleman interviewed did not want to find their way into print. The circumspection and accuracy to details is necessary as much in the interests of the interviewer and the person interviewed. Otherwise, much unpleasantness will be caused, and the necessity of publishing contradictions or corrections will be forced on the Editor, which will have its own unpleasant repercussions on the poor reporter concerned. The practice of submitting the report of the interview to the person interviewed, before publication, for his approval would obviate much of the dissatisfaction and misunderstanding which follows inaccurate and misleading reports, provoking some important people to refuse to be interviewed at all.

In cases, where the object of the interview is not a considered statement on a public question, but is a matter which is delicate,

the task of the interviewer is rendered immensely difficult. For, in such cases, directly he shows his threatening note book and pencil, the person interviewed gets frightened or is put on his guard and in either case, it is next to impossible to pump out any information from the gentleman. In these cases, therefore, all his ingenuity, resourcefulness and memory is put to the test. For, not only has he to make him speak by tact and persuasion, but also remember and record from his memory what he has said after the interview is over. This difficulty and the occasions leading to it are fortunately few and far between in our country. But it is very real in America, where the overzealous journalist has invited it on his head by his own indiscretion.

As in other countries, the interview has become a regular feature of our newspapers. But it is in its very crude form, and is generally put in the form of question and answer. Consequently, the report is most often dry and uninteresting. And yet, by a judicious use of the personal element and a moderate knowledge of casting it in the proper mould, it could easily be made a living, attractive thing! The level of interview reporting is pitifully low in our country, and it will probably continue to be so, so long as interviewing is left to be done by the half-educated, overworked and ill-paid reporting staff. Those in the higher rungs of the journalistic ladder have so far disdained to dabble in this highly interesting branch of newspaper work and only when they begin to try their hand at it will the tone of interview reporting be considerably improved. Then only will the interview report become, as it ought to be, a live thing, a human document and not merely a string of stupid questions and answers with a bit of information thrown here and there. Reading the interview reports by some of the best master minds of the West, one is left with an extreme longing for the day when we also will have journalists among us who could write out interviews as does for example, Wickam Steed in his "Review of Reviews"



# Ralph Waldo Emerson

(By P. V. Aghoram Iyer, B. A., B. L.)

(Concluded from previous issue)

**T**AKE a most unattractive subject like politics, which to an idealist like Emerson must be very bad matter indeed for treatment. But even here he doesn't falter or fail to tell us of the great hopes or aspirations for a better tomorrow which after all constitute the goal towards which every state is moving. But he must have his inimitable striking figures by which to convey the sense. "Humanity" says he "is priding itself, that its civilisation has reached the noonday and meridian of splendour, but it is hardly at the cock-crowing or the morning star stage. Every actual state is corrupt; the rise of the wise man in a community is a sign that the state shall cease to be. The wise man is law unto himself and when he speaks, his words are myrrh and frankincense to mankind. He elevates thus the tone of the discussion of the theme. There have been hosts of writers who have written about greatness and great men. I have read Bacon's essay on Greatness and whatever the acuteness of the writer I must confess to having been disgusted with the calculating practicality of its suggestions. Various other writers have kindled the flame of human aspiration by presenting the theme to the attention of men. But I know no statement about greatness throughout the range of literature so profound, so far-reaching in its significance as this of Emerson namely the uses of great men are that they give us the promise that there shall be greater men after them. He always draws the difference between the practical mind, that is lost in the sundry details of life and the intuitive mind that sees in a flash the great fundamental truths and does all to live up to them. He commends to the attention of cultured men this latter type of mind. "The business of life," says he "in his essay on Montaigne the Sceptic is largely to generalise, to resist the usurpation of particulars, to behave what the years and centuries say as against the hours. He attaches not the least little value to forms and conventions but would judge life by the sterling work of the liver. Look what he

says about prayer. "Prayer to private ends is meanness and theft. It is a contemplation of the facts of life from the lightest points of view." Look again at his idea of salvation. "Heaven doesn't deal with us on a representative principle. Souls are not saved in bundles. The question that is asked of each man is, is it well with thee personally?" The apparent isolation of poets and saints has been the subject of carping comment at the hands of pseudo reformers of society, but much as he loves the progress of society towards higher ends, he is not prepared to leave the poet and the saint undefended. In his view, "they retire to privacy to ends the most catholic and universal." It is very usual in common parlance to speak of downright originality of thought as though it existed in its absolute form in the world, and if a man by misfortune replenished his mind with the thoughts of others, it is his lot to be condemned as being affected by the vice of quotation. But Emerson clears the mind of much of its cant on this question when he says "every man in a sense is a quotation from his ancestors."

What can again be more true of average life than this statement "our faith comes only in moments; our vice is habitual." He has a clear and perfect grasp of the inter relations of the lay body and the canonical body. "The virtues of society are the vices of saints." Of self-reliance he speaks as the central virtue of life. "He that loseth wealth loses something; he that loseth a friend loseth more; but he that loseth courage loseth all," and these words of his which prove to us the utter sanity of his judgment and the sobriety of his mind link themselves in my memory with the great words of an Eastern Thinker who in grading the qualities and virtues that deserve admiration and respect, places wealth, old age, lineage, learning and character in the ascending order. Of the value of the great man to society both Carlyle and Emerson have written in almost the same strain. Carlyle fought a good fight with the scientists and historians of his time on the relation of greatness to the environments. He was concerned to prove that greatness was almost unrelated to the Environment. He had taken himself too seriously in promulgating the doctrine of messengers of God being sent to set right the affairs of men. But Emerson brushes aside the

controversy, though his conviction of the great man's power to mould human destiny is expressed with equal emphasis and certainty. "An institution is the lengthened shadow of a great man. Every reform was once a private opinion." In his essay on "Man the Reformer" he speaks with a voice which has the ring of prophecy and with a mind gazing eagerly into the future. "Our History has been the history of our meanness, hatreds and strife. We have not tried the influence of love on human affairs a general acceptance by Christendom of the doctrine of love would change this world. Love would put a new face on this weary old world which has been torn by strife and by hate. It is better to work on institutions by the sun than by the wind and so on." This passage gives us the living faith of Emerson. In the essay on woman he has written with rare insight and with absolute freedom from bias and pettiness. He quotes the saying ascribed to Coleridge which shows that the Scholar believed that women instinctively arrived at correct judgments. To a woman who gave a correct conclusion on a subject and proceeded to give the reason therefore, Coleridge remarked. "But madam, allow me to find the reason for myself" Man affects life by his will and intelligence and woman by her sentiment. In this ship of life man is the rudder and woman is the sail. "There is no career that woman will not give up for the life of the emotions and for being a mother."

On war which has provoked the thought of philosophers, he writes with singular clearness and level-headedness. The acute German philosopher Nietzsche makes exaggerated estimates of the value of war as a factor in human progress. It is a biological necessity. It is a process of weeding out in the world. Tolstoy whose heart ached for the follies of men spent the vials of his wrath on this unchristian institution. Christianity was a symbol of love and peace. War among nations professing christianity was heathenish and sacrilegious. There are other pacifists among men of letters who have levelled their battery of arguments against it. Carlyle has drawn most heart rending pictures of it.

Though he raises his voice against this savage butchery he is good enough to notice the virtues that have been incidentally promoted by it. The finest samples of valour and heroism are

the products of war. But he is not slow to point out that war has disfigured the earth too long and men should do all they can to end it, if not so, at least to mitigate its horrors. In no age has the glory of travelling, been so highly expatiated upon as in ours, when the ends of the world have been brought together, means of communication have advanced beyond the wildest dreams of men and the motives that actuate the traveller are so sinister and subtle: But Emerson is aware of the great mischief wrought by aimless travelling; he raises his note of warning against it and tells men that if they travel into other lands without any aim they will often travel away from themselves. Men have never so constantly exercised their thought on any theme as on immortality. It is the constitutional belief of man. But the popular misconceptions about the matter have been very curious and illogical. The imperfections of the present life being admitted by mankind to be inevitable, men have looked forward to that blessed state after death in some heaven of their dream and of their religious studies. A little reflection shows how absurd and baseless that conception should be. A state of thought transcendence attained in this very existence enters into our conception and we at last find that to be the very essence of the idea of immortality. It is this thought that Emerson tersely expresses in saying "It is not duration of life that is of consequence; but it is the intensity of experience."

Emerson exalted rectitude in conduct above religious enthusiasm. He was the first great writer of modern times to assert the claims of religion upon the attention of men; in its universal forms. He has indicated the possibilities of an universal religion based on rectitude taking the place of churches and theologies of old times. "Our religion is geographical, belongs to one time and place, respects and mythologises some one time and place, and person and people. So it is occasional. It visits us only on some exceptional and ceremonial occasion, on a wedding or a baptism, on a sickbed or at a funeral or perhaps on a sublime national victory or a peace celebration. But that to be sure is not the religion of the universal, unsleeping providence, which lurks in trifles, in still small voices, in the secrets of the heart and our closest thoughts, as efficiently as in our proclamations and successes".

Emerson wrote a book in 17 chapters on English Traits. He visited English soil twice. He became acquainted with her literary celebrities, thinkers, politicians, divines etc. He travelled also into the Continent. In England he closely observed all the parts of the social machine. He studied her religion art, literature and everything. He devotes a chapter to every subject. I am certain some of his opinions will be rejected by Englishmen. His estimates of England's religion, art, literature etc. will be considered to be wrong. I give below a few impressions that have remained on my mind for what they are worth to the Indian reader. I shall give as nearly as possible his own words. "The English are impious in their scepticism of a theory, but they kiss the dust before a fact. They are incapable of an inutility. They dare not believe in a god that does not respect English utility. Their poetry is iron raised to white heat. It smells of corn and cattle. It is common sense inspired. It gives a distant hint of their steam whistle. Their writers are municipal in their aims; they ask us to accept London and reject the World. The whole island is a roaring volcano of fate, of taxes, of free trade and poor laws".

Robert Louis Stevenson spoke of his daily course of studies in Boswell's life of Dr. Johnson as his bible; The essays of Emerson have been to me my bible both in the difficulties of my mind and in the perplexities of my moral being I have plunged headlong into his pages and never in vain. To the drooping spirit of man who may become fatigued by the exertions of his daily life and dragged down by the tendencies of physical nature his words are in the nature of a cordial. To him who is in pursuit of a culture whose dimensions are universal, his is the only book which equips the mind with thoughts which strike us by their depth and intensity, as by their breadth and range. No one has so persistently set eyes on the affairs of men from the mountain tops. His spirit soared as he wrote. He stood for truth won by strife and struggle. He protested against half-views and half-men. He pleaded for sanity and level-headedness, but not at the expense of vision and insight. He related all achievements to the sovereign spirit of man and looked for an understanding which did not dazzle but domesticated the sense of men. He hoped to see ideals turn into living actualities, and the actual raised to the level of the ideal. Wherever men value something higher than material good he will be read and his words will be remembered.

## A Study of Tagore's 'Fruit Gathering'

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B. A., B. L., Sub-Judge.

SOME of the most valuable poems in this volume give us a vivid idea of those noble qualities and divine impulses of the mind that lead us to the attainment of God. One of the first higher qualities required is a proper attitude towards life. In the forty-sixth poem we have a note of poignant sorrow which is at once personal and cosmic. The poet refers to his own bereavement and at the same time indicates that our bereavements should soften our hearts towards all and lead us nearer God. He says, "I offer to Thy service those flowers of my love that remained in the bud when she waited for them to open". The next two poems give us in one flash of inner revelation all the diviner verities and assurances of life that are brought home to our hearts in the numerous noble stanzas of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. In the forty-eighth poem the poet says: "Bring beauty and order into my forlorn life, woman, as you brought them into my house when you lived.....Then open the inner door of the shrine, light the candle, and let us meet there in silence before our God".

The poet shows to us in his own inimitable way all that the body means for us and what is the true spiritual attitude to be taken in regard to it. The entirety of cosmic forces has been in operation to give the gift of the body to us so that we might dedicate it to God. As a beautiful sanscrit verse says,

विचित्रा देहसंपत्तिरीश्वराय निवेदितुम् ।

In the seventy-second poem the poet says: "The joy ran from all the world to build my body. ....She is my bride;—she has lighted her lamp in my house". In the next poem he says; "My eyes are washed with delight like the dewbathed morning, and life is quivering in all my limbs like the sounding strings of the lute".

But the full stature of the soul is attained not in enjoyment but in renunciation. Many are the poems in this volume that make us realise in a poetic way and with all the subtle charm of suggestion this truth of truths which Indian Philosophy and religion have been proclaiming to the world from the dawn of time *तेनात्मकेन मुजीयाः* (Realise and enjoy the essence of things by renunciation) The tenth poem describes to us the nature of renunciation. The eleventh poem tells us that the enjoyments of life really choke the higher life and that the dedication of them to the service of the lord instead of to our self-gratification is their true glory and our true ennoblement. He says "It decks me only to mock me, this jewelled chain of mine.....could I but offer it to your hand, my Lord, I would be saved. Take it from me, and in exchange bind me to you with a garland, for I am ashamed to stand before you with this jewelled chain on my neck". In the thirteenth poem he says, "He who throws his door open and steps onward receives your greeting". The twenty-eighth poem gives us this great idea in the true accent of the gods and I quote it in full.

"Time after time I came to your gate with raised hands, asking for more and yet more. You gave and gave, now in slow measure, now in sudden excess. I took some, and something I let drop, some lay heavy on my hands, some I made into playthings and broke them when tired; till the wrecks and the hoard of your gifts grew immense, and the ceaseless expectation wore my heart out.

Take, oh take—has now become my cry. Shatter all from this beggar's bowl; put out this lamp of the unfortunate watcher; hold my hands, raise me from the still gathering heap of your gifts into the bare infinity of your uncrowded presence".

The same lofty and blessed spirit of renunciation run through the twenty-ninth, thirtieth, and thirty-second poems also. This spirit of renunciation means not quiescence, but energy of service for the extension of the empire of love. In the thirty-fifth poem he says: "From thee I have asked peace only to find shame. Now I stand before thee—help me to put on my armour!

Let hard blows of trouble strike fire into my life. Let my heart beat in pain, the drum of thy victory. My hands shall be utterly emptied to take up thy trumpet".

The same spirit animates the seventy-sixth poem also. In that poem the idea is taken to a still higher stage of spiritual emotion. A new and boundless rapture born of utter trust and simplicity and innocence results from the attained mood of love and service and renunciation. Tagore says:

"I sat alone in a corner of my house thinking it too narrow for any guest but now when its door is flung open by an unbidden joy I find there is room for thee and for all the world.

I walk upon tip-toe, careful of my person, perfumed and adorned—but now when a glad whirlwind has overthrown me in the dust I laugh and roll on the earth at thy feet like a child".

The last two poems in the volume bring before our inner vision the true glory and blessing awaiting the life of fulfilled love and service and renunciation. Tagore says:

"But the stars are singing the love-song of the eternal to a face sweet with shame and suffering.

The door has been opened in the lonely chamber, the call has sounded, and the heart of the darkness throbs with awe because of the coming tryst".

Tagore points out further that another great quality of the soul that leads us straight by an easy and quick and gracious path to God-head is trustful and humble love as opposed to the narrow and often blind lanes of knowledge. He says in his sixteenth poem:

"They knew the way and went to seek you along the narrow lane, but I wandered abroad into the night for I was ignorant.

I was not schooled enough to be afraid of you in the dark, therefore I came upon your doorstep unaware.

The wise rebuked me and bade me be gone for I had not come by the lane.

I turned away in doubt, but you held me fast, and their scolding became louder every day."

The sublime Upanishads have given the same teaching to us in the heavenly Sanscrit tongue in a stanza which I have already quoted above.

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।  
यमेवैष वृणुते ते नलस्यस्तस्यैव आत्मा विवृणुते तमस्वा ॥

(Katoopanishad)

Another great godward quality is self surrender in a spirit of humility. The seventeenth and seventy-eighth poems describe it very vividly. In the former he says:

"I brought out my earthen lamp from my house and cried 'Come, children, I will light your path!,'

The night was still dark when I returned, leaving the road to its silence, crying, "Light me, O Fire! for my earthen lamp lies broken in the dust!"

In the latter poem he says:

"To all things else you give, from me you ask". The thirty-third poem is of special importance as it sums up in a brief and beautiful manner the Godward qualities of the soul as contrasted with the vain glitter of worldly talents that may make for worldly success and even imperial supremacy but are really only "coloured delusions and dreams". The real blessedness of life consists in perfecting the godward qualities of the soul. The poet says:

"When I thought I would mould you, an image from my life for men to worship, I brought my dust and desires, and all my coloured delusions and dreams.

When I asked you to mould with my life an image from your heart for you to love, you brought your fire and force, and truth, loveliness and peace".

Tagore sings in various poems the value and glory of quiet contemplation as one of the means of the attainment of God-love and God-realisation. The beautiful poems 'To Night' in this volume bring out this truth very well. He says in the twentieth poem: "Make me thy poet, O night, veiled night!

Take me up on thy chariot without wheels, running noiselessly from world to world, thou queen in the palace of the time, thou darkly beautiful.....

Make me their poet, O night, the poet of thy fathomless silence".

In the twenty-second poem he says; "you will play on it the music of midnight when the lonely crescent moon wanders among the stars".

The twenty-third poem describes the outer vision of the variety of life and the inner vision of the unity of life.

"The poet's mind floats and dances on the waves of life amidst the voices of wind and water.

Now when the sun has set and the darkened sky draws down the sea like drooping lashes upon a weary eye it is time to take away his pen, and let his thoughts sink into the bottom of the deep amid the eternal secret of that silence."

The twenty-fourth and the twenty-fifth poems describe respectively the quiet hush and self-poised rapture of contemplation and the glad radiance and rapture of the sunrise of God-vision that is the fruit of such contemplation.

"Bare your forehead, waiting for the first blessing of light, and sing with the bird of the morning in glad faith."

The nature of the love of God which is the result and fruit of such a life of godliness and renunciation and contemplation and which sweetens the whole of life and makes our life a blessing to us and to all is described in various beautiful poems in this volume. In the sixty-third poem Tagore utters the following prayer:

"Send me the love that would soak down into the centre of being, and from there would spread like the unseen sap through the branching tree of life, giving birth to fruits and flowers."

Send me the love that keeps the heart still with the fulness of peace".

In the twenty-sixth poem the poet contrasts the unappeasable and unsatisfying hunger of the night of worldly desire with the morning radiance of the light of the love of God. The victory of the Light Divine overcoming the night of death is celebrated in the thirty-ninth poem. The very ecstasy of realisation is described in the fortieth poem where Tagore says:

"My body will be one with you, my heart will be caught in the whirls of your frenzy, and the burning heat that was my life will flash up and mingle itself in your flame."

Yet another poem—the forty-first poem brings out the joy of realisation by another vivid image—that of the Boatman crossing strange and agitated seas, "with a white rose in his hand and a song on his lips", to meet his beloved who dwells on the blessed shore "watching alone at night with her lamp burning."

These images of the human soul and its high destiny are turned over and over in the poet's mind till all their beauty and variety of charm are disclosed to the vision of our souls. In the sixty-first poem the soul is described as a bride preparing to meet the Eternal Bridegroom.

Tagore says:

"The child sitting in the dust is your destined bride; her play will be stilled and deepened into love."

In the fifty-seventh poem the poet shows how the human soul is delighted not by the wreaths of art and the songs of poesy, or by the sweet though fleeting sense-enjoyments, or by the conquest of the world, but by the attainment of the Beloved. The fifty-ninth poem is full of the passionate and anguished longing for the touch of God or the intimacy of divine communion and the realisation that the human soul attains its highest glory and joy in offering its fulness of love and endowment to God. The poet says: "There is an anguish in my heart for the burden of its riches not given to you."

It is this state of the soul that eventually leads it to the beatific vision which illumines the heart and transfigures the entire life of man. In the sixty-fifth, sixty-sixth and eighty-third poems we have a beautiful description of such transfiguration of life. Tagore says in them:

"The flowers have opened in hedges and gardens, and may be there is one heart that has found in them this morning the gift that has been on its voyage from endless time."

"The flute steals his smile from my friend's lips and spreads it over my life."

"I feel that all the stars shine in me. The world breaks into my life like a flood:

The flowers blossom in my body. All the youthfulness of land and water smokes like an incense in my heart; and the breath of all things plays on my thoughts as on a flute."

The soul becomes full of the rapture of Godrealisation which is expressed in the seventy-fifth poem.

"It was only the other day that I came to your earth, naked and nameless, with a wailing cry.

Today my voice is glad, while you, my lord, stand aside to make room that I may fill my life."

*(To be continued)*

Knowledge is infinite, and the man most learned in human estimation is just as far from knowing anything as he ought to know it, as the unlettered peasant.

\* \* \*

Of all the pulpits from which human voice is ever sent forth, there is none from which it reaches so far, as from the grave.

\* \* \*

Don't fancy that you will lower yourselves by sympathy with the lower creatures; you cannot sympathise rightly with the higher, unless you do with those.

\* \* \*

The ennobling difference between one man and another,—between one animal and another—is precisely in this, that one feels more than another.

*Ruskin*



# The Adventure of Life

By L. V. Ramaswamy Iyer, M. A., B. L.

**T**HE Rajput in the story leaves his own native land, crossing the realms of the seven kings, to that land where reigns no king.

From the beginning of time has this happened and till the end of the ages will this continue to happen.

In villages and towns trade flourishes, people prosper and quarrels rage; but who is our Rajput of all time leaves his native land in quest of the adventure.

Why does he so?

Water in the tanks stagnates there alone, water in the drains flows there only; but neither the water that falls on mountain heights nor the water that is charged in the clouds can contain itself. Even so, who could bind down the king's son to his land. How could he contain himself? Seeing the distant shores of the unknown land, he turns not his eyes backwards, but crosses the seven seas and the thirty-three rivers.

Man is born again and again as an infant, and time and again he hears the same old story.

When flame of the newly-lit lamp is still, children flock round their aunties and with hands pressed against their cheeks listen attentively to this time-old tale and each of them thinks in his or her own mind "I am he—the Rajput of the story."

In the midst of the distant ocean lies the mystic island and there in Daityapuri is the imprisoned princess who waits to be rescued from her thralldom.

When all else in the world were struggling for wealth, for fame and for comfort, our Rajput prince has set out on the adventure to rescue the princess. The waves of the sea rose mountain-high in anger, boats were scarcely to seek far and near, but yet the Rajput prince was intent on his quest.

This is the first allegory of man and last one too. Generation after generation of infants hears from their aunties and grandams the same old, old story of the imprisoned princess, the unfavourable sea, and the invisible giant; and the little auditors rapt in the story, make the resolve to accomplish the impossible.

Outside, in the darkness of the wood, the rains patter perpetually the cicada chirps unceasingly, and the little child with its fingers pressed against its cheeks thinks of accomplishing the adventurous feat of a journey to Daityapuri.

## II

In front of the limitless sea, like a blue dream stirred by waves; on the distant shore the royal prince dismounted from his horse.

But when his legs touched the ground, what magic was it that all of a sudden showed itself there?

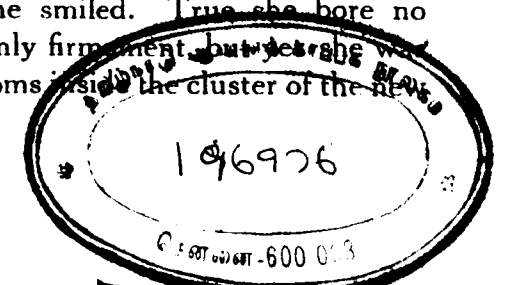
The metropolis city lay before him. Trams were running busily. The round was impassable for the crowd of office cars hurrying to and fro. The flute-seller was triumphantly playing on a flute in the midst of an admiring crowd of naked boys.

And was this the dress of the royal prince? Was this his resplendent garb? With an unbuttoned coat on his body, a dhoti not over-clean covering him, and tattered shoes sticking to his feet, the youth from the village was footing his existence in the city. College student as he was, he managed to earn his boarding-fees with a little tuition work.

And where was the imprisoned princess?

Yes. She was immured within the four walls of the neighbouring house.

True, her complexion was not like the Champa flower, and precious gems fell not when she smiled. True she bore no likeness to the stars on the heavenly firmament, but yet she was like that nameless flower that blooms inside the cluster of the new year's grass.



The mother-less girl of a marriageable age had been fondled by her father who waited for a suitable bride-groom for her, while all the world and his wife rose up against him in carping blame.

The father had suddenly died, and the orphan girl was taken over to her uncle's house in the metropolis.

At last a suitable bride-groom appeared. His purse was large and his age too was not small. Surrounded by grandsons and grand-daughters, his power and position knew no bounds.

The uncle said "The girl will now be happy." But alas! On the day of the betrothal the girl disappeared from her uncle's house,.....and simultaneously, the student from the village in the neighbouring house too.

Man proposed,....but Love disposed.

News came a little later that they—the student from the village and the girl—had secretly solemnised their marriage. Agreement of caste or of stars there was none, but of agreement of mind there was no lack.

The whole world pursed up its lips and blamed.

The millionaire—he who might have been pitchforked to the girl but for her dash for freedom—vowed to give a gold throne to his favourite gods if they brought damnation to the daring village-youth who snatched away his coveted prize.

In the law courts, learned vakils and anicient witnesses grown grey in the atmosphere of quibbling, converted night into day. What a miracle that was.

The day offerings and sacrifices were made to the favourite gods, churches were blown and all were happy when the wise remark went round; "Kali Kal indeed. But justice is still awake."

### III

Many a scene followed. The boy came back from the jail whither the world had sent him for his grievous crime, but the long, long road of which he had heard in the story of the

Rajput prince and the imprisoned princess was not yet near its end. How long and lonely it was. And in the darkness how many a time he had heard the gruntings of the giant —hau-u-ma-u-pa-u—as in the story, waiting expectantly to devour man.

The road was endless but the journey did draw to its close. And when the adventurer neared at the end of his journey, there was none to attend on him except one merciful God and that was YAMA Himself.

When the magic wand of this God touched him, what miracle was it that happened then.

The metropolis melted away from the knight-errant's view, and the dream of Life too came to an end.

In a moment there again appeared the Rajput prince; on his forehead were the princely signs of eternity. He would break open the doors of Daityapuri still, and free the imprisoned princess from her loneliness.

Age after age infant children listen to the story of the adventurer prince who left his land in quest of the great feat.

In various guises does this Rajput appear in human story, but outside human annals he has only one form,— he is always the Rajput Knight.

Beauty without grace is the hook without the bait. Beauty without expression, tires.

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

The manly part is to do, with might and main, what you can do.

He who loves goodness harbours angels, reveres reverence, and lives with God.

Trust men, and they will be true to you; treat them greatly; and they will show themselves great.

Emerson.

# The Clerk

[Adapted from an Article in Marathi]

By R. L. Rau.

**H**E was a clerk! And what interest could there be in the life and story of such a man? He was not a soldier who had been to war; nor was he the hero of a novel, who thrills the world around him with his deeds of adventure and daring. He was, on the other hand, to put it very simply, a clerk treading his lone-some way.

He had none to call his own. In one of the endless lanes of a city, on the top floor of a mean-looking chawl, he lived in a small miserable room all by himself. No rays of the bright, cheery morning sun ever reached that little window, and it was nearly dark too.

In the centre of that room, a torn mat was spread over the whole length of the floor; and on the mat was a foul mattress, the dirty, soiled cotton peeping out from its corners; this was supposed to be the clerk's bed. One kick, as soon as he got up from his bed, sent the mattress flying into a corner; another brought it back again, ready to be used, during the night; an old dictionary served the purpose of a pillow. Cigarette ends and empty carcases of match-boxes lay strewn all around; in another corner was a cheap tin trunk; it contained all the clerk's belongings; and on a knobby nail over-head, hung his only coat; and an empty bucket and a filthy tinpot completed the furniture.

And in this sordid, mean dwelling he lived—the clerk—for twenty years. He was the sole proprietor of all that sordidness and want! No gentle sound of laughter, no ripple of a glad smile had ever disturbed that awful loneliness of the man! No child had ever been seen to wander about, with its big wondering eyes, no neighbour had crossed his threshold; and thus he lived, neglected and neglecting the warm bright, world around him.

Every day, like the little cat that comes home regularly in the evening for its customary dish of milk, the life of this clerk had assumed such a regularity: every-thing was fixed and

machine-like—no screws to be loosened; no wheels to go astray. At six in the morning he left his bed, and went directly to the common wash stand; at seven, he was found in a restaurant, at the end of the lane. He placed the umbrella always in a particular corner, and sat always on the identical chair; if the chair was fronting the shop window, he would turn it back again, and would sit facing the wall. He had rarely anything but a cup of tea, and never in the course of these twenty years had he ever been noticed to have ordered an extra.

At half past nine, he was at the hotel. It took him ten minutes to finish his meal, and no man had ever heard him talk during that solitary meal, or ask for anything special by way of a change.

His office was somewhere in the busy part of the town. Each day saw him walking along the same road, along the same watered footpath. In the office, too, he was silent and alone. From eleven o'clock up to five in the evening he sat without moving and with his quill running along the fat glossy pages of the Ledger. After the office he would return home by way of the beach. He sat on the same seat every evening, with his back to the sea and watching the ice-cream sellers. The white dusty umbrella lay on the gravel by him. He was never known to have used that umbrella. Sometimes, as he walked home, he gave a long sigh; and the sunken eyes were filled with some strange inexpressible sorrow.

But his city was a busy place; and who cares for the tears of a clerk?

Yet there he was; toiling day after day, unfriended, alone and miserably poor. In the long star-lit nights, when the world outside made merry, this man lay upon his bed and looked at the wood in the ceiling; for hours he would gaze into that blankness and solitude.

Twenty more years passed away. He had continued to live as before. The old restaurant had disappeared; his hotel-keeper too, was no more. He had therefore to change his eating-place and the restaurant. These were the two events in his life, otherwise, everything was there as it was, when he had begun his life forty years ago.

The mean, sordid room was his still; he worked in the self-same office and returned home by the same footpath. But the city had changed: there were trams and motors now, and they rushed past the old man each day, in their mad career; but he still remained a clerk—only he had grown older and weaker. The body had begun to decay; and the disease had crept in. In the dull silence of the chawls his neighbours heard him coughing and rattling his throat; but no physician ever visited him and no medicines cured that silent suffering. Yet he went on..... The days sped away. He grew weaker still. Sometimes a great weariness would come upon him, and he would find that he had to rest himself by the lamp-post, when these terrible fits of coughing came upon him. In the office too things were not so comfortable as they used to be. He could no longer write that steady, beautiful, semi-upright hand which was his pride in the days of long ago. The fingers sometimes refused to work and sad errors crept in. The fierce-looking head clerk began to grumble and to abuse the old man. He called him stupid, he called him a negligent, useless nobody.

To all these taunts the poor old clerk had nothing to say; he simply looked at his young superior through his sad and weary eyes, and left the room very softly indeed.

But somehow, a great tenderness came upon that lonely man. He wanted company now. He wanted the children to come to him, to hear their child talk and play with him. But how could he ever do it—he who had never called a little child to him, he who had never smiled at a bairn's word? So he sat silent again.

But still, there used to come to his room, sometimes of an evening, a dirty little boy, and he had been seen wandering in the old man's rooms; but he could not talk, and excepting the two bits of chewing sweet the boy received, the old man had nothing to say or to do. Sometimes too the aged lady next door used to take pity on his wretched, solitary condition, and would send to him, when he was ill, a cup of her own medicinal concoction, his room too was swept and kept clean nowadays; but he did not know that.

And thus the days passed away. Long sleepless nights fell to the lot of the aged clerk. He could not now even stir out for

his customary cup of tea. The office ceased to exist, and became a thing of the past. New faces, new hands occupied his place and bowed to the manager; and the work went on without him.

And so also did the world; it cared little for his loneliness and suffering; on the other hand, it laughed him gaily in the face and went on.....

One cold winter morning, the sun was shining warm and clear on the long strip of the galleries of the chawl. It was Sunday too. And the men were at home; the children were out playing, and the women were coming in after the day's work.

Somebody suddenly remembered the old man; yes; they all remembered him too, on that crisp warm winter morning, and wondered at the silence about the old man's room. They remembered they had missed his terrible, long-drawn, coughing overnight.

The old lady, who sometimes attended to the poor clerk, softly opened the door and went in. Alas! all was still. The clerk had at last gone home; only the crushed withered body lay there gaping in the morning sun, neglected to the last. The bucket, the tinpot, the trunk and all the familiar objects of the room were there; and only they had been the dumb companions of that unfortunate man!

They gathered together and attended to his funeral. The police came and took charge of his belongings. They removed the body from out of the soiled bed; some one took up the tattered dictionary and opened it out of curiosity.

There was in it a picture of a lively girl; and written in a dainty delicate handwriting underneath, was the word: "Farewell."

A peculiar fragrance spread through the sad room, from the withered flowers that lay upon the picture.

They bore his body along the very roads he had walked all these forty years, as a living man, on to the cremation ground, where the fires are kept burning.

The trams and the automobiles rushed past as usual; the shopmen sat in their places; the early milk vans rattled past in their usual style; the urchins were quarrelling for the lost marble in the gutters; the new clerk was opening the Ledger at the office; and the big world smiled on as usual!

*New India Supplement.*

# A South Indian Story

By S. N. Venkatesa Aiyar.

“**T**RUTH,” so runs the old adage is stranger than fiction and I may inform the reader that the following story is founded on truth. The characters and incidents connected with it occurred many many years ago when my out-look on life was all rosy and bright, in fact, all roses without thorns. It needs no saying that it then made a great impression on me, which even the sterner every-day contact with the world and the sordid realities of work-a-day existence has not succeeded in entirely obliterating from my mind. I hasten therefore to give the reader the benefit of it in the fervent hope that his sympathies added to mine may in some way, bring solace to the soul of Gangadhara vadhiar. May He rest in peace!

Gangadharavadhiar was the astrologer and purohit of the village of P—nestling in its shady groves on the banks of the Cauvery. He had a few patrimonial acres and also fortunately or rather un-fortunately a large number of daughters. Now it has always been a puzzling problem to me that from time out of mind, there has always been an antagonism, shall I say? deep-rooted Natural (or is it not hot un-natural) enmity between the acres and the “daughters”—at any rate with the daughters, “acres” tend to dis-appear in mortgages and out-right sales leaving behind a bitter memory of marriages. It was the idea of poor Gangadhara Vadhiar to leave behind to his only son at least some ancestral property, (he thought he owed this much for the peace of his father’s soul), but with his darling Kamalam aging thirteen and growing alarmingly day-by-day, the idea began to vanish and beat a hasty retreat.

Annakutti Aiyar, the great Mirasdar of P— was a widower on the shady side of sixty. He had a large number of those “acres” which our poor Gangadhara had *not* and from time immemorial his family had been the most influential in the village. By his first wife, Annakutti was fully blessed with a son and several daughters all decently married to vakils and vakil’s sons and the son Ram Dorai himself after sowing his wild oats in a

befitting manner, as became the only son of a rich house had settled down comfortably to a house-hold existence after partitioning himself with his father. This latter event of a partition happened some time after Mr. Annakutti lost his wife and there was much discussion among the wise-acres of the village as to the advisability even from a worldly point of view of such a step on the part of Ram Dorai, but then Annakutti was only too anxious to cut himself off from the ever accumulating debts of his prodigal and extravagant son and Mr. Vishakanta Iyer the lawyer or to speak more correctly the lawyer’s clerk (of course more than the lawyer, as you and I know, Dear Reader, well) Mr. Vishakanta Iyer had so managed affairs that he was able to achieve that proverbially supposed impossible task of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds viz., of pleasing both father and son in effecting the partition. It was not that Ram Dorai was not aware of the fact that his father was only too mortal at that age and that he may croak at any time and that a partition left the way open for any prospective land-hungry daughter—selling huskster who had all his eyes for these acres and none for the “age” but then the Nattukottai Chetties were so un-wise with their 36% that instead of lending more and biding their time they would even press for payment. The situation was, what may be styled in war language “an impasse”, but then the genius of Vishakanta Aiyar triumphed over all obstacles.

Vishakanta Iyer, the lawyer’s clerk,—the factotum—all rolled into one is one of those great personalities whose successful career in life requires the daily Miltonic “Vindication of the ways of God to man”—Nay! even the existence of God himself. Born on the banks of the river A—ti of very poor parents, he had even early in life showed his genius and versatility that his services were greatly in requisition for all the “forgeries” and perjuries and other connected matters that form so large a portion of the every day life of those parts. He prayed upon the poor, pandered to the rich and so cleverly pursued his worldly ways as to amass for himself a small fortune before he made his native place too hot for himself and sought a wider field for his ripening greatness by settling in the near provincial town of C— His inesti-

mable qualities had already found an admirer in a rising lawyer of that place who was only too glad to attach to himself the services of such a useful personality. If ever there was any profession which seemed by Divine Providence to be exactly created for the special benefit of Vishakanta Iyer, this new role fitted him to a T— (what ever this might mean). In this widened field of his activities, he very easily made his mark and such was his greatness that there were very few big families in the district that did not find some use for his talents. It was therefore no wonder, that our friend V— became also a “persona grata” with Mr. Annakutti Iyer, who happened to pick him up in town in connection with his legal matters.

#### Parrrt. (II)

Vishakandier's star was in the ascendent though Gangadhara Vadhyar, astrologer as he was—believed that his darling Kamalam's out-distanced all the rest, when he—united her hand in holy wedlock with Mr. Annakutti Iyer's. It is true no doubt that the hand which held his lovely daughter was “palsied with old age” but the acres “were solid” and as Vishakandier put it, it was a match, which at merest rub, as it were, lighted up the greatness of the Vadhyar's family and at a stroke put it on a par with the most wealthy and the most respectable of the village. Let Gangadhara think of this mere fact that he was the “Sambandhi” of Annakutti Iyer and what is more the prospective manager or even proprietor of his boundless acres. Further was not Kamalam's beauty set to advantage by the *pair of costly thodus* and which father's heart would not rejoice at this? We would not be doing justice to Gangadhar if we did not point out that it cost him many a pang to consent to this marriage arrangement but then poor man—what was he to do? Even if he sold all the remaining property it would not suffice to get any suitable match for his daughter and after all the horoscopes agreed perfectly and he himself had known of innumerable cases of marriages of the like sort, where the pair had lived happily, begot issues, and left a numerous progeny behind to bless them. At any rate, the horoscopes clearly pointed out that Kamalam was specially intended for Mr. A—and destiny was all powerful and not to be denied. As the father of his

daughter, he wished Kamalam long life, prosperity and many children. Such were the blessings of the kind father who had deluded himself to the belief that, by this marriage he was only working in his daughter's interest and carrying out the will of God. We will leave it to our readers to judge what sort of God it must be who was supposed to have such a will and also of a society which can approve of such marriages—but, whatever all these matters might be, Vishakandha Iyer had his commission from both sides for such an effective stroke of his genius.

Fain would we pass over this scene of woe and suffering but then, in justice, should not we, who were at the marriage be at the funeral also? Annakutti Iyer lay on his death bed. A sudden chillness brought on fever which as suddenly put an end to his early career. Ram Doarai was of course there and also was Gangadhara Vdhiyar and Kamalam. It would be instructive to see what was going on. Ram Doarai's whole attention was directed to securing the keys of his father's iron safe, where was kept his cash and documents; unfortunately for him, the old man always carried these precious keys attached to his waist chain and as the females as usual in such cases, were weeping about the dead-body he was darting here and there with this object in view. His sympathetic friends, with Vishkandha Iyer at their head were simply marvelling at his grief to which was attributed his strange mad behaviour. As for poor Gangadhara he was wholly stunned by this sudden blow and in a mechanical way he was engaged with horoscopes and was wondering what past “karma” could have brought this calamity on his head. Poor Kamalam whose loss was the greatest was the one who understood least about it. Her mother and sisters were beating their breasts and hugging and weeping and condoling with her but she, poor girl felt it all as some strange horrible night-mare. The bustle and deafening dim and boisterous weeping gave her no idea that to her life was practically over. The Sun, the Moon and stars may rise and set but they were not for her. The winds of heaven may blow about, but she was not destined to feel them. Hers was to be a life of misery and enforced widowhood and in a dazed way, she sat and wept in sympathy with her mother. Mean-time spurred on by our

amiable business like friend Mr. V. Aiyar.—Ram Dorai succeeded in getting the keys and making off with the cash and the documents. Poor Gangadhara, unversed as he was in ways of the world but who had sacrificed at the altar of worldly prosperity his daughter, did not know that even that little solace was already being taken away from him. Vishakandha Iyer played his part so well and kept him so engaged that he had no suspicions as to the foul play that was even then being enacted with the dead-man's corpse still in the house. We shall hurry over the scene. Suffice it to say that Ram Dorai passed off in the village as the model of a pious and dutiful son. The brahmins were sumptuously fed, good presents were made, four cows were gifted and the religious injunctions were all dutifully obeyed—while all the time Vishakandha Iyer made himself most useful in dropping broad and significant hints as to the disposal of the “acres” by sundry legal and other small formalities which his fertile brain could bring into action, of course for consideration.

Gangadhara felt himself no where in this game of legal warfare. He was losing all along the line. In our friend V—, Ram Dorai or Chellappa Iyer,—as the legal documents of the time styled him had an able and un-scrupulous general who had built his fortunes on the ruins of many poor people and was also a veteran of many such battles. But the most important thing of all—the sinews of war, poor G—was the most lacking in—lacking which (we may say,) he lacked *all*. The Goddess of Justice, most Divine as she is, has to be wooed only with the most precious metal. “Her doors are barred with Gold and open but to golden keys.” If our G—had only known what he was letting himself in for, when he petitioned to the authorities (God spare the word for a “poor man”) against Mr. Chellappa Iyer's driving his daughter out of possession of the house and lands, rifling the safe and making himself free with the cash and other moveables, he would have hesitated and debated much longer even than when he gave his daughter for these very things of life. Well; to make a long story short, the result was inevitable, as it always is especially when the *poor* are pitted against the *rich* in our beautifully ordered system of law courts. He was driven from one police officer to another, from the sub-magistrate to the Divisional magistrate, with the result that our

Vishakandier brought forth a blooming will in which the old man (Mr. A) left all his properties, (as every decent follower of the Manava Dharma Sastra should do) to his *jyeshta* and *eka Putra* (eldest and only son) religiously enjoining it on him to pay his devoted girl-wife the grand sum of Rs. 100 per year to eke out the bodily needs of this mundane existence till of course she joins him in his heavenly one. Needless to say that except the authorities every one even of that God—for-saken village was taken aback, but then the will was all ship-shape, there was even the pious wish expressed that Gangadhara and Kamalam would not for mere worldly ends raise trouble and disturb the happy soul of the deceased,—thrice happier I suppose in that he had made a provision for his wife. Of his signature there could be no doubt. Vishakandier, as a lawyer's clerk had scores of such of every one of his clients. These mere signatures saved time and trouble in the Law courts where the affidavits were badly needed all the live-long day and Vishakandier thought that Gangadhara must be mad to think of contesting such a will. On the other hand, according to V—aiyer such was the badness of Human Nature that his humanity in the provision of a liberal maintenance in the will was not even thought of. Kamalam's case was already sufficiently bad with her lack of funds; it only wanted the “will” to kill it past all redemption. For years Gangadhara heard nothing but the “will.” It was in the Criminal courts, the Revenue courts, in the Civil courts; in fact here, there and every-where. A justice-loving Tahsildar judicially approved of it. There is nothing like a patta inquiry for forming new and useful friendships; A Sub Divisional Magistrate solemnly blessed it in sec. 144 inquiry; he was too much a Brahmin and a follower of his great Progenitor Manu to believe that young widows can be safely trusted to so much property and lastly, and this is the “most un-kindest cut of all”, a retired District Judge and a C. I. E. to boot, who came all the way from Madras—he with his accumulated judicial wisdom and forensic eloquence dribbled out at the rate of Rs 1000-0-0 diem—he “could not understand how Annakutti Iyer could ever have thought dying without making such a will—to which weighty arguments delivered by such a high personage the moustachioed weather marking judge could only say “Aye.”

I who have seen with these very eyes poor Gangadhara walking to the court house with dust up to his knees (he could not afford a jutka) while the other party with the high placed lawyer from Madras motored it out with a paraphernalia of juniors, attendant clerks, noffussal seniors and juniors to such seniors—Well! I had thought it a miracle if the judge could even say otherwise. But the most serious thing was that, in running the gauntlet of these various law courts—and it is myrmidons—Gangadhar's godly and genial nature began to assume a change for one of cynicism and deep distrust of his fellow-beings. He became moody, silent and taciturn. The paternal "acres"—for saving which he sacrificed his Kamalam and all his property including the dwelling-house, the few jewels and other moveables—all disappeared down the ravenous jaws of the mighty giant of the law but all this was nothing in my opinion to his fast-vanishing belief in the existence of his maker. He had prayed, he had fasted and he had made vows and pilgrimages all in a just cause and what was the result? If God is in heaven it seems all is *not* right with the world. Here is his poor daughter, widowed, at thirteen and hounded out of home and property and forced to live upon the charity of those who had encompassed her ruin. It may be alright to talk of past karma and well it should be for those few subdued souls who in the midst of sorrow and suffering can find relief in such "Divine Philosophy" but for poor things of the flesh one is inclined to cry with the Hebrew Prophets "wherefore lookest thou on iniquity and those that deal treacherously and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" Any way whatever be the explanations for some of these unsolved problems of life the fact remains that the "will" was pronounced "valid and true" and Kamalam and her father lost their all. "And behold the tears of such as were oppressed and they had no comforter and on the side of the oppressors there was power wherefore I praised the dead [Ecclesiastics.]

Did I say Kamala lost her all? This is not entirely correct. Through all these years of litigation and misery, she had preserved the "diamond thodus" given her by her husband. That was the only relics of the past, which she distinctly under-

stood as some how being connected with her bondage and the subsequent troubles. Tears rolled down her cheeks as her memory took her to the period of the pre-thodu-days, the quite but small home of her father "with its dim religious air"—The cheerfulness and the sweat peace that pervaded it, all contrasted with the present, troubled houseless existence with her father eternally dangling about the Law courts—much to the loss of his moral and dignified virtues, her brothers all moody and dejected and the whole-air breathing of a rank poisonous nauseating fume of worldly discord and strife. After the Sub Court judgment her father who had fallen a prey to the gamble of the law courts was casting about for means to try a chance in higher courts and he thought that the thodus could go a little way towards the usefull purpose. Vishakandier, whose reward for his services to Chellappier was to be the marriage of his son with this big mirasdar's daughter, was keen in his regrets that those old time beautiful thodus could not be made to adorn the ears of his daughter-in-law. He was blaming himself for his cursed feelings of generosity and humanity and was scheming about for some legal chicanery which may effect this purpose. The third actor in our story, poor Kamalam, was thinking of putting an end to all her mortal sorrows by taking those diamonds with her and showing them to God, in heaven as a memento of her earthly life. She had enough of this earth and the justice of Man and her thoughts were drifting heaven-ward and of the means to reach her maker.

In Chellappier's house, there were sounds of revelry and big feasting. The marriage of his daughter to our friend Vishakandier's son was to take place on the morrow and Chellappier was deterained that it should be an unique event of the season. There were to be grand nautch parties. Chellappier had all his life been a staunch opponent of the modern "anti-nautch" principles and clubs as tending to destory the ancient fine arts and all his numerous friends including our justice loving Tahsildar and other officers were all assembled to grace the marriage occasian with their presence. The night was dark, but the big spacious hall, with its lighted coloured electric lamps (they were specially fitted for the event) was echoing to the sounds of

merriment and laughter as the day's feasting was going on : Meantime, a poor, shrivelled up, tired wreck of humanity in the shape of a girl of seventeen was hurrying on with her preparations to meet her God. The *thodus* were broken, the diamonds were pounded and mixed with plantains and our poor Kamalam hoping to find that peace of soul in heaven which was denied to her on earth, she swallowed the fatal thing. Dear Readers! I am only giving you a true story as I heard it. I only wish I were able to paint you all our Kamalam's thoughts at the time, how her mind wandered to her childhood when a sweet innocent child, she played at house-keeping with her poor companions, how she assisted her mother in her daily house-hold preparations—milk-ing the cow, churning the curd and making the dung-cakes, how she sat expectantly waited for her father in the night to come from the temple and give her the eatables of *prasad*; how her brothers and sisters used to dress her in the glorious (alas! all too brief) *navarathri* days with borrowed jewels and flashing, gay, silken cloths then the marriage with bright new dresses and the sparkling *thodus*—all these rushed to her memory and crowded up her mind in that moment. The poison begins to work and in the efforts of the soul trying to free itself from its mortal shackles the victim writhes in pain. The sound of the *Nagasuram* music in Chellappier's house strikes in her ears. She is seized with a sudden idea of putting an end to her pain; she glides swiftly and un-noticed from the house, gazes in amazement at the lights and the gay feasting in the hall, rushes to the back yard and then a splash in the water and this world exists no more for her.

Hark! what is that noise of something dropping in the well? The servants rush about ah! what is that fair, frail thing floating in the well? The people look aghast and wondering comments are made as to who it might be. Well! my friend! take her up tenderly and lift her with care; so young and so fair; and let Messrs Chellappa Iyer and Vishakanda Iyer revel in the sight! If they can but for us let us turn our thoughts to God and pray that in His mercy, He may give to poor Kamalam that everlasting rest and freedom from re-birth which is in his sole gift and keeping.

Reader! I had intended to close; but my thoughts *would* go to a broken kneed, battered wreck of an old man wandering about demented in my village and living on the tender mercies of its charity for eking out his half-starved existence. Many fond mothers have trembled and hugged their little girls of thirteen whom in his madness he used to call out as his darling Kamala, whom he had wronged in life, but a charitable God has given back to soothe and solace the sorrows of his old age. The reader would have guessed by this time that this is no other than our poor Gangadara who had drifted about from his native village. For sometime it was thought that he was a dangerous maniac and therefore undesirable; but it was soon found that he was harmless. He dragged out a weary existence for a year or two; and then he was gathered one dark rainy night to his fathers, crying out "Kamala, Kamala. Oh my darling! Come to me". May his soul rest in peace!

A word to Vishakandier and then our story must close. He prospered in life, as I have seen only the wicked prosper and is even now a respectable citizen of his town enjoying all its amenities. His only regret has been that he could not get those "*thodus*". According to him there are many other *cheaper* modes of making an "exit from life" and it was sheer extravagance to waste a pair of costly *thodus* on such a simple and easy business.

Om. Santi; Santi;

Om. (Peace) (Peace).

Darkness engulfs the rays,  
Weakness on vigour preys,  
Penury conquers wealth,  
Disease devours health;  
Death doth swallow all  
And cast ov'r earth a pall.  
Oh for a ray of hopefulness  
In this grim dreary wilderness!

P. M. H.

## My Love \*

The sleek leopard and the sparkling snake  
Shoot gleaming fire from the forest brake;  
Oh they are lovely! but who would take

To the serpent or the mountain pard with love?  
Oh soft and sleek is the Kitten; the dove  
Is dainty; so too the blossom-laden bough!

But sweeter daintier far, unique,  
My love is soft, my love is sleek  
My love is sweet, with nothing to seek,

Purer, brighter with joy of heart  
And power of Genius, passing art,  
Pulsing through each quivering dart

From eyes and lips; the sap stirs in the dry tree  
As my love's laughter ripples free  
And the blossoms break out in ecstasy!

K.

\* Adapted from a Greek original.



## The Literary Critics of the Eighteenth Century

By P. Ramanathan, M. A.

The art of criticism is a later growth. There should exist works of imagination and pure art before the critic could take upon himself to exercise his function. In the eighteenth century such works were in profusion. As Goldsmith observes in his "Club of Anthas" they were issued from the press like paper-kites in summer. All kinds of essays, poems, prayers, ribald jests, sermons, etc. were produced, and the critic had thus ample material before him.

These critics were often men with little genius. The power of invention vests only with a happy few, "but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others: and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a critic". Besides the art of criticism was an easy one. It consisted in the knowledge and application of a few mechanical rules culled from Horace, Bileau and Bossu; or they might be heard in coffee-houses where literary men congregated.

Johnson draws a picture of a literary critic in his essays on Dick Miaim. Dick was early in life apprenticed to a brewer when, his uncle having died, he was left with a large fortune in the stocks. Not being fitted for any particular profession, and having nothing to do in his life of ease, he turned to literature underwent a course of apprenticeship in literary criticism. This consisted in frequenting the coffee-houses near the theatres where he listened very diligently, day after day, to those who talked of language and sentiments and unities and catastrophes and when the theatres were closed, in reading a few select works, whose opinions he impressed upon his memory by unwearied diligence. Thus in a short time he was able to say what the chief business of art was, and who was a perfect writer,

largely enters. The poetry of Keats appeals, like all great works of art, first and foremost to our senses. We find only enjoyment there. We find there infinite variety of colour and sound that fills the mind with bewildered delight. The poet takes us on the gossamer wings of his fancy through an enchanted garden, filled with the sweet aroma of rose and violet and pastoral eglantine and resonant with the alluring song of the nightingale 'and the murmurous sound of bees on summer eves', along green grassy paths glittering with dew-drops, under leafy bowers that are the relics of happy lovers, until we are glutted with pleasure and tossed 'on the rack of restless ecstasy'.

The verses of our poet have a music all their own. The smoothness of his numbers is in harmony with the beauty of his ideas. The haunting melody of such lines as,

"A little noiseless noise among the leaves  
Born of the very sigh that silence waves"

and

"Charmed magic casements opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn"

clings to our memory and refuses to be wiped away.

Keats is essentially a nature-poet. In his interpretation of Nature, which is the duty of the true poet of Nature, he is Shakespearean. What is said of that master poet by Gray in the following lines, may be said of Keats also.

"To him the mighty Mother (Nature) did unveil  
Her awful face; the dauntless child  
Stretched forth its little hands and smiled:  
'This pencil take' she said, "whose colours clear  
Richly paint the vernal year;  
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!  
These can unlock the gate of joy'"

The career of this young poet, chequered as it was with misfortunes, shows triumph of poetic delight over physical and mental suffering. The real Keats was very different from the fragile figure of a literary amateur as he was represented to be by his unsympathetic critic, Byron in his Don Juan, "who was snuffed off by an article." Keats was one of those immortal children of Nature, who, having access to the perennial fountains of hope that gush forth from the breast of Nature and attending to

the soft vibrations of music that tremble on her heart strings pay little heed to what happens in the world of war and woe. It is a fact that he never felt 'the pelting of the pitiless storm' of criticism poured down upon him by the literary dictators of his time. Time would have taught the contrary wind to steady itself; but Keats did not live so long. The shears of Destiny clipped off his existence and his long-cherished desire to 'fade away and dissolve into the forest dim' of mystic melodies was at last fulfilled.

## MARCH CROSS-WORD

### CORRECT SOLUTION

For our March Competition we received 24 correct solutions in all. The prize goes to

**N G Narayanan, Nellicherry, Palghat.**

Correct solutions were also sent in by the following:—

N. V. Parameswara Iyer, N. V. Venkiteswaran, P. Ramanathan, S. P. Venkiteswaran, S. R. Subrahmanyam, S. V. Ananthanarayanan, S. K. Subbarama Iyer, K. P. Padmanabhan, S. K. Ramanathan, S. K. Krishnan, S. K. Iswara Iyer, B. A. L. T., T. R. V. Nathan, L. R. Viswanathan, T. R. R. Swamy, R. Sankara Iyer, V. Radhakrishna Panikker, N. P. Neelakantan, V. S. Viswanathan, M. Kunhirama Menon, T. E. Ananthakrishna Iyer, M. S. Ramachandran, M. Srinivasa Rao and A. K. Venkatachalam.

### CORRECT SOLUTION.

**Across** 1. Walls. 6. Rally. 11. Pout. 12. Elia. 14. Tea. 16. Wrangle. 18. By. 19. Elm. 21. Ebony. 22. Ney. 23. Abut. 25. Quay. 26. Danube. 27. Flurry. 28. D. L. 29. Is. 30. Psalms. 33. Greets. 36. Puny. 37. Trim. 38. Pie. 39. Finis. 42. Yea. 43. Pt. 44. Silence. 46. R. C. 47. Opal. 48. Eyes. 50. Goats. 51. Relic.

**Down** 2. Ap. 3. Low. 4. Lure. 5. Stable. 6. Regnif. 7. Ally. 8. Lie. 9. La. 10. Stead. 13. yyyyy. 15. Elba. 17. No. 18. Bear. 20. Mundan. 22. Nursery. 24. Tully. 25. Quiet. 30. ppppp. 31. Suit. 32. Stills. 33. Gainer. 34. Tier. 35. Smack. 39. Fiat. 40. Ne. 41. Scye. 44. Spa. 45. Eel. 47. OO. 49. S. I.

# Notes

Our desire to publish the April number in time has necessitated the omission of the illustration, as it generally takes about two weeks to get illustrations ready.

In spite of our announcing the same subject for Essay-Competition last month as in the previous month, we regret to note there was no response whatever. So we are constrained to with-hold the award.

The subject for this month's competition is "The Condition of The Labouring Classes in India—How to improve them". The essay, must reach us on or before the 10th May.

We offer our hearty congratulations to Mr. C. R. Reddy on his appointment to the Vice-Chancellorship of the newly-created Andhra University. We hope that the University as organised by one of such vast and varied experience in the field of Education as Mr. Reddy will prove to be a model University.

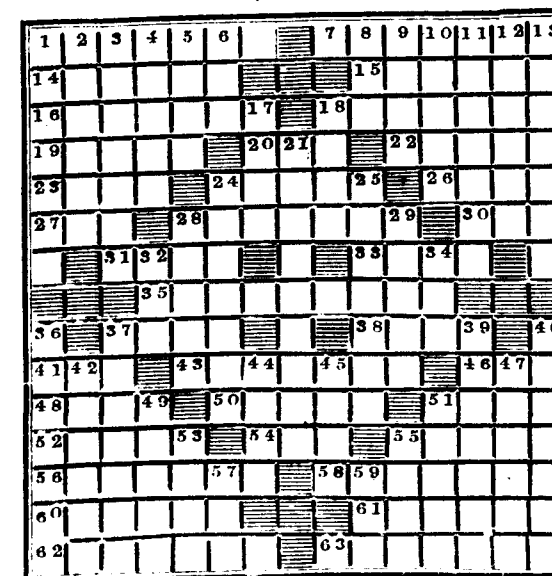
The changes recently made in the syllabuses of the Intermediate examination are far-reaching in character and results. The inclusion of such utilitarian subjects as Geography and such aesthetic subjects as Painting is really an advance in the right direction. But, for students to take advantage of the changes, alterations have to be made in the S. S. L. C. Course. We hope that the Secondary Education Reorganisation Committee will do the needful in the matter.

Even those who are opposed to the general provisions of the Madras Religious Endowment Act of 1925 cannot but welcome the proposal of the establishment of a Hindu University in South India. Everyone will agree that of all the ways in which the savings of religious institutions can be spent, the best and the most useful and reproductive is to utilise them for the progress of Ancient Indian culture and civilization. We hope the details of the scheme would be such as to ensure the revival of real Hindu culture.

## CROSS-WORD COMPETITION

### OUR APRIL PUZZLE

By E. N. S. R.



Name.....

Address.....

### RULES.

1. A prize of Rs. 5 will be offered to the first correct solution opened on 10th May, 1926.

2. Solutions should be addressed to **The Cross-Word Editor, The Scholar**, Palghat, so as to reach him not later than the 10th May, 1926.

3. Any number of alternative solutions may be sent but no solution which is not copied on diagram cut out of **The Scholar** will be accepted.

4. The decision of the Cross-Word Editor must be accepted as final and no correspondence regarding the competition can be entertained.

For March Solution, see page 323.

# CLUES

## ACROSS

1. Talk at large
7. British Soldier
14. Transfix
15. Behead latrine and jumble
16. Musical instruments
18. Keeps away
19. Makes weary
20. Stroke
22. Shoot up
23. In the eye
24. Punctuation mark
26. Past participle of a verb meaning 'to discern'
27. A tennis term
28. Make ready
30. Collection
31. Public auction
33. Temptation
35. Looks at the worst aspect of things
37. Kinds of tea
38. Critical examination
41. Fuss
43. Discussed
46. Repent
48. A surface impression caused by a blow
50. Instructor
51. Propel
52. History books are full of them
54. Affirmative
55. A freshwater fish
56. Sovereign remedies
58. Shrink
60. Sentinel
61. Physician
62. Hair of woman's head
63. Atheists are

## DOWN

1. Trickles down
2. Absolute control
3. Alcoholic liquors
4. Malacca noted for them
5. Liquors
6. Free from deduction
8. Circle
9. Deep sounding
10. Found in staircases
11. Superlative of a word meaning "very small"
12. Right of admission
13. Shows indignation at
17. Foot covering
18. Soul
21. Involve
24. Metal vessel for holding oil for light
25. Judge
28. Lawyers do
29. Relaxed
32. Imitate
34. A possessive pronoun
36. Most sorrowful
37. Annuity shared by surviving subscribers to loan
39. Low-wheeled truck
40. Ropes to tie grazing animals with
42. Dummy's partner at Bridge
44. Obtains for money
45. Disgusting reptile
47. Brothers of parents
49. Themes
51. Punishable by law
53. Gentlemen
55. Fastened
57. A cereal grain
59. A pronoun

## Ten Tests

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- iv. Are the examples given for exercise **numerous**, **exhaustive**, **well-graded**, **practical**, **interesting** and **instructive**?
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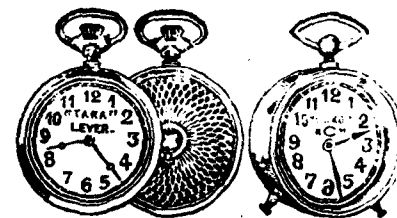
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