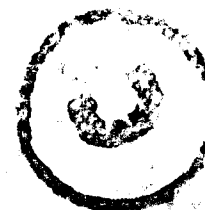


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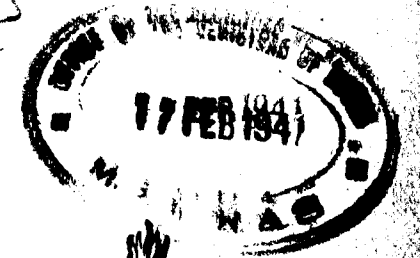
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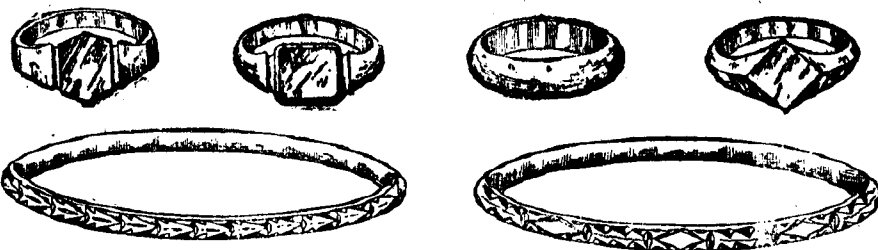
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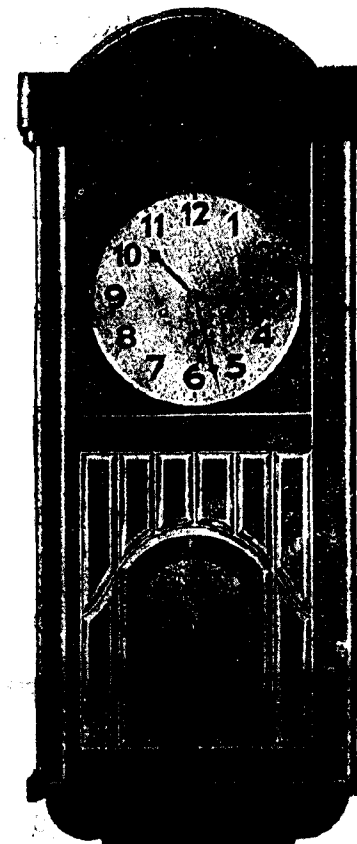
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The Scholar

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The Mongols.

(Diary Leaves.)

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

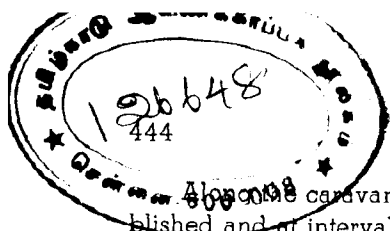


HE Banner of Chengiz Khan was white. In different campaigns he used various symbols—the lion, the steed of happiness, the falcon, or the panther. Fundamentally the color of the Mongols is blue.

The laws of the great khan are extant even to this day, and we may recall many which are applicable to our present life. His severe penalties for theft, murder, adultery and other offences, could be placed upon the pages of our law even in the present times. Similarly with his other official acts, his orders to his officers and his steps for the progress of his country all of which were broadly introduced by the Great Khan.

In order to prevent pride and vanity among the Khans, Chengiz Khan forbade the adoptions of pompous titles. Freedom of religion and speech were observed and the love of God acknowledged. Clergy and physicians were freed from public taxes. Capital punishment was prescribed for spies, perjurers, sorcerers and those who accepted bribes. The marriage laws forbade marriage between the next of kin. And to raise the sense of honor, it was forbidden to employ one's next-of-kin as servants. To abolish intoxication Chengiz Khan constantly discountenanced the use of strong beverages and urged his people to eliminate the use of these entirely.

A regulation is also known to have aimed at the abolishing of excessive superstitions. The ordinances of Chengiz Khan encouraged hospitality among his nomad population, and insured the safety of travellers throughout the vast extent of his empire. Rules were given in regard to camp sites and divisions of yurtas were made into tens, hundreds and thousands.



Along the caravan routes military stations with guards were established and at intervals of a day's journey posts for horses were set. The army was divided into divisions of tens, hundreds, thousands and ten-thousands. Capital punishment was meted out to all officers who deserted their posts.

Judging by everything which has come down to us, Chengiz Khan was a great leader and organizer.

"The Lord preserve us from the Mongols!" Such were the inscriptions found in destroyed cities. Danish fishermen did not venture into the open sea for fear of a Mongolian invasion.

This is one of the earliest descriptions of the Mongols, presented to Europe in the thirteenth century: "Lest human joys be especially prolonged, and the world's benevolence endure too long without tears," wrote Mathew Paris in the year 1240, "reviling creatures of Satan himself the countless Tartar hordes, broke loose and swept out of the boundaries of their encampments surrounded by mountains. Swarming like locusts over the earth, they brought terrible devastation to Western Europe and by fire and sword reduced it to a wasteland. They are inhuman, bestial, more like monsters than men. They thirst for blood, and gorge themselves with it. They rend and devour dogs and human flesh, and dress in skins with their chests and backs naked except for armor. They are small in stature, stocky, heavy, indomitable. With zest they drink the pure blood of their herds. Their horses are stout, strong and eat branches and even trees. Due to their short thighs they have to mount these horses with the aid of three-stepped ladders...They know no laws; they are completely lacking in any idea of comfort and are more ferocious than lions or bears...They have pity neither for age nor sex nor position...They know no language to converse in besides their own, which no one understands, because up to recent times there was no contact with them and they themselves never came beyond the boundaries of their country. Thus there is no information available about their customs and personalities, such as is gained through the mutual intercourse of people. They travel with their herds and wives, and the latter are accustomed to fight as well as the men. To the destruction of Christendom, they suddenly appear and with the speed of lightning ravage and annihilate everything in their way, terrorizing everyone and arousing terrific hatred everywhere." This was the reputation of the Mongols when their name first reached Europe, accompanied by the sensational terror which usually preceded their attacks. The very word Tartar aroused terror; they were considered the scourge of God. The old writers called them the 'plague of God'—demons sent against men in punishment.

Europe did not regard the Mongols as human beings. It denied them the honor of being enemies or customary adversaries and

considered them some sort of superhuman creatures. In those times Europeans sincerely believed that Mongols had dogs' heads and devoured human flesh. This was the sort of wild terror that gripped Europe before the appearance of the Tartar. The danger which threatened humanity was regarded as so extreme that even Danish fishermen did not venture into the open sea for fear of Mongols.

The same picture is apparent at that time within the boundary of the Far East as well as in the Far West—on the shores of the Pacific as well as on the shores of the Black Sea. One of the Chinese historians of that period exclaims with dismay that "since the creation of the world, no nation has been as powerful as the present Mongols. They devastate entire countries more easily than we pluck grass. Why do the heavens permit it!" Another writer, describing the consequences of Mongolian supremacy, significantly remarks that "in Asia and Western Europe a dog can hardly bark without the permission of the Mongols".

After overwhelming all Asia and reaching the threshold of Europe, the Mongolian invasion seemed such an ominous threat that the rulers of Europe began frantically to take counsel with each other as to ways of meeting the threatening danger. It was decided to undertake united resistance against this human deluge, as no single country could cope with it alone. No proof is more evident of the fear which these Mongol hordes inspired, even within the limits of the greatest European countries of that period, than the call of Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor, to the entire Christian world to repel the invasion of the dreaded Mongols. Just imagine an appeal addressed to "Germany, ardent in battles, France, nursing at her bosom a fearless army, militant Spain, England, powerful in men and ships, Crete, Sicily, wild Hibernia, and cold Norway,"—asking them to organize international crusades against the nomad conqueror who came to Europe from far-off Mongolia.

Excerpts from this manifesto eloquently remark the "Mongol terror" which surrounded Europe in 1240. "These people", wrote the emperor, "have emerged from the far ends of the world, where they have long been concealed in an atmosphere of terrific climatic extremities, and have suddenly and brutally swept upon the Northern countries, swarming like locusts. No one knows whence this fierce race has gained its title of Tartar, but one thing is certain, it is apparently God's will that this race has been preserved from prehistoric days as a weapon to scourge people for their transgressions, and mayhap even for the fall of Christendom. This brutal, savage people has not the least conception of humane principles. They have a leader whom they revere and whose command they blindly obey, calling him the earthly god. They are small in stature, stocky, strong,

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with great resistance, and have unbreakable faith. At the least sign from their leader they throw themselves with reckless valor against the most incredible perils. They have broad faces, slanting eyes and emit the most terrifying shrieks and outcries, which indicate vividly the savagery of their hearts. They know no other raiment except the skins of oxen, asses and horses, and up to now their armor is only crudely and badly-soldered iron plates. But now—and we cannot mention this without a shudder—they begin to improve their armor by looting that of the Christians. Soon the Lord's wrath will descend on all of us and these barbarians will begin to kill us, to our shame, with our own weapons. The Tartars already are learning to dress richly and elaborately, and at present they eat the most savory food. They ride beautiful horses and are inimitable archers. It is said that their horses, when they have no other fodder, eat foliage, bark and roots of trees and yet preserve their courage, strength and agility." Thus Europe estimated the Mongols.

In later times these estimates become more exact and more detailed. For instance, Timur, instead of the former evaluation of a destroyer, received from the French savant, Grousset, a completely different estimate. Grousset says that Timur, "who combines the subtle strivings of Iran—Hindu culture with the austere mold of an ascetic, appears as one of the most colorful figures of the Indo-Iranic world". Thus the great son of Chengiz Khan in the clan of Barlass is presented in a new light by the reflective scientist, Grousset. Similarly, many rulers of the world, who were hastily condemned, as quickly revealed themselves in a completely different light. Is this not the case in Russian history with Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great?

In recalling the descriptions of Grousset and the notes of Plano Karpini about the interest in arts and sciences of Mongolia, we may consider that the Mongolian apotheosis reached its zenith in Akbar the Great. Of course there have been prejudiced judgements of him as a bloodthirsty tyrant, but there has finally emerged a brilliant picture of the resplendent unifier and cultured ruler of a great country. And to this luminous image of Akbar, already apparent, new studies can only add new valuable signs. And the wisdom of the people which is just at its base, will add the aureole of a Saint to the image of the Great Emperor. Thus through the centuries the people can revere a consistently great service. In regard to the characteristics of Mongols, I also recall other notes by contemporaneous travellers. There are many valuable and benevolent tokens. One should likewise remember the sacred Mongolian books, with their covenants about the Bodhisattvas, and their admonitions to compassion, self-sacrifice and help to one's neighbour. Let us also recall the Nestorian times. In short, let us not in any way disparage that which was so real a factor in the life of this strong and courageous people.

How many beautiful hours we recall from our own travels in Mongolia. I remember the hearty greeting of welcome of the Mongol Rinchin. How much we valued also the fiery exclamation of the grey headed Buriat, "Light conquers darkness"! I remember how valiantly the Mongols acted in our encounter with bandits. I remember the building of the Suburgan and the gracious offering of their treasures. If we go by the marks of benevolence we will find many of them. No matter how often a nation finds rebirth, its foundations still prevail. The same may be observed with many other peoples. Circumstances may change, bringing happiness or ill fortune, but the soul of the people remains. And one may trace this folk soul by its ancient songs, its sayings and its parables. In these indestructable folk mementos, one can find the worthiest characteristics.

In the laws of the Mongolian Khans, in the heroic epic of these people, is reflected a nature that is firm, courageous, often ascetic, patiently enduring the vicissitudes of their time.

And perceiving these covenants of the past, which have not been lost in the currents of the present day, should we not help this people, which desires peaceful progress?

There was a time when the circumstances of life and the yearnings of their heart enticed the Mongols into far off places, because man often thinks that the beyond is more alluring—"Splendid are the drums beyond the mountains". But contemporary thought has directed the Mongols towards the treasures of their own lands. To appreciate our own possessions, to learn to evaluate that which is defined by destiny, is a great accomplishment. It so happens that the Mongols as such, having concerned themselves with remote places, did not as yet exhaust their own inner treasures. Not to use, means not to waste. Therefore it is but just to direct attention to Mongolia with benevolence and friendship.

No one will make the error of exclaiming again "Lord preserve us from the Mongols!" On the contrary, thoughtful persons will send hearty wishes for the peaceful regeneration of their people.

Rigden Djyepo himself, in resplendent armor, is galloping on. The Mongols do not forget the visions of the Great Lama in 1927. So it is also said in the prophecies: "On the slope towards the sunrise a white stone will be revealed with an inscription...and though you hew out this inscription it will never disappear, but will for ever emerge again."

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's
Critique of the Ramayana.

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI



R. Paramasiva Iyer's long-expected work on the Ramayana has come out and deserves close and critical examination. His mood is clear enough from his description in the preface: "The Bala Kanda impressed me as puerile Puranic stuff, and the Sundara as mainly florid, overwrought descriptive poetry, though in parts exceedingly fine and sweet-sounding." We can hurl any epithets we like at dead men. Aesop tells us about the kicking of dying lions. But can we do so safely as against living lions—can we speak of any present-day performance as puerile or overwrought?

Let me collect a few more extracts from the preface. "The Ramayana was in substance a credible record of the struggle of Aryan and Gond janasthan". Where is this janasthan? "The populous fertile black soil high-level plain of the Damoh District, 800 square miles in extent, and watered by the lower reaches of the Sonar river and of its tributaries, the Kopra to the right and the Bewas to the left". Hanuman and others in Kishkindha could speak Sanskrit also and there was a civilised polity governed by the rule of primogeniture and so on. Kishkindha was an Aryanised Kingdom. So was Lanka an Aryanised kingdom. The Rakshasas knew the Vedas and practised the Vedic rites. It is hence difficult to accept the author's Gond theory or his theories about the location of Lanka etc. There is of course the difficulty about Sinhala and Lanka. But in the Kishkindha Kanda, Sarga 41, the island of Lanka is clearly located south of the Tamraparni near whose mouth was Kavata (Korkai) the then capital of the Pandyas and opposite to the Mahendra Mountain which was the abode of Agastya. The author calls this description as an interpolation. I shall deal with his view presently. It is enough to say here that the author's location of Kishkindha and his description of its civilisation as Gond civilisation are palpably wrong.

We must not be carried away by the poet's giving the Vanaras monkey faces and tails or saying that they were generated by the gods. He calls them *Kamarupis* (with forms assumable at will) like the Rakshasas. They, like the latter, assumed the human form on many occasions. In Balakanda, XVII, 3 and 4 they are called knowers of policy and wise beings aware of *asthras* (spiritual weapons). The Kishkindha Kanda (XXXIII, 6) describes them as wearing garlands and clothes. Hanuman was an expert in Sanskrit grammar and in Ayurveda and was a great devotee. Sugriva performed the obsequies of Vali,

The Vanara ladies were experts in music. The Vanaras lived in a fort and had flags and machines (Kishkindha Kanda XIV, 5). They had an enlightened system of government and a keen sense of right and wrong. Thus the Vanaras must be regarded as South Indians who had built up a great civilisation which, however, had much to learn from the North Indian model. They were probably an Aryan colony which settled in South India and were out of touch with the main centres of Aryan culture in North India. Hanuman prays to all the Aryan gods before he begins his search of Sita.

Even if the Vanaras are to be regarded as a pre-Aryan tribe, they had been largely aryanised and that was why Sri Rama sought their help in preference to seeking the help of the other kingdoms in South India. Even in his time there were the Chera and Chola and Pandya Kingdoms.

The Rakshasas also seem to have been Aryan immigrants to the South. They settled in the fertile island of Ceylon and built up a great civilisation. The description of Lanka in the Sundara Kanda shows that the country had an abundant supply of rain and had a plentiful and varied vegetation (Sarga II Verses 12 and 13 of the Sundara Kanda). The Rakshasas spoke Sanskrit and recited the vedas and performed Yajnas (vedic sacrifices). But they had lost touch with the Aryan homeland and become as sensual and cruel as they were powerful and prosperous. The great crime of the abduction of Sita brought about an inevitable retribution and purgation.

What is Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's theory? It is that Lanka, the capital of Ravana, was situated on the top of the Indrana hills in the Central Provinces, with the great Hiran river embracing it on three sides. This theory has not even the merit of newness, it having been anticipated by some others. But all such theories are equally wrong. Mr. Paramasiva Iyer thinks that Ceylon was faked into Lanka and that Adam's bridge was faked into Nalasetu in the eleventh century A. D. What has a late conquest of Ceylon by the Cholas to do with the matter is hard to understand. If Kambar located Lanka south of Tamraparni why should we presume that he followed an interpolation in Valmiki's work? My surmise is that Lanka was probably the sea-shore capital of Sinhala. I have tried to prove this in my essay on *The Aryan Kingdoms of Kishkindha and Lanka* which was published in the *Dharmarajya* some time ago, though Mr. Paramasiva Iyer may call them non-Aryan at his will and pleasure. Mr. Pargiter also agrees with the identification of Lanka and Ceylon and locates Kishkindha near Bellary. I am not concerned with defending him but Mr. Paramasiva Iyer certainly goes beyond bounds in saying that "the entire essay of Pargiter (not even Mr. Pargiter!), I must add, is a farrago of trash of this sort". Mr. Pargiter is a great scholar and it would not do for Mr. Paramasiva Iyer to dismiss him with a royal wave of the hand.

The fact is that many indologists have only made the confusion worse confounded. In 1914 Mr. M. V. Kibe located Lanka as a hill near the Pendra Railway Station, north west of Bilaspur! He suggested later another theory that it was the Amarakontaka hill in the Kaimur range of the Vindhya mountain! Mr. V. H. Vader located it in the Maldive Islands. In 1936 Pandit W. Ramalingam said that there was no land south of Waltair and that the Setu was from Waltair to Lanka and was 8000 miles long and 80 miles wide!

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's trump card is that the Ramayana does not say that Rama crossed the Narbada river. *Ergo* the territory stated in it must be shifted north of the Narbada! This is extraordinary logic. Then mark the other steps in the reasoning. The monkeys did not search beyond the Vindhyas. The Mahendra is the Katas cleft in the Kaimur ridge of the Vindhya range. The ocean stated in the Ramayana is only a tank, as the Indians used to call even tanks as *Samudras*!

Let us test the reliability of this argumentation. The Ramayana locates the Panchavati on the banks of Godavari. What then is the rationale of the view based on the non-mention of the Narbada? The 41st sarga of the Kishkindha Kanda—which has not been proved to be an interpolation despite Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's glib affirmation—refers to the Narbada and the Godavari and the Krishnaveni and the Kaveri and the Tamraparni and the Andhras and the Pundras, and the Chera and the Chola and the Pandya kingdoms. Thus the argument based on the non-mention of the Narbada has no force. Nay, sarga 4 of the Yuddha Kanda shows that the Vanara army, led by Rama, crossed the Sahya and Malaya mountains and then reached the ocean.

Valmiki describes Lanka as a Dvipa (island) in Chapter XLI of the Kishkindha Kanda. He locates it as being opposite to the Mahendra Hill near the Pandya capital. He calls the waters round it as Mahodadhi, Samudra, Oormimati etc. He calls Sagarena Parikshipta (Kishkindha 47, verse 28), Samudra Parigha (Uttara, 3, 34). It is idle to say that he called a tank as a sea, even assuming it that the Indians sometimes called a tank or a lake as a *sagara*.

All poets and dramatists and critics from ancient times till now have described Lanka as being south of Sahya and Malaya mountains and of the Kaveri and the Tamraparni rivers and of Agastya's hermitage. Mr. Paramasiva Iyer wants us to discard them and enrol ourselves under his banner! He wants us to say that Chapter 41 of the Kishkindha Kanda was interpolated by the Chola Kings in the 11th century A. D. This is an utterly impossible theory.

Another strange feature about Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's theory is that it brings Lanka very near Kishkindha i. e. a few miles away from

Matanga Vana which was very near Rishyamuka! Yet Sugriva and his friends did not know about it and had to send search parties to trace it.

There is no doubt an apparent snag in the Kishkindha Kanda. After wandering about in Swayamprabha's cave, the Vanaras are led by her out of it to the Vindhyas where they meet Sampati. Sarga 59 says that Sampati's son Suparsva was at the *dvara* (cave) in the Mahendra hill. Sarga 60 describes the ocean as being at the foot of the Vindhyas. But it seems to me that we need not on that account search for Lanka near the Vindhyas. Sarga 63 Verse 15 shows that the search began again and that eventually the Mahendra hill was reached. (see Sarga 67). Tilaka says in his commentary on अभिजि-वभिमुखां दिशं ययुः thus: अभिजिह्वसंमुखां दिशं दक्षिणां.

I need not pause to discuss elaborately Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's view that Hanuman swam through the sea. He says that *plutah* (35th sarga verses 57 to 71) means swimming. He says further that Ravana went from Lanka to Janasthana in a car, drawn by asses and took Maricha in it to Panchavati, and took Sita in another ass-drawn car after Jatayu smashed the first car. Valmiki does not refer to Suparsva having seen an ass-drawn car. Nor does he refer to a second car, though the Adhyatma Ramayana refers to it. Mr. Paramasiva Iyer says with cocksureness: "Ravana drove straight in his ass-drawn chariot from Rishyamuka to Mahendra and on to Lanka". There is no foundation for these fantastic theories. The root *p/u* means not only swimming but also leaping, soaring, flying. The verses in the 1st Sarga of Sundara Kanda show that Hanuman did not swim but jumped and soared and flew.

तस्याम्बरगतौ बाहु..... (Verse 57).

लाङ्गूलं च समाविद्धं प्लवमानस्य शोभते ।

अम्बरे वायुपुत्रस्य शक्रध्वज इवोच्छ्रितम् ॥ (Verse 62).

तस्य वानरसिंहस्य प्लवमानस्य सागरम् ।

कक्षान्तरगतो वायुर्जीमूत इव गर्जति ॥ (Verse 65).

कपिवातश्च बलवान्..... (Verse 71).

छाया वानरसिंहस्य जले चारुतराऽभवत् ।

Has any one heard of the shadow of a swimmer in the water?

शुश्रुभे स महातेजा महाकायो महाकपिः ।

वायुमार्गे निराकम्पे पक्षवानिव पर्वतः ॥

There is no need to cite other passages. Further, the Ramayana makes it clear that Ravana went in his aerial car and not in an ass-drawn chariot moving on the earth as Mr. Paramasiva Iyer imagines.

कामर्गं रथमाख्याय शुश्रुभे राक्षसेश्वरः (Aranya Kanda, 25, 10). See also Aranya Kanda, 28, 6, and Aranya Kanda, 49, 23 (विहायता). Though

Jatayu broke the car, yet the poet does not refer to a second car being used. The fact is that the Pushpaka Vimana, though broken, could become whole again (Uttara Kanda, 21, 28). भज्यमानं तथैवासीदक्षयं ब्रह्म रेजसा ॥

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer seeks to make out that Kabandha was "a faithful emissary of brainy Hanuman" and that Hanuman had asked him to suggest it to Rama to seek the friendship of Sugriva (page 43). This is a thoroughly gratuitous and unproved assertion based on a baseless assumption.

I now proceed to deal briefly with a few miscellaneous heresies and queer notions of Mr. T. Paramasiva Iyer. He says that in the Balakanda the Siddhasrama is said to be in Tatakaranya whereas Maricha says in Aranya Kanda that it is in Dandakaranya (Sarga 31 Verses 24, Sarga 32 Verses 7 to 9). He regards this as a serious discrepancy. Balakanda, Sarga 26, verses 33 and 34 show that Siddhasrama was near the Tatakavana. After all, between the kingdoms in the north of India and the kingdoms in the South of India there lay a huge forest in those ancient times. Different bits of it were inhabited by different sages and others and went by their names. The generic name was Dandakaranya. Why should Mr. Paramasiva Iyer make a mountain of a mole-hill! He says: "Rama, I have no doubt, did not kill Tataka, and the sin of stri-hatya has been wickedly foisted on him and Viswamitra for a reason which I will discuss in a later volume". We shall await that volume, and meanwhile we would prefer to act on the concurrent testimony of generations in regard to the Tataka episode in preference to Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's *ipse dixit*.

It is difficult also to follow and accept his asserted but unargued *ipse dixit* that the giving of boons by Dasaratha to Kaikeyi was a fake. It was a fact and not a fake. He thinks that Rama was seventeen years old when he was exiled. For that his only authority is Kausalya's words: "It is now seven and ten years since you were born" (Ayodhyakanda Sarga 20, verse 45). But Rama is described as Oonashodasa Varsha (less than 16) when Dasaratha sent him with Viswamitra. Mareecha describes him as being 12 years (Dwadasa Varsha) of age when he saw him first. Sita says that after her marriage she lived with Rama for twelve years in Ayodhya and that he was 25 years of age when she met Anasuya. Garudaraja says that Kausalya referred to Rama's second birth at his Upanayana in his eleventh year! The most natural explanation is that Kausalya counted the period from the time when Rama was capable of bearing arms and protecting her. "Born" evidently meant "born and able to protect". Otherwise we will have to reject the statement of Dasaratha, Sita and Mareecha. Why should we do so?

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer says that Dasaratha ruled only for 60 years and that Rama ruled only for 11 years. This again is a mere *ipse*

dixit. He thinks, further, that Lakshmana was older than Bharata! This is quite against the order of birth stated in Valmiki's work. The author misunderstands Rama's offer of Yuvaraja's status to Lakshmana. That offer was refused by Lakshmana and it was then made to Bharata. Rama did so to show the nobility of Lakshmana. The author misinterprets verse 39 in Sarga 129 of Yuddhakanda. The poet does not say that Bharata prostrated before Lakshmana. He says that Bharata prostrated before Sita. ततो लक्ष्मणमासाद्य वैदेहीमभ्यवादयत् । Mr. Paramasiva Iyer has misunderstood Raghu Vamsa XIII, 73. Mallinatha's commentary on it has been pilloried by Mr. Paramasiva Iyer without reason and without effect.

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer need not have expended the archery of wit against Rama's flesh-eating. A Kshatriya could take flesh and there was no embargo on his doing so. After separation from Sita he voluntarily abstained from flesh and wine (Sundara Kanda, sarga 36, verse 41).

Another verse which rouses Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's ire is that noble verse in which Lakshmana says that he knows only the anklets of Sita. He says: "This verse was evidently forged in the degenerate unchivalrous days long after Valmiki, and is supposed to be a gem of a verse in these yet unregenerate days". We shall continue to be unregenerate enough and do not care to cultivate Mr. Paramasiva Iyer's good opinion. The verse occurs in Mahanataka and elsewhere and has always been rightly regarded as a gem. Suppose that there was no ghosha in Rama's days as Mr. Paramasiva Iyer says. What bearing has it on the verse? In Rama's times Royal ladies could appear in public on certain occasions (Yuddha kanda, 117, 27). Kalidasa says that Rama's eyes would instinctively turn away from the lovely face of another's wife. The above-said verse is inspired by the same noble spirit.

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer is angry also with the verse describing the Bala and the Atibala. He says:—"It is clear that this is not Valmiki but a recent mantra-ridden interpolator". He does not vouchsafe any reasons—except a hatred of mantras for this view. Another crotchety notion is that there was no Urmila at all. The most flimsy reasons are given for this curious view. Yet at page 137 he says:—"When Rama was wedded at sixteen his brothers too had to be wedded, three girls had to be improvised, and three weddings tacked on to Sita-Kalyana."

There are a few other miscellaneous curious notions also. The author seems to disbelieve that Sita spoke harshly to Lakshmana when he did not rush to help Rama as beseeched by her. That is a natural description of a human scene and yet Mr. Paramasiva Iyer talks of insult and abduction and what not. He thinks that Mareecha did not

know Rama's voice. Why, Mareecha had heard the talk between Rama and Sita! Sita's natural reply to Ravana to wait for Rama's return is twisted by the author. Was she to shout out her fears to a stranger and a guest? Mr. Parmasiva Iyer is furious against imaginary forgers, and has missed altogether the natural charm of a human situation because of his hunt for forgers!

The parting shots of Mr. Paramasiva Iyer are aimed at the beautiful story about Valmiki's *soka* (grief at the shooting of the bird by a hunter) becoming *sloka* and giving rise to the epic; and at the Gayatri Ramayana. The former is called by him "rank bunkum". The *anushtup* metre was certainly known to the vedas but Valmiki's *anushtup* metre is charged with poetic Rasa and is charming poesy. That trait clothed the bare skeleton with flesh and blood and charm and loveliness. The author calls the Gayatri-Ramayana idea as "a fantastic conceit". He airs another crotchety notion that the Gayatri consists of only 23 letters. तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं consists of 8 letters. All except the author are agreed that Gayatri has 24 letters. A familiar verse says that the Pranava became the Ramayana, when God took form as Rama. Manu (II, 76 and 77) says that Om and Gayatri were both distilled from the three vedas. Mr. T. Parmasiva Iyer thinks that he has scored a point by saying that the Ramayana has 646 sargas whereas Sarga 4 verse 2 of Balakanda refers to 500 sargas. But Sarga 4 verse 2 refers to 500 sargas in regard to Kandas 1 to 6 excluding the Uttara Kanda.

Mr. Paramasiva Iyer says at the conclusion of his work: "For the above reasons, there can be no doubt that the so-called Gayatri Ramayana is a contemptible forgery". He has given no reasons but a few cocksure assertions and yet he talks in a high-brow fashion looking down with a superiority complex on his betters. The Gayatri Ramayana idea may be regarded by some persons as a mere lovely fancy but it is an ancient idea and cannot be dismissed even by Mr. Paramasiva Iyer with supercilious contempt.

Mr. T. Paramasiva Iyer's work betokens a careful and continuous and comprehensive study of the immortal epic and we are grateful to him for his keen analysis of many problems and puzzles in the Ramayana. But his main thesis is indefensible and his inner affirmations are baseless and have more novelty than substance.

Village Improvement

By R. GALLETTI, M. A., I. C. S.

[This is the first of a series of three articles by Mr. Galletti, which constitute an able and exhaustive analysis of village conditions—Ed.]



HIS pamphlet is addressed to all those who intend to take a lively and active interest in the improvement of village life within the M— division. It is meant not only for the officers of the various departments but also for the numerous persons of goodwill and intelligence without whose aid nothing substantial can be achieved. Its aim is to bring out in bold relief the essential outlines of the subsisting conditions, the work to be done, the methods that can be used, and the aims to be borne in mind.

Section I. The General Condition of the Villages and the Needs of the Village.

No general survey has yet been made of the social and economic life of the villages of this area. Very few such surveys have been made in any part of India; and the results of those that have been made elsewhere do not necessarily throw much light on conditions here. There are great differences between areas within the same taluk, not to mention districts and provinces. Yet certain types of rural economy give rise to certain kinds of needs and difficulties all over the world; and with a general notion of how the people live, it is possible to forecast within certain limits of error the results of a detailed investigation.

M— division presents certain obvious features. It is mostly hilly country with a low rainfall and a soil which is nowhere very rich. Irrigation is effected by a very large number of small tanks, a few large ones, and a few unimportant channels. The total area irrigated is not great. The soil is for the most part loam, containing rather more sand than clay. The principal crops are ground-nut and sazza with other millets and various pulses on dry lands, and paddy and ragi on wet lands. Yields are very moderate on the average. Ground-nut is the only crop of commercial importance. The export of food-stuffs is small. Agricultural methods are for the most part traditional and unprogressive. Implements are primitive and seed unselected. Manuring is insufficient. Rotations are empirical, not scientific.

There is no cattle-breeding. Large numbers of cattle are kept to provide manure; but good animals for ploughing and draught purposes are brought in from outside. Fodder is very insufficient and poor in quality. Milking cattle are too few for the population.

Large-scale industries do not exist. Very few of the villagers use their spare time to supplement their income from agriculture. There are no special advantages—no cheap power, no cheap source of essential materials. So the income from the fields is practically the sole livelihood of the vast majority of the villagers.

Population has been increasing steadily. Cultivation has been extended to very unpromising land; but the pressure of the population on the means of subsistence has increased and is increasing. When ground-nut fell in price this pressure became serious. The people are disinclined to reduce their standard of living, and many have by borrowing maintained a higher standard of living than their income warrants. Land still has a sufficient value to secure large loans. It will be found here as elsewhere that the larger a man's property the greater are his debts.

Nearly everybody is indebted. Some of the richer landowners will have debts amounting to about half the value of their property. Some smaller holders have debts equal to three-quarters of the value of their property or more. Landless tenants and labourers have only small debts amounting perhaps to a year's income. There are few professional money-lenders; the bulk of the money debts have been taken from fellow-ryots, especially from the rich and influential families in each village. A rough estimate of the extent of the debt in a village can be made by multiplying the land revenue by $2\frac{1}{2}$ or by 3, which will give the amount of the interest due annually on the outstanding debt; the outstanding debt itself will be about eight times this amount, as interest on money debts averages about 12 per cent.*

A very large proportion of the total debt consists of loans taken in grain and to be repaid in grain. As these are repaid after three or four months with the addition of one quarter or more as interest, the rate of interest on them regularly exceeds 100 per cent per annum.

As expenditure in the villages at present tends to exceed income in most families, debts are rarely repaid; the creditor is generally content to obtain a portion of the interest due each year. So debts are accumulating. Payment of land revenue is nominally a first charge on the ryot's land; but the ryot himself regards it as the last painful necessity to be met after he has secured his food, his clothing, and his ceremonies, and paid enough to his creditors to satisfy them for the year. His creditors, incidentally, have a way of taking their dues at the very field, so that they are harder to baulk than Government.

The income per head in the villages will generally be found on careful investigation to average about Rs 30 in terms of money. It

* This was written in 1937—It is doubtful whether recent legislation for the relief and conciliation of agricultural debt has made any noticeable difference.

costs Government well over Rs. 50 to keep a prisoner in good health for a year. But the diet given in jails is much more generous than that which most villagers enjoy. A standard of one seer of grain a day with a little condiment and pulse and a very little buttermilk is regarded as ample; and many do not get so much. Food for the average villager comes to about Rs. 20 or Rs. 25 for a year in terms of money. It is much the largest part of the family budget. Nothing is paid for house-rent, and clothing is only Rs. 5 or so a year. Ceremonies consume Rs. 3 or so, except when a marriage or a funeral has to be performed; for these borrowing is practically unavoidable. Expenditure on health and sanitation is as little as can possibly be imagined. Most of the villagers will have an income and expenditure very near the average. The very poor are not many, and the well-to-do are very few.

Working hours are long during a few months of the year when the principal operations of agriculture are in full swing; but during most of the year the ryot is not overburdened with work. He has very little to do with his leisure. Entertainments are few; games are hardly played at all; and intelligent or co-operative activities are seldom found.

Women work hard all through the year, but have even less use for their leisure than the men. They are not encouraged to indulge in any activities outside the house, so that they have little recreation besides gossip. They generally keep their houses clean but have so few possessions that they can hardly grow house-proud. Women of labouring classes are very badly paid but supplement the family income in a way that women of richer families are often too proud and indolent to do. Skill in embroidery and other practical crafts is not common; and women very rarely earn money by their handiwork.

Maternity and child welfare are almost unknown. The midwives in the villages are ignorant and far from clean in their methods. It is rare for a woman to be taken to a hospital or a competent doctor. Infants are rarely well tended and infantile mortality is very high. Nursing and first aid are of the roughest and readiest kind. Certain traditional remedies are known and used; but the amount of preventable suffering and death in every village is very great. Diseases due to dirt, bad drainage, and an unprotected water-supply are everywhere common. The water-supply is nearly always from open wells or kuntas which are nurseries for germs and mosquitoes. Drains are very few and bad. Latrines hardly exist. The village site is usually full of uncovered heaps of manure and refuse, which attract flies. Insanitary pits and cess pools abound.

The women are almost wholly illiterate. The proportion of literates is very low among the men and even lower among the

women. A fair proportion of the children attend school wherever a school exists; but the attendance is irregular and the instruction often unintelligent and uninterested. Only a small proportion of the school-going children acquire a genuine elementary education. There is too little development of character or ethical education. It is true of most villages that the majority of the inhabitants are wanting in enterprise, hope, self-reliance, truth and neighbourliness. The sense of the common interest which must have existed in the days when the land was the common property of the village and the affairs of the village were administered by its own panchayat seems to have died. Co-operation is rarely evident, and co-operative credit societies, forest panchayats, and village panchayat boards are all marred by faction and self-seeking.

The moral and social condition of a village will generally depend on not more than half a dozen persons whose wealth or force of character have made them the leaders of the community. Five or six families may own half the land in the village. The rest of the village depend on them for loans and for other assistance. If these families contain some persons of public spirit they may do much good. If, as too often happens, they become absentee landlords or leaders of factions, the whole village will deteriorate.

There is much more to be said, but the sketch is sufficient to show what are the principal needs of the villager and the village. The needs are so inter-related, as are the methods of filling them, that they must all be studied together; but for convenience they must be stated separately.

(i) The villager needs a change of outlook. He needs hope, self-reliance, and the will to assist his neighbour and be assisted by him in common action for a common end. Without this better outlook he will not endeavour to improve his condition; and if he does nothing, nobody can do anything for him. He is caught in a vicious circle. He knows that if he does not change his ways and methods he will continue as he is—poor, unhealthy, and oppressed; but he thinks he is too poor, unhealthy, and oppressed to be able to change his ways and methods. He must be helped to break his way through the vicious circle.

(ii) He needs education. He must be made capable of understanding new ideas and of following the written and printed word. It is impossible to supply him with mentors who will be always at hand to tell him what to do. He must therefore comprehend the elementary principles and obtain his detailed instructions from written and printed matter. He must learn not to distrust those who wish to instruct him. He must realise that his children must attend school regularly and make the best of their opportunities to learn. He must learn not to tolerate slack and absentee school masters,

(iii) His chief material need is a sufficiency of really nourishing food. His health and energy cannot improve until he has proper diet.

(iv) He needs more air and light in his house and more cleanliness in his neighbourhood. More particularly he needs a better water supply and better drains.

(v) He needs clear ideas about disease and injuries and their treatment.

(vi) He needs more amusement and interests for his mental health.

(vii) He needs profitable sidelines with which to occupy his spare time and supplement his meagre income.

What is needed by the men is needed also by the women. And to secure the fulfilment of each of the needs in the list there are many other things necessary.

Section II. The Investigation of Conditions in Particular Villages.

Before anybody attempts to improve a village he must have a thorough knowledge of that village. Improvement must always radiate from a centre where there are enough workers competent and eager enough to make prolonged and intelligent efforts to assist their neighbours. The village to be improved must be near enough to such a centre for the workers to go to it frequently. It should also be sufficiently healthy in its moral and social atmosphere to respond to assistance. If there is already some corporate or co-operative activity so much the better.

The investigation should be as thorough as the time and the number of investigators permit. Whenever it is possible the investigators should begin by making a detailed enquiry from house to house. All the houses of the village or hamlets should be numbered and a certain proportion assigned to each investigator. The villagers will generally be unable to give accurate information or correct money values. The investigator must therefore use his own judgment in allowing margins of error and in reducing quantitative estimates to money values. The information obtained should be tabulated in a form like the following.

First Sheet							
Name of house—holder	Caste	Number in family of		Number of			
		Adults	Children	Literate adults	School-going children		
(1)	(2)	(3-a)	(3-b)	(4-a)	(4-b)		
Second Sheet							
House		No. of		Holding			
Its value	No. of rooms	No. of windows	Government	Wet	Dry	Wet	Value
(5-a)	(5-b)	(5-c)	Wet	(6-a)	(6-b)	(6-c)	(7)

Third Sheet

Cattle—Number of					Cattle—value of				
Bulls	Cows	Buffaloes	She- buffaloes	Sheep and goats	Bulls	Cows	Buffaloes	She- buffaloes	Sheep and goats
(8-a)	(8-b)	(8-c)	(8-d)	(8-e)	(9-a)	(9-b)	(9-c)	(9-d)	(9-e)

Fourth Sheet

Value of other assets			Total	Debts			Total
Furniture, tools, Jewellery	other imple- ments	Loans given to others	value of assets	Mort- gage	Pledge secured	Un- secured	Liabilities
(10-a)	(10-b)	(10-c)	(11)	(12-a)	(12-b)	(12-c)	(13)

Fifth Sheet

Outturn of Crops—Amount of							Total value of
Paddy	Ragi	Sugar- cane	Sazza	Jonna	Ground- nut	Other crops	Income from other sources
(14-a)	(14-b)	(14-c)	(14-d)	(14-e)	(14-f)	(14-g)	(15)

Sixth Sheet

Agricultural expenses					Rent paid	Assessment	Interest
Cattle	Labour	Seed	Manure	Other ex- penses	for land		on debt
(17-a)	(17-b)	(17-c)	(17-d)	(17-e)	(18)	(19)	(20)

Seventh Sheet

Domestic Expenses						Total	Total
Grain	Food, Milk and Milk products	Pulses	Condi- ments	Cloth- ing	Cere- monies	Other expenses	Income Ex- penditure
(21-a)	(21-b)	(21-c)	(21-d)	(21-e)	(21-f)	(21-g)	(22)

The information thus tabulated can then be analysed to give the averages per family and per head for different castes and for different economic groups. For instance the families can be divided into groups according to the extent of the holding—those holding no land, those holding less than one acre, those holding less than three acres, those holding less than five acres, those holding less than ten acres, and those holding more than ten acres. (For convenience three acres of dry land can be taken to be equal to one of wet, and all holdings reduced to terms of wet land.) The particulars of their holdings given by the house-holders can to some extent be checked with the help of the official register of holdings (Village account No. X), but not completely, as many pattas are joint and the shares of the various pattadars are not exactly known. A careful study of the averages for each group and each caste per family and per head will reveal the economic condition of the village.

The investigators must also make detailed and penetrating enquiries into a great many other matters. Below is given a form designed to cover a very wide variety of points which may serve as a guide.

Part I—Statistical Particulars (to be compiled mainly from the village registers)

Population—Men	Average birth-rate—
Women	
Boys under 18	Average death-rate—
Girls under 16	

Inhabited houses—Tiled
Thatched
Terraced

Ploughs

Cattle—Bulls

Cows

Young stock

Buffaloes

She-buffaloes

Young buffaloes

Sheep

Goats

Carts

Loans

Land—Registered wet (Government and Inam)

Registered dry (ditto)

Normally irrigated—

by channel

by tanks

by wells

Average annual revenue—

Average water-rate—

Average remissions—

Number of irrigation sources—

Number of wells (for irrigation) in repair

Number of wells and kuntas for drinking water

Number of wells for other domestic uses

Number of Government trees

Area for grazing

Area of unreserved land providing fuel and timber

Area of land reserved for communal purposes

Area of land reserved for depressed classes

Average rainfall (nearest recording station)

Average area under principal crops =

Wet — (1) Paddy

(2) Ragi

(3)

(4)

Dry — (1) Sazza

(2) Jonna

(3) Korra

(4)

Pulses — (1) Horse-gram

(2) Others

Fodder— (1) Janumu

(2) Others

- Money-crops — (1) Ground-nut
 (2) Chillies
 (3) Onions
 (4) Tobacco
 (5) Gingelly
 (6) Turmeric
 (7) Cotton
- Vegetables —
 Fruit — (1) Mangoes
 (2) Oranges
 (3)

(To this section should be added explanatory notes, showing e. g. the periods for which the various averages have been struck, or the margin of error in those figures which have to be estimated.)

Part II—Notes on Social Conditions.

1. The principal castes, their numbers and standing—Condition of the depressed classes—Emigration ; Prevalence and causes.

2. Temples and Insitutions--Fairs and Festivals—Bhajanais.

3. Distinctive social and religious customs—Prevalence of partition ; effect on joint family system—Poor relations and paupers ; how supported—Superstitious beliefs and observances.

4. Associations—Personal, communal and religious factions and reasons for their existence —Panchayat Boards and Courts—Vigilance Committees—Co-operative Societies —Ryots' Associations—Canvas-sing for Elections—Caste—Panchayats —Common funds for religious and other purposes.

5. Education—Schools —Number of pupils, boys and girls—Attendance—Efficiency of instruction —Difference between various castes—Female education—Secondary education—Boys sent to Middle School, High School and University—Adult literacy—Adult education.

6. Communications—Rail—Buses—Metalled roads—Cart tracks—Village streets—Encroachments—Distances to important places (especially markets).

7. Public Health and Sanitation—Water supply in hot and rainy weather —Scavenging—Drains—Latrines —Prevalent disease and epidemics (with special reference to cholera, small-pox, malaria, other fevers, leprosy, eye-troubles, consumption, plague) —Dispensaries —Nearest hospital—Doctors —Midwives —Infantile mortality—Care of expectant and nursing mothers—Average age at death of men and women—Physical condition of people—Average height of men and women—Purity and cleanliness of food—Adulteration.

8. Employment of leisure — Games and amusements of old and young—Newspapers and books —Story-telling—Recitation—Street-drama—Music—Drinking and drunkenness.

9. Conditions and hours of work —Cultivators—Field-labourers —House-servants —Women —Children—Factories—Virtual serfdom.

10. Standard of life—Houses ; their type, size, cost and condition (ventilation, light, cleanliness, number of persons to a room)—Food ; difference between castes and classes in diet ; quantity and quality ; use of condiments, ghee, milk, sugar, fruit, vegetables—Clothing ; difference of dress in various castes and classes, use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth ; cost of washing ; annual expenditure—Furniture and domestic utensils—Lighting of houses and streets.

11. Income and expenditure —Highest, lowest, and average income —Difference between various castes and classes—Pressure of population and size of holding —Debt—Money-lending —Rate of Interest—Security for loans—Duration of loans and methods of recovery —Grain loans—Rent of land—Savings.

(This section should as far as possible be based on the results of a house-to-house enquiry.)

Part III—Notes on Occupations.

A. Agriculture—

a) Soils—General type and distribution—Salinity—Sale values.

b) Land still to be taken up—Area and nature—Uncultivable land.

c) Irrigation—Number and nature of channels, tanks and wells—Expenditure on repair by Government—Kudimaramat—Defects to be rectified—Distribution of water ; agency and grievances—Irrigation Panchayats ; whether constituted or possible—Loans for well works.

d) Seasons—Rainfall —Calendar of agricultural operations—Famine.

e) Principal crops—Food crops ; money crops ; fodder crops—Consumption and sale—Movement of prices—Pests—New crops and varieties and their success.

f) Agricultural methods and implements —Ploughing—Sowing and seed —Manuring—Weeding—Watering—Harvesting—Introduction of improvements —Work of Agricultural Department.

g) Agricultural finance—Expenses, with particular reference to seasons at which demand for money is greatest—Loans—Interest—Repayment—Net return and profits—Purchase of land and return on investment—Mortgage—Co-operative Credit and Land Mortgage Societies—Work of Co-operative Department.

h) Agricultural Marketing—Dealers—Methods—Transport—Middlemen's profits—Wholesale and retail marketing centres —Loan and Marketing sale Societies.

i) Holdings—Average size—Especially small and large holding—Fragmentation ; its causes and prevalence —Average assessment and income —Grouping of holdings by area and assessment—Number of landowners—Number of tenants—Number of farm-servants and field labourers—Absentee landlords.

B. Weaving—Number of weavers—Number of looms—Occupation of dependants—Capital—Borrowing—Type of loom—Conditions and hours of work—Output—Purchase and preparation of materials—Sale of product—Net return to weaver—Average income—Weavers' Co-operative Societies.

C. Artisans—Potter, Carpenter, Blacksmith, washerman, Goldsmith etc. —Tools and methods of work—Purchase of materials—Method and amount of remuneration—Inams; value; alienation.

D. Other trades—Masons; note on house-building and thatching—Rattan work—Basket-making—Tailoring—Fishing.

E. Merchants and Shop-keepers—Nature of business—Goods most in demand—Changes in public taste—Profits—Employment of clerks and carriers.

F. Subsidiary Industries—Poultry—Bee-keeping—Gathering of minor forest produce—Needlework—Arts and crafts.

Part IV.—Notes on cattle.

1. Cattle-buying—Dealers—Methods of payment—Type of cattle.

2. Cattle-breeding—Types of bull—Selection of cows for breeding—Care of calves.

3. Cattle-tending—Pasturage—Fodder—Stalls—Diseases—Veterinary assistance—work of Veterinary Department.

4. Manure—Conservation—Use for fuel and domestic needs—Penning of sheep and goats in fields—Manure-pits and making of compost—work of the Agricultural Department.

5. Products—Yield of cows, she-buffaloes and goats—Disposal of milk—Hides and skins—Bones—Horns—Hooves—Carcases.

Part V.—Notes on vegetation.

1. Forests and unreserves—valuable trees and plants—Their uses—Grazing—Fuel—Utilization of Timber.

2. Destruction and Conservation—Burning—Browsing—Illicit felling—Restrictions imposed—work of Forest Department—Attitude of ryots—Forest Panchayats—Increase or decrease in number of goats.

3. Plantation—Fate of old topes—Planting of fresh topes and trees by ryots—Regeneration of forest growth—Planting of shrubs for green manure.

Famous Relics in Travancore

By K. P. PADMANABHAN TAMPY, B. A.

Vattakotta. The gigantic and awe-inspiring stone fort of Vattakotta, three miles to the north-east of Cape Comorin, the Land's End of India, rises in majestic grandeur at the brink of the ocean. This granite fort was built for the defence of the coast at Cape Comorin against the depredations of pirates and merry buccaneers. Vattakotta is but a part of the well-planned and famous South Travancore Lines which were erected under the commands of H. H. Marthanda Varma, (1729–1758 A. D.) the 'Maker of Modern Travancore', whose prowess and organising capacity brought into one sovereignty the hinterlands of Kerala extending immediately to the north-west and south-east of his central state. Vattakotta, an eighteenth century fortress, was built in 1757 by the famous Flemish General Eustachio De' Lannoy who was taken captive by H. H. Marthanda Varma at the battle of Colachel and who later became the Commander-in-Chief of Maharaja Marthanda Varma's army. The old records in the Bhagavathi Temple at Cape Comorin contain references to the completion of the Vattakotta fort and the part played by some of the Travancore chieftains, in the former half of the 9th century of the Malabar Era.

Colonel St. Leger's army, which marched into Travancore in 1810 A. D., and demolished some portions of the Travancore lines did not, however, cause any havoc to Vattakotta. For a brief period a small detachment of his army was stationed in the fort.

The four walls of Vattakotta enclose an area of about four acres. There are four buildings and a cellar inside the fort which were in former days used as store houses. These structures which measure 50' x 9', are built of brick and mortar, the roofs consisting of granite girder stones paved over with brick mortar.

The walls of the strong and irregular fort are massive. The front wall has a width of 29 feet and the rear wall is 6 feet wide. The width at each corner is 18 feet. There are bastions at the four corners and facing the vulnerable points. One of the bastions which is very strongly, constructed juts out into the sea for a few yards. The bastions in the west and south are triangular in shape, the one at the north square, and the other facing the sea is rectangular. The bastions and the fort walls are protected by parapet walls three to six feet high. The parapet walls in the east and north are only 3 feet high and are built of granite. A masonry wall 5 ft. thick affords additional protection to the walls of the Fort. This wall is composed of two layers of granite set on edge 3 feet, from each other. The space between has been filled in with brick and mortar.

A revetment wall 6 feet high and 2 feet thick runs all round the interior of the fort. The height of the walls from the ground level to the top of the parapet varies from 28 feet to 25 feet. The outer facing of the walls of the fort are still in splendid condition though the revetment walls have, in some places, become weak.

Inside the fort are a well and pond which are now silted up. The Vattakotta Fort is a magnificent specimen of military architecture situated amidst a landscape of arcadian exuberance and sea scape of unrivalled charms. The sea-front at Vattakotta is charming and majestic. The shore is lovely and rapturous with the unending music of the waves over the rocks. The boiling tide here races across like a thousand white-crested sea-horses and splashes against the walls of the fort. Although divested of its former glory, Vattakotta, is full of attractions to the tourist. It is an ideal camping place. It is thrilling to enjoy the quiet charms of Vattakotta, in the evening when the heat no longer reflects off the mounting sands on the beach, when the cool ozone-bearing night breeze hisses across the feathery palm leaves into the interior and the tides splash against the rocks throwing up silver spray. Vattakotta is a great relic of the past, an imposing landmark, a solemn and melancholy witness to the valour and achievements of Travancore, which evokes great and sacred memories.

The Chitalar Rock Temple. The Chitalar Rock Shrine situated four miles to the north of Kuzhithura (on the Trivandrum—Nagercoil Road) in South Travancore, is of great antiquity and historical importance. It was originally a shrine sacred to the Jains. Jain groups had their habitat in Travancore in early times, but disappeared consequent on certain historical circumstances which had their origin outside the State. The Temple at Chitalar was, later on, converted into a Hindu Shrine. A number of epigraphs in the Tinnevely District, go to show that Jainism was once prevalent in South Travancore and that some of the wellknown Jain teachers and devotees hailed from Chitalar. The Shrine at Chitalar is visited both by Hindus and non-hindus as there are no caste restrictions in this ancient place of worship.

The temple is cut into a huge rock. The wall of the temple alone is outside the work. Inside the shrine proper are many images which are avowedly Jainistic in origin, dress and demeanour. The distinguishing features of these black granite images are bald heads, clean shaven faces, the absence of holy thread, and a tier of three umbrellas. The images are masterpieces of the sculptor's art.

Chitalar is famous for its inscriptions on huge rocks. A number of inscriptions of great historical and cultural importance are noticed here. They throw much light on the religious and cultural history of the State.

A beautiful rock spring, the waters of which form a pretty tank, shoots up in front of the shrine. A magnificent panorama stretches before the sightseer who ascends the Chitalar Rock and surveys the lovely landscape around. At a distance he sees the jagged outline of the mountains enveloped in mist. Gleaming pale green lakes and fields, winding rivers and irrigation canals, clusters of pretty villages, dense cocoanut and palmyrah plantations, greet the tourist's vision at this charming spot. Chitalar is a beauty spot which affords many charms to the tourist and the pilgrim.

The Udayar Vazhy at Kovalam. At Kovalam, an alluring beauty spot and a magnificent bathing beach situated in a sea side village nestling amidst dense palm groves, is a mysterious cave around which time has woven many interesting legends. This wonderful cave is in common parlance called "Udayar Vazhi". A furlong to the interior of the picturesque rocky cliff overlooking the Kovalam sea is a precipitous and narrow pass. The cave is at the farthest end of this pass. Weird sounds are caused when sea water rushes into this deep and mysterious cave. It is not possible to see clearly water rushing in, for the mouth of the cave is partially hidden by a huge globe like stone towering 6 feet above the sea level. It is said that if this black rock is blasted away the interior of the cave would be clearly visible. To the right of the narrow pass visitors could stand and look round. The left side presents the appearance of a pretty jungle. To obtain the best possible view of this strange cave one should embark either a catamaran or canoe and take a position facing the cave. Of course, this is a difficult and irksome task full of thrill. The interior of the cave is broad. The figure of a person seems to occupy the centre of the cave. When the rays of the setting sun reflect inside the cave, two eyes of flame are noticed there. One hears the noise of the sea water flowing into the recesses of the cave. The sea water, however, does not flow back into the ocean. Legend avers that this awe-inspiring cave has its terminus at the foot of the *Mookunni Malai*, a small mountain range about 20 miles to the interior. Aged people who inhabit the coast say that terrible sounds emanate from the cave before the out-break of the monsoon. It is believed that such sounds indicate an imminent monsoon.

Legend says that many many years ago when Kovalam was occupied by *Pandarams*, a section of Saivites, one of their priests or *Udayars* as they were called, used to observe penance inside this cave. The *Udayar* who was a saint was in the habit of praying inside the cave for days together at a stretch without coming out or partaking of food. At last, he informed his disciples that he had determined to take up his permanent abode inside the cave and commanded them to close the mouth of the cave. The dutiful disciples rolled down a huge stone to cover the mouth of the cave but the stone failed to

serve the purpose. The *Udayar* did not again make his appearance outside the cave. Religious belief asserts that in places where such saints attain *samadhi*, *Siva Lingams* sprout up. It may be that the figure which appears to occupy the interior of the cave is either a *Siva Lingam* or the body of the *Udayar* himself.

Ammachi Plavu. Twelve miles to the south-east of Trivandrum is situated the township of Neyyattinkara which is famous for its Temple dedicated to Sri Krishna. The shrine, situated on an eminence the foot of which is washed by the Neyyar River, is of unique historical importance. In the precincts of the temple is an old jack tree which has been known for the past two centuries and odd as *Ammachi Plavu* (Mother jack tree). It was in the hollow of this tree that His Highness Marthanda Varma (1729—1758), the Maker of Modern Travancore, took refuge from his enemies and lay ensconced for a few hours during one of the most turbulent periods in the history of the State.

Prince Marthanda Varma, whose military prowess and organising capacity brought into one sovereignty the hinterlands of Kerala extending immediately north-west and south-east of his central State, took an active part in the administration of the State even from his younger days. Maharaja Rama Varma, the then Sovereign, allowed the Prince a free hand in administration of the State in consultation with the officials of the State. The Prince who was an accomplished statesman and brave warrior adopted stern measures to put down the rebellious spirit of the confederacy of *Yogakkars*, *Ettuveetil Pillamars* and *Madampimars*, influential and wealthy chieftains who were opposed to the Ruler and who longed for supremacy. This powerful confederacy of clever and unprincipled chieftains found in Prince Marthanda Varma a dangerous and strong enemy and they sought many a measure to assassinate the Prince. The Prince was compelled to shift from place to place to avoid falling into the vile clutches of the desperadoes. Finding it unsafe to stay at the capital, Maharaja Marthanda Varma was obliged to tour throughout the State incognito, very often seeking shelter in forests and the houses of loyal subjects. On various occasions and at different places, the Prince was waylaid by his scheming enemies but Providence came to his rescue every time and he managed to escape.

On one occasion when pursued by the enemies the Prince rushed into the Sri Krishnaswami Temple at Neyyattinkara. His attention was drawn to the hollow of a huge tree, inside the precincts of the temple, by a loyal subject. In the twinkling of an eye the agile Prince slipped into the hollow and he spent a few restless hours there as King Charles of England did when chased by his enemies. It was dusk and his pursuers were not able to locate the Prince who had mysteriously disappeared almost in front of their eyes. The Jack tree

at Neyyattinkara which offered shelter to the Prince and saved him from being killed at the hands of his treacherous enemies has ever since been hailed as *Ammachi Plavu* by the loyal subjects of Travancore.

At the base this tree has a circumference of twenty feet. The *Ammachi Plavu* is at least three hundred years old, and strange to say, it bears fruit in abundance even now. A masonry wall has been built around this tree. Close to the base of the tree has been installed a black stone image of God Ganapathi. The *Ammachi Plavu* stands near the principal entrance to the Sri Krishnaswami Temple. It is held in affectionate veneration by the people. It is a sacred relic of the past.

Karimadi Kuttan. Ten miles from Alleppey, the Venice of the East, is the tiny and unpretentious village of Karimadi which is surrounded by vast stretches of brackish water and fertile paddy fields with black Soil. This place is famous for its *Karimadikuttan*, a black stone figure which stands imposingly to the south of the bridge across the canal. Many are the thrilling legends and colourful stories associated with this image which for a long time lay immersed in saltish water. Now this centuries old work of art has been placed on a masonry pedestal on the bank.

The image is in a standing posture and is five feet high. The right hand of Karimadikuttan has been broken by some vandal. The Kamarathu Temple consecrated to the Goddess Bhagavathi is a furlong to the north-east of the image. The image is finely chiselled and is a triumph of stone carving.

Opinion is divided in regard to the origin of this image. Some persons are of opinion that it is a Jaina image. It is believed that Karimadikuttan (Black Boy) is one of the few relics of Buddhism, which was once prevalent in Travancore. The head dress and the traces of upper cloth spread over the chest, visible in this image, go to prove that it is a Buddhistic figure. It is strange that local tradition does not in any manner indicate its Buddhistic origin. Many stories point to the mysterious and divine origin of this strange figure. One story avers that Karimadikuttan is a pariah by caste, who was cursed by a holy Brahmin to become a stone. Another story says that he is one of the minor diabolical deities deputed by the chieftain and priest of Chengannoor to kill Devanarayana, the Brahmin King of Ambalapuzha but that the God in the Ambalapuzha temple in his wrath made him a stone and fixed him up as Karimadikuttan. Yet another legend enlightens us that Karimadikuttan is a low caste boy who dared to pollute the great sage Vilwamangalathu Swamiyar with whose name is associated the consecration of the idols in many temples, and that the latter petrified him.

Karimadikuttan is held in great fear by the people, especially the boat men who consider him as an evil minded deity. They propitiate him by making offerings so as to ensure a safe journey. They usually break cocoanuts before Karimadikuttan. The local folk credit this jet black granite statue with supernatural powers and say that Karimadikuttan is so powerful that even during severe floods the water will not rise above his shoulders and flow over his head. This interesting image serves the useful purpose of indicating the water level to boatmen who navigate the backwaters.

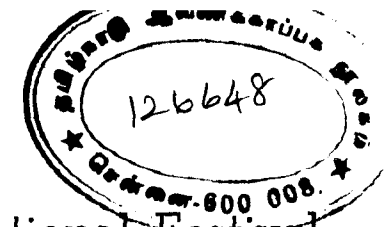
A Mystic Land

The place is strange, its solitude
Beyond the mood of man, beyond
The mountain peaks, an altitude
Above the reach of times' base flood.

Here grow the water lilies, here
The waters dance with silver flame,
And round the spotless lotus rear
Their reflex like a fiery spear.

There is no name, there is no way
To guide one to this fiery place,
Yet he who sees the Pleiads play
May take this starry road one day.

Barnett, D. Conlan.



Thiruvonam—the National Festival of Kerala.

By M. S. KRISHNA AYYAR



HIRUVONAM (literally the 22nd asterism in the lunar mansion) is the most popular national festival of Kerala. The phrase *onamkeramoola* (that corner where Onam is not celebrated) used by the Malayalee to show the worthlessness or outlandish nature of a place, and the saying *kanom vittum onam unnanom* (feast during Onam even at the risk of selling property) indicate the importance attached to Onam in Malabar. In spite of the universality and popularity of the festival, its exact origin, and historical or religious significance remain still a closed book, and one has for their understanding to depend mostly on tradition and some speculative theories, and a little on history.

The common story is that King Mahabali once ruled over Kerala, that his was the Golden Age of the country, that he visits Kerala once in a year and that it is in commemoration of him, his time and his visit that the festival is celebrated, and that the mud idol made and worshipped now during the festival days is his emblem. The skeleton of this story is embodied in the *Ona Pattu* (Onam hymns sung from time immemorial) also. The difficulty is to identify this King Mahabali.

Srimad Bhagavatha describes the great King Mahabali as having his sacrificial abode on the northern banks of the Narbada and performing his Aswamedha Sacrifice there, when Vamana, the dwarf or the fifth incarnation of Maha Vishnu, getting a gift from him (the king) who was noted for his liberality, of as much earth as could be covered in three steps, covered the whole earth by the first step, heaven by the second and not knowing where to place the third, planted it on the king's head, and sent him and all his legions to the Patala (the nether regions). This cannot be the Mahabali in whose memory the feast is held; for even if we take it that Kerala was once under his sway, why is it that Onam is celebrated in Kerala alone and not elsewhere in his vast domains?

The view that Onam is reminiscent of the day of the Vamana incarnation may also be considered here. Pouranikas (scholars versed in the Puranas) opine that the Avatar took place on the twelfth day of the white part (suklapaksha dwadasi) of the Malayalam month Chingom (August-September). It is quite possible that this day corresponded to the Malabar Thiruvonam day in the month of

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Chingom. But, if the festival is in memory of the Avatar day, prominence ought to have been given to Vamana or Lord Vishnu which is not the case, Mahabali being considered the guardian angel of Onam.

This story is given a slightly different turn by others. Onam comes in, not in memory of the Avatar day, but in that of the day Mahabali was fated to meet with loss of his freedom, country and all. Mahabali was such an ideal ruler, and beloved of the people, that when he left this for the nether world, people were so much afflicted with sorrow that Lord Mahavishnu ordained that the king would be returning once every year on the day of the star Thiruvonam in the month of Chingom when they could all entertain and worship him with divine honours. The floral decoration of homes, the gorgeous dress of the people and the feasts during Onam are said to be indicative of the affluence that prevailed in Mahabali's time. From the importance attached to the worship of Mahabali during Onam, there seems to be some plausibility in this theory; but then again, why should this festival have been confined to Malabar alone?

The theory that Parasurama, the traditional reclamer of Kerala from the seas, has enjoined on the people to celebrate such a festival as Onam, has nothing to support it.

A more rational theory, it also having some historical foundation, is that Mahabali was one of the thirty-six Perumal Kings who ruled over Kerala, that during his benign and ideal rule Thrikkakara (now in the Alangad Taluk in North Travancore) was the capital of Kerala, that his subordinate princes and chiefs used to visit and pay obeisance to him once every year in the month of Chingom, that a Durbar and presentation ceremony were held on the Thiruvonam day being the concluding day of a preceding festival lasting four weeks, and that Onam came to be celebrated from that time and in memory of the same. This view of the origin of Onam is accepted by Mahakavi Kunhikuttan Thampuran more familiarly known as Kerala Vyasa, in his historical poem "Keralam," with this small difference that Baskara Ravi Varma Cheraman Perumal, the last of the Perumal kings, started the 28 days' festival and the concluding function in honour of his predecessor.

This view gets strength added to it, by the place assigned today to the worship of Thrikkakarappan (presiding deity of Thrikkakara—Lord Mahadeva) side by side with Mahabali. A festival for 28 days ending with the Thiruvonam day in Chingom used to be held at Thrikkakara formerly and it was enjoined on all Malayalees to be there that day. When Cheraman Perumal divided and distributed the country, the Perumpadappu and the Nediyrippu Swarupams the present royal families of Cochin and the Zamorins respectively, got their slices. The Athachamayam festival and procession conducted by these royal

Houses to-day are emblematic of their leaving for Thrikkakara, to be there in time for Thiruvonam. Whatever that may be, worship of Thrikkakarappan forms an inevitable adjunct to the celebration of the Onam festival both among the rich and the poor and this affords proof of the aforementioned Perumal's injunction to Malayalees to assemble at Thrikkakara.

Having got an idea as to the origin of the festival it will be interesting to know something of the conventional observances during the Onam season. From the day of the Thiruvonam that precedes the Thiruvonam day in Chingom, the abundant supply during this time, of vernal flowers of variegated colours, are collected, and beautiful floral carpets intended for the reception of Thrikkakarappan and Mahabali are made on the floor in front of houses. It is the Nayars and the lower Kammala castes that devote great attention to this practice. The Brahmins and the Ambalavasis (caste of temple servants) begin to install in front of their homes three idols of Thrikkakarappan from the day of the star Hastham, whereas others are seen doing this only from the Mulam day. From the time the idols are installed the floral carpets are no longer made, only flowers are showered and strewn, the idea underlying the same being that the God has already seated himself.

The installation of Thrikkakarappan is done according to a regulated scheme. On the Moolam day two plantain leaves with their triangular corner turned towards the east are spread separately over two wooden planks, and on each of them three and two idols respectively, decorated with flour paste, and head adorned with flowers, are placed. It is incumbent to have seven on the Puradam day, nine on Utharadam, and twenty one including one idol of Mahabali on the Thiruvonam day. These twenty one are arranged in the family quadrangle in a particular way. Mahabali is placed on a seat towards the South. Just to the left of it, in another seat, is placed Lord Mahadeva surrounded by ten other idols. To the north of this, on a third seat, is placed in a square the nine other idols.

When Mahabali is installed, there is what is called Puvili (invocation for prosperity). From the time Thrikkakarappan is installed on the Thiruvonam day a tall oil lamp is kept burning. *Ilaadai* (a sweet cake like preparation made of cocoanut, jaggery and flour and folded over by plantain leaf) and banana *Nivedayam* (food offering) is compulsory. The lamp may be removed after the Nivedya. Till some auspicious day after Purorattadi, when the idols may be removed, food offering, though not of *Ilaadai*, is indispensable at least once in a day.

Of the amusements indulged in during Onam *Villukottal* (playing on the music bow) is one, and this is said to be a relic of that practice during festival days in the Thrikkakara temple. In former days the kings and chiefs used to take with them to Thrikkakara men trained

In the course of five years no less than 24 ballets and divertissements were founded, whose influence spread throughout the artistic world. It may be said in fact that the "Swedish Ballet", better than any other single organisation of its time, represented the trend of post-war art in all that was most strikingly original. Rolf de Mare created the most luxurious theatre in Paris—the Theatre des Champs-Élysées known as "Opera Music Hall". Here such celebrities as Anna Pavlova, Colette and Cecile Sorel made their first appearances in variety, and likewise Escudero, Elsie Janis and Josephine Baker effected their Paris debuts. For a period of time, this inedited form of spectacle continued to flourish, giving place in its turn to a new and more positive project to which Rolf de Mare devoted his entire efforts and enthusiasm, viz., the foundation of the International Archives of the Dance.

The International Archives of the Dance is unique of its kind and has surpassed the original hopes of its founder. Created with the intention of imparting to the dance an aesthetic discipline which it greatly lacked, the International Archives of the Dance has rapidly developed into a centre of choreographical activity in Europe. Library, Museum, office of documentation for the dance, all in one, it offers likewise spacious galleries to sculptors and painters, its conference hall to lectures and its stage to dance-artists of the world. The generosity of Rolf de Mare has been amply rewarded. The dance has acquired at last that which all other arts possessed before it—a permanent home, where information may be sought, inspiration found and where this living art can express itself with complete independence. The Archives is a temple of learning of the Fine Arts in an atmosphere conducive to research and study. This picturesque collection possesses inestimable historic value. In the field of study of International folklore, it is destined to render the most eminent services. The International Archives of the Dance will justly be proud to be an institution. Faces that have vanished in the darkness of the past, features that are lost in the depth of the memory, these are what evoke interest to all art lovers. Rolf de Mare, the founder and resident of the International Archives of the Dance, is a genius and his institution stands to-day as a triumphant monument to his foresight and wisdom.

His Highness The Late Maharaja of Mysore



His late Highness Maharaja Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar Bahadur, G. C. S. I., G. B. E., was born on 4th June 1884. He was installed on the historic throne of Mysore at the early age of eleven. During his minority the State was administered by His late Highness's mother, Her late Highness Sri Vanivilasa Sannidhana, C. I., as Regent. He attained his majority in 1902 and on 8th August of the same year he was invested with full ruling powers.

His late Highness took a keen interest in the administration of the State. During the 38 years' rule of His late Highness, Mysore has made remarkable progress in all directions and has won the name of a "Model State." Mysore took the lead in constitutional developments and in the association of the non-officials and officials in the administration of the State. The establishment of the University of Mysore, the Economic Conference, the inauguration of the Iron and Steel Works at Bhadravati and the construction of the Krishnarajsagar Dam and Reservoir and the Irwin Canal, the Jog and Shimsha Falls projects are few of the outstanding features of the reign of His late Highness. The Silver Jubilee of the reign of His late Highness was celebrated in August 1927 with an enthusiasm unparalleled in the annals of the State. There was no town or hamlet in the State which did not celebrate the joyous occasion. The celebrations were organised by a committee consisting of leading citizens from the different parts of the State and subscriptions to the extent of Rs. 4½ lakhs were collected. Of this amount, nearly one lakh of rupees was allotted for expenditure on objects of local utility leaving about Rs. 3½ lakhs for a central Jubilee Memorial. This amount is utilised for the Technological Institute named after His late Highness. The building of this Institute which is now completed had its foundation-stone laid by His late Highness on the 8th March 1933. An accomplished musician himself, His late Highness was well-known for his encouragement of music and painting both Indian and western. His late Highness was a keen sportsman, a fine polo, tennis and racquet player and a splendid shot.

During the year 1936, His late Highness, accompanied by the Dewan and personal staff, went on a tour to Europe for a period of three months. The tour was crowded with engagements and enabled His late Highness to renew many old friendships and to make several new ones.

In the year 1902, the late Lord Curzon of Kedleston, then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, journeyed to Mysore in order personally to perform the ceremony of investiture. In the course of the address which he delivered on August 8, 1902, he acknowledged, "that the smooth progress of events during the minority has been largely due to the unfailing tact and discretion of Her Highness" who "has set an example of public and domestic virtue which has been of equal value to her people and to her family and which has earned for her the admiration and respect of all." He felt satisfied that through home associations, study and observation, "the natural good judgement and sound sense of the Maharaja" had developed until he had acquired the "capacity to assume the full and final responsibility of the Government."

His late Highness followed in the footsteps of his illustrious parents in promoting the welfare of over six million people. A firm believer in the diffusion of knowledge, he made middle school as well as primary education free, and offered other inducements to boys and girls of school-going age to take advantage of the facilities. About 14 per cent of the total revenue of the State is spent on education. In order to enable young men and women to acquire, as far as possible, the highest education without being compelled to go beyond the borders of the State, the University of Mysore was established in 1916, and it has struck out a line of progress specially suited to Mysore's requirements. At the same time, a system of scholarships continues in force to enable promising young men to go abroad for special training which is not yet available in India.

Desirous of developing, as rapidly as possible, the resources of a State richly endowed by nature with mineral deposits, forests, fertile soil, and an intelligent and industrious population, the late Maharaja employed Indian, British and American specialists, to carry on economic and industrial surveys; and on the basis of their investigations, the Government have been engaging in enterprises of considerable magnitude. To ensure a plentiful supply of water for the hydro-electric works at Sivasamudram Falls, and to increase the capacity of those works, originally opened by His late Highness on June 30, 1902, a huge dam (known as Krishnaraja Sagar) has been thrown across the Cauvery River, 12 miles from Mysore City. The dam is 130 feet high above the river bed and stores water to a depth of 124 feet at full reservoir level. It is intended to irrigate 125,000 acres of which about half has been brought under cultivation. Special mention has to be made of the magnificent gardens laid out below the dam which put into shade the famous gardens at Versailles.

At Bhadravati are located the Mysore Iron and Steel Works, owned and run by the Government. The works are the second largest of their kind in the British Empire and contain the only charcoal blast

furnace and wood distillation plant in the East. A plant for manufacturing steel and steel products has been added in April 1936. A newly erected cement plant has been attached to the Works. Nearby is also situated the Mysore Paper Mills started as a joint-stock company, which has begun production of paper. Bhadravati bids fair to become one of the most important industrial centres in India. Among other industries may be mentioned a sandal oil distillery, a silk filature, a soap factory, a weaving factory, technical art and industrial workshops, porcelain factory, industrial and testing laboratory, lac factory, and a factory for the manufacture of electrical goods.

There are about 393 large industrial establishments in the State, employing 52,593 persons per day. Thirteen large industrial concerns with a total fixed and working capital of more than three crores of rupees are completely owned and managed by Government. About eighteen concerns have been started by private enterprise with the assistance of Government in the form of subscription to their share capital or in the shape of grant of land, water, electric power, etc., free of charge, or at concessional rates, while a very large number of concerns have been started by private industrialists on their own initiative or with the financial and technical assistance of Government. A Trade Commissioner for Mysore has been appointed in London, whose functions have an important bearing on the development of the Industries and Commerce of the State. Now there are several state-aided joint-stock companies for the manufacture of sugar, paper, chemicals and fertilisers, spun silk, tobacco and coffee curing, electrical batteries, glass-making and vegetable oils.

To provide for the ever-widening demand for power for industrial, domestic and town lighting purposes, the Shimsha and Jog hydro-electric schemes have been taken up.

Thanks to a wisely ordered system of finance, the financial position of the State to-day is thoroughly sound. The revenues are maintaining their progressive character. It was in 1901-02, Rs. 192 lakhs; now it exceeds Rs. 438 lakhs. While the expenditure has kept pace with the demands for the provision of more funds for objects like the development of roads, the restoration and maintenance of tanks, the construction of works of public utility and for grants for water-supply and drainage schemes in the districts. The investments made in the past are bringing in increasing returns that add largely to the revenues of the State.

As the great majority of His Highness's subjects are engaged in agricultural pursuits, the improvement and extension of irrigation facilities receive special attention. During His late Highness' rule, vast arid tracts have been rendered fertile by a great network of irrigation projects. The reservoirs at Marikanive and Krishnaraja Sagar are among the works of importance calculated to improve agricultural

prosperity. The Irwin Canal, costing over Rs. 2 crores, is rated as one of the boldest irrigation projects in India. The Marconahalli Reservoir Project, of which His late Highness laid the foundation-stone, is another instance of his solicitude for the economic well-being of his subjects.

But it is only by a comparative analysis that one can assess the actual worth of His late Highness's actual achievements for public weal. In a span of over thirty-eight years, progress has been certainly arresting and even astonishing. The accounts for 1901-02 show an expenditure for irrigation at Rs. 8,23,000, now it is annually estimated at about Rs. 28 lakhs; for education it was Rs. 11,48,276 now it is annually put at about Rs. 59 lakhs.

The improvement of medical relief and sanitation in urban and rural areas also received special attention. The headquarters of every one of the 80 taluks in the State is provided with a hospital and there are over 143 dispensaries in hoblis outside taluk headquarters. A scheme of subsidising rural practitioners has been sanctioned. The total annual expenditure on hospitals and dispensaries is about Rs. 19.50 lakhs. A notable feature of the progress of medical relief in the State has been the spontaneous and enthusiastic co-operation of the more well-to-do among the people who have made donations for the construction and equipment of hospitals amounting to over Rs. 25 lakhs.

Water-works have been established at great cost in Mysore and Bangalore. Both these cities (and 194 towns and villages outside them) are lit by electricity and much has been done in the way of clearing out congested areas, providing them with "lungs", opening out extensions, and inducing the people to build houses of an improved type. Mysore, His late Highness's favourite city, bears the impress of his artistic genius, and is a veritable garden city.

Mysore leads India in the institution of the first Power Station in India. Now the net electrical revenue is Rs. 46,68,900 (excluding contribution to depreciation and provident fund). The percentage of net return on the capital cost, including the outlay on Krishnarej Sagar reservoir amounting to Rs. 130 lakhs allocated to the Cauvery Power Scheme and excluding the outlay on Jog and Shimsha New Projects, works out at 9.70 per cent.

To enable the commonest cultivator to witness the results accomplished by the employment of modern implements and methods, agricultural stations and experimental farms have been established. His late Highness's solicitude for the betterment of the economic condition of the ryots found expression in the formulation of important measures like the institution of a system of Record of Rights, the starting of a Land Mortgage Bank with branches in many parts of the State and the

passing of an Agriculturists' Relief Act. A considerable amount of money is spent every year for providing drinking water facilities in mofussil towns and villages.

During the 38 years of His late Highness's reign, much has been done to improve and to extend the means of communication. Railways, roads and bridges have been built. The present open mileage of railways under State control and the District Board is 748.19 miles. From 1st January 1938, the State assumed control of the Bangalore-Harihar and Yesvantpur-Hindupur sections. The total capital invested on all State lines amounted to Rs. 666 lakhs. The net return works out at 6.49 per cent.

Considerable progress was made during His late Highness's reign in building spacious, well-designed public offices and courts, not only in His Highness's capital and the headquarters of his Government, but even in the remote districts.

Book Reviews

An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth.
By M. K. Gandhi. Published by Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad.
Price Rs. 4.

Gandhiji's autobiography was originally published in two volumes. The present edition is a single-volume edition and is cheap for Rs. 4 at which it is priced.

John Gunthar, in his *Inside Asia*, writes thus of the autobiography :

"It is a work of very peculiar and original texture. I know no other autobiography quite like it. Artlessly it sets down details of almost shocking intimacy; peacefully it explores the origins of Gandhi's character, like a brook rising to a river. It gives an impression of almost biblical restraint, and yet is full of naive candour. It varies between passages of great nobility and literary force and of preoccupation with idiosyncracies almost meaningless to a Western reader. Its last words are—after 1090 pages—'I must reduce myself to zero.'"

That puts in a nut-shell what is unique in this Autobiography. Gandhiji's frankness is at once disarming and compelling. Truth is stern and severe and will admit of no compromise; and as his whole life is a long series of experiments with Truth, no part or detail of it will bear mincing or softening. And so, out comes his story, with absolutely no trace of an attempt at adornment, softening, suppression or apology about it. The language is as cold, cutting and precise as Truth itself. Even his relations with his wife—including sex relations—are relentlessly recorded in this artless and candid tale. His consuming passion for Truth is evident in every one of these pages.

A feature in Gandhiji is this: he formed and formulated his convictions and principles as a young man, and the succeeding years have only seen their pruning and perfecting but never a fundamental change. His views on our social system and on European civilization, his method of combating its evil influences and absorbing its merits, his way of winning his country's freedom—these were formed decades ago. It is important to point this out because there is a tendency, among the younger generation of our patriots and politicians, to feel that Gandhiji does not understand our problems in their modern developments. Nobody understood them better nobody felt more deeply about them; and nobody probed deeper into them than he. And, having diagnosed the disease, he has prescribed his treatment which, in its very severity, hurts and scares away less stern spirits.

And it must also be borne in mind that he is more than a politician—very much more.

His courage of conviction and his confidence are inspiring. His way is not for milk-sops and one must be a man of steel, with nerves of iron, if one wants to follow him. If something strikes him as good, he must live up to it, whatever the consequence; and if he feels that he is in the right,

nothing can ever daunt him from his path. He says that he began as a mediocrity and worked his way up, which should be possible for any person. One may point out that this is not so. His quiet determination, his persistence and his unflinching courage—these are just the qualities of soul with which all men are not gifted and without which even greater talents than his will avail nothing.

We are seeing the test to which European civilization has been put. We are seeing, day by day, the extent to which man can be brutalised and how science *aids* him in his work of destroying his brother. From the vicious circle of war and armament, Gandhiji pointed a way of escape years ago. It sounded odd, but it was found to work, as the British government will testify. Gandhiji today is a challenge to all that Europe stands for. It is time, then, that Europe awakened to his call and learnt pacifism at his feet.

It is often said that Gandhiji is so towering a personality that he has prevented independent thought in others. This is a travesty of truth. Nobody has a greater respect for the other man's point of view than he, and nobody ever encouraged independent thought in others as he does. It is only true to say that he was responsible for creating in us an active civic consciousness and for an ever-growing passion for the study of politics. Indeed, the danger nowadays is that young men brush aside his own theories after a cursory glance, in their impatience to study world movement. His own method is so peaceful and quiet and so unobtrusive that it is often missed by eager minds who search for sensational things.

It is opportune, then, that the Navajivan Press has brought out this great work in a single volume. It is not an ordinary autobiography. It presents to us the beginnings of a new world of thought and action, the beginnings of a passionate striving for a nobler and happier world based as a hitherto-neglected and therefore now startling idea that *love* is the force that sustains the world, that but for this force of love we should long ago have been wiped out of existence. In a world of fierce passions and hates, in the midst of the clang of steel and the thunder of cannon, this voice is arresting in its very solitariness; and the world, disillusioned with materialism and slaving under totalitarianism, stops short and listens spell-bound to its music with its insistence on personal purity, respect for personality, love for all and god for guide. Gandhiji's glorious days are only coming. The brief years of his struggle in South Africa and India have only been years of 'experiment'. Exhausted and weary after the war, the world will listen to him with keener attention and shall have then better deserved his teaching. A new world will then be born and it may come sooner than some of us imagine.

S. Vaidyanathan.

Our Mystic Friend!

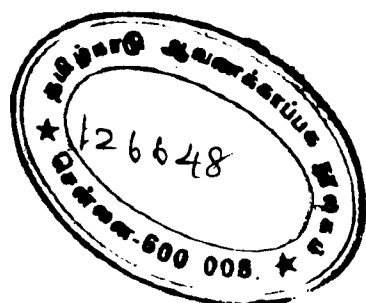
(On seeing a Painting of Nicholas Roerich, "The Shadow of the Teacher".)

By Prof. MOHANLAL KASHYAP, M. A.

A weird mass of idle cliffs and sullen rocks
Laid bare to the rage of the sun and rapid swelling streams
With dull and rugged looks, in coarse, unshapely blocks,
All grim and grey—perhaps, forgotten, massive dreams
Concealing Damayanti's cries and Ahalya's gentle tears
And tender Gopis rapt in Krishna's fluted lure;
Buddha's quiet joys denouncing petty, human fears—
These sleeping bards of glory, yet so proud and pure.
Perhaps, the unfulfilled desires of a rustic lad,
Uncouth and coarse, who loved a simple gipsy-maid,
The maid who once illumed his little world and fled
Away—dwell in these rocks that would not die nor fade.

And who will rouse them? Who will cry and call
These poets of passion—passion subdued in stone,
Dark, chill and quiet, who know no rise and fall,
Who will hear their mirth and music, their unrecorded moan?
Amid these persons of the great and gloried past
A shadow dark, unmasked, unreal is seen,
Among the rocks it stands a rock of ancient cast,
A figure, proud and pure, a person, firm and lean.
He lifts a finger and the rocks instantly assume
Their human form and nod and stay at his command;
They speak their tale, those sleeping bards of joy and gloom!
The shadow bids, they glow and grow—Our Mystic Friend!

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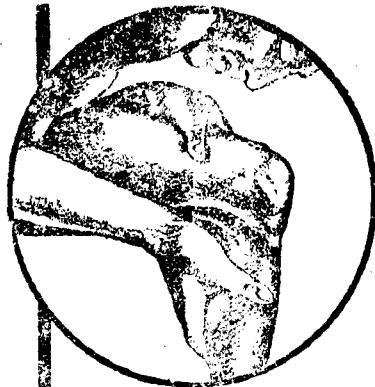
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