

WS2, NO  
" N67  
: 4169

## BIOGRAPHICAL VISTAS



# Biographical Vistas

*Sketches of Some Eminent Indians*

C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR



ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
LONDON

Copyright © 1966 by C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

Chetpat Pattabhirama Aiyar **Ramaswami Aiyar** (1879)

First published : 1968

*To my friend*

DR SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN



923.54  
Aiy-B

W 2, NO  
167



PRINTED IN INDIA  
AT THE JUPITER PRESS PRIVATE LIMITED, MADRAS-18 AND  
PUBLISHED BY P. S. JAYASINGHE, ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE,  
447 STRAND, LONDON W.C. 2

---

## Foreword

THIS book *Biographical Vistas* contains sketches of some notable Indians written by the late Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Dr Ramaswami Aiyar was a versatile genius who was like a many-faceted gem. As one who had known him closely for nearly forty and odd years I can vouch that there was no subject under the sun which he touched and did not adorn. Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar is equally at home when dealing with great classical personalities like Valmiki or Sankaracharya on the one hand and his contemporaries like Sir M. Visveswarayya, Srimathi Sarojini Naidu or Dr Tej Bahadur Sapru on the other and one can discern in all these sketches the work of an unbiassed student of human character who had a mastery of felicitous, terse and forceful expression at the same time never forgetting the human side of his subjects. It is a particularly characteristic feature of the sketches that Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has made an objective approach.

Shri C. R. Pattabhi Raman, who is the eldest son of the late Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, is to be commended for doing a great service to biographical literature in India by editing and publishing these sketches.

I have great pleasure in commending this book to the reading public and I am confident that it will prove to be not only interesting reading but also highly informative as well as educative.

Kaudiar Palace  
Trivandrum  
23 September 1967

RAMA VARMA  
H.H. the Maharajah of Travancore

---

## Introduction

DR RAMASWAMI AIYAR had contributed biographical sketches to journals and had spoken about some of the subjects at various meetings. He had in view the portrayal of more lives, ancient and modern, Indian and European, and had chosen a large canvas for the purpose. His *magnum opus* in the last two years was his book *The History of My Times*. He had gone to London last September to collect material for the same from the British Museum, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and other places in England. His peaceful end while sitting on a chair in his room in the National Liberal Club, London, upset the programme of the publications on account of its suddenness.

The classification of the mass of his papers, letters, documents and diaries and in particular the hand-written notes he had prepared for addressing various meetings has taken much time and has not yet been completed. They cover an important period of over sixty years of Indian history. The book containing his convocation addresses<sup>1</sup> delivered to various universities over a period of more than forty years has already been released by the Annamalai University where he served as Vice-Chancellor for two periods.

He was active throughout his life and it was only during the last two years that he was comparatively free to find time to write or dictate on literary or biographical subjects during his spare moments. Most of his dictation was to his Private Secretary and on a few occasions to his grand-daughter, Padmini, who stayed with him at Ootacamund. It is planned to bring out some of his unpublished writings and speeches in the near future.

In this book are contained sketches of Indian subjects and it is hoped that the young readers will develop an interest for a fuller study of the lives portrayed in it. Older readers may be

<sup>1</sup> Annamalai University Publication, Annamalainagar.

interested in catching glimpses of a few little known incidents in the lives of those belonging to an older generation and even of their contemporaries.

The book is dedicated to Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan till recently our Rashtrapathi. Father and he were good friends who corresponded with each other often. One of the well known photographs of my father is the one with him in the middle and Dr C. V. Raman and Dr Radhakrishnan on either side standing outside 'Bhakthi Vilas' in Trivandrum — referred to as the three 'Rs' by their admirers.

I am beholden to His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore who has written the Foreword. Father's association with Travancore, now part of Kerala, was for over ten years. The Ruler and he as Dewan were responsible for the famous Temple Entry Proclamation in 1936. For the first time in India, temples were thrown open to all Hindus abolishing untouchability in the most orthodox part of Hindu India. "I verily believe that when all else about Travancore is forgotten this one act of the Maharajah will be remembered by future generations with gratitude" proclaimed Mahatma Gandhi whose tributes to this bold and great act are contained in Sri Mahadev Desai's book *Epic of Travancore*.<sup>2</sup>

It is appropriate that the Foreword should come from the pen of His Highness for whom father had much regard. It would perhaps have been more elegant to have printed the various quotations in the original Sanskrit or Tamil avoiding transliteration. This process would have entailed more delay. I wish to express my thanks to Dr P. Nagaraja Rao, Dr V. Raghavan and Sri T. V. Viswanatha Aiyar for their help and advice in this regard.

Prof. R. Ramanujachari, until recently Professor, Annamalai University, has placed us under a deep debt of gratitude for the reverence with which he corrected the proofs and got the index ready. He worked tirelessly and gave much of his time for the purpose. I wish also to acknowledge my thankfulness to Sri S. Chidambaram. He was my father's Private Secretary for over 50 years. Apart from taking down his master's dictation he also helped in the collection of materials.

C. R. PATTABHI RAMAN

<sup>2</sup> Navjivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad.

## Contents

|                                                     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Foreword by H.H. the Maharajah of Travancore</i> | vii |
| <i>Introduction by C. R. Pattabhi Raman</i>         | ix  |
| 1 VALMIKI : THE SEER AND HIS EPIC                   | 1   |
| 2 JAGADGURU SRI SANKARACHARYA                       | 13  |
| 3 MIRABAI                                           | 34  |
| 4 TYAGARAJASWAMI                                    | 41  |
| 5 THAYUMANAVAR                                      | 51  |
| 6 SRI RAMAKRISHNA : THE GREAT MASTER                | 62  |
| 7 SWAMI VIVEKANANDA                                 | 66  |
| 8 SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI                               | 71  |
| 9 DR RABINDRANATH TAGORE                            | 78  |
| 10 ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY                           | 86  |
| 11 DR ANNIE BESANT                                  | 90  |
| 12 SRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU                           | 107 |
| 13 SIR K. SESHADRI IYER                             | 112 |
| 14 DR SIR M. VISWESVARAYA                           | 125 |
| 15 SIR V. BHASHYAM AYYANGAR                         | 130 |
| 16 SIR C. SANKARAN NAIR                             | 136 |
| 17 SRI V. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR                        | 139 |
| 18 KASINATH TRIMBAK TELANG                          | 146 |
| 19 MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE                            | 161 |
| 20 BAL GANGADHAR TILAK                              | 166 |
| 21 GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE                            | 176 |
| 22 SRI BEPIN CHANDRA PAL                            | 190 |
| 23 PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU                             | 198 |
| 24 THE RT. HON'BLE DR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU             | 206 |

|    |                                          |     |
|----|------------------------------------------|-----|
| 25 | THE RIGHT HON'BLE V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI | 216 |
| 26 | SRI S. SRINIVASA RAGHAVA AIYANGAR        | 223 |
| 27 | SRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU                     | 230 |
| 28 | SIR P. S. SIVASWAMI AIYAR                | 237 |
| 29 | SRI G. A. NATESAN                        | 240 |
| 30 | SRI S. KASTURI RANGA IYENGAR             | 245 |
| 31 | SIR MUHAMMAD IQBAL                       | 253 |
| 32 | RAJAH SIR ANNAMALAI CHETTIAR             | 259 |
| 33 | SRI AUROBINDO GHOSH                      | 262 |
| 34 | RAJAH SIR MUTHIAH CHETTIAR               | 269 |
| 35 | MADRAS PRESIDENCY COLLEGE AND ITS ALUMNI | 273 |
|    | <i>Index</i>                             | 281 |

# 1

## Valmiki: The Seer and his Epic

IN approaching the task of evaluation of the *Ramayana*, not only as one of the most notable and formative of the world's literary classics but as embodying and crystallising a definite and mellow philosophy of life, it is necessary to bear in mind that not merely the readers of the epic but all the inhabitants of our sub-continent have been moulded and influenced through the traditional and age-long renderings of the classic by *Kathakas* and *Bhagavatas* who have been the real educators of the masses of India. It is needless to emphasise that literacy in the sense of being able to read and write and engage in a hasty scrutiny of ephemeral literature is by no means synonymous with that true culture of mind and heart which in India has been brought about through the ears rather than by the eyes. It is not now proposed to attempt the task of analysing the characters and the exploits of the great personages of the epic, the inspiration of whose deeds has so profoundly affected thought and endeavour in this land. The aim of what follows is rather to indicate and discuss briefly the outlook upon life for which the poet-sage Valmiki is responsible and the facts on which he rests his views.

All great authors represent an epoch, a civilisation, and a culture. In their works, they pursue certain definite ends of instruction, exhortation, or amusement. In the language of Wordsworth, the fundamental instincts of humanity involve admiration, hope and love. The first of the world's epic arouses these emotions in abundant measure through its characters and their trials, failures and triumphs. But, in addition, most significantly, the great protagonists of literature, along with their vesture of thought and language, adorned themselves, consciously

and otherwise with jewels that, in the words of a seer, "shine for ever on the stretched forefinger of all time".

Let us consider the background of Valmiki. He lived in an epoch of great achievement, material as well as moral. The art of music, even in its minutiae, was understood and practised :

Suśrāva madhuraṃ gītaṃ trīṣṭhāna-svara-bhūṣitaṃ |  
Sundara : 4, 10

The classical dance to the accompaniment of musicians and singers was not only a relaxation but a part of popular education :

Naṭa nartaka saṅghānāṃ gāyakaṇāṃ ca gāyatāṃ |  
Maṇaḥ karṇa-sukhā vacaḥ śuśrāva janatā tataḥ ||  
Ayodhya : 6, 14

The recounting of stories, which has been a constant accompaniment and a diversion of Indian life, was well understood :

Kathābhiramrajyante kathāśīlāḥ kathā-priyaiḥ |  
Ayodhya : 67, 16

The architectural experts (sthāpatye niṣṭhitān) were very much in requisition. The description of the Ayodhya palace, and especially of Kaikeyi's apartments, and of the magnificent residence of Sugriva and Ravana, indicates a many-sided and intricate development of the building art. Sculpture and fresco-painting were common features of the habitants of the well-to-do :

Kāñcanapratimaikāgram maṇi-vidruma-toraṇam |  
Ayodhya : 15, 33

Lanka had art galleries (Citrasālāghāṇi), bowers fashioned by creepers (Lalatā-grhāṇi) and artificial hills built of timber (Dāru-parvatakāṇi). Wood carving was already a well known and highly developed art ; the description of Vali's palanquin containing life-like representations of birds and animals affords a proof of this :

Pakṣi-karmabhirācitrāṃ druma-karma-vibhūṣitāṃ |  
Kishkindha : 25, 22

A long and comprehensive list of various arts and crafts known to India of the *Ramayana* days, can be compiled from the epic. They include mining and implements involving elaborate mechanism. Skilled plasterers, workers in bamboo and in pottery, sawyers, spinners and weavers, and craftsmen in precious stones, jewels and gold, weavers of carpets and blankets, shampooers, wine-makers, the fashioners of white tooth-paste and polished mirrors, and of unguents, as well as actors of various types are all mentioned in detail :

Khanakā yantrakās tatha |  
Karmāntikāḥ sthapatayaḥ puruṣā yantrakovidāḥ ||  
Kūpakārāḥ sudākārāḥ vaṃśa-carma-kṛtastathā |  
Maṇikārāḥ kumbhakārāḥ etc.

Sūtrakarmakṛtaḥ, mājūrakāḥ, krākacikāḥ, sudhākārāḥ,  
suvarṇakārāḥ, kambala-dhāvakaḥ, ucchāḍakāḥ, śauṇḍikāḥ,  
śailūṣāḥ,  
Śuklān amśumataścāpi dantadhāvana-saṅcayān |  
Parimṛṣṭān darpaṇān etc.

It would be seen, therefore, that, from the earliest times, of which we have any record, India, while not exalting the claims of the body and the senses, did not disdain the legitimate demands of a full and artistic life.

In this environment, Valmiki, although himself a sage who had renounced the outer life of the world, evolved a scheme of existence which was catholic and comprehensive and which united and reconciled the claims of mundane and spiritual requirements. Through the mouth of one of his characters, he speaks of the satisfaction of the five senses accompanying the pilgrimage of life. What he advocates is alertness in such a life and his objection is to deceit and an absence of pleasure :

Santuṣṭa-paṅcavargo'ham lokayātrāṃ pravartaye |  
Akuḥaḥ śraddadhānaḥ saṃ kāryākāryavicakṣaṇaḥ ||  
Ayodhya : 109, 27

As the years roll by like a resistless flood, care must be taken to procure the peace of mind that co-exists with the legitimate enjoyment of pleasure ; and the happiness of most people depends on the due provision of the amenities of life :

Vayasah pratamānasya srotaso vānivartinaḥ |  
Ātmā sukhe niyoktavyaḥ sukhabhājah prajāḥ smṛtāḥ ||

Having laid stress on this rather material aspect of life, the poet is equally insistent on the thought of *dharma* as a stabilising influence. He proclaims that *dharma* is so-called, as nothing else sustains the world so well as the conviction and pursuit of that *dharma* :

Dhāraṇād dharmityāhuḥ dharmeṇa vidhrtāḥ prajāḥ |  
Yasmaddhārayate sarvam trailokyam sa carācaram ||

Such *dharma* should, consistent with the above objects, be attained and preserved by discipline ; and in a passage full of comprehension and vision, Valmiki asserts that the ultimate good cannot be attained merely by a life of ease or idleness :

Ātmānam niyamaistaistaiḥ karṣayitvā prayatnataḥ |  
Prāpyate nipuṇair dharmo na sukhāl labhyate sukham ||  
*Aranya* : 9, 31

Such a discipline involves constant and strong effort at self-discipline and control of the mind and the senses, without which strength does not come and with which nothing is unattainable.

In the conditions of human existence, it is not always that endeavour meets with success. We are, often, face to face with failure, complete or partial, and the danger that encounters the pilgrims through life's journey, is a sense of despondency and personal unworthiness. To meet this, Valmiki counsels equanimity and freedom from despair as the origin of success and a fundamental requisite of existence :

Utsāho balavān ārya nāstyntsāhāt param balaḥ |  
Sotsāhasyāsti lokeṣu na kiñcidapi durlabham ||  
*Kishkindha* : 1, 122

Anirvedaḥ sriyo mūlam arirvedaḥ param sukham |  
Anirvedo hi satatam sarvartheṣu pravartakaḥ ||

*Sundara* : 12, 10

Such an outlook is immeasurably helped by learning and by advertence to the precepts and traditions handed down to us by our ancients. *Amnaya* means not only such a heritage, but it also connotes the implementation of culture by conduct. Two of the most striking passages in the *Ramayana* deal with the barrenness and futility of speech without culture, and culture without its adequate implementation :

Āmnāyanām ayogena vidyām praśīthilām iva |  
Saṁskāreṇa yathā hīnām vācam arthāntaram gatām ||

*Sundara* : 15, 38

Learning and culture, however thorough, are, nevertheless, of little avail when strong temptations and exigencies of the moment press from all sides of a human being, and when resistless Fate follows in the wake of our surrender to momentary impulses. Valmiki is a profound believer in that fundamental article of faith in Hindu consciousness, viz. the doctrine of eternal compensation and balance in human conduct, which we term Fate. Nevertheless, the sage asserts that, like an excited elephant unmindful of the goad, Fate or Destiny can be overcome by strenuous effort :

Atyankuśamivoddāmaḥ gajam madabaloddhatam |  
Pradhāvitam aham daivam pauraṣeṇa nivartaye ||

*Ayodhya* : 23, 21

In a very beautiful verse, the reconciliation or harmonisation of fate and free will is described as the main essential. In other words, self-control, not through starvation of instincts, but through sublimation, is the ideal that is envisaged :

Kaccit puruṣakāram ca daivam ca pratipadyate |

*Sundara* : 36, 19

The organs of sense are like mischievous prancing horses, and human resolve should act as the charioteer for restraining and directing them aright :

Indriyāṇām pradustānām hayānām iva dhāvatām |  
Kurvīta dhṛtyā sārathyam samhṛtyendriyagocaram ||

*Uttara*

As an epitome and compendium of human conduct, under diverse and trying circumstances, it is difficult to rival the *Ramayana*. Mildness of speech and the choice of the right time and place are prettily described :

Desa-kāla-vibhāgaṇaḥ sarvaloka priyamvadaḥ |

And in passage after passage one of the chief lessons of the epic is the insistence on the protection of every distressed being who seeks refuge. The duty is enjoined of protecting such a person even though he may have been an open opponent :

Ārto vā yadi vā dṛptaḥ pareṣām śaraṇāgataḥ |  
Api prāṇaṇ parityajya rakṣitavyaḥ kṛtātmanā ||

*Yuddha* : 18, 28-9

Valmiki recognises that even great persons are apt to go wrong and pronounce harsh judgments, as Rama did in the case of his devoted wife Sita :

Prāpta-cāritra-sandehā mama pratimukhe sthitā |  
Dīpo netrāturasyeva pratikūlāsī me dṛḍham ||

*Yuddha* : 118, 17

When Rama gave way to causeless doubt and likened his condition to a man with a diseased eye unable to behold the light of a lamp, Sita reminds him that Rama's behaviour was unbecoming of him and characteristic only of low natures :

Rūkṣam śrāvayase vīra prākṛtāḥ prākṛtām iva |

*Yuddha* : 119, 5

The principle enunciated in the *Ayodhyakanda* to guide our conduct on such occasions is picturesquely described. Even as regards elders who behave indiscreetly or unwisely and transcend righteous conduct, it is the duty of the onlooker to check such wrong-doing.

Gurorapyavalīptasya kāryākāryam ajānataḥ |  
Utpatham pratipannasya kāryam bhavati śāsanam ||

*Ayodhya* : 21, 13

although it is enjoined upon us all to speak prettily and briefly but without hesitation and without precipitance and in a pleasant tone :

Avistaram asandigdham avilambitam adrutam |  
Uras-stham kaṇṭhagam vākyam vartate madhyame svare ||

*Kishkindha* : 3, 31

In a characteristic touch of broad humanity, Valmiki counsels comprehension and compassion even as regards those who deserve chastisement, and justly points out that there is no man or woman born who has no faults :

Pāpānām vā śubhānām vā vadhārhanām plavaṅgama |  
Kāryam karuṇam āryeṇa na kaścīd nāparādhyati ||

*Yuddha* : 116, 44

Remembering that life is transitory

Āyuste hīyate yasmāt sthitasya ca gatasya ca |

*Ayodhya* : 105, 21

and that human intercourse is one of its rare compensations, the warning is administered that those who are constantly speaking only what is pleasant and gratifying are not to be taken at face value. Rare and much to be prized is the man who speaks what is not merely pleasant but what is wholesome :

Sulabhāḥ puruṣā rājan satatam priyavadinaḥ |  
Apriyasya ca pathyasya vaktā śrotā ca durlabhaḥ ||

*Yuddha* : 17, 20-21

Only so shall the encounters of men be fruitful. In a condensed form, four qualities are described as having been combined in Hanuman and as typifying the essential human requisites — fortitude, foresight, intellectual perception and skill in execution :

Dhṛtīr dṛṣṭīr matir dākṣyam sa karmasu na sīdati |

*Sundara* : 1, 198

But all these exordiums are only imperfect guides. The ultimate test and judge is one's own conscience. The canons of right and wrong are difficult to describe and analyze. But the inner mentor, if properly disciplined, can distinguish right from wrong :

Sūkṣmaḥ paramadurjñeyaḥ satāmdharmaḥ plavamgama |  
Hṛdisthaḥ sarvabhūtānām ātmā veda śubhāśubham ||

*Kishkinda* : 18, 15

Fate is often described as invincible and joy and suffering are not to be commended :

Yadi sītāpi duḥkārtā kālo hi duratikramaḥ |

*Sundara* : 16, 3

But the wheel of life turns high and low, and Hanuman reminds Bharata that life is so constituted that every man gets his meed of happiness :

Eti jīvantam ānando naram varṣa-śatād api |

*Yuddha* : 129, 2

In human transactions and the dealings with the various encounters of life, the art of realising that first things are first is an essential characteristic. Hanuman again is described as one who, given a task, will attend to the most urgent without ignoring the essential priorities :

Kārye karmaṇi nirdiṣṭe yo bahūnyapi sādhyat |  
Pūrvakāryāvirodhena sa kāryam kartum arhati ||

Na hyekaḥ sādḥako hetaḥ svalpasyā pīha karmaṇaḥ |  
Yo hyartham bahudhā veda sa samartho artha sādḥane ||  
*Sundara* : 41, 6

There are certain aspects of Valmiki's treatment of his topics which must be noticed. His fairness in dealing even with the opponents of his heroes is one of his striking traits. The description of Lanka where the *Rakshasas* were devoted to the arts of peace and sedulous learning and the description of Ravana himself as strong, comely and courageous, and as an embodiment of all the great and gracious qualities of man may be likened to the treatment of Satan by Milton in his *Paradise Lost* and of Mephistopheles, the eternal mischief-maker by Goethe :

Suśrāva japatām tatra mantrān rakṣogṛheṣu vai |  
Svādhyāya niratāmścaiva yātudhānān dadarśa saḥ ||

*Sundara* : 4, 13

Aho rūpam aho dhairyam aho sattvam aho dyutiḥ |  
Aho rākṣasa-rājasya sarvalakṣaṇayuktatā ||

*Sundara* : 49, 17

The women of Ravana's harem were star-like and models of womanly grace and beauty :

Tārānām iva suvyaktam mahatīnām śubhārciṣām |  
Prabha-varṇa-prasādāśca virejah tatra yoṣitām ||

*Sundara* : 9, 43-44

At the same time, Valmiki, in summing up the life of Lanka, is careful to point out that in the main its outlook was materialistic, although refined :

Indriyāṇi indriyārthaistu pañca pañcabhir uttamaiḥ |  
Tarpayāmāsa māteva tada Rāvaṇa-pālītā ||

*Sundara* : 9, 29-30

More than once the sage discovers himself as an acute student of human nature. The inherent jealousies and littleness of man-

kind do not escape his notice. Through more than one of his characters he points out that men are never so disliked and persecuted as by their own friends and relatives :

Hṛṣyanti vyasaneṣvete jñātīnām jñātayaḥ sadā |

*Yuddha* : 16, 3

There are many descriptions which attest to Valmiki's intimate knowledge and love of nature. Rama, describing Chitrakuta, says he is reconciled to the loss of his kingdom and separation from his brothers and friends as he had seen the most beautiful of all hills :

Narājyād bhramśanam bhadre na suḥṛdbhir vinābhavaḥ |  
Mano me bādgate dṛṣṭvā ramaṇīyam imam girim ||

*Ayodhya* : 94, 3

His description of sunset, twilight and moonlight are exquisite in their conception and their language :

Tato'stam agamat sūnyo sandhyayā pratirañjitaḥ etc.

*Yuddha* : 38, 18

In administration and polity Valmiki shows himself to be a careful student of the arts of Government and of peace. The settled views and the deep knowledge of polity as evidenced by Hanuman are described :

Niścītārtho'arthatattvijñāḥ kāladharmaviśeṣavit |

*Kishkindha* : 29, 6

The importance of financial propriety in Government is kept in view :

Āyaste vipulaḥ kaccit kaccid alpataro vyayaḥ |

*Ayodhya* : 100, 54

The unity of India is implicit throughout the work. Mildness of administration is envisaged as the ultimate ideal :

Na hi sāmopannānām prahartā vidyate kavacit |

*Kishkindha* : 59, 17

A balanced and disciplined outlook free from severity and weak compliance is regarded as a kingly attribute :

Rājyam pālayitum śakyam na tikṣṇena niśācara |

Na cāpi pratikūlena nāvinītena rākṣasa ||

*Aranya* : 41, 11

If war becomes necessary, it is to be waged in a spirit of equity and with compassion towards the distressed and vanquished :

Ayuddhamanaso bhītān asman hamsi yathetaraḥ |

*Uttara* : 8, 3

In negotiations and embassies the qualities necessary to achieve success are set out in the following verse :

Bhūtāścārthā vipadyante deśakālavirodhitāḥ |

Viklavam dūtam āsādyā tamas sūryodaye yatha ||

*Sundara* : 2, 39

The necessity for preliminary deliberation and consultation is pointed out in verse 59, sarga 41. of *Yuddhakanda* :

Sammantrya mantribhissārdham niścītya ca punaḥ punaḥ |

Ānantaryam abhiprepsuḥ kramayogārtha-tattvavit ||

The *Rama Rajya* that was kept in view by Valmiki was that of a land where the people were cheerful and righteously inclined and sought to follow the lead of Rama who typified true *Ahimsa*. Mutual toleration and understanding between individuals, classes and creeds prevailed in the kingdom. The ideal set before the king was a lofty one. The ruler had always to act in consonance with the popular will. The nomination of the heir-apparent had to be approved by the Sabha of the people and the assembly of allied and tributary princes. The Paramountcy of *dharma* is illustrated by the story in our *puranas* of the killing of King Vena

whose wickedness became unbearable. King Sagara banished his eldest son, Asamanja, because of his evil deeds and propensities. Living in monarchical times, Valmiki, from first to last, stresses the importance of the maintenance of high standards by kings ; and he says that as the kings behave, so do the subjects and the people at large :

Yad-vṛttāssanti rājāṇaḥ tad-vṛttāḥsanti hī prajāḥ |  
Ayodhya : 109, 9

It is thus seen how full of sympathy and understanding and with what skilful reconciliation of secular and spiritual considerations, Valmiki has performed the task not only of a chronicler of great events and the lives of great men and women but that of a true philosopher and guide, helping mankind in its onward march to material and spiritual greatness.

## 2

### Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya

It may be that, in the catena of stories of the human quest for supreme knowledge, there have been more epoch-making and significant personalities, but rarely in the history of religions, has there been such a combination of intellectual and spiritual attributes as is found in the Adi Sankaracharya.

Aldous Huxley affirms with reference to Hindu Philosophy, in his *Perennial Philosophy* :

“ Hindu philosophy is not philosophy in the modern Western sense of the word, but rather the description and explanation of a praxis (namely a system of practices) aimed at the transformation of human consciousness.”

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, in his earliest philosophical treatises described Hinduism as not so much a religion, but a way of life. This description is very appropriate because Hinduism does not treat religion as a matter of Sunday observances or special occasions. It does not treat religion as the devoting of a few hours each day to prayer or to the hearing of sermons. It concerns itself with the whole of life and with all the impacts of the Universe on human personality. It colours, influences and penetrates the totality of existence.

In all systems of Hindu philosophy, there is a special place reserved for Intuition (*Vijnana*). There is another place for Experience (*Anubhava*).

Intuition is a word which is often inaccurately used. Intuition is that particular faculty by the aid of which there is an immediate apprehension in the mind without any elaborate reasoning ; it is also called insight.

The results of Intuition may be obtained by gifted individuals and through collation of facts, analyses or syntheses, but they never attain the heights to which intuition is obtained as a revelation through personal experience of the Ineffable.

In the *Brahma Sutra*, there is a maxim which just says, "by vibration (*kampanāt*) or from motion". That *Sutra* contains a single word but means a great deal. It means that the universe and all manifestations of the universe are modifications or transformations of that eternal vibration, *Sabda Brahma* as it is called, vibration being the cause of all that matters, so far as the life of the universe is concerned. This expression is matched by another saying in the *Kathopanishad* :

Yad idam kimca jagatsarvam prāṇa ejati nissṛtam |

Literally translated, it means that the whole world trembles in the *Prana* (i.e. the great breath or the Supreme Being). These sayings come from intuitions—intuitions which are marvellously verified by the discoveries of today. We now know that all the world is not so substantial as we may imagine; that this table, you and I are merely aspects of vibration, even matter being one form of what may be called "condensed vibration". Another aspect of this intuition may be here noticed. The Western world has by experiment and reasoning developed the science and art of psychoanalysis.

Men like Freud, Adler, Jung, and latterly a French writer called Baudouin, who has written a book entitled *Suggestion and Auto-suggestion* have developed several remarkable theories. What we call psychoanalysis (psychotherapy is one of its manifestations), depends for its foundation upon what is called the "Sub-conscious self", and in relation to this sub-conscious self, the scientists now are beginning to realise that the Indian thinkers, by the exercise called intuition and the *anubhava* (experience) born of intuition, called Yoga, have anticipated many modern conclusions.

By way of illustration let me quote two passages from the book, *Suggestion and Auto-suggestion* by Baudouin :

"Psycho-analysis is the weapon wherewith to dig into the

different layers of the mind, and suggestion and auto-suggestion are the seeds to be implanted therein. Suggestion may be defined as the acceptance of an idea by the mind, especially by the so-called 'sub-conscious' <sup>1</sup> ~~entirely~~ independently of adequate logical grounds for such acceptance. The idea is placed before the mind . . . when the mind is in a state where opposing and conflicting ideas have no chance of making themselves felt," whereupon this implanted idea tends to realise itself. Then he says : "One must put oneself into a state of concentration without effort." It is essential that "attention should remain spontaneously immobilised". This is what happens when one uses the Rudraksha Mala or rosary. This is also what happens in the Hindu Yoga. The religious aspirant follows a special technique. The whole course of this *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) is not to allow a person to think of himself as a finite matter bounded by all limitations. He has to awaken permanently the consciousness that he is the Atman, ever free, ever perfect. For this, there is a regulated course of practice laid down in the *Ashtanga Yoga*. Referring to the teachings of the Hindu Yogis, Baudouin says this : "The two states, whose acquirement must be the novice's first aim are known as *Pratyahara* (mental examination) and *Dharana* (concentration of mind upon the thought)." And the same thing has been said by Coue. In other words, Yoga relies on what is now known as auto-suggestion.

All that I am anxious to point out now is that by a process of intuition and of experience, our ancients discovered methods, both of discovering some secrets of the outer universe and for delving into the sub-conscious self. For suggestion and auto-suggestion to work effectively, faith is necessary. According to Coue's method the subject is made to feel that the springs of success and achievement are in himself. He can then overcome all inhibiting and obstructive factors. In essence, these Western methods do not differ from certain forms of Hata Yoga and manifestations due to *Bhakti*.

Right through the ages, the founders of religions and the great pathfinders of humanity have delivered their messages to chosen disciples, and almost invariably their teachings were propagated



by groups of *sishyas* (apostles) through whose interpretation the world became cognizant of those abiding truths that have, according to the needs of the times and the exigencies of the world situation, been manifested to those who were attuned to them. The apostles of Christ, Ananda, and the other immediate disciples of Lord Buddha, and the faithful companions of Prophet Mohammad, in their several ways, interpreted their masters' teachings and founded churches, *viharas*, mosques and other centres of spiritual realisation and teaching.

Religion in India, like many other aspects of India's soul force, was essentially individual rather than congregational. The *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Gita* and the various *Dharma Sutras* and *Grihya Sutras* were the result of the explorations or flights of thought communicated by *rishis* or other types of evolved beings to their *antevasis* or *sishyas* (literally those who lived with them).

The evolution, therefore, of India's several *Darsanas* or systems of philosophy, of many types of observance, ritual, prayer, worship and metaphysical speculation was like the growth of the trunk and branches of a tree springing from a root and extending through a trunk in the form of branches, twigs and leaves, rather than a pyramid culminating in a point. Each *Darsana* represented a special experience or revelation and such experience is both the test and fulfilment of spiritual and religious discipline.

It is, therefore, not surprising, with the rise and progress of avowedly antagonistic doctrines which began to question the validity of old premises and the inspirational character of old scriptures, that, in self defence, there were evolved in India great counter-movements designed to give battle to scepticism, atheism, agnosticism and nihilism on the one hand, and on the other to eliminate untoward varieties of so-called religion based either on wrong ideals of allegiance to darker powers or on self-mortification or the cult of dark powers whose favour had to be sought by gruesome or non-moral sacrifices and observance.

It is a proof of the wide range and tolerance of Hindu thought that it embraces and includes in its ambit philosophies and cults which even deny the validity of the *Vedas* or which deny the existence of *Ishvara* (a personal God) or which attribute to the infinite play of atoms the growth of the body, mind and soul.

The time, however, came when the very foundation of Hindu culture was sought to be disrupted both as a result of political subversions and by reason of the aggressively proselytising campaign, pursued sometimes under royal patronage, by the followers of crooked and debased varieties of the originally pure Buddhist, Jain and Sakta faiths and of animistic and *Vamachara* movements.

The inherent resilience of the Indian mind produced the inevitable reaction and as often in human history, the need of the times produced the inevitable *Avatar* (pre-destined incarnation). There arose successively men like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Vallabhacharya and many other religious leaders, who stemmed the tide of unbelief and wrong belief and re-established and revived the pristine Indian Spirit, based alike on *Vichara* (investigation) and on elucidation of the fundamental and universal doctrine, *Tattvamasi*: "That Thou art" equating the Individual and supreme self.

Sri Sankaracharya's advent was at a time of spiritual and moral chaos. The Vedic rites and ceremonies had lost their original importance and appropriateness and formal temple worship had become universal. Some practices involved what are called *Vamacharas* or objectionable observances transcending the accepted notions of morality were proclaimed to be essential parts of religion. Sankara strove to abolish these excrescences and inaugurated what is called the *Panchayatana Puja* which, by combining several varieties of worship and adoration, effected a synthesis of many approaches to Godhead. The Buddhist culture had suffered a great change from the pure and simple teachings of the master, and there were many other subversive and destructive teachings that were being actively propagated. Sankara, feeling that there was a necessity to integrate the Indian thought, not only travelled all over India discussing and persuading as he went, and not only wrote his commentaries on the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma-sutra* and the *Gita*, but also deemed it necessary to establish centres of religious instruction and propaganda in several parts of India.

It is needless for us to worry over the exact date of Sankara's birth, about which there is much controversy, or about the authenticity of the stories narrated about him. Suffice it for us to realise that in him India possessed a man of unfathomable

intellect as well as the highest spirituality. The most likely date of his birth is, perhaps the 7th or 8th century A.D. He was acquainted with Bhartrihari, and this, probably, fixes the date as well as the circumstance that one of his disciples, Sivasoma, is mentioned in a Cambodian inscription of A.D. 878. It is needless to deal with the long narratives and Sankara Vijayas that have dwelt on the several miracles attributed to him, because the greatest miracle of all is his life itself and the fact that in thirty-two years, from his birth at Kalady to his *mukti* at Kedar-nath, he compressed the labours of many epochs of intellectual and spiritual illumination.

Born in Kalady in Travancore, Sri Sankara manifested unrivalled physical and spiritual energy. He established *mathas* in the Himalayas, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, and in the Karnatic country at Sringeri, which was associated with the name of Rishyasringa and was situated on the banks of the Tunga River and juxtaposed to its confluent, the Bhadra. It is also claimed that he established a centre in the Kaveri region at Kumbakonam.

It is said of Kant, the German philosopher, that he never knew what was taking place around him ; he was wholly absent-minded, abstracted, and some thinkers believe in aloofness and abstraction. There are many philosophers who assert that by ignoring the world, they can regulate their self. But Sankaracharya was a very rare combination of a dynamic human personality in addition to being the most concentrated of seers.

This is what happened with regard to his mother's funeral. Sankara had taken to *Sanyasa*. As a *Sanyasi*, or *Yati*, he was not supposed to bother himself about domestic or *Grahashta* ceremonies like those connected with *sraddha* (funeral). But Sankara so loved his mother and was so bent upon bringing solace to her soul that he, who had become a *Sanyasi*, somewhat against her will, insisted against the whole embattled force of the people around him on performing his mother's funeral as if he were a householder. And the Nambudiris of Malabar were very severe with him ; they would not allow him to remove the body into the *Smashana* (cremation ground). It is stated that he cut the body of his mother into pieces and buried those in

his own compound and so performed his mother's funeral in his own fashion.

This practice of Sankara became so sanctified that up to this date, in Nambudiri families, the cremation is never performed in the general cremation ground, but in the house itself. They follow the example set by Sankaracharya. That is one instance in which I am showing that he was a very human individual in addition to being a transfigured saint.

There is also the well-known case of Kumarilla Bhatta, the great *Purva Mimamsa* authority, who decided to commit suicide because he had in his own view, fallen short of his highest ideals. When Sankara approached him in order to discuss *Purva Mimamsa* with him, Kumarilla said : "I have decided upon committing suicide in order to expiate for my sins. But there is another person by my side, Viswarupa is his name. You can conduct your discussions on the *Purva Mimamsa* with him." And so the dispute began. They discussed *Purva Mimamsa* and *Vedanta*, and the chosen arbitrator was Viswarupa's wife, Ubhaya Bharati, who was a paragon of learning and wisdom.

After the discussion, the wife, true to the highest traditions of the *Rita* (Indian Norm), decided against her husband and declared Sankara as the victor. That incident indicates that Sankara transcended all the limitations laid upon women in the matter of *Adhikara* (righteous capacity). He transcended all restrictions and allowed Ubhaya Bharati, wife of Viswarupa, not only to be present when the discussion was taking place, but to be the arbitrator, or judge in the matter of this dispute.

On one occasion, Sankara was in Banaras. In those days no great teacher (e.g. Sankara or Madhwa, Ramanuja, Vithal or Vallabha) ever thought his task consummated unless he went to Banaras, taught to and had discussions with the Pandits of Banaras and persuaded them of the truth and the cogency of the doctrine for which he stood. And so Sankara went to Banaras. And when going along the streets of Banaras, he found an *Antyaja* (a man of the lowest caste), a *Chandala* as he was called. He was walking along the street and Sankara's followers asked him to stop aside. The *Chandala* was none other than Siva Himself in disguise. The *Chandala* came near Sankara and said : "Who

are you to ask me to move away? Who are you and who am I? What is this clearing out? Where am I to clear out? Where am I to go? Who are you and am I different from you?"

The words which he spoke betokened such wisdom and such transcendent universality and enlightenment that Sankara is reported immediately to have prostrated before him and composed those great verses, *Manisha Panchaka*, a wonderful quintette of verses in which he says :

Brahmaivāham idam jagacca sakalam cinmātravistāritam  
sarvam caitad avidyayā triguṇayā śeṣam mayā kalpītam |  
Iṭham yasya dṛḡhā matiḥ sukhatare nitye pare nirmale  
caṇḍālo'stu sa tu dvijo'stu gururityeṣā maṇiṣā mama ||

[I am indeed Brahman; all this universe is nothing but the manifestation of pure consciousness; all that is imagined by me as the manifested world is due to ignorance (*avidya*) constituted of the three *gunas*: he who has this firm conviction and is ever established in the eternal, pure, blissful Absolute let him be a low-caste *chandala* or a twice-born brahmin, I declare, is verily my guru.]

Within the short compass of thirty and odd years, he travelled throughout India and demonstrated his marvellous organising capacity by the establishment of mutts in all the four quarters devoted to the continuation by chosen disciples of the doctrines he had expounded in his life and to the demonstration in their dedicated lives of the efficacy and the practicableness of such teachings.

The uniqueness of Sankaracharya may be illustrated by a few examples. We are all aware of the *Bodhi Sattva* ideal in pursuance of which, under the Buddhist dispensation, in addition to the Lord Buddha himself there are several *Bodhi Sattvas* who, after having attained perfection in what may be called their spiritual evolution and being entitled to attain *Nirvana*, nevertheless decide not to accept *Nirvana*, but to come back to this world and to work in this world for the purpose of benefiting suffering humanity.

Following this idea, Sankara in the *Brahma Sutra Bhashya*, says as follows :

Yathā ca vartamāna brahmavidaḥ prārabdhahbhogakṣaye  
kaivalyam anubhavanti, evam apāntaratamahprabhṛtayo'pi  
īśvarāḥ parameśvareṇa teṣu teṣu adhikāreṣu niyuktāḥ ||

This passage means that liberated souls are now and then commissioned by the Supreme *Isvara* to work for the welfare of the world even after liberation has been secured by them. Essentially Sankara was one of such people. He was a person who, after having attained the summit, "the liberating processes", nevertheless made up his mind, during the short life that was allotted to him by the *Paramatman*, to do creative and constructive work for the world at large.

In a well-known passage, he has stated in the same *Brahma Sutra Bhashya* :

Sarveshamcha adhikaro vidyāyām paranchashreyah |

That is, everyone is entitled to the knowledge of the Brahman and the consequential fruits. At the time when Sankara wrote thus, there was an idea that many classes of people were unfit to pursue the quest of ultimate Truth as expounded by our seers. There were rules prohibiting the recital of *Vedas* by certain classes. Sankara affirmed that apart from what may be called the formal studying of *Vedas*, the Supreme Truth could be sought and attained by everyone in other directions and by other means. He, in fact, asserted that *Adhikara* is for everybody (*Sarvesham-Adhikara*).

Sankara was realistic as well as unflinchingly speculative. He combined in himself the attributes of a poet, a logician, a devotee and a mystic as well as being the architect of the monistic system of philosophy that bears his name. He was an inspired poet whose appeal was, in turn, to every human feeling and sentiment. His descriptions of nature and his appraisal and description of human and divine personalities reached the summit of poetic art, and his command over the *navarasas* (the delineation of human feelings and emotions) was superb.

Sankara was the author of some of the sweetest lyrics in Sanskrit like *Soundarya Lahari*, devoted to the description of personal Godhead in several manifestations.

At the same time, in his commentaries on the *Prasthanatraya* he displayed a rare faculty of relentlessly logical and concatenated argument and refutation and such subtlety of reasoning as has been rarely surpassed in the philosophical writings of the world. He vindicated and firmly established the Advaita philosophy described as one of the supreme achievements of India.

The *Bhashyas* or commentaries on the *Prasthanatraya* that he has written, namely, on the *Gita*, the *Brahma Sutra* and the *Upanishads*, are models of logical conciseness and of consecutive and concentrated thinking. As already indicated, he also produced some of the most moving *stotras* (hymns and praises of particular aspects of manifestation of Godhead) which are unsurpassed in the range of literature : *Stotras* on *Ganga*, on *Annapurna*, on *Narasimha* and on *Subramanya*. His *Dakshinamurthi Stotra* is supreme in its combination of terse accuracy of expression with personal devotion to the Supreme regarded as a Yogi and a teacher. His idea is that the Supreme can be viewed by those who are sufficiently evolved as an abstract and impersonal entity, but to most normal people such a lofty conception is not possible. That kind of elevation is not easily attained. To them, he prescribes various methods of *Upasanas* (i.e. various methods of approach) including *stotras* and forms of external worship of embodied deities in temples or by Panchayatana Puja at home. He has a well-rounded composite philosophy of life, making allowance for the various stages of evolution of human souls. He is thus essentially a human philosopher. His reconciliation of *Bhakti* and *Jnana* in his *Prabhodasudhakara* is one of his greatest contributions.

Spinoza and Eckhart were great European mystics who are more or less akin to a *Vedantin*. But they do not bring themselves down to the level of the ordinary man nor did they make allowances for him.

The *Acharya* is also remarkable for his insistence on knowledge by investigation and not by the mere acceptance of assertions by others :

Na vidyate vinā jñānam vicāreṇānyasādhanaḥ |

In a great memorable passage he says :

Nāvaśyam tasya (āgamabalāvalambinaḥ) yathādr̥ṣṭam eva sarvam abhyupagantavyam |

The arguments respecting the pervasiveness of supremacy of the *Atman*, the interpretation of *Rita*, *Karma* and *Samsara*, the assertion of the continuity of existence and the elucidation of the ideals embodied in the expressions *Karma*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti*, involving, as they do, the possibility of devotion to a personal Godhead, and the simultaneous realisation of the mystery of what lies beyond personal Godhead, all these ideas were restated and amplified by the Adi Sankaracharya and his chosen disciples.

If one can presume to summarise the main features of his philosophy, contained, as they are, in the commentaries on the *Gita*, the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasutras*, and in such condensed expositions as *Vivekachudamani*, *Atmabodha Satasloki*, *Prabhodhasudhakara*, *Aparokshanubhuti*, and the unequalled compendium of wisdom, the *Dakshinamurthi Stotra*, they consist in the affirmation of the *samsara* or the succession of births and deaths conditioned by *Karma* and its cosmic significance and the realisation of the essential unreality of phenomena in the context of the reality of the Supreme-self, the realisation of that Self not being a theoretical matter but in the nature of a direct and achievable realisation and actual experience summarised in the saying, *Tattvamasi*.

Sankara's summary is contained in his *Dakshinamurthi Stotra* :

Yasyaiva sphuranam sadatmakamasatkalpārthakam bhāsate |

( . . . whose manifestations, the essence of which in reality appears as the object of fictitious notions ).

Let us consider Sankara's attitude towards the *Vedas* or *Srutis*. Sankara makes it perfectly clear that *Srutis* or *Vedas* are *Gnapaka* and not *Karaka*. In other words, they reveal, but do not command. They are, therefore, to be interpreted in a liberal manner. According to him, *Srutis* or *Vedas* exist for enlightening us on matters which are not perceptible by the senses. In matters which are perceptible to the senses, one must depend upon one's own senses, no doubt with some limitation.

The test of the authority of a passage is not whether it states

a fact or relates to an action, but its capacity to confer fruitful knowledge. In other words, these passages refute the contention that Vedantic thought does not look at realities, but is always fixing its gaze on unrealities and on vaguely conceived thoughts.

In this connection, I may quote from a passage from the *Uddhava Gita* :

Yā vai vidyāḥ sādhayantīha karma, tāsām phalam vidyate,  
netarāsām !

That is, whatever knowledge and whatever instruction, get things done, justifies itself. In other words, our ancestors — and Sankara is not the least among them — realised both the limits of the known and the boundaries of the unknown and the need while speculating on the infinite, to look to the tasks immediately ahead of us.

Scriptures are, in Sankara's interpretation, records of truths on the supersensory plane. In the *Bhashya* on the *Aitareya Upanishad* he says :

Sukhāvabodhārtham ākhyāyikā lokavat !

Stories and episodes in the scriptures are for the purposes of impressing ideas amongst common folk.

However, Sankara observes in his *Gita Bhashya* :

Na hi pratyakṣavirodhe śruteḥ prāmāṇyam !

*Śruti* is not an authority valid against observed facts. A hundred passages cannot be authority for saying that fire is cold and does not emit light. And he goes on to develop this doctrine with all its ramifications and limitations.

I have earlier adverted to Sri Sankara's insistence on knowledge being acquired only by investigations and experience. Let me for a moment dwell on this *Vichara* and *Anubhava*. Commenting on the opening statement of the *Brahma Sutra* : *Adhatho brahmajijnasa*, and dwelling on the word *Adha* (i.e. now, then or thereafter), he insists that knowledge of Brahman is attained only after much preliminary experience. In *Gita Bhashya* we

see him again taking an original line. There are many passages of the *Gita* in which it is stated that the fixing of the gaze on the tip of the nose or between the eyebrows leads to beatitude. Sankara's interpretation is this : It does not mean really that by projecting his gaze to the end of the nose or putting his gaze in the middle of the eyebrows, a person attains salvation. It seems that you add the words "as it were", the idea being that these physical acts exemplify and symbolise the withdrawal of the mind from external objects which is to be attained by this process.

In other words, it is not the nose or the eyebrows that matter so much as the effect of the concentration of the physical gaze on the abstraction of thought and its deflection from outer concerns so as to result in inner stability and peace.

Then, with reference to *Anubhava* (experience),

Anubhavāvasānatvat  
Bhūtavastu-viśayatvāt cha  
Brahmajñanasya !

This is mentioned in the *Gita Bhashya* also. *Brahmajñana* is the experience of an existing entity as the culmination of a course of discipline. In other words, so far as our philosophy and our system of thought and discipline are concerned, nothing is attained or to be taken for granted unless, it is actually experienced. Our system of philosophy does not depend upon external mediation or grace descending on one as a gift. You may have a *guru*. You prostrate before the *guru*, get *Upadesha* from the *guru*, but unless that *Upadesha* has become a part of your inner being, and has been interfused in your personality, unless you make the truth your own and your experience is the result, you do not benefit either by the *guru* or his revelation. That was a gospel which is inherently Hindu in conception. Each religion has its own outlook and its own approach towards the world's problems. The Hindu religion, as expounded by the *Advaita Vedanta* depends entirely on what is called *Anubhava* (i.e. personal experience of a sacred truth which is thereafter implemented in life).

The world, according to Sankara, is neither non-existing nor

void. Its attributes are neither *Abhava* nor *Sunya*. But, granted all this, the world is not ultimate reality and our confusion arises because we do not differentiate between the basic "atman" and the empirical "Anatman". Owing to *Avidya* according to him, we see diversity where there is unity and many where there is none. He did not teach that the world was unreal or a figment. On the other hand he was at pains to point out that such an idea of unreality was a part of the *Yogachara* (Buddhist) doctrine which he attacked.

The central doctrine of Sankara is that there is only one infinite, cosmic consciousness of which we are all part, and that the manifestations of the world are by way of *Maya* (illusion) or *Adhyasa*, as the case may be :

Sarvam khalvidam brahma |  
Jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ ||

In respect of this central message, one of his commentaries makes the matter clear beyond all confusion.

He refers to leaves, twigs and branches of a tree ; they are one with the tree ; in spite of their multiplicity the tree includes them all. Again in his well-known commentary on *Mandukyo-panishad* which is the main background of Sankara's system, there is this statement :

Sarvam hyetat brahma |  
Ayamātmā brahma ||

He asserts that the eternal, impersonal *Brahman* is the only ultimate reality. He explains the phenomena of the Universe as due to the power called *Maya* by which that absolute, without undergoing any change in or by itself, appears to us as an ever-changing succession of phenomena conditioned by time and space. He postulates that the spirit of man is identical with the "Supreme spirit" and that our sufferings and errors are due to the failure to realise this identity. He further declares that this realisation can procure liberation. One of his chief doctrines is that *Karma* (work) and *Upasana* (worship) are ancillary to *Jnana* (illumination).

Sankara's conception of the Absolute is not solely a matter of intellectual subtlety. He assumes that the relation of the *Brahman* with the world is *Anirvachaneeya* — impossible of explanation. *Brahman* is attributeless and immutable. *Ishvara* himself, in a sense, is a product of *Maya*, being the highest approach to the *Nirguna Brahman* possible to the normal individual soul. The world is an apparent transformation through *Maya* of the *Nirguna Brahman*. *Jiva* is individualised by what are called *Upadhis*, accessories to adjuncts. The *Jiva* regards itself as a doer or an agent.

Sankara in his *Sathasloki* thus expounds the idea :

Jīvātmabrahmabhedam dalayati sahasā yat prakāśakarūpam  
māyā tenaiva tasya kṣayam upagamitā samsṛteḥkāraṇam  
yā |

Incidentally, it may be observed that the saying :

Kim ca jagat sarvam prāṇa ejati nissṛtam

taken in conjunction with the *Brahma Sutra* aphorism, *Kampanat*, means assertion that life is a continuous vibration or manifestation of energy operating in the *Brahman*, the circumambient or the "Supreme Self".

Let us reflect on the doctrine of *Maya* as outlined by him. It has been often stated that the world is illusory according to Sankara, but this is a thoroughly misconstrued interpretation of Sankara's doctrine. What he says is this :

Na ca dr̥ṣṭe anupapannam nāma | dr̥ṣṭatvādeva ||

The above citation from the *Brahma Sutra Bhashya* means that the facts of perception cannot be challenged on the ground of their improbability, because they have been perceived. In other words, what you perceive by your eyes or ears or other sense organs, cannot be completely dispensed with. Sankara's argument is somewhat as follows : "Man's sense may deceive him ; his memory may play him false ; the forms of the world may be a matter of delusion ; the objects of knowledge or perception

## 28 BIOGRAPHICAL VISTAS

may be doubted; but the doubter himself cannot be doubted." This position leads to the conclusion that the "Self" which is composed of the elements of *Sachchidananda*, being consciousness and bliss, is universal and infinite, whereas the world of objects is subject to mutation. In other words, the world, as perceived, is as real as the perceiver. In saying this, Sankara differs, as already stated, from the *Yogachara* tenets of Buddhism.

The truth of *Brahman* may be mentally or intellectually envisaged. But, in spite of such attempts there is a deep-rooted desire for personal separateness, which is the true *Avidya* and the true play of *Maya*. It creates the notion: "I am the actor; I am the one who experiences." This notion is the cause of bondage to conditional existence, birth and death, and this notion can be eradicated only by a strenuous endeavour to live in union with the *Brahman*. Such an eradication is called *Moksha*. *Moksha* arises when the truth is realised. It is not *Nirvana* in the sense of dissolution, but the replacement of a false outlook, *Avidya*, by the true outlook, *Vidya*. In the *Vivekachudamani*, Sankara says, "Deliverance is not achieved by repeating the word 'Brahman' but by directly experiencing Brahman". One of the boldest steps taken by Sankara is the pronouncement that when a man follows the ways of the world, or even the way of tradition (i.e. when he believes in religious rites and the letter of the scriptures), he cannot attain the knowledge of reality, which does not arise until and unless by some path he attains the citadel of *Jnana* or illumination.

Having proceeded so far Sankara expounds the view that *Nirakara* (the Absolute) becomes *Akaravath* (embodied) for the individual worship as a *Saguna* (personal) Godhead, which is the only form in which the Absolute can be comprehended by the finite mind. The religion of a personal God is not a mere dogma, but is a product of realisation, intuition and experience. *Upasana* is in fact a means of obtaining continuous current of creative thought:

Upāsanam nāma samāna-pratyaya-pravāhikarāṇam dhyānam |

— [contemplation is like the flowing of oil poured out of a vessel (*Thailadharavath*)]. As the end of religion is unification of the

limited with the Infinite, what is termed *Bhakti* is the striving for this *Sakshatkara* or relation by means of and through devotion to a *Pratika* (personal God or symbol), or which may be an image, a painting or other object evoking concentration through veneration. It will thus be seen that Sankara does not exclude or expel the framework of the eternal world. This is an aspect which is not always understood by those who deal with the "Vedanta" system.

What may be called the "Sankara set of doctrines" pervaded and influenced not only all aspects of Indian thought, but has had significant repercussions amongst medieval Christian saints, Sufi divines and more recent thinkers like Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. There is, furthermore, a growing body of scientific thinkers who, confronted by the phenomena and developments of nuclear, atomic and cosmic theories feel irresistably drawn to Sankara's enunciations as the most legitimate and satisfactory explanation of the Universe — physical, psychological and para-psychological.

It may be observed that similar conceptions and thoughts have occurred to men and women in many other countries and in other ages. St. Catherine of Genoa exclaims: "My 'me' is God, nor do I recognise any other 'me' except God himself," and the Sufi saint, Bayazid stated: "I went from 'God' to 'God' and one cried from 'me' to 'me'. Oh thou I!" When some one knocked at the saint's door and asked, "Is Bayazid here?", his answer was, "Is anybody here except God?"

In Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy*, occurs the following passage elucidating the maxim: "That art 'thou'. Behold but one in all things. God within and God without." There is a way to reality in and through the world and there is a way to reality in and through the soul. But the best way is that which leads to the 'Divine' ground simultaneously in the perceiver and in that which is perceived.

That inspired and medieval philosopher, Ruysbroeck, has stated, "The image of God is found essentially and personally in all mankind. In this way we are all one, intimately united in our external image, which is the image of God and the source in us of all our life."

Perhaps, however, one of the nearest approximations to Sankara was manifested in Spinoza. According to him, the totality

of all existing things is God (God or nature — *Dens sive natura*). God is not a cause outside of things, which passes over into things and works upon things from without. He is immanent, dwelling within, working from within, penetrating and impregnating all things. In his *Short Treatise*, he utters the truth as revealed to him. Nature consist of Infinite attributes. To its essence pertains existence. It thus coincides exactly with the essence of God.

The more one studies the teachings of Sankara and his source books, the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma Sutra* and the *Gita*, the more one is struck by the intuitory anticipation by past seers of what are now coming to be regarded as scientific truths. The atomic theory and the existence of a reservoir of incalculable energy in the atoms, the doctrine of conservation of energy and many of the developments in physics, chemistry and biology regarding the potentialities of the infinitesimally small and the plentitude of the infinitely great — all these demonstrate the transmutations of primal energy, into the entities of creation and evolution. Such ideas are envisaged in the doctrines of *Anu* (atom) of *Anna* (matter) — wrongly identified in many passages with food, and *Sabdha Brahman* (the *Brahman* as manifested severally as vibrations, sound and energy and *Sakti*).

In 1956 there was published a book entitled *The Outlines of Modern Knowledge*, to which contributions have been made by the most eminent scientists of today. In an article by Dr. Rhine on "Para Psychology" contributed to this volume, he says, "Why should we suppose that there could be no kind of energy beyond those that are known; why should it be assumed that all the energies of nature should be subject to time and space and mass-relationship and perceptible to the sensory organs of man?" Again, some of the conclusions reached by astronomers and physicists that have culminated in the works of Einstein, Heisenberg and Nils Bohr and the Curies and men like Sir James Jenes, seem like excerpts from Sankara's exposition of the "Relativity of Knowledge" and the illusoriness of sensation and experience.

Even amongst Indians, there is considerable misapprehension in relation to the real import of Sankara's "Advaita".

When Sankaracharya propounded these doctrines, people did

not always understand him correctly. It is not well known that in the *Padmapurana* there is a frontal attack on Sankara and his doctrines and the description "Crypto Buddhist" (*Praccanna bhoudha*) was applied to Sankara in a passage wherein Lord Siva is supposed to have declared to the Devi that the theory of *Maya* is a false doctrine, being a disguised form of Buddhism. Lord Siva adds,

Mayaiva kathitam devi kalau brāhmaṇarūpiṇā |

"I have myself propounded it in the Kaliyuga taking the form of a Brahmin."

This "purana" is supposed to stand second in the list of *Puranas* and in its later sections is strongly Vaishnavite, Siva being supposed to explain to Parvathi, the nature and attributes of Vishnu, whom, they both join in adoring. In its present form the *Padmapurana* is attributed to the 12th century and it reveals a very common misconception regarding both Sankara and Lord Buddha, the critics forgetting that both the great seers openly took their ideas from the early *Upanishads*, though they developed their theses differently.

The only feature common to Buddha and Sankara may be pronounced to be their freedom from narrow theological obsessions.

The greatest service that Sri Sankaracharya has done is to make clear what he meant by the discipline of life which is synonymous with *Vedanta*. He says :

Nanu śāstram bhṛtyāniva balāt nivartayati niyojayati vā |

The scriptures do neither hinder and bind us nor direct us by force as if we were servants or slaves. In another passage from the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Bhashya* he supplements the above thus :

Prāgātmañānam pravṛtṭyupapatteḥ |

"Before the awakening of self-knowledge, performance of one's duties, secular and sacred, is essential."

And he adds :

Ācāro'pi sa dharma viśeṣa eva |

"Achāra or the accepted rule of life is another aspect of *Dharma*."

And finally :

Yastu adhikṛtaḥ saṅgam phalābhisandhim ca tyaktvā nitya-  
karma karoti |

"When a qualified person works without attachment or longing for results (he is purified)."

He makes it clear when the term "Sanyasa" is used. It is the same thing as Lord Sri Krishna indicates in the *Bhagavad Gita*, namely, the giving up of activities with an eye to results. He asserts that before the awakening of self-knowledge performance of ordinary duties is essential.

Sankara lived in a period of great spiritual crisis. The work done by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda in the face of modern materialism was anticipated in the life history of Sankara, who was an adept in the processes both of synthesis and analysis. Sankara sought to uphold the verities of the *Gita*, *Brahma Sutra* and the *Upanishads* by his commentaries. The special glory of Sankara is that, over and above being the protagonist of the monistic approach he is the author of innumerable *Stotras* or invocations to personal Godhead. The *Jnana* of Sankara is not a cold study of books, but a warm-hearted striving to realise the truth, which, when turned towards a personal deity, becomes *Bhakti*. Sankara is as insistent as Buddha on the supreme importance of lofty ethics as one of the fundamentals of spiritual life, but his outlook on *Karma*, on temple worship and on domestic ceremonial is sympathetic and harmonious and not merely destructive.

Hinduism, as some people have said by way of criticism, and as can be equally described in terms of justification and praise, is a great and golden umbrella that has sheltered all forms of thought and speculation, and it is an umbrella which is still standing erect and giving shelter notwithstanding the fury of the

elements and those batterings and shatterings which have affected other forms of thought. Its stability is in no small sense due to the work of Sankara, because it was given to him to reconcile all its varied aspects. In his *Bhashyas* and in his poems what he has sought to do is to give explanations which comprehend the actualities of life while at the same time they reach above and beyond them to a synthesis typified in the four *Maha Vakyas* of the *Upanishads* identifying the Universe with the Self that is both within and beyond it, and explaining existence and death and evolution by the theory of *Maya*.

Sankara trod a path which had been trodden by several preceding philosophers and prophets, but his glory is characteristic and unique in that he effected a synthesis, a harmonious adaptation of various ideals and made it possible for people with differing equipments, with separate heredities, aptitudes and separate life histories to follow their own bent of mind, their own philosophy and at the same time to aspire beyond that individual philosophy into that supreme revelation in which the individual soul merges into the infinite and is not differentiated from it by interposed obstructions.

Sankara, in short, is the arch interpreter of the four *Maha Vakyas*.

Vijñānam brahma | aham brahmāsmi | tattvam asi | ayam  
ātma brahma |

"*Brahman* is intuitive knowledge. The individual self is that *Brahman* (part of it). That thou art. Each *Atman* is *Brahman*."

## 3

---

 Mirabai

THE passionate self-surrender of the individual soul is like the highest form of renunciation and of realisation and is termed *Bhakti* amongst us in India. Its significance, although perceived from time to time by evolved souls all over the world in Western as well as in Eastern countries, has not been fully understood by sophisticated men of the world. It is nowhere better typified than in the life-story of Mirabai who was the daughter of a 15th century Marwar king and who, almost from her childhood, adored the Divine Krishna with concentrated devotion. To Him she dedicated unforgettable songs of love and surrender and with Him she was ultimately merged, according to orthodox tradition. Her songs are part of the living heritage of India and her life has much more than a legendary import. It demonstrates a national characteristic that has persisted through the ages. Even as early as the Vedas, we notice rites and prayers to invoke a certain form or manifestation of Divinity. Some so-called superior persons term this mode of approach idolatry or superstition, and in Christian countries the adoration of the Virgin Mary and the incarnated Christ child is criticised by many sectaries. The Indian technique rests upon the fundamentally true doctrine that any type of one-pointed concentration in thought, in speech, in poetry, in song or action always fulfils itself and that God responds and enters the place and form to which such concentration is directed. Any wooden, bronze or stone image or any tree or living object is filled, from the point of view of the worshipper, with His personality and the Supreme Being is regarded as acting from within the image. A European scholar, Dr. Betty Heimann, with rare perception has rightly

apprehended the idea underlying our *Bhakti*. In her language,

“Not only man but animal, plant and stone are imbued with universal life force. A second animation is provided by concentrated thought and action of the sculptor. A third animation takes place by the concentrated thought of the priest by chants of invitation and welcome for the Deity. A fourth animation follows when the Divine responds to the call and takes His seat in the image. The veneration of the devotee adds to the life of the symbol and re-vitalises it. The image therefore embodies an intensity of power drawn from various sources.”

This is why it is believed that even some deserted or broken temples possess what is called *Sannidhyam* (the living presence of spiritual essence), whereas, on the other hand, certain temples of popular resort and storied history, by reason of lack of such concentrated veneration, or worse, by reason of foul thoughts and objectionable practices connected with the institution, have ceased to give any impression of sanctity to the expectant worshipper.

Sri Dilip Kumar Roy, a well-known mystic poet and musician, who has lived a full and variegated life, who has always sought the ideal and has been strong enough to renounce an ideal when it ceases to be vital and sufficing for him, has sought to express the secret of *Bhakti* as expounded and lived by generations of sincere souls ; and, in a play entitled *The Beggar Princess*, which follows, in his literary career, a series of biographical sketches, poems and acutely-sensed life-sketches of memorable persons, he has presented the drama of Mirabai's existence. The play is not only a prose-poem but is, in truth, the biography of a questing soul.

The Prologue opens in an *ashram* temple of Krishna in Kashmir. A young Sadhika, Tapati, and her companion are singing a mystic song and the Sadhika goes into a trance or *Samadhi* during which a woman in Rajput dress appears to her and arouses nameless yearnings, and certainties. She asks if the vision is a resurrected thing from the world of sleep ; but the answer is :

I have come authorised  
 To awaken in your yearning consciousness  
 A spark of vision truer than the one  
 That helps us see the Sun and Moon and Stars.

Finally, the vision of Mirabai appears singing in rapture :

Thou art blue lotus ; I am the leaf ;  
 Thou art the magic hue  
 And I am irised by thy gleam  
 Whom thou, in Grace, wilt woo.  
 And yet I ask : Who am I, Radha,  
 With whom thou playest so ?  
 But how can I say what I am,  
 Does one, Lord, ever know ?

Asked by Tapati to narrate her life-story, Mira consents and outlines what she calls

My passion-play of love's insatiate yearning  
 Which, starting from a spark, grew into a mystic  
 And ruthless fire engulfing all I cherished  
 Till nothing could survive of the name and form  
 Of one whom people knew as Mira, the Queen,  
 Who lost her all, she knew and knew not why.

This is the story which is set out in the drama, a story which begins in the royal palace of Raja Ratan Singh : It is the seventh birthday fete of Mirabai. Mira is singing a chorus and during the course of the song, a Yogi enters and the boys and girls gathered for the festival are told by Mira that she has seen Radha and Krishna with a flute. Sanatan, the Yogi, gives her a present, the image of Bala Gopal (Krishna as a child) and says that he has been commanded by his Lord to hand over to her the image, for, He has chosen from now on to stay with Mira as guest and comrade. Mira asks, "If I love Him, will He come to life?" and Sanatan's answer is, "You will get your answer, the most loving answer, when you begin to love Him." Before departing, Sanatan asks the father to promise not to give

his daughter in marriage, because He says that she will not be happy if she marries.

Many years pass and Mira yearns to meet Bala Gopal in vision, in questions and responses. She tells the image that her father and aunts are calling her *Arakshaniya* and assert that it is a sin to keep her at home unmarried. Krishna declines to advise her and tells her that "you cannot get to the top of the ladder in one bound ; you have to go up rung by rung". Mira then asks if she should obey her father and get married. Bhojraj, the fiance, and Mira meet and in answer to Bhojraj's question, "Why turn your back finally on this our world for something which is too rare to be trustworthy if not actually too good to be true? Is it wise to bank on something so uncertain?", Mira answers, "I do not ache to be wise. I only hunger for one thing, to be true and loyal to my Gopal." Finally, Bhojraj promises that he will cherish her and adds, with worldly-wise confidence, that she is a trifle non-human but nature is not mocked ; it will assert itself. Thereafter, Ratan Singh, the father, recounts her story and says : "Mira is always asserting that the image comes to life day after day and teaches her beautiful dances and difficult rhythms in dancing." The father adds that there was no trickery because even when Mirabai was locked in her room, there was a presence that appeared. At the end of an anxious colloquy, Mira calls Gopal and there is no answer ; Mira is baffled and confused and the marriage takes place with Bhojraj who is the Maharana of Udaipur, the lovely city of lakes and famed palaces and forts. Mira builds for herself a private golden temple for Gopal and she continues her life of devotion and surrender and of *brahmacharya*.

The sister of the Maharana comes to him and says that people are gossiping about Mirabai because she spends most of the time in the temple neglecting her husband and her duties. His relations reproach and threaten to forsake him. In perplexity and despair, Bhojraj approaches Mira. He has kept his promise not to insist on his rights as a husband and realises that she has shed glory on the throne of Mewar, that her songs are sung in every house, but still asks her to accept him with all his limitations although he inwardly knows that though she is born in the world yet she is not part of it.

There are episodes, both pleasant and unpleasant, and gossips in the palace ; but special mention must be made of a marvellous scene when Tansen, the great musician who was Akbar's chosen friend, appears before Bhojraj and pays his homage to Mirabai. He says, "I wonder if what commonly passes for Art is inspired so much by the deeper urge to perfection as by the cheap desire to catch the fancy of the common man." Mira answers that "Art is not true Art when technique is flaunted to win praise. It can only spring from *tapasya*." Mira sings one of Tansen's compositions and she goes into a trance and dances in the trance. Tansen departs after saying that he was born a Hindu and has become a Musalman but Akbar had made him see that he is a false Muslim who respects another's faith less than his own. Tansen leaves after getting the blessings of Mira, resolved to bring about a *darsan* of Mira for Akbar, his master.

Bhojraj dies on the battle-field and his brother, Vikram, is installed in his place. Vikram's sister and his courtiers protest against Mirabai's dancing and singing in the temple even after her husband's death and they make uncharitable remarks about her not discarding her golden bangles and not wiping away the vermilion mark on the forehead. The sister asserts that she can prove Mira to be an unchaste woman. And just at this juncture, Akbar, desirous of seeing Mirabai, appears in the temple with Tansen disguised as a Hindu priest. He says, "Maharani, I came here expecting to see a devotee, but I have glimpsed something great, a Seer." Akbar makes an offering of a precious chaplet which Mira places on the head of Gopal. Just then, Vikram comes into the temple and he and his sister, Udaybai, reproach Mira and point out that the chaplet is of Muslim craftsmanship and that Mira covers the mask of her sin with her seeming innocence. Madan comes on the scene and reveals that Akbar had been in the temple. Vikram is infuriated and shouts that a Muslim has defiled the sacred temple and that Mirabai must have invited him clandestinely. Vikram insists on her taking poison, but the cup of poison when drunk by her is inoperative. The image is seen to tremble and it turns into a blue-black colour like a human being who had taken virulent poison. When Madan witnesses the miracle and repents and asks for pardon,

Mira says, "Gopal has told me that there is nothing a man can do which cannot be absolved through repentance and surrender." Mira leaves Udaipur and becomes a wandering minstrel.

And so, we come to the last Act when Mira, now a mendicant, reaches Brindaban after having begged her way in Krishna's name and unmindful of being insulted and deceived in Rajasthan by a group of immodest and lascivious persons. Mira enters Brindaban and proceeds towards the image of Krishna in utter distress of mind. There follows a scene with two robbers one of whom hurts her. When she is distraught and bleeding, she tells Lord Krishna, her *Guru*, who had tested her gold in the crucible of pain, "Do not judge me by whatever I may have said in bitterness. By loving you I have, indeed, lost everything." She then prepares to throw herself into the Jamna and then Krishna appears to her. She insists :

My hand, a woman's, is not strong,  
So, how can I, Lord, hold for long  
You, in my arms, my King !  
But I can defy you to depart  
For even a moment from the heart  
Of thy weak underling.

and the answer of Krishna is :

But when did Krishna ever seek  
To leave the hearts that felt so weak,  
If He declined to sing ?  
But the underlings He came to hail  
Would every time His Grace repel  
While calling Him their King !

Mira's father, Ratan Singh, appears on the scene and invites her back to the palace. She replies, "I am no more the Princess that you dandled on your knees years ago. I cannot be happy again in the life of a palace." Her final answer is that she would live at the feet of her *Gurudev* and, with another great invocation to Krishna, "The Beggar Princess" makes her final self-dedication.

This story of Mirabai has been the delight as well as the consolation of many generations.

In every age terrestrial life has used  
Sound as a stair of songs to the peak of Hush.

It is not too much to say that the *Rasakrida* of Krishna in the groves of Brindaban has been both the inspiration and the consolation of myriads of musicians and devotees in our land. To them the boundaries between this life and the life beyond were hardly defined as Dilip Kumar Roy asserts in his Dedication to Mirabai to whom he feels so near and close. He, like many others in the past, putting aside the claims of spurious art and science and statecraft and false knowledge, has

turned from these  
Half-lights, world-weary, orphaned, disenchanted  
To the one light no cloud can ever quench  
Of the Orb beyond the hazes.

## 4

### Tyagarajaswami

It is not too much to assert that the musical trio, Tyagarajaswami, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, along with the artistic group that surrounded and was dominated by the royal musician, Sri Swati Tirunal, firmly established the classical tradition of the South and that the system of *kritis* now regarded as the foundation of musical performances owes its perfection to this great assemblage of composers and musicians amongst whom perhaps Tyagarajaswami's influence was most widely pervasive. Tyagaraja's life was that of a dedicated artist and saintly devotee. He possessed a singularly sweet and devout temperament and was the very embodiment of spiritual poise. He lived from 1759 to 1847 and was coeval with Syama Sastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar and, like the great musical and literary figures of the world, he did not disdain to absorb the lessons taught by earlier protagonists of music like Purandara-dasa, Kshetragna, Jayadeva, Ramadas, Swami Narayana Thirtha and Sadasiva Brahman; but he was, in addition, a great extemporer and path-finder in the domain of musical composition, excelling alike in simple patterns and elaborate effects and distinguished throughout by lyrical expertise. But at bottom his songs constituted a reservoir of spiritual appeal and he ranks as one of the greatest in the long catena of India's *bhaktas*.

Born in the shadows of one of the great South Indian temples, Tiruvarur, which was also one of the cultural centres patronised by the rulers of Tanjore, all that we know about Tyagaraja is that he owed a great deal to his father and maternal grandfather, that he seems to have acquired considerable proficiency in Telugu and Sanskrit and that he imbibed the characteristic

culture of the Chola country. Tyagaraja's life-history was outwardly uneventful although certain supernatural incidents have been woven into the accepted chronicle connected with his mission and the mystery of his music. Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, to whom all students of Tyagaraja owe so much, has imparted the information that Tyagaraja's family name was Brahman, his father being known as Ramabrahman. The appellation, *Tyagabrahman*, by which his disciples lovingly designate him, is thus literally as well as psychologically correct. His father seems to have destined Tyagaraja for a life of literary scholarship and entered him as a student in the Sanskrit College at Tiruvayar, but the attractions of music proved to be irresistible and he devoted himself fairly early to the art. Tradition declares that over and above the Vainika Venkataramanayya who originally instructed him, Narada himself became his preceptor and presented him with a treatise entitled *Svaranavam* which is now lost, and also taught him the *Tarakamantra*. Tyagaraja is supposed to advert to this episode in the *kriti*, "Svararagasudharasa", and his gratitude to Narada is outlined in *Varanarada*.

He had an elder brother who was anxious to benefit by his musical talents and who insisted on his visiting the Tanjore court. But Tyagaraja would not yield to his brother's solicitations. At the family partition, Tyagaraja received very little in the way of worldly goods but he obtained the golden image of Rama cherished in the family as an heirloom. His elder brother, although he came into possession of all the properties of the family, was jealous of the rising reputation of his younger brother as a musician and the story goes that he secured and threw the image of Rama into the Cauvery. The biographers of Tyagaraja declare that Tyagaraja was absorbed in this image and in its worship and composed hymns outlining in loving detail all the rituals relating to its ceremonial worship, including the *Naivedyam* and the *Arathi* to the image. The loss of the golden image was chronicled by him in *kriti* "Nenenduvadakudra" in Harikamboji and when, after many months of search, the image was marvellously washed ashore and recovered, the song, "Et a Dorakithivo" was composed by him describing of this homecoming of Rama.

Throughout his life, Tyagaraja consciously put aside wealth and honours. He lived with his wife and supported a large number of disciples who gathered around him, and they all subsisted mainly on alms in kind gathered by *unchavritti* from householders in Tiruvayar. The *kriti*, "Santhamulekha", is regarded as autobiographical. In the biographical sketch by Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar, there is an acute analysis of the tradition and the tendencies amidst which Tyagaraja lived. It is pointed out that the age of Tyagaraja was a transition between the age of patronage when kings and noblemen endowed and gave shelter to chosen musicians and other artists and the age of public support which only recently has come to its own. During the time of Tyagaraja, the Tanjore dynasty, which in its heyday of prosperity was one of greatest patrons of painting and letters and music, was passing through a difficult period, and the only locality where love of music and its patronage were still flourishing was Travancore where, from the days of Marthanda Varma, the founder of modern Travancore, and his successors (the greatest of whom as an art-lover was Swati Tirunal), music was both encouraged and practised by the members of the royal family. Saraboji the titular king of Tanjore, however, kept up some state and was a contemporary of Tyagaraja. It is recorded that he sent an emissary to the musician asking him to compose a *kirtana* in his honour and we learn that he refused to do so, but on the other hand composed a song in Kalyani "Nidhisalasukhamu", where he dilates on the theme: "Which gives greater joy, wealth or worship, in the holy presence of Rama? Which of the two is better—the praise of man or the praise of the Divine?" Such was the disdain for worldly recognition which was manifested by this man of God. He kept himself independent of both official and officious patronage. Similarly his contemporaries, Syama Sastri and Muthuswamy Dikshitar, both prayed to be saved from the calamity of singing for the undiscerning rich.

Tyagaraja, in his own composition, has ranged from simple *Divyanamavalis* to most complicated *kirtanas* though he did not emulate the reconditeness of Kshetragna or Muthuswami Dikshitar. His *kirtanas* were created as accompaniments of fervid worship and are often conversational and sometimes are per-

## 44 BIOGRAPHICAL VISTAS

sonal outpourings outlining his life and his experiences. It has been remarked that in his youth he began by regarding Rama who was his tutelary deity as being the one supreme God, superior to every one else. His songs, "Rama Bhajeham" and "Rama Kothandarama" are typical of this mood. He felt that he himself was a successor of Valmiki and had the mission of glorifying the epic figure of Sri Rama. His main musical contributions were in praise and honour of Sri Rama, regarding him as the summation and essence of all the Gods, as illustrated in the *kriti*, "Dvaitamu sukham". His thesis on one occasion was that the syllables composing the word Rama epitomised the *Tattvas* of the *Siva mantra* and the *Vishnu mantra* — *Ma* being *Jiva* of *Siva mantra* and *Ra* of *Vishnu mantra*. He is supposed to have declined even to witness a procession of the Goddess, Dharmasamvardhini, and instituted unflattering comparisons between her and his own *Ishtadevata*, whom he, in his songs described as Lavanya Rama contrasting his beauty and grace with the attributes of the Devi whom he termed *Thamasa mathu daiva*, the deity of the *thamasa* way of life.

As in the cases of Shakespeare and Dante, Tyagaraja seems to have had his moods of despair and periods of tribulation and, notwithstanding his spiritual quest, his songs in Denuka headed "Teliyaleru Rama" is indicative of his despair of realisation and the difficulty of knowing the right path. He fell ill and ascribed his illness to the anger of the Goddess whom he disparaged and whose grace he at last implored in the song, "Karuna jooda vamma". Later, as in the case of other great poets and musicians including Shakespeare, Goethe, Mozart and Beethoven, he attained comparative peace of mind and acquired a rare catholicity of temper. To this period are attributed songs in which he has apostrophised many deities and evolved a mentality which has been styled by Professor Max Muller, "henotheism", wherein the devotee alternately ascribes supremacy and primacy to several manifestations of Godhead. This method indeed is in the authentic Hindu line of thought and the greatest example is the Rigveda where alternately Surya, Mitra, Aditi and Varuna are dealt with as supreme. To these mellow years belong the songs, "Girirajasutha", dealing with Ganesha, "Neevanthi Davamu" dedicated to Subrahmanya, "Sambho Maha-deva" to

Siva, "Pahi Rama Doota" to Hanuman and "Tulasi Jagaj-janani" to the Tulasi plant.

It must not also be forgotten that in addition to his *kritis* he wrote the "Divyanamavali", the "Prahlada Bhakta Vijayam" and the "Nowkacharitam", in honour of Krishna and finally the "Pancharatnas". Many of his songs rebuked intellectual pride and intellectual equipment as such and he was constantly advocating the grace of Rama as the only means of attaining bliss, the *kirtana* "Enu Chesthini" being typical of his outlook. Whenever there arose an opportunity as in his songs, *Kasi Cheta* and *Rookulu Padivelunna*, he inveighed against the love of money and love of possessions.

Towards middle age, Tyagaraja resolved to go on a pilgrimage to various shrines. At Tirupati, he found that a screen separated him and Venkataramana and he sang about that screen in *Therathiyogarada*. A wealthy patron and Tamil scholar, Sundaresa Mudaliar at Poonamallee, presented him with a palanquin and a sum of money. Thieves beset him on his journey and he is supposed to have sung the song "Mundu Venaka" in Darbar, which led to the mental conversion of the thieves. The story recounts that they even offered to carry his palanquin. He visited Madhyarjunam where he is stated to have resuscitated a dead man, by his composition "Sri Rama Padama" in Amritavahini. He then proceeded to Rameswaram. In Madura he sang the hymn, "Manasunilpa", and in Srirangam composed, "Oh! Rangasayi". In his travels, he heard a discourse on the *Avatars* and his mental reaction was manifested in the song, "Evari Nirnayanchirira" — "How did the wise determine who Thou art? How do they worship Thee". Some of the most memorable of his songs were composed in Kancheepuram where he came in contact with the great devotee, Upanishad-Brahmendra, in whose name there is a mutt that is even now functioning.

Gradually he collected a band of devoted and accomplished *sishyas* around him, one of whom, Kanniah Bhagavatar, who visited Travancore, impressed himself so much upon Maharaja Swati Tirunal, the most musical of monarchs, that he sent his own court musician, Vadivelu, the violinist, to invite Tyagaraja to his capital. Tradition has it that there were many contacts

between the Royal Musician and Sri Tyagaraja, who seem to have profoundly appreciated each other's gifts but they unhappily never met. When Vadivelu approached Tyagaraja and stated that Swati Tirunal could bestow on him a great *padavi* or status he is said to have sung the *kriti*, "Padavi Sadbhakti", asserting that the state of mind which places implicit faith in Rama is the only *padavi* for which he craved. Amongst Sri Swati Tirunal's court musicians already referred to, one of the most accomplished was Govinda Marar, who was named "Shadkala Govinda Marar" on account of his ability to sing *pallavis* adapted to six *kalas* or degrees of time. This Govinda Marar, notwithstanding that he was crippled by rheumatism, went on a pilgrimage to meet Tyagaraja, the meeting having been arranged by one Nallatambi Mudaliar, who was a palace employee. His performance so enthralled Tyagaraja that he is reported to have composed his famous song "Entharo Mahanubhavulu", in honour of Govinda Marar to whom he gave the title "Govindaswami". This song avers: "Many indeed are the great ones of the world and to all of them I pay my homage". This and four other hymns in *Nata*, *Gowla*, *Arabhi* and *Varali* constitute the *Pancharatnas*.

Tyagaraja's relations with his disciples and his loving care for their spiritual welfare and their musical competence are well known. Yet at the same time he appears to have been a hard taskmaster with a temper of his own and was as exacting with his disciples as with himself. Eighteen disciples are stated to have gathered round him, of whom Venkataramana Bhagavathar, who belonged to the Sourashtra community, was the earliest and certainly one of the foremost. The meticulous care with which Sri Venkataramana Bhagavathar attended upon Tyagaraja and supplied his various needs makes a touching story, and his daily supply of *Tulasi* for the Pooja of Tyagaraja is an affecting narrative. This service was rendered even without the knowledge of Tyagaraja until the Saint, by an accident, learnt that early in the morning daily, Venkataramana Bhagavathar walked all the way from his domicile (Ayyampet) to Tiruvayar and handed over the packet of *Tulasi* leaves without disclosing their source. Tyagaraja very early recognised the supreme merits of his disciples and utilised Venkataramana Bhagavathar's

services as amanuensis and assistant. There is an amusing, and rather disconcerting, account of the way in which local pandits disputed the value and the authenticity of the *Nowka Charitram* and stated that the story had no basis in Puranic lore. It is said that Venkataramana Bhagavathar produced palm leaf manuscript in Sanskrit which satisfied the Pandits. It was learnt only later that actually the palm-leaf manuscript was the work of Venkataramana Bhagavathar himself, who composed the Sanskrit verses and resorted to a stratagem to enhance the reputation of his master.

Practically everyone in the family of the Bhagavathar formed part of the musical group of Tyagaraja. Like Bharata in the case of Sri Rama, Venkataramana Bhagavathar collected the *Paduka* of Tyagaraja and all his compositions and notes and treasured them in his house until much later the Madura Sourashtra Sabha acquired and deposited them as well as Venkataramana Bhagavathar's own compositions in a specially constructed building in Madura, which evidences the gratitude and generosity of the Sourashtra community to which Venkataramana Bhagavathar belonged.

Interspersed in Tyagaraja's outpourings are allusions and references indicative of his deep knowledge of the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Sastras*. Although he sang mainly in Telugu, his Sanskrit equipment was deep and extensive and his poetic and literary gifts were considerable. His gifts of description as well as of satiric and of righteous indignation are evident from his works which are notable both for quantity and for variety. In his *kritis*, he expressed the quintessence of Carnatic *Ragas*.

There has been, in India, an age-long tradition equating the Supreme Entity with *Nada* or sound. Indeed, *Nada Brahma* is an expression constantly invoked by poets and musicians alike. Tyagaraja, who was devoted to the technical details of the musical art, believed with all his countrymen that every *raga* had its own shape and personality and revelled in describing Sri Rama not only as a *Sangeethalola* or *Ganalola* (lover of music) but as the embodiment of music. In one of his songs, he describes the Lord as *Saptaswarachari* (one who lives, moves and has His Being in the seven notes).

In song after song, Tyagaraja refers to the celebrations of the glories of the Supreme Being as the only appropriate objective of music. One of his greatest songs asserts that mere knowledge of music without *Bhakti* is of no avail: "Sangeeta gnanamu bhakti vina" etc. Indeed he insists on making music one of the main paths to beatitude. Knowledge and realisation of *Nada*, namely, melody are means to attain bliss and salvation. He sings, "One who has a devoted mind and a knowledge of Ragas is a liberated soul". He describes Krishna as *Nadachala deepa* (the light on the hill of *Nada* or melody). Supreme bliss or *Ananda* is attained, according to him, by *Nada Upasana*.

The outstanding contribution of Tyagaraja in the domain of music was the development and systematisation of *Sangatis* or melodic phrases in close assonance with the *bhava* or the underlying emotion and he also released musical practice from the grip of the word as such. Some one has averred that his work was *kriti* as apart from *kirtana*. His services to the continuity of the Indian tradition are conspicuous. After him there has been a little too much of emphasis on formal correctness and the musical value of notes whilst at the same time purely musical values have not been preserved against non-musical intrusions. Tyagaraja himself represented a compendium of all musical resources of his predecessors. It may be remembered that in his days the main instrumental accompaniments had not attained the position which they now enjoy and exact. The violin does not seem to have been much in use during Tyagaraja's time and it has been observed that there is no mention of it in any of his *kritis*. In Northern India its use is not as prevalent even now as in the South and in fact in this Presidency, the vogue of the violin really started with Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar, although in Travancore, Vadivelu had greatly popularised it. Krishna Ayyar, along with the saintly, Sarabha Sastri, who gave the flute a unique place in South Indian music, and Narayanaswami of *mridangam* fame, constituted the great names of the generation subsequent to Tyagaraja. According to tradition, Tyagaraja's main and simple accompaniment was the *tambura* and this was but appropriate in the nature of things to one who was primarily a *bhakta*. It was fitting that Tyagaraja should have felt that his proper end and aim was *sanyasa*.

Passionately devoted to his art he rose above it towards the end, although he had in the past insisted that music was essential for salvation in his lyrics, "Mokshamu Galada", "Ragasudharasa" and "Enthuku Peddala", and had insisted that all curricula of studies should include music. His *kriti*, "Aparthamuna norva", exemplifies the final attitude: "I have a wavering mind. I composed and sang hundreds of *kirtanas* in order to obtain salvation for my individual self irrespective of others. I crave pardon and mercy for such great offences." The next step was to prepare for his death and his song in Manohari, "Paritha pamukani", foretold his end and he prepared for it by *sanyasa* and surrender. He exclaims in it: "Oh Rama, you appreciated my condition and have told me that in ten days you will save me. May I remind you of this promise?"

Gayakasikhamani Muthia Bhagavathar, who, in his own person, typifies the confluence of many traditions and is equally honoured in his own district as well as in Mysore and in Travancore, has in his short account in Sanskrit of the life and work of Tyagaraja presented succinctly the scope of Tyagaraja's art, his freedom from sycophancy and simplicity of life and his devotion to his *Ishtadevata*, — Rama, and the inner symbolism of his *kritis*, the felicity of his wording which is compact and nevertheless of profound spiritual meaning and technical excellence.

Tyagaraja's contribution to music constitutes an exemplification of a veritable *Sadhana*, namely the self-determinative processing of inner consciousness. His gospel may be thus summarised: Contemplation of the Lord should be with a mind free from longing. Mere performance of rituals is of no efficacy. The belief in planetary influences and astrology, the glorification of book learning sought for its own sake and even the acquisition of supra-normal powers are as superficial, ignoring the essentials of existence. In a well-known song he depicts orange robes and betaking to *sanyasa* as mere externality.

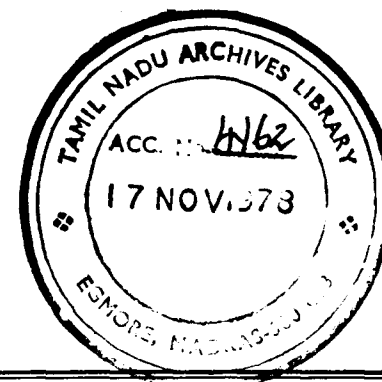
The establishment of what is called *Rama Rajya* was the main motive of Tyagaraja's efforts and he has delineated all the mystical moods and experiences by means of which the divine figure of Sri Rama could be typified and experienced as friend, as lover, as companion as well as the prefiguration of supreme consciousness. In essence, Tyagaraja was not only the foremost of our

composers in an art which attains spiritual unity as well as artistic elaboration but one who has, throughout his work, striven to make his music an adjunct to the right type of quest of the divine.

The memory of Tyagaraja should serve to minimise, if not to counteract, some of the tendencies now increasingly prevalent in the practice of Carnatic music. To say that at present the *laya* aspect is sometimes over-emphasised and the passion for *tala* over-accentuated and that legitimate regard is not paid to melody and to the *Raghabhava* is certainly not to exaggerate. The present type of audience is new and in the making and the present demands on the artists are variegated and therefore it is that I have ventured on such a reminder. "Oftener ornateness goes with greatness. Oftener felicity comes of simplicity".

Of Tyagaraja it may well be said in the words of the English poet :

"Enough that there is none since risen who sings,  
A song so gotten of the immediate soul,  
So instant from the vital fount of things  
Which is our source and goal."



### Thayumanavar

It is not possible, within a short compass, adequately to deal with the age-long and characteristic civilisation of the Tamil country prior to the Aryan contacts, or with the special features of secular life and religious belief, which differentiate the north from the south.

In the literary remains of the earliest epoch of Tamil civilisation, heroism and devotion to duty, side by side with a poignant love of natural scenes and of the home and the hearth, are the features that most impress themselves upon a student. It is clear, moreover, from the testimony of ancient Greek and Roman writers, not to mention the references in the *Mahabharata* regarding the political and social connections of the countries on both sides of the Vindhya range, that South India was not only highly civilised in the arts of peace, but advanced enough to possess a literary academy dating from many centuries anterior to the Christian era.

The old Tamil idylls and what were termed the *Keezh Kanakku*, viz. *Naladiar* and Thiruvalluvar's *Thirukkural*, give evidence of the impact on Tamil Nad of Buddhism and Jainism in addition to Vedic religion, and of the rise of a new scheme of life differentiated from the heroic age. The *Kural*, following Tholkappiar, supplied a fresh formulation or codification of domestic and social ideals. Then followed the age of the two Tamil epics and later still of the Saivite and Vaishnavite saints.

A remarkable literary blossoming characterised the resuscitation of the Pandyan Kingdom and the later expansion of the Chola Empire; and from about the 8th or 9th century, Tamil

and Sanskrit literary forms and locutions became fused together; and Ottakoothan, the Court Poet of Kulothunga Chola, and Kambar compiled their masterpieces. A long period of philosophical speculation commenced with Meikandar's "Sivagnana-bodan" and gradually all the various sects of Hinduism established and fostered their religious sanctuaries which kept the lamp of scholarship and devotion burning in the land.

Between the 17th and 18th centuries, Father Beschi, otherwise known as Veeramamunivar, began to create a Christian Tamil literature; Omar and others preached Islamic doctrines, and Pillai Perumal was adding to Vaishnavite literature. It was at this period that Thayumanavar set before himself the task of reconciling the apparently conflicting doctrines of the Vedanta and Saiva Sidhantha and of elucidating the underlying harmony.

What we know of Thayumanava Swami's life does not amount to much, but it is more than is known of many of our greatest seers, artists and authors, who, in India, almost invariably chose the path of anonymity. He was born of Vellala parentage during the closing years of the 17th century (about A.D. 1685) at Vedaranyam, his father Kedilia Pillai being at that period in service as one of the ministers of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha Nayak (the grandson of the famous Tirumalai Nayak). He was named after the presiding deity, Thayumanavar of the well-known Shrine at Thirusiramalai, to whom vows were offered by his parents for the birth of a son. Is it a mere coincidence that some of the finest hymns of the saint were dedicated to the Sakti aspect of the divinity embodied in that deity?

Very early in life, Thayumanavar became proficient not only in his mother-tongue and its literary and philosophical classics but also in Sanskrit and his knowledge of both the tongues is adverted to in the verses headed "Kallatha Perkalae Nallavargal". His father died when he was barely 16, and in spite of his reluctance he was nominated by the ruler to succeed his father in his office in recognition of his abilities.

Not long afterwards he encountered by chance at Trichy, his future preceptor, Mouna Guru, a disciple of Thirumala Nayanar, the author of *Tirumantiram* and *Meikkondar*. It is reported that almost instantaneously Thayumanavar felt drawn to the guru and became his *chela*. It is also stated that he desired

then and there to be initiated and guided in his studies. No answer came from the guru and Thayumanavar, practically abandoning his career, followed him from place to place until at last he was asked to concentrate on *Sivagnana Siddhi* of Arunandi Siva Charya Swami as containing the best instruction to attain the knowledge of the Supreme, a knowledge which was described as *Suddhadvaita Saiva Siddhanta*. When further pressed for initiation, the guru merely asked him to wait and in answer to his entreaties gave the reply, "chumma iru" (keep quiet or still). This declaration was taken as his "Upadesa Mantra" (guiding principle) by Thayumanavar as is evident from several of his poems.

Ēdukkū śummā viru maname enrunakku  
bodikka vunnaiyenge pokaviṭṭai uḍal poyyuravu  
nī sonnavoru vārttaiyinai  
malaiyilakkena nambinen.

(Mauna guru vaṇakkam)

From this time, he devoted himself solely to his religious vocation and obtained permission from the ruler to resign his position.

After the death of the monarch, it is recorded that his widow, Minakshi Ammai, declared her love for Thayumanavar who repelled such advances and leaving the capital settled down at Tevai near the present Ramnad.

Later, at the instance of his uncle and other members of his family, he married and had a son, but his wife died soon afterwards. It was at this juncture, and after he had faced the facts of life, that Mauna Guru visited him and permitted him to adopt the ascetic mode of life and gave him the necessary initiation.

Thayumanavar, thenceforward, devoted himself to pilgrimages to important shrines of the South and to Banaras, to meditation and *pūjas* and to authorship, surrounded by devout adherents like Surulayar and Kodikarai Gnanaiar.

He knew no distinction between man and man and realised the littleness as well as the greatness of humanity and the pervasive character of temptation.

## 54 BIOGRAPHICAL VISTAS

He has in a mood of penitence sung :

sukattin vālvinaṭ satamena venṇiye  
mikuttīmai viḷaiya viḷaikkinren

and right through his work one sees evidences of his abounding humanity and compassion. Thus he says :

śna mirakkarrālum śittiyellām perrālum  
manamirakka kallārkkū vāyēn Parāparame

He held and declared that the Tamil language is specially suited to express *anbu* (tenderness and devotion)

“ en tamiḷanukku  
innal pakarādulakam āramai melit-  
tiruttalāl ittamiḷaiye  
śonnavan yāvan avan mukti sittikalellām  
toinda neriye paḍittīr.

He has utilised his high spiritual experience and rare literary gifts in expounding, in language of rare metrical beauty and melody, the fundamental doctrines of the faith that irradiated him. The great masterpieces of the Tamil language, differing in this respect from many other literatures, are distinguished by certain very special, or rather, unique qualities of compression and concision, brevity of language and fulness of thought being combined to a marvellous extent.

The charm of Tamil poetry depends, even more than the poetry of the Greek and Latin, on assonance, as well as the close knitting of word with word and the intricacy and varied beauty of metre and rhyme. Furthermore, the literature of *Bhakti* in Tamil is, perhaps, more fervid and intense in character than the only compositions that can bear comparison with it — viz. the creations of Hebrew and Sanskrit prophets and seers. It is not too much to say that the outpourings of Thayumanavar are supreme manifestations of such *Bhakti*.

The development of Saiva Sidhantha really starts with the Tamil version of *Gnanavasishtam* wherein Vasishtha, the Pre-

ceptor, persuades Rama that, even in the midst of pomp and the trappings of royalty, it is possible to attain the highest spiritual stage. On the same *Sutras* of Badarayana are founded Sankara's monistic doctrine, Ramanuja's "qualified non-dualism" and Nilakanta's "Suddhadvaita Bhashyam" advocating pure non-dualism.

The Saiva Siddhanta doctrine is summarised in *Sivagnana Bodha* in the passage,

“ Like song and its tune ; like fruit and its flavour ; the Lord's energy everywhere pervadeth, non-dual. Therefore, the Vedas do not say 'one', but say 'not two'.”

The “ekam sat” of the *Vedas* does not, according to his interpretation, mean the identity of God and soul ; but that God pervades and is immanent in and energises the soul. This is what *Thirukkural* preaches in its first verse :

Akaramutala veḷuttellām  
Ādi Bhagavan mutarre ulaku.

(All letters have for their source the letter 'a'.)

(The world hath for source the ancient and adorable one.)

The *Saiva Siddhanta* postulates three entities : *pati* (literally God or king) ; *pasu* (soul or the aggregate of souls — literally living creature) and, *paasam* (bondage — being the sum total of all elements that fetter the soul). The *malam* or *maya* produced by *paasam* has, according to this scripture, to be removed by *Sakti* or *arul*. The principal aspects of *Sakti* (the Great Mother) — as She is typified, are the *pancha kriya* or *Aiyinthozhil*, creation or projection being *sirushti* or *thorram* or *padaippu*, *sthithi* or preservation being *thithi* or *nilai* or *kappu* ; destruction or involution, *sankaram* ; or *odukkam*, veiling or *tirobhava* or *maraiippu* and grace or *anugraha* or *arul*. The earliest manifestation of divine energy is taken to be *nada* or *vak*. It is necessary to understand the significance of these ideas and expressions to follow Thayumanavar's compositions and their real import.

In the series of lines addressed to *Sakti* (the Universal Mother), who is the Absolute become manifest as Force and who is worshipped at Thevai near Ramnad in the character of the Highland Maid or *Malai Valar Kathali*, occurs a poem, which is perhaps one of the peaks of Tamil poetry.

Patiyuṇḍu nitiyuṇḍu puttirarkaṇ mittirarkal  
 pakka muṇḍekkālamum  
 paviṣuṇḍu taviṣuṇḍu tiṭṭānta māka yama  
 paṭarenuntimira manukāk  
 katiyuṇḍu jñānamāṇ katiruṇḍu śatiruṇḍu  
 kāyaśittikaḷamuṇḍu  
 karaiyuṇḍa kaṇḍarpālammai ninrāḷir  
 karuttonru muṇḍākumel  
 Natiyuṇḍa kaṭalenac camayattai yuṇḍa para  
 jñānavānanda voliye  
 nādānta rūpame vedānta moname  
 nānenum ahantai tīrtten  
 matiyuṇḍu matiyāna mativādana valliye  
 madusūdanān taṅgaiye  
 varairaca nukkiru kaṇmaṇiyā yuditta malai  
 vaḷar kātaliṭ peṇumaiye

Again, while describing Siva as *akanda sacchidananda siva* and as transcending all sects (*matankalukku atitamai*) he characterises Sakti as (*parai yenun kiranan sulappanu*) namely the Supreme Devi or Para being like the rays surrounding and irradiating the sun of Godhead. Elsewhere the essential unity of Siva and Sakti is thus envisaged when singing of the divine Thayumanavar.

“Oruruville tāyum tantaiyum ānoi śiriśirit-  
 Tāyumāna dayāpara mūrtiye.”

In another series of impassioned hymns, Thayumanavar pictures God's operations in the Universe culminating in the redemption of the soul as illustrated and exemplified in Nataraja's Cosmic Dance in the *Chit Sabha* of Chidambaram.

Thayumanavar, in his writings, has practically exhausted all

forms of lyrical expression and metrical devices.

A poem, which may be regarded as containing the essence of his writings, is cast in the form of a love song. This mood is characteristic of intense devotion and can be studied in the Bible in the poems ascribed to Solomon and Isiah, as well as in *Gita-Govinda* and the songs of several Alvars. In his *Ananda Kalippu* the soul is pictured as the lover and the Lord as the Beloved. The soul, ridding itself of the likes and dislikes and of the ideas of “I” and “Mine”, blends with the Lord, and, in the process, expresses its bliss in song and dance. The refrain is “Sankara, Sankara, Sambhusiva”; *Bhakti* and *Gnana Yoga* mix and fuse and the soul's history is sketched, advancing in the path of love, meeting the Lord as a teacher and being initiated by Him in the path of knowledge — the Soul and the Lord being apparently distinct, but in fact there being no duality.

The reconciliation between the Vedānta and Saiva Siddhanta schools (*Vedānta Saiva Siddhanta Samarasa*) is effectively illustrated in this poem. One of the verses may be cited in this connection :

uḷḷatum illatu māi mun  
 nuṇarvatu vāyun nulaṅkaṇḍa tellām  
 taḷḷenac colli ennaiyan — ennait-  
 tānākki koṇḍa camarttaipār toḷi.

But even more remarkable, both in language and sentiment, is another verse

anṇeṇṇu māmeṇṇu muṇḍo — unak-  
 kānandam veṇḍi naṇivākiḥ caṇṇe  
 nanṇār reṇiyum enave — marai  
 nītyem mādi nikaḷṭinān toḷi.

This reconciliation is specifically referred to in the poem. *Siddhar Kanam*.

“Vedānta śittānta samarasa nannilai peṇṇa  
 vittakaccittar kaṇame (‘vittaka’ meaning *Gnanam*).”

His *Akara bhuvanam Cidambara rahasiyam* develops the doctrine of matter and soul as non-existent but for Siva

“cittum saḍamum śivattai viḍa illai”  
and “nīyanṇi nānār?”

As in the case of Sankara, this monism was regarded by him as consistent with the worship of the divine as embodied in temples, the image being regarded as a potent means of concentrated devotion. His catholicity was one of his most admirable qualities.

veru paḍum samaya mellām pukuntu pārkkīn  
vilāṅku param poruḷe ninviḷayāṭṭallāi  
mārupaḍuṅ karuttillai muḍiviṅ mona  
vāridiyinattiran pol vayanṅkirrammā.

— Kallavin.

The appreciation of natural beauty manifested by Thayumanavar, side by side with rare abstraction of philosophic speculation, is illustrated in the following poem in which, describing God as the only reality in the world, the Saint still recognises the place legitimately due to the appreciation and enjoyment of the world's largesses. The poem suggests the right outlook towards the pleasures and glories of Life and Nature.

kontaviḷ malarccolai nannīḷal vaikinum  
kuḷir tīmpunar kaiyyallik  
koḷḷukinu mannīr iḍaittiḷaittātinum  
kulir santavātai maḍavār  
vantulavukinratena munrilidai ulavave  
vasati peru potum vellai  
vaṭṭamati paṭṭappakar pola nilavutara  
makil podum velaiyamudam  
vittai pera varu śuvaīyil vantatena vaḷutunṇum  
velaiyilu mālaikantam  
vennilaiyaḍaikkāi virumbi veṇḍiya vaṇṇam  
viḷayādi viḷituyilinuṅ  
santatamu ninnaruḷai maravā varam tantu

tamiyenai rakṣai purivāi  
sarva paripūraṇa akaṇḍa tattuvamāna  
saccidānanda sivame.

The Sage's metrical dexterity and metaphysical subtlety are both in evidence in a series of poems entitled *Vannam and Ahaval*

aruven paṇamumanri uruven panavu manri  
akamum puramumanri murai piraḷatu  
kuriyum kunamuminri niraivum kuraivumanri  
marayon rena viḷambi vimalamatāki  
acalam pera vuyarntu vipulam pera vaḷarntu  
capalam capalam enruḷari vinarkāṇa  
jñāna veḷiyiḍai mevum uyirai.

The song entitled *Porul Vilakkam* in its ecstatic sense of realisation is hardly equalled in any literature.

nittiyamāi nirmaḷamāi nitkalamāi nirāmayamāi  
niraivāi nīṅkac  
cuttamumāit tūramumāi samīpamumāi turiyanirai  
śuḍarāyellām.  
vaittirunta tārakamā yānandamaya māki  
manavāk keṭṭāc  
citturuvāi ninra vonraic cukārambap peru  
veḷiyaic cintai śeivom.

But, it is in the description and adumbration of *Sakti* as the Universal Mother and ultimate source of energy and illumination that Thayumanavar is, perhaps, super-eminent. These hymns can be compared with Sankara's *Dakshinamurthi Stotra* and *Soundarya Lahiri* as embodying the perfect union of verbal melody and spiritual harmony.

Thayumanavar's splendid conception of the “Devi” is thus outlined :

akhilaṇḍa koti īnra  
vannaiye piḷḷaiyuṅ kanniyena marai peśu  
mānanda rūpa mayile.

(Mother of crores of world's creatures and yet described as a virgin by the scriptures).

Another remarkable characteristic of Thayumanavar is the complete assimilation and co-existence of the Sanskrit and Tamil locutions and idioms. For instance, in the fifth of the same series of stanzas, appears a poem, the first half of which is almost pure Sanskrit. Nevertheless there is a sense of symmetry and no loss of verbal elegance or appropriateness.

pūraṇi purātani sumangalai sutantari  
purāntaki triyambaki yeḷir  
puṅkavi vilaṅku śiva śāṅkari sahasradaḷa  
puṭpamiśai vīrrirukkum  
tāraṇi manātīta nāyaki guṇātīta  
nādānta satti yenrun  
nāmame uccarittiḍu maḍyār nāmame  
nānuccarikka vaśamo  
āraṇi śaḍaikkaḍavuḷāraṇi yenappukaḷ  
akhilāṇḍakoti yīnra  
annaiye piḷḷaiyuṅ kanniyena marai peṣum  
ānanda rūpa mayile  
vāraṇyu maruṅkaḷ mātarmaḷi gaṅgai pukaḷ  
vaḷa maruvu devai yaraśe  
varai rāśa nukkirukaṇ maṇiyā yuditta malai  
vaḷarkatalip peṇumaiye

In another poem entitled *Paripoornanandam* appears those celebrated lines beginning with the words "Andabahirandamum maya vikaram" where the doctrine of *Maya* and *Karma* is interpreted by the poet simply and yet conclusively.

The poem *Karunakara Kadavul* affords another instance of that harmonisation of Sanskrit and Tamil which has already been alluded to.

Nirguṇa nirāmaya niranjana nirālamba  
nirviśaya kaivalya mā  
niṣkaḷa vaśaṅka caṅcalarahita nirvacana  
nirdonda nitta mukta  
tatpara viśvātita yvomaparipūrana

śaḍānanda jñāna bhagava  
śambhu śiva śankara sarveśa venru nān  
sarvakālamu ninaivano  
arupta agocara nivartiperum anbaruk  
kānanda pūrttiyāṇa  
vattuvita niccaya sorūpa sākṣātkāra  
vanubhūti yanu ātamūṅ  
karpanai yarakkāna mukkanuḍan vataniḷar  
kaṇṇuḍirunta guruve  
karutariya circabaiyil ānanda nirtamiḍu  
karuṇākara kaḍavule.

While these poems and those entitled *Sacchidananda Sivam* and *Thaejomayanandam* deal with philosophy in the abstract, there are other poems of simpler character and approach like *Periyanayaki Virutham* and *Paraparakanni* and *Paingilikanni* and *Ennatkanni* and *Nirkunilai* and the various *Iyalbu* verses namely — *Arun Iyalbu*, *Porul Iyalbu* and *Ananda Iyalbu* which deal, in an appealing manner, with problems, both secular and other-worldly.

The sprightly lilt of dancing measures resembling some of the creations of the French muse is dear to Thayumanavar and has often been resorted to. One of the most charming specimens of this type of verse is a series beginning with "Padukinra Panuval".

Pādukinra panuvalorka  
teḍukinra celvame  
nādukinra jñānaminri  
lādukinra vaṭikane

(O Treasure, by Poets sought, O beauteous Dancer in the Hall of Wisdom).

In fine, Thayumanavar is a marvellous amalgam of Sanskrit and Tamil culture and his spiritual insight was communicated to the world in multiform verse whose lyrical and devotional appeal is as direct as it is intense.

## 6

---

 Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master
 

---

IN one sense, the life of Sri Ramakrishna by Romain Rolland is definitive. It is the exposition of the life, inner experiences and visions of an authentic mystic by one who, bred up in the Christian faith, was, nevertheless, fully *en rapport* with the spiritual evolution of an Indian seer. Such a task could not have been so successfully performed unless Romain Rolland himself was touched with the fire of mystic thought.

The book entitled *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master* by Swami Saradananda, one of his direct disciples, falls into a different category. It is the loving and minute record of the rich inner life and *Sadhana*, and of the teachings and sayings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. This volume is a rendering of the five-volume biography in Bengali entitled *Sri Ramakrishna Leela Prasanga*. Into this book have gone the labours of several distinguished men. Believing, as the authors do, that Sri Ramakrishna is an incarnation specially appurtenant to the present age, and re-asserting with Swami Vivekananda that he was the spirit of the *Upanishads* living in a human form, it has been the object of the authors to illustrate the synthesis between the East and the West, of the mystic with the familiar, of which Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was an embodiment.

Swami Saradananda, who originally began the book, could not complete it, and the pious work of completion was left to others. It will be remembered that Saradananda was not only inducted to monastic life by Sri Ramakrishna, but was disciplined by him and was one of the early collaborators in the work of the Ramakrishna Mission. It has been narrated that Sri Ramakrishna had a vision of Saradananda as having been, in a

previous life, one of the companions of Jesus. A work initiated by such a personality is bound to be a source of intense interest. It commences with the assertion that religion in our country has been synonymous with the realisation of God, and the very expression *Darsanas*, applied to our various systems of philosophy, involves the assumption that they are things seen and experienced. With Carlyle, our seers emphasised that each great seer or *mahatma* is an idea incarnate; and, indeed, our philosophies, insisting on the transcendental *Brahman* but regarding *Iswara* as the controller of a cycle, also insist on the importance to the bulk of mankind of the idea of a personal God and of a *Guru*, as an essential factor in religious evolution.

Sri Ramakrishna's significance as one in the authentic hierarchy of *Bhaktas*, like Sri Chaitanya, has been amply described in this book. An analysis of present-day tendencies is attempted, and the decline of faith today is attributed to the spread of Western thought, though I am afraid that not sufficient attention is paid in this volume to the undeniable service rendered by Western scholars in inculcating intellectual self-reliance in India, and in re-introducing us to the treasures of ancient thought.

The outer history of Sri Ramakrishna's life was uneventful. Born in a poor family and bred up in the shadow of a temple, the boy evinced a remarkable aptitude for making friends, as well as for attracting the notice of evolved persons. He developed, very early the habit of devotional reading and singing to men and women alike. One of the most interesting chapters, in this book, relates to the development of Sri Ramakrishna as a spiritual aspirant, and it is acutely pointed out that even incarnations have to grope their way in our life of blended light and darkness; and, both in the life of Jesus and of Sri Ramakrishna, there are many instances of essential humanity and the frequently disconcerting and unexpected attributes of the seer.

In a chapter entitled "Sadhaka and Sadhana", an apparently irrelevant, but intrinsically correlated, discussion takes place on the two paths which are separately referred to as "not this, not this" and "this, this", the attainment of the latter consciousness leading to the *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* which Sri Ramakrishna experienced so often and so spontaneously. A series of instances is brought before us illustrating Sri Ramakrishna's wonderful

memory and his courage, as well as his love for merriment and gladness. The building and the dedication of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar led to the assumption by the seer of the office of priest, in the course of which he had his first vision and, what is called, the "Divine inebriation of the *Sadhana*". A disquisition on the mental states experienced during *Sadhana* is also included in this book, and the analogy with Sri Sukadeva's life is pointed out. In the course of the *Sadhanas*, the Master acquired an active distaste and contempt for money, and his outlook transcended all differences between man and man and between forms and manifestations of matter.

Sri Ramakrishna's marriage and its marvellous bye-product of ascetic self-control, the *Tantric Sadhana* which he underwent at the instance of Bairavi Brahmani, and the later affluence and the various developments of spiritual experiences and moods which are called *Vatsalyabhava* and *Madhurabhava*, leading to the *Sadhana* of the absolute Vedanta are the topics of the next few chapters. At the end of this period, comprehensiveness and all-embracing tolerance was demonstrated by the Master's practice of Islam and other religions in order, not only to widen his experience, but to demonstrate the essential unity of all creeds.

The chapter entitled "Shodasi" contains an account of Sri Ramakrishna worshipping his wife as a manifestation of *Sakti*, and it brings many new facts to light. The Master's desire for specific *Sadhanas* came to an end thereafter, and his mind became truly universal; and, he realised in himself the essentials of the Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh beliefs, as well as Christianity. Chapters relating to spiritual moods, meditations and visions contain a loving account of the bodily changes and outer manifestations produced during Sri Ramakrishna's experiences in *Samadhi*. He declined to be called a spiritual originator or founder of a religion; but his sayings — profound, pithy and homely — are, like the parables of Christ, full of meaning and fuller of varied implications. In the words of this book, he lived in peace, his whole life calm and tranquil and free from anxiety; and he converted himself into an instrument in the hands of the Divine Mother. Having attained reality, he opened his store-house of knowledge, for distribution. The physical

and mental results of the practice of *Yoga*, as experienced by Sri Ramakrishna and by others, including some of his disciples, are described with minuteness. What is of nearly equal importance with the narration of these instances is the chronicle of the influence of the Master on the Brahmo Samaj and his instinctive recognition of Swami Vivekananda as his chosen disciple. The development of the extraordinary relations between the *Guru* and that great *Sishya*, the *Guru's* methods of testing and schooling the future Vivekananda and the events which led up to the climax in 1886, in his last days, are of absorbing interest.

Towards the end of his life, the consciousness of his mission came to him vividly; and, it is narrated that, when he touched each of the devotees assembled, they went through transcendental experiences. His was a wonderful life which, devoid of any dramatic or spectacular incidents, was yet full of an epoch-making struggle towards perfection.

---

## Swami Vivekananda

NARENDRANATH DUTT, who became a world figure under his *sanyasin* name of Swami Vivekananda, was endowed by nature with resistless energy and he had, as a young man, all the fiery passions that normally co-exist with bodily strength and determination.

From his student days, Narendra personified the conflict of past and present, of East and West and of dream and action. He was possessed by two apparently irreconcilable desires, one for conquest and domination and the other for renunciation and compassion. Even before he came under the influence of Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he strove to embody in his life the motto of Saint Augustine of Hippo who asserted : "If you want to find God, serve man". After a period of varied study and of espousing and grappling with sceptic and agnostic trends of thought, Narendra had the good fortune of being marked out as the chosen *sisya* of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who brought to him spiritual realisation culminating in *Yogic samadhi*.

The story of his first encounter with that inspired seer, the Paramahansa, and of the latter's instinctive attraction for his future pupil born of his insight into his disciple's latent gifts, are narrated in all the biographies of the Swamiji with loving detail, but nowhere as revealingly as by Romain Rolland who, in his *Lives of the Two Personages* has rendered unique services to Indian literature and thought.

Very soon, the disciple appreciated the message of his *Guru*, namely, the universality as well as the immanence of the Supreme, of the essential oneness of the various religions of

the world and of the duty to serve man in order to reach God. After his noviciate, Swami Vivekananda travelled through the whole sub-continent of India as a *Parivrajaka* and apprehended the essential spiritual unity of India. As an ardent and discerning student of Western classics and philosophy, he was filled with a desire to reconcile and to assimilate Hindu ideals with modern scientific processes and organised philanthropy. Travelling incognito through India, he lived one day with a prince and another day with a wandering beggar. He carried with him in his travels both Thomas A. Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* and the *Gita*. It was in April 1891, that during a musical performance given by a danseuse in the palace of the Raja of Khetri that, in his own words, his spiritual pride was quelled as he was about to leave the palace as a protest against the presence of a dancing girl who, presumed to sing a devotional melody, conquered the Swamiji with its uplifting appeal. Thereafter, he made no difference between man and man and lived, with no difference, with noblemen as well as thieves and sweepers.

It was at Porbandar that the advice was given to him to visit the West. Standing at the land's end, known as Kanyakumari, he had the vision of the renaissance of India, of its release from misery and poverty and of the need to reveal India to the West and the West to India. He decided then and there that the search for personal salvation was secondary and that his duty was to preach the spiritual unity of Asia and the message of Asian thought and philosophy to the world. But when he resolved, in pursuance of this call, to proceed to Chicago he was without any resources, as is seen from the fact that he had to swim to the Kanyakumari rock from the mainland as he could not afford even the boat fare. Thanks, however, to some far-sighted philanthropists, it became possible for the Swamiji to sail for America.

Madras furnished his first group of disciples and his supporters. During Swami Vivekananda's sojourn in Madras just prior to his departure to the United States to participate in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, he resided in a house on the Madras sea-shore which was then called the "Ice House" and which belonged to Sri Biligiri Iyengar, a well-known attorney of those days. Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao, Mr. M. C. Alasinga

Perumal and several men of note including Dr. S. Subramania Aiyar, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and my father, C. R. Pattabhirama Aiyar, were amongst the persons who, at that time, recognised the transcendent intellectual and spiritual qualities of the Swamiji. As I have often remarked, the general Indian public did not then take much notice of him and, as very often happens, he was recognised as an authentic apostle of Indian culture only after his epoch-making utterances and labours in the United States and in England.

During his stay in Madras, Swamiji conducted Gita classes regularly and it was my privilege, along with C. Ramaswami Aiyangar who was, later on, instrumental in starting the Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home in Mylapore, to attend those classes. No one who was present at those discourses could fail to be impressed not only by his magnetic personality and by his compelling voice but by the easy mastery over his subject and his inspiring exposition, in an easily comprehensible language, of the main teachings of the *Gita* and of the essentials of the Vedantic doctrine and their applicability to everyday life.

September 1893 saw his spiritual conquest of the Parliament of Religions in Chicago and he carried the whole Conference with him when he proudly re-affirmed the immemorial teachings of the *Upanishads* and the place occupied by the *Sanyasi* and the monk in the spiritual and secular polity of Eastern countries.

The Swami's prolonged lecture tours in America and in England have been adequately described by his loving disciples. Many in America eagerly accepted his teachings and, in truth, the way was prepared for them by the writings of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman. The message of identity of the Supreme with the inner soul of man had been preached by these American men of genius and Swami Vivekananda had a fertile soil for his talks and writings. He enunciated the doctrine of social philanthropy and service to the lowly and the depressed and he emphasised that India's doom was sealed when the word *mlechcha* was invented. Margaret Noble (who afterwards became Sister Nivedita), Sister Christine and Sister Haridasa were among his early disciples and the Swami dictated his *Raja Yoga* to Sister Christine; and, later on, Mr. Goodwin became

his Secretary. For over a year, he travelled through many Western countries stressing the need for tolerance and the religion of universality. He met, in Europe, great savants like Max Muller and Paul Deussen who all became his fast friends and supporters. His visit to Switzerland gave him the idea of the Almora Asram and his contact with Edward Carpenter and Frederick Myers made him acquainted with the newly arisen spiritual cravings of Europe.

Returning to India, Swami Vivekananda made up his mind not to have any political affiliations and he often repeated that he would, unhesitatingly, keep his movement pure and untouched by passing controversies. He made a memorable speech in Colombo where he insisted that Siva should be worshipped mainly by service to the poor, to the diseased and the weak. In Madras, he helped to start the Brahnavadin and his Madras speeches were practically the summation of his fierce resistance to outworn caste prejudices and incrustations. He preached in his lecture on the "Plan of Campaign", that whilst England had political vitality and power and Italy and France were intrinsically artistic, in India, religious life is the centre of existence but that in order to realise that life, we must re-create for ourselves a man-making religion and man-making education. He, thereafter, began to embody his ideals by founding various *ashramas* and *mutts* as well as educational institutions and hostels. In the midst of his incessant work, he was dictating his masterpieces on the four *Yogas* and on the teachings of the *Upanishads*, *Epics* and *Puranas* and he composed hymns and significant poems like his "Ode to Kali, the Mother". The Advaita Asram was founded in Almora and the Belur Mutt was consecrated in 1898.

The Swami paid a second visit to the West, but by that time, his health had begun to fail. He rallied his powers and made a great speech in the Paris Congress of the History of Religions. But his second Western trip over-taxed his physical powers and he died in July 1902 while not yet forty years of age.

Spiritual freedom and fearlessness, equilibrium and synthesis were the watchwords of his revelation to India, and to him, to know and to do, were synonyms. He continually insisted on the three *Danas*, namely, *Anna Dana* (charity), *Vidya Dana*

(gift of learning) and *Jnana Dana* (meditation). He was both an exemplar and an exponent of true *Samadhi*, which is really another word for the re-plunging of the conscious thought into the abyss of the sub-conscious and prenatal and perennial life. Such a type of *Samadhi* co-existed in him with a faculty for energetic action. This was a unique combination.

Unlike many other religious teachers, he had a great gift of humour and was not above making jokes and uttering pleasantries in order more effectively to drive home to the audience truths which others propounded with solemnity and in obscure or inflated language. Equally important with his religious teachings was the manifestation of a fervid patriotism and a desire to work for the uplift of the under-privileged. He would constantly reiterate his profound conviction that physical, economic and spiritual growth should proceed side by side and that the eradication of poverty, dirt and disease was even more essential for the attainment of spiritual realisation than the mere repetition of slogans and catchwords which the down-trodden, in their misery, could hardly follow or appreciate.

Summing up Swami Vivekananda's contributions, they may be described as the organising and the consolidation of Hindu ideals and the insistence that Hinduism never had and should have no fear of the truth. There is, according to him, in reality, no difference between the sacred and the secular. Every aspect of life is, and should be made, a part of religion and man becomes divine by realising the divine in every aspect of the universe and of life's activities. Finally, like his *Guru*, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he constantly insisted that by the term *Ishtadevata* was meant that each man may seek God in his own way provided that he is sincere and tolerant, and that the aims and the goals of all the great faiths of the world were identical.

## 8

### Sri Ramana Maharshi

PHILOSOPHIES and religions have depended, throughout the ages, on two types of sages. One group may be described as inspirers and men of intuition and the other as expositors or commentators. To vary this phraseology, the former group may be likened to the sowers of grain and the latter to those who reap and distribute the harvest.

It is natural to believe in great men ; and, in the language of Emerson, the search after the great is the dream of youth and the most serious occupation of manhood. The same philosopher, dealing with representative men, insisted that, in order best to fulfil his functions, the great man must be related to us, and our life should receive from him some promise of expansion. He added that there are persons who, either by their character or by their actions, answer questions which we have not the skill to put.

In India, the *Upanishads* and the *Sutras* made eternally true affirmations ; and it became the privilege and mission of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa, and the Alwars and the Nayanmars of the Tamil country, to elucidate their meaning and expound to the people at large the significance of the utterances of the *Rishis*. Such utterances were the result of deep contemplation and of self-realisation consequent upon intuition and experience. It was not for them to justify or explain themselves. It was for others to do so. Their function has been thus described :

Astīti bruvato'nyatra katham  
tad upalabhyate

(Save by affirmations, how is truth revealed ?)

Thus, for instance, the short but infinitely comprehensive Vedic precept, *Tatvamasi*, (That thou art) includes and com-

prises in itself the entire philosophy of tolerance and comprehension of compassion and universal brotherhood ; and it may be said to be the root or the kernal of most revealed religions. The function of such sayings is, so to say, to throw a man's mind back on its haunches and to bring about humility, contemplation and concentration.

Swami Vivekananda has asserted that all the dreams of living men have found an appropriate home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence. For nearly four thousand years what Romain Rolland calls the tree of vision has renewed itself tirelessly ; all kinds of fruits ripen upon its boughs at the same time ; always side by side are found all kinds of Godheads from the lowest to the highest, to the unnameable and the boundless One. India has also produced, throughout the ages, a series of path-finders or universal souls. The tree of vision has been described as the Eternal *Asvattha* whose roots are in the sky and whose branches pervade the earth.

The world abounds with scriptures, revelations and philosophies, all of which seek to expound the truth ; and although truth is one and eternal, it expresses itself in time and through the mind of man ; and therefore, as Sri Aurobindo has stated, every scripture and revelation contains two elements, one temporary and perishable, belonging to the ideas of the period and the country in which it was produced, the other, applicable to all ages and countries.

Sri Ramana Maharshi's life is a life without many outward incidents but a life dedicated, from the beginning to self-realisation, and an insistent and absorbing search directed to *Vairagya* and God-quest. Renunciation and realisation, and the power that comes from both, seem to have been the prerogatives of the Maharshi from his early youth.

In the book entitled *Self Realisation — Life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi*, Narasimha Swami has furnished an absorbingly interesting pen-picture of his daily life, his remarkable encounter with thieves and his sympathy for and brotherly love towards men and animals alike. The Maharshi sedulously avoided publicity and controversies, social or religious.

As in the case of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, so in the case of the Maharshi, illumination reached him by means of a

deeply-felt devotion to a particular manifestation of the Divine by which he was led on to experience the ineffable One, the *Paramatman*. Through deep concentration, he attained *Samadhi* and, after complete realisation dawned on him, he appeared as a guide and exemplar to the outer world ; and, for some years, he continued to enlighten an increasing number of devotees who resorted to Tiruvannamalai from this country and abroad.

The Hindu ideal has always been in favour of teaching through life and not so much through words. It was thus said of Sankara and Dakshinamurti that the teaching was by eloquent silence and the disciples could get their doubts easily dispelled. The Maharshi was almost always in *Sahaja Samadhi* — an uninterrupted state of realisation, wherein one is able to attend to any work that turns up without feeling disturbed or distracted. Like Socrates and Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Maharshi spoke pithily and what he spoke was mostly in parables and short sentences addressed to small groups of earnest seekers after truth and peace.

The Maharshi's teachings were simple and he spoke little and wrote little, but the words he uttered and the verses he composed were direct in their appeal and meaningful. Beyond a hundred verses at the most, he has left no writings behind him. What he has told us in his *Ulladu Narpadu* or *Sad Vidya* is a pithy synopsis of Vedantic teaching. The translator of the Swamiji's *Five Hymns to Sri Arunachala*, Grant Duff, positively avers that he felt that he was in direct contact with one who had passed beyond the boundaries of the senses and was merged in the absolute of his true self. The hymns are the efflorescence of the mystic urge, and the Maharshi speaks of a heart which is different from the physical one but whose secrets have to be learnt in order to discard that "Self which is the aggregate of sense impressions". It has always been one of the fundamentals of Hindu life and faith that those who wish to be free must, in the language of the *Gita*, seek and reverently question those who have seen the truth and freed themselves.

One of the Maharshi's disciples, Vasishta Ganapathi Muni, has published *Sri Ramana Gita*, which, he claims, embodies the fundamentals of the three kinds of *Yoga*. Various collections have been published, both in Tamil and in Sanskrit, outlining

his teachings and precepts. All of them are characterised by a directness of approach and a felicity of expression that come from enlightenment. Loving disciples have gathered and collected every saying of his. The calm that characterised his daily life, and that was diffused by it in his environment, has been actually described as matters of daily experience.

India has never committed the mistake of overstressing the ultimate reality of the world and its phenomena ; and the scientific West is fast arriving at the same conclusion. This approach stemming from relativity and now fortified by the researches of physical and chemical sciences has been the fundamental concept of Indian religious teachers who have always regarded the world as unreal and everchanging, and the by-product of energy and vibration.

In order to explain the outlook on the great problems of the world illustrated by the Maharshi, let me quote two questions and their answers set out in the Maharshi's Gospel.

D. How does a *Grihastha* fare in the scheme of Moksha ? Should he not necessarily become a mendicant in order to attain Liberation ?

M. Why do you think you are a *Grihastha* ? Similar thoughts that you are a *Sannyasin* will haunt you when you go out as a *Sannyasin*. Whether you continue in the household or renounce it and go to the forest, your mind haunts you. The ego is the source of thought. It creates the body and the world, and it makes you think of being a *Grihastha*. If you renounce, it will only substitute the thought of *Sannyasa* for that of *Grihastha*, and the environment of the forest for that of the household. The mental obstacles are always there for you. They even increase greatly in the new surroundings. It is no help to change the environment. The one obstacle is the mind ; it must be got over, whether in the home or in the forest. If you can do it in the forest, why not in the home ? Therefore why change the environment ? Your efforts can be made even now, whatever be the environment.

D. Is it possible to enjoy *Samadhi* while busy in worldly work ?

M. The feeling, "I work", is the hindrance. Ask yourself "Who works ?" Remember who you are. Then the work will not bind you ; it will go on automatically. Make no effort either to work or to renounce ; your effort is the bondage. What is destined to happen will happen. If you are destined not to work, work cannot be had even if you hunt for it ; if you are destined to work, you will not be able to avoid it ; you will be forced to engage yourself in it. So leave it to the High Power ; you cannot renounce or retain as you choose.

On yet another occasion he said : "When camphor burns no residue is left. The mind must be like camphor ; it must melt away and be wholly consumed by the earnest resolve to find and be the real Self ; by this resolve the 'Who am I' quest becomes efficacious. When the mind is thus consumed, when no trace of it as mind is left, it has become resolved into the Self."

Sankara, in his *Viveka Choodamani*, claims that there are three things which are rare and due to the grace of God, namely, to be born a human being, to long for liberation and to obtain counsel from a perfected sage. Not only in our scriptures, but right through the ages, the *Guru* and the *Sishya* are regarded as pre-ordained for each other and one seeks the other out, as Socrates did seek Plato. The only explanation is that such a call is essential and cannot be anticipated or forced.

Speaking of the necessity of a *Guru*, the Maharshi himself was asked by someone whether the belief in the necessity of a *Guru* is correct. He gave the following reply :

"So long as one thinks of himself as little — *laghu* — he must take hold of the great — the *Guru* — he must not however, look upon the *Guru* as a person ; the sage is never other than the real Self. When that Self is realised, then there is neither *Guru* nor disciple."

The question arose because the sage himself had no *Guru* — at least no outer *Guru*. On another occasion, the sage said :

"A teacher is needed if one has to learn something new ; but this is a case of unlearning."

Asked how one can find his *Guru*, the sage answered : “ By intense meditation ”.

It is not, however, so much by reason of his formal teachings of the *Advaita Vedanta*, nor even by his lambent devotional verses, that Sri Ramana Maharshi will be remembered. His personality was unique and he manifested, in his own person, the paramountcy of the spirit over bodily feelings and sensations. Those, like myself, who met him during the days when he underwent an operation for cancer, could not but marvel at his serenity and total indifference to corporeal pain and suffering. He proved to a doubting and hesitant world that man is essentially a spirit temporarily imprisoned in flesh and blood, and that by insight and personal experience of the Divine, the spirit can conquer outer impacts and sensations and remain unmoved in utter absorption.

By the very fact of his existence, and the compelling force and charm of his personality and by means of his vivid talk, the Maharshi profoundly influenced men to become aware of the immense mystery of existence and the part that man has to play in the life that has been vouchsafed to him. Pascaline Mallet, in her book *Turn Eastwards*, speaks of a central figure whose serene strength and perfect poise seem to fill the whole place with unutterable peace. Paul Brunton speaks, in his *A Search in Secret India*, of a silent figure on a couch and his strange reception, ostensibly characterised by indifference. Let me quote his own words : “ My initial bewilderment, my perplexity, at being totally ignored, slowly faded away as this strange fascination begins to grip me more firmly. But it is not till the second hour of the uncommon scene, that I became aware of the silent, resistless change which is taking place within my mind. One by one, the questions which I prepared in the train, with such meticulous accuracy, dropped away. For, it does not now seem to matter whether they are asked or not, and it does not matter whether I solve the problems which have hitherto troubled me. I know only that a steady river of quietness seems to be flowing near me, that a great peace is penetrating the inner reaches of my being, and that my thought-tortured brain is beginning to arrive at some rest.”

“ How small seem those questions which I have asked myself

with such frequency ! How petty grows the panorama of the lost years ! I perceive with sudden clarity that the intellect creates its own problems and then makes itself miserable trying to solve them. This is, indeed, a novel concept to enter the mind of one who has hitherto placed such high value upon intellect.”

It is a remarkable proof of the unifying faculty of the Maharshi's personality, that he has gathered around him men of such varying equipment and experience as Aksharajna, B. V. Narasimha Swami, Grant Duff and Suddhananda Bharathi.

All that one has learnt of, and read about, the Maharshi, furnishes proof that we have been face to face with one of those beings who, having embarked on the eternal quest of the human soul, has not only attained the peace of realisation, but is able to communicate that peace around him.

It is unfortunate that while Socrates had a Plato and Swami Ramakrishna had a Swami Vivekananda, Ramana Maharshi had none to fill the role of an evangelist. Nevertheless, hundreds of people who came across him, have had their lives deeply influenced not only by his simplicity and transparent integrity of outlook, but also by the manifest revelation in him of a life lived in the light of, and in contact with, the Eternal. As I have remarked elsewhere, those who came across Sri Ramana Maharshi, especially in his last days, realised that here was a man who transcended his physical environments and physical life and lived on a higher level of consciousness and of surrender to the Supreme Will, uninfluenced by physical pain or handicaps. Sages like Sri Ramana Maharshi, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, His Holiness Sri Narasimha Bharathi of Sringeri, make us aware of the reality of the spiritual world which envelops us and may be experienced by true seekers. They reveal to us the potentialities of the human soul and possibilities of the sublimations of the Self.

## 9

---



---

## Dr. Rabindranath Tagore

CIVILISATION, as has been observed by an eminent French writer, is chiefly a high sense of the essential unity of mankind and a respect for the dignity of man which expects an equal respect in return. Throughout his life, Rabindranath Tagore emphasised this unity and the concomitant respect for the dignity of man. His outlook may be described, most adequately, by a reference to a passage from *Comedy of Terence*: "I am human and nothing that is human is alien or foreign to me." (*Homo sum nihil humani a me alienum puto.*) Born in one of the most historically celebrated families of Bengal and the descendant of one who was acclaimed as a Maharshi, Rabindranath Tagore was, nevertheless, able to transcend the limitations of his aristocratic environment and to make himself the spokesman not only of the elite but of the lowly and the depressed. Two of his brothers were great artists and another, a philosopher and nature-lover.

As W. B. Yeats remarks in his Introduction to the English edition of *Gitanjali*, Tagore was already famous at 19 when he wrote his first novel; and the plays and social dramas written when he was but a little older are still staged in Calcutta. During his early years, love-poems and lyrics descriptive of nature flowed ceaselessly from his pen. Later, he underwent a great personal sorrow, and, as a result, some of the most poignant love lyrics in any Indian language were produced by him. When he was about 35, he turned to the consolations of philosophy and religion and, in course of time, became the exponent of the dreams and aspirations of humanity.

Family influences, including primarily those emanating from his ancestor, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, created in Rabindranath Tagore a special outlook that transcended forms and appearances. His early contacts with Henry Morley and the

mystic Irish poet, W. B. Yeats, enabled him to reach across parochial boundaries. In his *Gitanjali*, Tagore deliberately surrendered himself to impacts originating both from the East and the West. In the story of Gautama and Satyakama Jabala, he recounted Jabala's search for truth and his unashamed avowal of his illegitimate birth which extorted appreciation and acceptance by Gautama.

In *Gitanjali*, the first of his works to be translated into the English language from the original Bengali, there are already traces of a variegated and mellow culture. Deeply moved by every aspect of nature and animated by a profound love of trees and flowers and streams and hills, he was, at the same time, a passionate exponent of every variety of human emotion.

"The steps that I heard in my playroom are the same that are echoing from star to star,"

he says in *Gitanjali*. As is well-known, Tagore made his mark as a lyric poet in the Bengali tongue. He created new metres and measures and, by his unique devotional songs as well as songs on the varied aspects of human life, he made Bengali the vehicle of marvellously melodious and suggestive poetry, such poetry preserving its beauty even in translations.

Tagore was not only a supreme lyrical poet but, in addition, was a distinguished dramatist. One of his lyric dramas, *Chitra*, has attained universal recognition. It is based on a story in the *Mahabharata* and is the chronicle of attainment and surrender, both resulting from a great love. *Chitra*, being essentially a study of the futility of commonplace human responses, contains one of the most original of conceptions. In this respect Tagore has travelled far beyond the original epic. It may be said to be an endeavour to clasp something that can last longer than pleasure, that can endure even by and through suffering. In *Stray Birds* and the *Gardener*, Tagore displayed his gifts for the comprehension of the tragic and the joyful aspects of life and of love. His experiments in lyrical drama are signalled by the production of plays like *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Post Office*, *The Cycle of Spring* and *Sacrifice*, all of them being both racy of the soil and universal in appeal.

He wrote letters descriptive of Indian life ; and the lectures that he delivered in America were collected in two volumes entitled *Personality* and *My Reminiscences*. Tagore's short stories, and especially his *Hungry Stones*, transcended mere conformity with convention and were masterpieces of portraiture. In his volume, *Crescent Moon*, he identified himself with the moods, playful and sorrowful, of childhood and its clinging love ; and similarly in his play *Post Office*, he entered into the feelings of a sick child longing for open air and wide spaces. He sang on one occasion :

“Come out of thyself  
Stand in the open,  
Within thy heart then wilt thou hear  
The response of all the worlds.”

Collaborating with Evelyn Underhill, Tagore translated some of the poems of Kabir, the mystic singer, who attracted Tagore because, in spite of a rapturous vision of the spiritual realms, Kabir never lost touch with ordinary existence and common life. Like Kabir, Tagore insisted on simplicity and directness and was a ruthless critic of formal and external religion. Some of Tagore's translations of Kabir are wonderful in expression. For instance, he says :

“Between the poles of the conscious and the  
unconscious, there has the mind made a swing :  
Thereon hang all beings and all worlds, and  
that swing never ceases its sway.”

Again,

“In the home is the true union,  
in the home is the enjoyment of life ;  
Why should I forsake my home and wander in the forest ?  
If Brahma helps me to realise truth, verily I will  
find both bondage and deliverance in home.”

Later in his life, Tagore identified himself with the upsurge of

national feeling that displayed itself in such manifestations as the swadeshi movement, the liberation struggle and even with the many aspects of the revolutionary movement, though he abhorred physical violence in all shapes and forms. But, though he was deeply influenced by the nationalist movement, and particularly by the events in the Punjab that led to the Jallianwala Bagh disaster and consequently went to the extent of renouncing his knighthood during the height of the national struggle, yet, he disliked the controversies and the crudities of political life and never took active part in political life or party movements. Thus, while deeply resentful of many aspects of British rule, he opposed the burning of foreign clothes and declared in his pamphlet, *The Call for Truth*, that his idea of politics was based on a view-point wider than narrow nationalism, or, to use his words, “The noise moment scoffs at the music of the eternal”. Fully conscious, as he was, of the poverty and backwardness of India in the industrial and commercial spheres, he always pleaded for a spiritual rather than a temporal solution of our difficulties. He declared, “Men's freedom is never in being saved from troubles. It is the freedom to take trouble and to make the trouble the element of his joy.”

Tagore's genius and his significant contributions to literature and the drama were recognised all along in Bengal ; but his world-wide reputation started with the translation of the *Gitanjali* into English followed by his other works. The appreciation of foreign critics like Yeats, Arthur Symonds, Evelyn Underhill and Ernest Rhys as well as the bestowal of the Nobel Prize upon him, set the seal on his renown. He became a legendary figure and his striking face and figure and flowing robes gave him a special cachet. He travelled extensively all over the world and gave readings from his works and delivered speeches on subjects of universal import. Along with Tolstoy and Gandhi, he may be said to have been the most widely recognised exponent of universal peace. The slow appreciation, even in India, of Tagore's genius may be described, in the poet's own words, “I was waiting for tomorrow and keeping silent.”

The essence of his philosophy of life may be gathered from his *Sadhana* whose sub-title “The Realisation of Life” is an apt description. Tagore points out that, having been brought

up in a family where the *Upanishads* were used in daily worship and having before him the example of his father who lived in communion with God while not neglecting his duty to the world, he had the opportunity to come into touch with the authentic spirit of India, as revealed in the sacred texts and as manifested in life. His *Sadhana* may be regarded as the fullest revelation of Tagore's many-sided personality. He asserts, in it, that the Indian mind creates no break between human nature and the inanimate world. In his own language, the Indian mind has never any hesitation in acknowledging its kinship with nature, its unbroken relation with the All. He emphasises that in the history of aesthetics, there often comes an age of emancipation when the recognition of beauty in things, great and small, becomes easy and when we see it more in the unassuming harmony of common objects than in things that are startling in their singularity. Tagore furnishes a remarkable interpretation of the precept of the *Isa Upanishad* that we attain the Supreme by renunciation. "Man," he says, "truly realises his soul by outgrowing his possessions and man's progress in the path of eternal life is through a series of renunciations." He sums up his message in these words :

"Man's abiding happiness is not in getting anything but in giving himself up to what is greater than himself, to ideas which are larger than individual life, the idea of his country, of humanity, of God."

In other words, "Our function is not to get but to be."

In the volume, *Sheaves*, he says, "Place your free soul on the throne of poverty filling your mind with the leisure of want."

Count Hermann Keyserling declared that the importance of Tagore's message rests on the exposition of the inner meaning of old truths. He adds that Tagore's consciousness is rooted in a deeper level of existence and, thus, he can give expression to the working of deeper forces. Reviewing Tagore's autobiography, this penetrating German critic also asserted that Tagore recognised no restrictions or dividing factors between man and man and that he was the most ecumenical (universal) man. If by the term "humanitarianism" is meant the gospel of one who

insists upon the unity of mankind and discards all differences in status, colour or creed, Tagore was a supreme exemplar of such a person. Though he was essentially Indian in thought and outlook and dress, yet he was as much at home in Russia, in England and in America as in India, and he put foreigners completely at ease. He sought, in the Shantiniketan and in Sriniketan, to invite artists, poets and men of religion from Europe, China, Japan and America who came not only to teach but to learn ; and his idea was to make his Forest University a replica of what prevailed in the old days in India. To the University of Nalanda, as Hiuen Tsang has testified, came students from far-off lands like Tibet, Java, Sumatra, Korea, Iran and Arabia. It was likewise Tagore's aim and ambition to make the Visvabharati a nucleus of universal culture.

When he founded the Shantiniketan, the Sriniketan and the Vishvabharati, his aim was to re-capture the ideal of the old forest civilisation of India. As he himself has stated, our aim should be not to acquire, but to realise, and to let all objects interpenetrate our being.

The message of peace outlined by Tagore portrays the perpetual conflict that constantly arises in men's souls as between constructive action which, at the best of times, can never be a complete fulfilment, and the pursuit of the ideal in art which can be both self-determining and self-fulfilling. Tagore once stated that "the East with its ideals in whose bosom are stored the ages of sunlight and silence of stars, can patiently wait till the West, hurrying after the expedient, loses breath and stops". In the *Sadhana* and elsewhere, Tagore has expanded this theme, and he preached that the world of to-day is beginning to realise that the achievements of science lead to a question-mark and that poetry and the arts can alone lead to a full-stop, implying consummation. He goes on to observe, "The West seems to take pride in thinking that it is subduing nature, as if we are living in a hostile world where we have to wrest everything we want from an unwilling and alien arrangement of things". In India, according to him, the point of view was different. India put all her emphasis on the harmony that exists between the individual and the universal. The fundamental unity of creation is not simply a philosophical speculation for India. With medi-

tation and service, with an ordered regulation of her life, India cultivated her consciousness in such a way that everything had a spiritual meaning. The man who aims at his own aggrandisement underrates everything else, and especially the discipline we have to go through to prepare ourselves for our social duties — for sharing the burdens of our fellow-beings. Tagore illustrated this by a quotation from the *Upanishads*: "Every endeavour to attain a larger life, requires a man to give away and not to be greedy".

A study of Tagore and Gandhiji (the Mahakavi and the Mahatma) correctly stresses their likeness amidst the obvious and seeming divergences in their outlooks. Both stressed similar intrinsic values of life. Similarly, both Tagore and Kalidasa possessed alike the love of humanity, the love of God and Nature : and *Kumarasambhava* is aptly described as the poem of paradise regained.

It was not merely as an imaginative poet, but with sincere conviction that, in his *Gitanjali*, Tagore outlines humanity's ideal thus :

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,  
where knowledge is free, where the world has not been broken  
up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where words  
come out from the depths of truth, where tireless striving  
stretches its arms towards perfection, into that Heaven of  
Freedom my father, let my country awake."

For Tagore, the world of nature was a part of himself

"the same stream of life that runs through my veins as night  
and day, runs through the world and dances in rhythmic  
measures. It is the same life that shouts in joy through the  
dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks  
into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers. It is the same  
life that is rocked in the ocean, the cradle of birth and of  
death, in ebb and flow."

Also, as in the case of the American poet, Whitman,

"All mankind was near to his heart  
To move is to meet you every moment, fellow traveller."

More directly in a song entitled "Invocation", he expresses the substance of his message — a message that is now urgent and timely :

"Men and women  
Pray with clasped hands,  
Fill our hearts with springs of love  
And they will flow over the world  
In language that has no words  
To whom does the world ever cry  
Fulfil, oh, fulfil our prayers."

With an abiding sense of the beauty of the earth and sky and of human beings, and especially of children as exemplified in his *Crescent Moon*, he united an apprehension of the unseen import of the failure and achievements of life ; and he may be accounted as one of the authentic seekers of truth in this land of traditional path-finders, expressing himself alike in lyrical poetry of rare beauty, in dramas, in short stories and in poems descriptive of childhood and love and joy, of disaster and of achievement. A lover of Bengal and its specific traditions, he, nevertheless, transcended his background and his outlook, became, not only national, but universal in character. But it is not even as a poet that Tagore will perhaps be remembered best and revered in the coming years. His main contribution was the discovery and revelation of the Soul of India and its kinship with the universal. In one of his early poems, he identified Urvashi with the dawn and pictured her as the spirit of beauty behind the phenomena of Nature. Tagore caught and transmitted that spirit in his poems, plays and reflections. His is the true voice of modern India intimately reacting to Western art and literature but still preserving the authentic and age-long Indian tradition.

## Ananda K. Coomaraswamy

THE DEATH of Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy\* undoubtedly leaves a void which is difficult to fill.

The multiform contacts between Ceylon and India have always been intimate and have resulted in, among other things, a lively and continuous interchange of ideas, literary and artistic. From the days of the Ramayana and through the Buddhist epoch, Lanka played a notable part in the history of India and vice versa.

The middle of the last century witnessed the activities of three men who did a great deal to foster unity of outlook and friendliness between Ceylon and India and who, in their several ways, contributed to promote the cause of Indian culture. All three — Sir P. Arunachalam and his brother, Sir P. Ramanathan, as well as Sir Muthukumaraswami — were natives of Jaffna, which was practically an offshoot of the Tamil land; but every one of them played a great part in the life and politics of Ceylon. The literary and educational work of Sir P. Arunachalam and Sir P. Ramanathan are well known to every one in the south of India, and Sir Muthukumaraswami not only made a great position for himself but bequeathed to India and the world of art his son, Ananda Coomaraswamy.

The generation to which Coomaraswamy's father belonged adopted European ways and educational methods, in pursuance of which young Coomaraswamy was sent to England for education very early in life and he wound up his academic career with a Doctorate in Science from London University. Returning to Ceylon, he accepted office as Director of the Mineralogical Survey of the island, but the claims of literature and art were paramount and he devoted his life to the study and elucidation

\* Dr. Coomaraswamy died in 1947.

of Indian art in its various aspects. His equipment was many-sided and is proved by his Fellowship both of the Geographical and the Linnean Societies. As with Tagore and J. C. Bose, so was it with Coomaraswamy; his Indian contemporaries began to recognise his merits only after he had been made a Research Fellow in Persian and Indian Art in that centre of intellectual activity. Both in that capacity and as Vice-President of the India Society, he did pioneering work in explaining to the English and American public the meaning and significance of the artistic output of India.

His services were even more fundamental. Macaulay had held up to scorn the literature and the legends of India, and European connoisseurs had damned Indian art with faint praise.

It should be remembered that the traditional arts and crafts of India have survived the impacts of invasion and vandalism; and in various corners of India, masons and sculptors are still to be found, especially in the Indian States, who continue the vital tradition of the immemorial past. Unfortunately, educated India, in the early years of the 19th century, was almost studiously neglectful of its heritage. Lord Curzon did more than any Indian for the preservation of the monuments of the country. The arousing of national consciousness with regard to the ancient and mediaeval art of India was largely the work of Ananda Coomaraswamy and E. B. Havell; and credit must also go to Abanindranath Tagore and his followers, including Nandalal Bose, for promoting the renaissance of Indian painting by drawing inspiration from Ajanta. Happily such ignoring of our art is a thing of the past and India is now on the threshold of a new age. The new nationalistic movement has indeed created a revolution against the imitation of the West.

Combining in himself a deep knowledge of Buddhistic philosophical and artistic masterpieces and those of the Aryan and Dravidian intellect and spirit, Dr. Coomaraswamy started a movement for national education in Lanka in the vernaculars as an essential preliminary to the revival of Indian culture. He lectured in American and European centres on Indian and Singhalese art. He studied the methods of the Indian craftsman and wrote on his technique. He spoke on art and Swadeshi and analysed the *Visvakarma* legend in collaboration with Sister

Nivedita and produced excellent examples of Indian art to illustrate the treasures of India and Ceylon. The name of Dr. Coomaraswamy is specially associated with the study and exposition of what has been designated "Rajput Painting". The term is perhaps misleading for the reason that, as pointed out by Mr. Havell, although the traditions of Hindu painting were specially formative in Rajputana, yet they were by no means exclusively Rajput. Travancore, Cochin, Pudukkotta, Kashmir, Bengal and Gujerat produced their own schools of art which owed their inspiration to the same influences that operated in Rajputana; and all Hindu painters, even when painting on paper, followed the technique of mural painting which was a feature of the Hindu *Chitrasala*. Whereas the Muslim painter was concerned mainly with the life of the court and the camp, the Hindu artist was not only a chronicler of rural and scenic aspects but essentially a religious teacher clothing the mysteries of religion in familiar garb and introducing into his paintings the events of daily life. The so-called Rajput painting is, in fact, a sequel to the Buddhist frescoes wherein the Indian artist displayed perfect acquaintance with the intricacies of the effects of light. Coomaraswamy himself has thus described Indian art:

"This vigorous archaic outline is the basis of its language. Wiry, distinct and sharp as that golden rule of art and life desired by Blake: sensitive, reticent and tender, it perfectly reflects the severe self-control and sweet serenity of Indian life."

Dr. Coomaraswamy specialised in the exposition of Hindu painting, but this was not his only sphere of activity. He published his own reading of Lord Buddha and his gospel. He tried to effect a new approach to the Vedas and he wrote on the transformation of Nature in art, in addition to compiling a sumptuous catalogue of the Indian collection in the museum at Boston. All art is one although its manifestations may be many; and it is therefore not surprising that Coomaraswamy lectured and wrote on the art of dance as illustrated by the dance of Siva and Kali and Krishna, and collaborated with an Andhra expert in a publication on *Abhinaya* entitled *The Mirror of Gesture*.

His work was ever characterised by a keen faculty of discrimination as well as the utmost delicacy of feeling. Behind and above all his activities there was a passionate devotion to Indian aspirations and an ambition to create in the country of his origin, a devotion to those impulses which made India the paradise of fine art in the days of the epic past.

Interpretation to the European and American world of the essential and inseparable symbolism of Indian painting and sculpture and explanation of the inner spirit and rationale of Indian art were the main contributions of Dr. Coomaraswamy; and reading one of his latest works, *Why Exhibit Works of Art*, published in 1943, one realises with what concentrated enthusiasm he applied himself to his self-imposed duty of interpreting Indian thought-forms such as those personifying the allegories of Nataraja dancing the cosmic dance, Krishna, as the protector of his flock, capturing the souls of his devotees with the music of his flute, and the eternal virgin, Kanya Kumari, waiting for her union with the Lord.

## 11

## Dr. Annie Besant

THE AVERAGE Indian of today does not fully realise the deep debt of gratitude that he owes to Dr. Annie Besant for the selfless and tireless enthusiasm with which she toiled for the regeneration of the country she adopted as her own and for her services for the educational, social and political progress of India's teeming millions. With her rich and variegated experience, Dr. Besant contributed in several ways to awaken India to her own greatness. As the late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said, to the younger generation of to-day, she is perhaps just a name but to his generation and to an earlier one, she was a tremendous figure who influenced the men of her time greatly and there could be no doubt that in India's journey for freedom her part was a considerable one.

Annie Wood, as she was known till her marriage, was born on the 1st of October 1847 in London. Her parents were Irish and she came of a family which had provided a Mayor of London and a Lord Chancellor. This family descent gave her a training in reticence and the pride of honour which, in her own words, was strange preparation for her stormy public life — a much attacked and slandered life. The very pride became a shield against degradation and, in her own words, however lost her public reputation, she could never bear to become sullied in her own sight.

The childhood of Annie Besant was a period of struggle and anxiety on the part of her mother on account of financial troubles. She was, however, brought up in strict accordance with the traditional pattern. It was an age of pervasive materialism in England, not the philosophic materialism of the few but the religious materialism of the many. She had a regular course of education, a short period of stay in Europe when she

perfected her French and German and after her return to England she had a very thorough musical education.

In 1866, she was introduced to a clergyman, Rev. Frank Besant, a young Cambridge don, whom she married after a brief courtship. Remarkably, however, at the same time that she met Frank Besant, she began to encounter many doubts as to the Christian gospels, which she recorded in her diaries. So far as her inner life was concerned, she was still filled with passionate religious fervour and a philosophy which she characterised as really the human passion of love transferred to an ideal. Holding this view of religion, she idealised the clergyman as a special messenger and servant of the Lord. Her engagement to Frank Besant took place within a few weeks and, as she says, she drifted into an engagement with a man she did not pretend to love. She tried to break the engagement but her mother dissuaded her and so she married when she was 20 years of age, with no more idea of marriage relations than if she had been four years old.

By the end of 1867, the crisis in her distressful married life had commenced. She realised that they were an ill-mated pair, she being accustomed to freedom, indifferent to home details, impulsive, hot-tempered and proud as Lucifer, and he with very high ideas of a husband's authority and a wife's submission, and being precise, methodical, easily angered and appeased with difficulty. A son was born to them in 1869 and a daughter in 1870. The children fell ill in 1871 and Annie Besant had to fight with death for their lives. Once they were out of danger she collapsed physically, and thereafter had to face a struggle which lasted for three years — a struggle which transformed her from a Christian to an atheist. She began to study heretical books and sought relief from mental strain in practising social welfare work, nursing the sick and helping the poor. The marriage tie was broken in 1873.

Annie Besant had come to be acquainted with the work of Charles Bradlaugh in 1867 but it was in 1874 that she joined the Free Thought Society and came into direct contact with him. This started a friendship that lasted unbroken till death severed the earthly bond and which, to her, stretched through Death's gateway and linked them together. Bradlaugh and she became

intimate friends. One of the earliest lessons she learnt through him was never to have an opinion on a subject until she had tried to study the strongest things said against the view to which she was inclined. According to her, one should not think he knew a subject until he was acquainted with all that the best minds had said about it. To her, a lofty system of ethics was of much greater importance than a logical, intellectual conception of the universe. This was her creed of ethics and conduct from 1874 to 1886. She worked side by side with Charles Bradlaugh and gradually but definitely, great public antagonism grew up against them. Many persons believed that atheism implied degraded morality. Accusations were made against Mrs. Besant of personal immorality and, as she says, her extreme political views combined with her atheism engendered a pervasive feeling of hatred. She accepted a place on the staff of the *National Reformer* and was paid a weekly salary of a guinea. She began to write under the *nom de plume* "Ajax".

It was about this time that Bradlaugh, with the support of John Stuart Mill, stood for parliament, his constituency being Northampton. Mrs. Besant took part in the electioneering. The election gave her the first experience of rioting. Bradlaugh was accused of all unnameable vices. It was known that he was separated from his wife and it was alleged that, being an atheist, he was an opponent of marriage and had deserted his wife and children. He could have easily defended himself as it could be proved that his wife had given way to drink and her habits were the cause of the break-up of the home, but he would say nothing. Public feeling was aroused against him and during the election, the crowd charged the door of a house where he was sitting. There were, however, many defenders of Bradlaugh and it is remarkable that although he was often attacked, he equally often rescued those who had maligned him, from being manhandled by his followers.

In 1835, Dr. Charles Knowlton, who was a follower of the teachings of the Rev. Malthus, came to the conclusion that married people should be taught to limit their families within their means of livelihood. He was the first exponent of what is now called "family planning". His book had been sold for forty years. It was essentially a physiological work and advo-

cated conjugal prudence and parental responsibility. The book was never challenged until a very disreputable Bristol bookseller began to sell copies of this book to which he added some indecent and obscene pictures. He was prosecuted and he pleaded guilty and was convicted. It was at this stage that Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, after careful deliberation, decided to publish the pamphlet in order to test the right of free discussion on the population question.

To Bradlaugh, this step meant the almost certain destruction of his parliamentary position. To Mrs. Besant, it meant obloquy and scandal; but it was characteristic of both of them that the day prior to the pamphlet being put on sale, copies were delivered by them at the Guild Hall and to the officers of the City Police. Letters of approval came from many sources including even clergymen's wives. But the law had to take its course and both Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant were arrested. Their trial commenced before the Lord Chief Justice of England and a special jury. As often happened later, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant defended themselves. Her pleading was unequalled in any case on record for the boldness of its affirmation of free thought. The Lord Chief Justice summed up strongly for an acquittal and made statements praising the straightforwardness and courage that animated both Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant. Everyone in the court thought that the case was won but religious and political hatred against them was strong and the jury came to the conclusion that the book was calculated to deprave public morals. The jury, however, exonerated them from corrupt motives. A sentence of six months' imprisonment and a fine of two hundred pounds was passed. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant moved for a writ of error and the sentence was quashed. Thereafter, Mrs. Besant wrote a pamphlet on the "Law of Population".

As a sequel to this an attempt was made to deprive Mrs. Besant of the custody of her children and in 1879 the High Court of Chancery was moved in the matter. Mrs. Besant was deprived of the custody of her children. Her health broke down but amidst her difficulties she took steps to set aside the order. The Court of Appeal upheld in 1879 the absolute right of the father but allowed her the right of access to the children. Mrs. Besant

characterised this ignoring of all right to her children on the part of the married mother as a scandal and a wrong. This state of things was subsequently redressed by Parliament.

Apart from these domestic tragedies, the position taken by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant in the Knowlton pamphlet was fully appreciated by the public, and from 1893, even Christian magazines began to speak in favour of the right and duty of voluntary limitation of the family.

It was characteristic of Mrs. Besant that, about this time, she took to the resolute study of science in co-operation with Dr. Aveling who wrote popular scientific articles for the *National Reformer*. She also joined the University of London as a student of science. In the midst of court proceedings, she turned for relief to algebra, geometry and physics. She qualified as a science teacher. She appeared for the B.Sc. examination of the London University but there were attempts to prevent her studying in the University and she was, in fact, denied permission even to visit the Botanical Gardens in Regent's Park. She was able to take the honours degree in Botany from the London University, being the only student in all England to have achieved that distinction. Side by side, with all these pursuits, along with Herbert Burrows, she arranged for a London Convention on Land Law Reform. She protested strongly in public meetings against England's policy towards Egypt. In the meantime, the publishing business of the Free Thought Movement was enlarged and she participated in the socialistic and labour work which was started about this time along with men like Bernard Shaw, Dr. Aveling, Moncure D. Conway, Prof. Ludwig Buchner, Yves Guyot, Prof. Haeckel and others.

Mrs. Besant joined the Fabian Society in 1885 and worked hard as a speaker and lecturer on its behalf, her colleagues being Sidney Webb, G. Bernard Shaw, Mrs. and Mr. Bland and Graham Wallas. They lectured at Workmen's Clubs and spread ideas of sound economics in an effort to turn the workers' energy towards social, in preference even to political, reform. That the London working classes today are so largely socialistic is due greatly to the years of work done among them by members of the Fabian Society and to the devotion of that noble and generous genius, William Morris. In the same year, she drew attention

to the sufferings of the Russian political prisoners. She fought against the opposition of the police authorities to public speaking by socialist spokesmen and, gradually, public opinion changed. Herbert Burrows, a social worker, stood for the London School Board and, in spite of opposition, won by a large majority. Mrs. Besant herself succeeded in getting into the School Board in 1888.

An agitation for an eight-hour day and a great movement against unemployment occupied her in 1887 until another psychological crisis occurred in her career. Foreshadowing all that she pleaded for and did much later, she started a Charing Cross Parliament in which many socialistic debates took place. The *National Reformer* of which she had been co-editor and a part proprietor found itself in the midst of divided loyalties. The editorial policy of the journal on socialism was divided, and rather than continue in that position, she resigned her joint-editorship. Charles Bradlaugh expressed real grief over the severance of her relationship with the paper in which she had rendered enormous service to the free thought and radical causes. As Mrs. Besant declared, it was a wrench, this breaking of a tie for which a heavy price had been paid thirteen years ago, but it had to be. Thereafter, she devoted herself wholeheartedly to the cause of socialism. Gradually her tie with Bradlaugh was also broken.

By 1888 Mr. William Stead and Mrs. Besant had become close friends—he a Christian and she an atheist, but both burning with one common love for man, one common hatred against oppression. Mr. Stead was the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* and owing to his influence and that of the Rev. S. D. Headlam, she wrote in favour of founding a new Brotherhood in which service of man should take the place of the erstwhile service of God. She was unconsciously marching towards her next destination in life. In pursuance of her ideas, a weekly newspaper was projected called *Link*. Its objectives were to speak for the dumb, to speak of the small to the great and of the feeble to the strong. Week after week the injustices suffered by the poor found a voice. Starvation wages paid to women were exposed. The sweating of labour was denounced. In the course of the crusade for the poor, Mrs. Besant worked for the

dockers, for children's free dinners, and for the child martyrs of the slums. Unfair wages and illegal deductions from labourers' wages were protested against. A Match Makers' Union was formed; and Mrs. Besant, Sidney Webb and others led a procession of match makers to the House of Commons. For years, Mrs. Besant acted as the Secretary of this trade union which was, for a long time, the strongest women's trade union in England.

About this period, there opened a completely different chapter in Mrs. Besant's life. A profound change of mental outlook and psychological approach took place and she plunged headlong into Theosophy. Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky had outlined a statement of its principles. In an article written in 1882, Mrs. Besant said that the Theosophical Society had no definite ideas of the requirements for membership beyond a dreamy, emotional, scholarly interest in the religio-philosophic fancies of the past. Madame Blavatsky replied paying a tribute to a highly intellectual person who had suffered at the hands of blind bigotry in her life-long struggle for freedom of thought. Her public announcement that she had joined the Theosophical Society raised a storm of criticism not only amongst religiously-minded Christians but most pointedly in the ranks of those with whom she had worked in defence of free thought and atheism. This announcement came after her return from Paris where she had attended a Labour Congress. She made the public pronouncement at a lecture entitled, "Why I became a Theosophist". The lecture was condensed into a pamphlet which ended with the words :

"An imperious necessity forces me to speak the truth, as I see it, whether the speech please or displease, whether it bring praise or blame. That one loyalty to Truth I must keep stainless, whatever friendships fail me or human ties be broken. She may lead me into the wilderness, yet I must follow her; she may strip me of all love, yet I must pursue her; though she slay me, yet will I trust in her! and I ask no other epitaph on my tomb but 'She tried to follow Truth'."

A fierce controversy arose over her conversion to Theosophy. Anonymous friends assisted her with finance. She went on with her vigorous socialistic work and with the work of the London School Board. She organised the South London fur-workers into a union. She started a movement for shortening the hours of tram and bus workers, and, all the while, she pursued her studies, reading in railway carriages, tram cars and omnibuses.

In 1890, Madame Blavatsky who had received a donation of one hundred pounds decided upon the establishment of a club in East London for working girls. This club was opened by her and was dedicated by her to the "brightening of the lot of hard-working under-paid". In 1890, the head-quarters of the Theosophical Society in Europe called the Blavatsky Lodge was opened and Mrs. Besant was one of the first participants in its work.

When Dr. Besant became a theosophist, she did something which nobody else could have done. She took the Truths of Theosophy from the few books on theosophical literature such as *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine* and *Esoteric Buddhism*, and presented them in public addresses, full of idealism and beauty. That is the remarkable gift which she had; she gave beautiful settings for all these wonderful Truths and an aspect which never existed before.

It was in November 1893 that Dr. Besant landed in India. On arriving in India Dr. Besant made up her mind to rouse the self-respect of Indians. It was not that similar work had not been attempted before her time. Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjea, Gokhale and Tilak had done a great deal in that direction, and Gandhiji after her — and perhaps the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest in this respect. But at the time that Dr. Besant came here, it was with a somewhat shame-faced countenance that an Indian would wear Indian clothes. Even the turban was barely tolerated. If a man pretended acquaintance with the English methods of tea-taking and eating and dressing and living, it was considered a point in his favour. It was not considered shameful not to know or speak in one's own mother-tongue. The time devoted to its study, or to the learning of Sanskrit, was regarded as largely a waste. A man was so mixed up with his studies in the schools where he had to learn everything in English, that he had no time for shaking

himself free of the obsession of the West. The great protagonist that she was, Dr. Besant defended everything good in India. Her position was that if cow-dung was used in India, then cow-dung must be championed as the most sanitary way of keeping a house clean. To a people imprisoned in alien ideas and bewitched by the Western standards and mode of life, some voice had to come to release them from the dungeons of their own musings and imaginings and from their inferiority complex. If it could be said of anyone that Indians were enabled by him or her to shed their inferiority complex and acquire respect and reverence for Indian personality and institutions as such, that credit must go to nobody so much as to Dr. Besant.

Having begun thus, she started work in the educational sphere, which culminated in and fructified into that magnificent educational institution, the Banaras Hindu University. Many collaborated with her in this work, notably Pandit Malayiya. But it was she who compelled Indians to shed their lethargy and work for a common purpose.

After that, she turned to politics. The history of politics in India until Tilak, Besant and Mahatma Gandhi came on the scene was the history of debating societies in whose chambers met groups of about twenty, or at most sixty people combining together for collaborating over resolutions, academically faultless and essentially just, but so suave, so sweet, so reasonable that nobody bothered about them. To none had come the vision of appealing to the masses, of going to the villages, of speaking to the people at large, of making them realise what they could do, and what it was their duty to do, in the future.

As a tried political and social worker, Dr. Besant brought into Indian politics for the first time this idea of propaganda and publicity, of appealing to the masses, of studying group-psychology and crowd-psychology and of realising that good use could be made of this great gift. The awakening of India from a long sleep had to come. It came through Dr. Besant herself, and none of us who have been engaged in political work can forget that Indian life, Indian politics and political agitation, and Indian education, would not have been what it is today, and the history of India would have been fundamentally different, if Dr. Besant had not come on the scene. Mahatma Gandhi went farther indeed

in some directions but both had the objective of awakening the people at large.

It was in 1916 that Mrs. Besant's active political work was renewed, soon after the termination of a case (in which she was the defendant) initiated by G. Narayaniah, the father of the present world celebrity, J. Krishnamurti. This case finally ended in 1915. It was characteristic of Mrs. Besant's generosity and fairness that the frank criticism of certain theosophical tenets and personages indulged in by me, as lawyer for the plaintiff, G. Narayaniah, during the progress of the case, did not prevent her from collaborating with me in her political work.

Mrs. Besant's characteristics may perhaps be best illustrated by a reference to her relations with J. Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti's father had entrusted the education and up-bringing of his two sons, Krishnamurti and Nityananda, to Mrs. Besant. Later on, prompted and financed by some persons who were personally opposed to her and regarded her as a foreigner who tried to over-turn Hindu society, the father instituted proceedings in the High Court of Madras for recovering the custody of the children from Mrs. Besant who had not only spent large sums of money on the education of the boys but had arranged for their being entered in an English University. Mrs. Besant defended the action herself and her demeanour and advocacy were on a par with her historic performances as her own lawyer in the English Courts. She was firm but always courteous to the judge notwithstanding that the judge was an Englishman and was deeply prejudiced against her from every point of view — as one who had broken away from Christianity and adopted Hindu modes of life and thought and as one ranged against the British Government in political matters. All the same, the judges who heard her case could not but admire the legal erudition that she displayed, the eloquence of her pleading and the logical common sense underlying every word that she spoke.

In the course of the proceedings she declined to disclose or to produce in court certain documents relating to Mr. Leadbeater whom she had constituted as the preceptor of the boys under her guardianship and against whom certain grave allegations were made. Such documents included the proceedings of a body of theosophists in Australia. When ordered to produce those docu-

ments and paper, Mrs. Besant claimed privilege but her contention was not upheld. My client, the plaintiff, suggested to me that Mrs. Besant should be proceeded against for contempt of court. I declined to do so stating that whilst I was willing to conduct the case in respect of the guardianship, I would not be a party to vindictive proceedings. Nothing could illustrate Mrs. Besant's essential character more than her reaction to this attitude of mine. She wrote to me to the effect that whilst she appreciated my chivalrous courtesy, she yet took exception to my disregarding my client's instructions and added that it was my duty to proceed against her for contempt. She concluded by saying: "I am so touched by your generous outlook and by your chivalrous attitude that I would request you as a favour, after this case is over, to co-operate with me in the educational and political work in which I am now engaged." I did not reply to this letter until after the case was over; but thereafter, not only did I accept her offer but became one of her staunchest lieutenants and supporters in the Home Rule League, in her work in connection with the National University and in the National Scout Movement which she inaugurated.

Mrs. Besant lost the case in the Indian Courts but succeeded, on a technical point, in her Appeal to the Privy Council. She helped to complete the education of Krishnamurti and his brother; and thereafter, Krishnamurti became one of the leading figures in the Theosophical Movement and was regarded by some, including Mrs. Besant, as likely to be the coming Messiah. It happened, however, that Krishnamurti violently reacted against the working of the Esoteric section of the Theosophical Society and broke away from it declaring that his mission was to force people to give up conventional religious beliefs and the apparatus of man-made refuges from reality, and to promote self-reliance. Not only did he break away from the Society but a large number of members from the Society followed him, and today he ranks as one of the great leaders of a new school of thought having a numerous following in India, in America and many other parts of the world. Notwithstanding his avowed and conspicuous differences with Dr. Besant, she continued to speak highly of him and would not listen to any disparaging remarks against Sri Krishnamurti.

When Dr. Besant founded the Home Rule Movement in 1914-1915 and started her weekly magazine and the daily *New India*, all the previous prejudices against her entertained by orthodox or reactionary groups vanished and she was formally acclaimed as a leader of Hindu thought by the assembled Pandits of Banaras and other citadels of Hindu religion. Also, men like Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Subramania Aiyar and other leaders were proud to work with her.

At the time that Dr. Besant entered the political field, there was a stir in the land. There was a reverberation in the country of new life. Dr. Besant became President of the Congress in 1917. She was interned and for a while thereafter was easily the best-beloved popular idol of India. But popularity in politics is easy to acquire; it is quite as easy to lose. By 1918 Mrs. Besant had lost her popularity by reason of her insistence on the need to obey the law and to shun non-cooperation. She could not command audiences or compel attention. Mrs. Besant never for one moment dreamt of being either angry, disappointed or disgruntled. Through *New India* and the *Commonweal* and on the public lecture platform she fought, day in and day out, against Gandhiji just as she did against the existing system of Government. She fought for Home Rule and worked against non-cooperation. Side by side she incurred the dislike of the authorities and became comparatively friendless. There were great struggles which Dr. Besant had with the Madras Government, with a series of cases which laid down the fundamental principles in certain branches of the law, but she was always the same silver-tongued orator, the sage counsellor with infinite patience—the fighter and yet the reconciler. I emphasise the word patience. Realising that all these set-backs were only temporary, she believed that one should learn to put up with failure, and then to transcend and surmount ill-success. That was the Besant policy.

The period between 1928 and 1933 was specially indicative of her real spirit. It is easy, if success blesses us, to display some easy virtues and to prove and demonstrate them. But it is difficult for one living amidst calumny, amidst obloquy, and even amidst oblivion, at such a juncture to remain sweet tempered, patient and forgiving and long suffering, and yet hopeful of the future. There was not one bitter expression on her face, nor one

MS 2, 110  
N 67

4162

vengeful word on her lips. She held that these were the times through which India had to pass and that having surmounted the obstacles she would come to her own.

Dr. Besant's life, as human life generally is, was an amalgam of success and failure. Her success lay in this — that she organised the people of India. She taught them the virtue not only of organisation, but of business-like organisation. Politics and book-keeping seemed to be strangely at variance with each other. Dr. Besant showed the people that steady business-like habits and persistence are as essential for politics as for all professions and careers. She made it clear that business was business, and that, even in politics, organisation and attention to detail, therefore, should be sought for as much as adherence to great ideals. Her second success was the creation of an all-India spirit and the attempt to eliminate those barriers that are threatening us more to this re as time goes on. The third success was the inculcation only did respect for Indian personality and Indian civilisation. lieutenants her failure? I think her failure lay in that, notwithstanding in her inmost desire, neither the religious harmony and National unity of India nor India's political salvation was achieved.

Mrs. Besant's days. But if she failed, it was primarily because we failed her and we failed ourselves.

A great deal has been said about Dr. Besant's gifts of leadership. They were evinced and exercised not through coercion or by deliberately impressing herself on her contemporaries but by her complete identification with those who worked with her and for her. She was wholly forgetful of self and loyal to the uttermost to her colleagues, co-workers and followers, and such loyalty continued even in the case of those who failed her or proved disloyal to her. She never attributed motives to those who differed from her and even when a well-known Indian political leader from Maharashtra declared that no foreigner could be true to India and likened Dr. Besant to Poothana who offered poisoned milk to Sri Krishna, she never grew bitter but agreed to co-operate, later on, with the same person and with his leader, the great Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who also had criticised her violently. There were some persons who managed her business affairs for her and were careless almost to the point of unscrupulousness with regard to money matters. When some of Dr. Besant's col-

leagues and friends warned her against such persons, she not only took no action against them but when she learnt that some of her monies were not accounted for she wrote them off and never sought to take any action or proceedings against those who had wronged her.

Dr. Besant's generosity of judgment and her appreciation of her opponents' point of view were unique. But equally noteworthy and remarkable was her complete disregard of money excepting as an instrument for doing good and procuring happiness. One of the maxims which she continuously followed in practice was to distribute in scholarships, in charitable gifts and in donations to worthy institutions, all the monies that came to her during the course of each year. She had numerous admirers all over the world who were continuously sending her remittances for use at her discretion. Such persons included many millionaires and leaders of industry and commerce in all parts of the world. One of them, Miss Dodge, who had inherited vast copper mines, used to send her periodically large sums of money.

In addition to her generosity in judgment and criticism of others and her lavishness in regard to money matters, Dr. Besant was also a wonderful hostess and took a maternal interest in those who worked for her or with her. When workers of the Theosophical Movement or of the Home Rule League travelled with her during her numerous train journeys throughout the length and breadth of the country, she personally used to prepare coffee and sandwiches for them and was meticulous in seeing to their bodily comfort and accommodation. She stood in *loco parentis* to successive groups of persons who worked for her in the religious, educational and political spheres. George S. Arundale, the great educationist and public worker who succeeded her as President of the Theosophical Society, C. Jinarajadasa, the Buddhist scholar and writer, whom she and Leadbeater helped to educate, Dr. Bhagavan Das, the great Sanskrit scholar, writer and public worker, who collaborated with her in her educational work and with whose help she translated and edited the *Bhagavad Gita* and other works, G. N. Chakravorthy, the profound thinker and theosophical leader, the Telangs, sons of the great Bombay judge, were all Dr. Besant's devoted adherents and helped her in her work. B. P. Wadia, the fiery spirit who joined

her as a young man and afterwards led the labour movement and Home Rule activities and also collaborated in her journalistic work, Trilokekar and Sanjeeva Rao, Iqbal Narayan Gurtu and many others who carried out their great educational work under the directions of Dr. Besant and George Arundale — these were some of the persons who practically formed part of Dr. Besant's family and whom she encouraged, tended, supported and stood by through good and evil report and through all difficulties and complicated situations. Similarly Miss Dodge, Mrs. Bright and Mr. Graham Pole were people who followed Dr. Besant in her various activities and loyally supported her.

One of the characteristics of Dr. Besant was her brilliance of oratory. She used few gestures in her public speaking and her strength lay in her matchless voice. None could rival the range, the quiet sense of power or the resonance of her voice. When delivering her public speeches, she ascended the platform at the appointed time without a minute's delay, and generally she ended her speeches exactly on the expiration of sixty minutes. She began in a low tone but gradually her voice rose to a higher pitch and had a resonance which made Mr. Gladstone declare that there was only one European orator to rival her, namely Senor Castelar of Spain. The clarion-like reverberation of her words was such that at a time when microphones and loud-speakers were not in existence, she could be heard with ease by a crowded audience of five thousand or more, and yet she seemed not to strain her voice at all! Its harmony and ringing character seemed to pervade every part of a large hall. Almost exactly after the expiry of fifty-two or fifty-three minutes from the commencement she began her peroration which rose to great altitudes both of oratory and of delivery. She sat down as quietly at the end of her speech as when she entered the hall punctually to the second. In the days when she acted as her own lawyer in the English and Indian courts as well as when she spoke on political or on religious subjects, both her matter and her manner were unapproachable, in their power to convince. Her face and demeanour during her public utterances were characterised by a rapt look and a compelling presence.

Another characteristic of Dr. Besant was her capacity not only to attract people but to keep them bound to her in ties of un-

breakable affection. She would never neglect a friend. She would cling to him despite his weakness, his limitations and even his unkindness. It was this generosity of her nature which enabled her to win friends and keep them attached to her work. It was the root of her success. She was able to build up her great institutions by making all her friends and colleagues feel all the time that they were doing her work, that she was constantly looking at them admiring, helping and encouraging them throughout. She was full of praise for her friends and had no unkind thought or word for them at any time, whatever befell.

Dr. Besant's method to attain freedom for India was by way of intense and well organised constitutional agitation. She appealed to the people and sought their enthusiastic support for the cause. She set very high value on reverence and respect for and implicit obedience to the law of the land. This teaching is of special significance to our infant Republic, for without that respect for the rule of law, our visions of a strong and progressive country would remain merely a dream and it would be difficult to erect any stable structure over the Independence we have won. Dr. Besant learnt this lesson from her first leader, Charles Bradlaugh, with whom she had closely collaborated in his constitutional agitations. That was the attitude that Dr. Besant advocated in India and her faith in its efficacy was so great that when the Non-Cooperation Movement was started in this country, she preferred to part company with her earlier political friends. She held that discipline and obedience to law were the foremost essentials for all organised agitations. The years after Dr. Besant's passing have proved the truth of her teaching. If we could but remember again this teaching of hers and resolve to adopt it, we should be paying her the greatest homage and at the same time saving the country from the peril towards which she seems to be heading.

It has been held that it was Dr. Besant who largely helped Indians to feel and act truly Indian. In fact, she revealed the true India to the Indian. In all her activities, whether in the social, educational or political field, her endeavour was to rouse the self-respect of the Indians and help in the renaissance of India. An unflinching integrity of mind and soul, complete dedication to the causes she espoused, a persuasive oratory, a

wonderful political sagacity — such was the unparalleled combination of qualities in her. As Count Kyserling once said, she ruled her personality from a centre rarely reached by ordinary men. The coming years will justify and vindicate the essential characteristics of her approach to world problems, the message of Indian self-respect, tolerance and spiritual re-generation, the message of law and order as the basis of all social and political work and the message of the sacredness of human personality.

There is of late considerable discussion on the personality cult but it is as dangerous to ignore formative and creative personalities as to advertise or idolise them without a sense of proportion or perspective. To an extent perhaps unparalleled in modern times, Dr. Besant united in herself the most disparate and conspicuous features. An unflinching integrity of mind and soul and a complete dedication to the causes that she espoused were combined in her with the gift of the most persuasive oratory and a political sagacity which is not generally found in combination with the other qualities mentioned above.

In her own words, her main aim was to see that India rose to her full stature and could as a free nation do for the world what none but she could do, namely, pour out over the earth from her place in the great commonwealth, the priceless spiritual treasures conserved with this object for thousands of years and prove to all nations of the earth, as she proved it in the glorious day of her youth, that where the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness is found, there are also found the might of intellect, the nobility of ethics and the outer splendour of worldly prosperity.

## 12

### Srimati Sarojini Naidu

My acquaintance with Srimati Sarojini Naidu, who was nine months my senior in age, began very soon after she passed the Matriculation examination of the Madras University at the age of 12 and became quite a celebrity. Her father, Dr. Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya, was a great educationist and scholar and, in his daughter's words, "a great dreamer of dreams". My father knew him well. He settled down in Hyderabad and founded the Nizam's College. From him, Sarojini learnt the lesson of tolerance and communal harmony and the appreciation of Islamic culture in all its aspects.

Sarojini was experimenting in English verse from her earliest days, even before she was sent to Europe in 1895 and began her travels and studies in England, France and Italy. In December 1898 she married, in spite of the opposition of all her people, Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu, who was a brilliant doctor and an attractive, though reticent person. Soon after her marriage, in my Madras house, she gave a recitation of her poems. Her fragile beauty and her appealing voice made a great impression on all who heard her.

When she was in England, she came across a notable critic and scholar, Edmund Gosse, who, in Sarojini's language, first "showed her the way to the Golden Threshold of Poetry". He met her quite often, and soon became an intimate friend and adviser; and, it was as a result of his advice, that she concentrated on Indian life, Indian thought and the Indian background. In Gosse's words, she became a genuine Indian poet and not a machine-made imitator of the English Classics. She took full advantage of Edmund Gosse's suggestion and even her first volume of poetry published in 1905, entitled *Golden Threshold*, fully merits the praise that Gosse bestowed upon it when he

Hourly this subtle mystery flowers anew,  
O Love, I know not why. . . .  
Unless it be, perchance, that I am you,  
Dear love, that you are I !

When the agitation for Indian independence began and Dr. Besant came out with her clarion call, Sarojini put aside her literary and domestic activities and plunged into the struggle for women's emancipation and for self-rule for India. During the years 1915 to 1919, Dr. Besant, Sarojini and myself were in continuous contact and mutual co-operation. She then established herself in Bombay, and associated enthusiastically with stalwarts like Jinnah and Umar Sobani. The latter was a devoted friend and to him she has addressed some poignant lines in the latest volume of her works, *The Feather of the Dawn*. She was very intimately associated with Jinnah in his activities as an Indian political leader; and perhaps, next to Gandhiji the dominating influence on Sarojini's life was that of Jinnah, although she was far superior to him intellectually and spiritually—the difference being between genius and talent. From 1917, she placed herself in the forefront of the political struggle and signalled herself as one of the chief lieutenants of Gandhiji and as one who shared his confidence. Side by side Sarojini's God-given gift of mellifluous verse, she developed a rare capacity for impassioned and persuasive public speaking and a gift of humour. She could laugh at herself and pleasantly laugh at her neighbours and, perhaps, she was the only person who could crack jokes with, and at the expense of, Gandhiji.

Lightly, O lightly we bear her along  
She sways like a flower in the wind  
of our song ;  
She skims like a bird on the foam of a stream,  
She floats like a laugh from the lips of a  
dream,  
Gaily, O gaily we glide and we sing,  
We bear her along like a pearl on a string.

She was elected President of the Indian National Congress as early as 1925, and, notwithstanding her increasing ill-health and the development of heart trouble which began in her twenties, was associated with all important political movements and events including the Round Table Conferences and the meetings of various committees and gatherings of a political and social character. She became recognised, even before she was elected President of the Congress, as one of the protagonists and victors in the struggle for women's emancipation and their social uplift and she took a prominent part in the campaign for the eradication of untouchability. In 1947 when Independence was obtained.

Her second volume of poetry, *The Bird of Time*, appeared in 1912. It was a chronicle of her reaction to the joys and tragedies of life, to the manifestations of spring-time and the scenes of village and country life. Her song, "Radha, the Milk-Maid" and her "Persian Love Song", establish her mastery over poetic feeling and lyric expression. I quote, by way of example, the last lines from the "Persian Love Song".

she was appointed Governor of Uttar Pradesh, but she was a sick woman when she accepted the assignment and passed away in 1949.

When she published her poems in 1916 entitled *The Broken Wing*, she had already become an invalid ; but she was ever dauntless and clear-eyed and she has sung in "The Gift of India" as follows :

Is there aught you need that my hands withhold,  
Rich gifts of raiment or grain or Gold ?  
Lo ! I have flung to the East and West  
Priceless treasures torn from my breast,  
And yielded the sons of my stricken womb  
To the Drum-beats of duty, the sabres of Doom.

*The Broken Wing*, in fact, evidences the premonitions of a passionate and broken spirit. She was, in her person, a vindication and exemplar of high endeavour, of a passionate love of beauty in all its forms and of the inescapable frustration described by Shelley as the love of a moth for the star, of the night for the morrow.

After her death, her gifted daughter, Padmaja Naidu, now Governor of West Bengal, who has inherited the charm of her mother's personality, has collected some poems written by Sarojini in 1927 and published them under the title *The Feather of the Dawn*. Like the *Broken Wing*, the verses in this volume, mainly speak of unrequited love and of various aspects of love's unattainable quest. But some poems like the "Lonely Child", "Ghanashyam", and "The Song of Radha" and "The Song of the Khyber Pass", bring back memories of her early and spontaneous rhythms unmarked by the inner sorrow which seems to have been the constant companion in her later years.

Let me illustrate her later outlook on life by a few lines from "The Feather of the Dawn".

Life gave me joy and song for dower,  
Laughter and grace and shining fame,  
Hope like a forest tree in flower,  
Dreams with reverberant wings of flame,

God troubled in His High domain,  
Sent you, O Love, from starry spheres  
With quick and ardent gifts of pain  
To teach me tears, to teach me tears.

As an orator and as an authentic poet, Sarojini's name will live long in Indian history ; but by those, like me, who knew her intimately, her image will be recalled by us as that of a brave and unconquerable soul rising superior to bodily suffering and disease and manifesting a confident optimism that transcended all obstacles and handicaps.

Modern poetry has undergone many revolutions ; but, as was recently observed by a discerning critic, Stanley Burnshaw, the first person singular returns to poetry but with a new magisterial force and with a new assertiveness quite different from anything heard at an earlier time. It would be correct to describe Sarojini as a poet who embodied and typified the discovery of the inner self of the poet as a limitless world for private exploration.

## 13

## Sir K. Seshadri Iyer

THE nineteenth century produced in India a galaxy of notable administrators who were able fully to display their talents in the so-called "Princely States". Most of the higher appointments in the executive and administrative fields in British India were occupied by British civilians and, in some parts of the country, by British army officers. The highest positions to which Indians could aspire in British India in the early years of the century were of a subaltern character. Indeed, even at the time when I entered the Bar, the position of a Collector or of a Secretary to the Board of Revenue was the summit of an Indian's ambition, the only exception being in the domain of law. A few High Court Judgeships had been thrown open to Indian talent and men like Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar, Sir Gurudas Banerjee, Kasinath Triambak Telang and Mahadev Govind Ranade could leave their permanent impress in the Law Reports and they conspicuously helped in the growth of Indo-British jurisprudence.

It was in the Indian States that there arose the opportunity for the full efflorescence of Indian ability and men like Sir Salar Jung of Hyderabad, Sir Dinkar Rao of Indore and Sir T. Madhava Rao who was successively Dewan in Travancore, Baroda and Indore, made history during their lives. All of them passed through their period of eclipse, opposition and of misunderstanding but they triumphed by their strong character and their genius and overcame all obstacles; and their place is secure in the chronicles of the country. Sir Seshayya Sastry, like Romesh Chandra Dutt and R. Raghunatha Rao and, in later times, S. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar, attained the highest position open to Indians in British service and then obtained the opportunity to serve in Indian States with great distinction. Sir Seshayya

Sastry, in particular, was the maker of modern Pudukkotta and occupied the position of Dewan-Regent for several years. He, like many of the others already referred to, was not only a great administrator but wielded a trenchant style which, especially in the case of Sir T. Madhava Rao, Romesh Chandra Dutt and Seshayya Sastry, was evidenced in Minutes and Memoranda which are a delight to read even now and which formulated memorable policies.

Dewan C. Rangacharlu and Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, both Dewans of Mysore, can not only be ranked with the foremost of the personages referred to, but, in some respects, their contributions were unique and epoch-making.

It will be remembered that in 1831 (which curiously was the year of Rangacharlu's birth), the British Government deposed Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodiyar and assumed the administration of Mysore. Those who have had the occasion to examine the inner history of this transaction have noted, with sorrow and some indignation, the steady policy which was pursued by men like Bowring and Cubbon and even the Viceroy, Lord Canning, which, on the one hand, deprived Krishnaraja Wodiyar of real power and, on the other, encouraged the Maharaja's subordinates, after having actually ministered to his weaknesses and over-generous instincts, to carry tales against the Ruler to the Paramount Power. Unmindful alike of argument and entreaty, Mysore was brought under the direct rule of the British Government for fifty years and until, owing to the indefatigable efforts of the Maharani aided by her agents like Thirumal Rao and tried friends like Gazula Lakshminarasu Chetty, the merchant-prince of Madras, public opinion in England was roused. In memorable and caustic phrases, John Morley, then the Editor of the *Fortnightly Review* and long afterwards a prominent member of the British Cabinet, lashed out against the policy of the British Government which, he described, as resulting in the despising of England in Europe and the hatred of England in Asia. "We have abandoned", Morley said, "our legitimate influence in the West in order to annex in the East. We are making ourselves despised in one continent in order to make ourselves hated in another continent." John Morley was, in this matter, supported by a great Indian, Dadabhoy Naoroji. The rights of Krishnaraja Wodiyar were

partially recognised in 1867 but it was not until 1881 that what is called "Rendition" took place.

C. Rangacharlu, like Ranganatha Sastry, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Seshayya Sastry and many other notables, was a student of E. B. Powell, and they were all graduates of the Madras Presidency College. C. Rangacharlu was easily one of the most remarkable men that India has produced. He was a brilliant and incorruptible disciplinarian and a strong administrator and yet a veritable democrat, who was decades in advance of his times. After a brilliant scholastic career, he passed what was called the Public Service Examination and became a clerk in the Madras Collectorate. When he was only 25 years of age, he published a paper on "Bribery" in which he attacked some of his own relations for their lack of integrity and, at the same time, pointed out the inadequacy of the salaries of Indian officials. He further exposed the imperfections of the revenue system and the errors of administrative officers. Its most remarkable feature was that he insisted on the formation of Popular Assemblies. It is a matter for congratulation that his superior officers, especially Mr. Taylor, appreciated his motives and recognised his worth. When Taylor became a Member of the Viceroy's Council, he used to consult Rangacharlu on various matters. Rangacharlu's promotion was rapid and when he was Assistant Inams Commissioner in Madras, he drafted a scheme of village panchayats which was a monument of industry and vivid sympathy with the rural population. He pleaded for the revival of village municipalities which, as they matured, should relieve Government of many minor duties which it cannot profitably undertake and which would serve also as a bulwark against official repression.

Krishnaraja Wodiyar died a broken man in 1868, within a year of the Rendition and Rangacharlu, then a Deputy Collector in Madras, was, when he was 35 years of age, appointed Commissioner to revise the Palace establishment in Mysore. Later, he was made Controller of the Maharaja's household. It is characteristic of Rangacharlu that, whilst in a subordinate official position in the State, he wrote a paper strongly critical of the fifty years of British administration of Mysore and the shortcomings of their rule. The corruption directly and indirectly fostered and encouraged in the British administration was fear-

lessly exposed. It says much for the detachment and impartiality of the British authorities of that time that, soon after, Rangacharlu was appointed Revenue Secretary in 1871. As so often happens, Rangacharlu's advancement was bitterly opposed on the ground that he was a non-Mysorean, and baseless charges were levelled against him which were not, fortunately, heeded.

It was in 1881 that Chamarajendra Wodiyar was installed as Maharaja; and, on the same day, Rangacharlu was appointed as Dewan and President of the Council. He took charge soon after a most disastrous famine. He has left behind him a description of his duties testifying alike to his penetration and to his fearlessness. He says: "My work includes the reform of the abuses of a bureaucratic regime; I have to revive education, to improve sanitation, to extend commerce, to raise the political and moral status and the character of the people and, at the same time, to keep on good terms with the English Residents who are not always very amiable, and, lastly, to protect the Ruler against the corrupting influences of his Court." In a memorable Address to the Mysore Representative Assembly which he established as the first of its kind in India, he made observations on finance and on agriculture and on industries which are apposite even today. Above all, he insisted that in the administration of Mysore, the people should be associated, and a beginning was thus made of an annual meeting of representative landholders, merchants and others. His views on popular education, on the relation of the Government with the educated classes and students and on the elevation of women, were at least fifty years in advance of his days.

Unfortunately, Rangacharlu died within a couple of years after he assumed the Dewanship; and no greater instance, perhaps, of his sagacity could be furnished than his unerring choice of his successor, K. Seshadri Iyer, who was born in 1845 in a village near Palghat and who, losing his father at an early age, grew up under the fostering care of a mother whose circumstances were very straitened. To the end of his days, Seshadri Iyer acknowledged his indebtedness to his elder brother and to his mother with deep gratitude. His school career was brilliant and he early displayed a talent for figures which afterwards stood him in good stead when he dealt with the State's finances and public works.

As in the case of many other administrators of those days, he started as a clerk and then became a translator in the Collector's office at Calicut where Rangacharlu was Deputy Collector. Thus began a friendship which was fraught with notable consequences. Rangacharlu, as already stated, came to Mysore in 1868 and within a few months of his arrival, Seshadri Iyer was appointed as Judicial Sheristadar. His promotion was rapid and he became Public Prosecutor, Controller in the Royal Household and finally Deputy Commissioner. When Rangacharlu became Dewan, he made up his mind to gather around him the most capable and trustworthy persons he could secure and he put Seshadri Iyer on special duty to draft certain regulations and rules. This work was done in such a masterly fashion that when Rangacharlu was away from headquarters, he deputed Seshadri Iyer to look after the current duties of the Dewan's office. On the death of Rangacharlu in January 1883 and in pursuance of his strongly expressed dying wishes, Seshadri Iyer was chosen as Dewan at the age of 38.

The position of a Dewan in an Indian State is one of peculiar difficulty and complexity. The people of the State take it for granted that he is the real fountain of authority and patronage. The ruler relies on him, but very often feels jealous or worried if all the credit for the administration is attributed to the Dewan. The British Government of those days treated him as their protege, on the one hand, and, on the other, warned the Maharaja not to be too dependent on the Dewan. There were in addition constant intrigues on the part of those who wished to displace or succeed him, and of those whose desires were thwarted or whose requests were turned down.

When Seshadri Iyer assumed the Dewanship, the finances of the State were at a low ebb. The worst famine on record had just devastated the country ; but he had the inestimable advantage of the example and precepts of his illustrious predecessor to whom he paid a wonderful tribute in the Representative Assembly soon after he became Dewan. He successfully tided over the crisis and soon restored the financial equilibrium. He had also the full confidence and co-operation of the ruler to start with, though, later on, there were certain misunderstandings that came to the front. His administration started with liabilities exceeding

the assets by thirty lakhs and with an annual income less than the annual expenditure ; but very soon, Seshadri Iyer effected an improvement in the revenue position. He started the gold mining industry which began to yield substantial royalties. He codified the revenue laws and started the scheme of agricultural banks to relieve indebtedness. He, by his wise policy, augmented the forest wealth of the country. Large-scale irrigation works were started and railways, communications and medical relief were rapidly extended.

All these steps were taken at a time when the after-effects of the plague epidemic following the famine had not yet disappeared and when, in addition, there was a drought in the State shortly after Seshadri Iyer took up the Dewanship. In fact, he had to use all his persuasive powers to induce the Government of India to postpone the payment of an enhanced tribute which had been decided upon. Proceeding by sure steps, the deficit position of the State was converted into a surplus ; and Seshadri Iyer at once began a scheme of tank restoration in which the ryots concerned were called upon to take their share. A system of State Life Insurance was initiated for the benefit of public servants ; and, in order to attract the best talent available to Mysore, a competitive Mysore Civil Service examination was inaugurated ; and it is no exaggeration to say that in the matter of executive, administrative and engineering services, Mysore's reputation, during many decades, was about the highest in India. Indeed, the Mysore engineers were able to create widespread roads, bridges, and irrigation schemes and sanitary improvements throughout the State and, in particular, in the two cities of Mysore and Bangalore. Seshadri Iyer began the policy of converting Mysore and Bangalore into beauty spots and places of resort — a policy that has been effectively continued under the guidance of Sir M. Viswesvarayya and Sir Mirza Ismail. Surmounting grave difficulties, adequate water supply to the cities of Bangalore and Mysore was brought into existence. Prospecting for minerals and the formation of the Geological Department also marked the Dewan's administration. Social legislation for the prevention of infant marriages and the promotion of women's education, were also amongst the sedulous objects of the Dewan's attention.

When all these projects were under way, Chamarajendra Wodiyar passed away suddenly during a visit to Calcutta. As already stated, and generally speaking, the Ruler and Dewan worked in the closest harmony with each other. Mr. Thambuchetty who had been a Member of Rangacharlu's Council was, not unnaturally, disappointed when his junior, Seshadri Iyer, was appointed Dewan; but the tact and good nature of both these persons as well as the intercession of the Maharaja eased the situation. The Maharaja was personally instrumental in raising the salary of Seshadri Iyer from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 5,000 a month and it is worthy of note that in those days, the Viceroy's sanction was necessary for the purpose.

Seshadri Iyer was animated by lofty ideals and impulses but he was also sensitive to a degree. From the time of his assumption of office, he was subjected to ill-natured criticism on the part of those who attacked him as a foreigner and those who falsely charged him with nepotism and favouritism towards Madrasees. A critical situation arose when Seshadri Iyer thought that he was not receiving adequate and consistent support from the Maharaja. In the result, within five years of his appointment, he tendered his resignation in a letter wherein occurred the following sentence: "My usefulness as Your Highness' Dewan and my power to do good to Your Highness' name are entirely dependent upon not only the support but even on the appearance of support which Your Highness accords to me." He proudly pointed out that he was not in the least anxious to assert his individuality. He also pointed out that when he became Dewan, the Treasury was empty and even the first instalment of the tribute could not be paid punctually. He claimed that before the Rendition, there was a grasping clique of officials and weak European officers and malignant newspapers. He adverted to a class consisting of a few families that was guilty of gross oppression during the British administration and was, and is now, most disloyal to the ruler. Disproving all charges of nepotism, Seshadri Iyer justly remarked that in point of efficiency, the Mysore Judicial, Police, Education and Medical Departments will bear favourable comparison with the most advanced provinces in British India.

For the second time in 1890, a disagreement arose between

the Ruler and the Dewan regarding the contents of an Address to the Representative Assembly; and once more, Seshadri Iyer tendered his resignation stating: "Should Your Highness think that my retirement would promote your happiness and prevent irritation, I beg permission to retire at once." On both these occasions a reconciliation was happily effected. These were the only two exceptions to the uniform spirit of intimate confidence that subsisted between the Minister and the Sovereign.

Generous to a fault, Seshadri Iyer insisted on adequate recognition being shown to the members of his predecessor's (Rangacharlu's) family. Notwithstanding that the members of the family of Purnayya whose loyalty, amidst difficulties, to the British Government secured the downfall of Tippu Sultan, were by no means, friendly to Seshadri Iyer, he was responsible for generously settling the dispute regarding the Yelandur Jagir that was bestowed on the family of Purnayya.

The sudden death of the Maharaja in 1894 created a new situation, and the Government of India, while sanctioning, in accordance with their insistent claims and prerogatives, the succession of the eldest son, stated that the Maharani Vanivilas, should be appointed as Regent and that on all matters of importance the Dewan should consult the Resident, as customary, and also consult the wishes of the Maharani. Almost from that moment a new campaign of calumny and vituperation was initiated against Seshadri Iyer. He had thus to bear a heavy load of afflictions amongst which may be mentioned the fire which destroyed the old Palace in 1896 and a renewed attack of plague in 1898. The *Evening Mail* of Bangalore referred to an imaginary deadlock after the death of the Maharaja, and asserted that Seshadri Iyer was creating a one-man Government and was reducing the Council to a nullity. At the same time, in relation to the powers of the Representative Assembly, the appointment, as Chief Justice, of that eminent lawyer, A. Ramachandra Aiyer, and various other matters including the personnel of the Council and the proposed appointment to that Council of V. P. Madhava Rao, the Resident, began to be obstructively interfering so much so that in a letter to the Resident, Sir William Lee Warner, Seshadri Iyer had to say: "The Dewan has any amount of responsibility, but he has no corresponding power and is liable

to obstruction from all quarters". There was, in addition, an attempt to interfere with the discretion of the Mysore Government in regard to certain mineral concessions especially those relating to the Kolar Gold Fields; and even the Viceroy is reported to have brought his personality to bear directly upon the Maharaja without reference to the Dewan. It was at that period that Seshadri Iyer undertook a sea voyage to Burma and again expressed his desire to relinquish his office. The Viceroy and the Resident, however, firmly persuaded him to stay on in Mysore "until the young Maharaja acquired a firm seat in the saddle".

Knowing that the relations between the Paramount Power and the Dewan were not quite harmonious, intriguers again began a series of newspaper attacks alleging that the Dewan had obtained large loans from the Maharaja and levelling other fantastic charges against him. Seshadri Iyer was so affected by these attacks that I remember, as a young man, his consulting my father and Sir Bashyam Iyengar on the question of prosecuting the newspapers indulging in defamatory attacks. I also distinctly remember the advice that they then gave in 1900, namely, that very few people outside and even inside Mysore would notice the slanderous attacks, but if a complaint or suit were filed by Seshadri Iyer, both in India, and even in England, there would be people whose attention would be roused and who would jump to the superficial conclusion that there can be no smoke without fire. The proposal for a prosecution was accordingly stopped; but Seshadri Iyer was so worried that his constitution which had been undermined already by diabetes, underwent a collapse; and in February 1901 he had to write to the Maharani Regent regretting his inability to serve as Dewan during the remainder of the Regency.

It must be admitted, in this connection, that some of his worries originated in the constant friction between the Dewan and the political section in the country that found Seshadri Iyer unready to accept immediate and sweeping devolutions of power. This section was able to invoke, as their authority, the example and the precepts of his predecessor, Rangacharlu.

In spite of all these unwelcome handicaps, Seshadri Iyer continued his policy of large scale improvement. He laid down new suburban extensions in the City of Bangalore (Malleswaram

and Basavangudi), constructed the Victoria Hospital and manned it with people who gave it a unique reputation throughout the country. His biggest achievement and one which should secure immortality for him in the State is the Cauvery Power Scheme. I can speak with some authority on the magnitude of Seshadri Iyer's achievement because it devolved on me, much later, to conduct negotiations, on behalf of the Madras Government, with the Government of Dewan Bannerji in Mysore, for initiating the Mettur Scheme. It was then that I had occasion to peruse some of Seshadri Iyer's Notes and Memoranda and to be aware of the masterly way in which he safeguarded the interests of Mysore in regard to the utilisation of the Cauvery waters and obtained an easy victory in 1892, by his advocacy, over the legitimate but badly argued case of Madras. The Cauvery agreement of 1892 was a triumphant vindication of Seshadri Iyer's tact and powers of reasoning.

The inception of the Cauvery Power Scheme was effected, if not against active opposition, at least with the very lukewarm support of the Central Government. Seshadri Iyer looked far ahead and realised that in the improvement of irrigation and hydro-electric power lay the industrial and agricultural future of the State. His work has been consistently continued and expanded by his distinguished successors, and especially by that great Engineer-Statesman, Sir M. Viswesvarayya, and Sir Mirza Ismail, the latter of whom was instrumental in making Mysore and Bangalore veritable beauty spots. But it was Seshadri Iyer's vision and far-sightedness which made Mysore a pioneer in hydro-electric development and in industrial advancement. This scheme alone should entitle Seshadri Iyer to claim a position among the three or four makers of modern India. In the execution of this work, he had the advantage of the loyal assistance of Capt. Lotbiniere whom he attracted to his side from Kashmir and also the advantage of consultation with, and advice from, great men like Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, Dadabhoi Naoroji, Sir Jamshedji Tata and the other members of his family. He had also around him, colleagues of eminence like Chentsal Rao, Sir Thambuchetty, Sir P. N. Krishnamurti, V. P. Madhava Rao, A. Rangaswami Iyengar and C. Srinivasa Iyengar; but the ultimate credit for originality of conception and inflexible deter-

mination to carry out a policy in the face of all handicaps and obstacles, must be exclusively Seshadri Iyer's. His work was equally conspicuous in the founding of elementary and technical schools and flourishing colleges.

During the whole period, however, when he was engaged in these great schemes, Seshadri Iyer was not only subject to virulent attacks from outside, but suffered the loss of his life and other domestic trials.

Not less noteworthy than important roads and bridges, scientifically organised railway systems, supply of water, light and electricity and the development of well-planned towns, his notes and memoranda which, like those of Rangacharlu, were momentous and of great inspirational value. It is a pity that even the members of his family are not in possession of these products of his indefatigable brain. One of his biographers thus describes them :

"The archives of the Secretariat at Bangalore are full of Minutes and Memoranda enunciating principles and policies in a terse and pointed style and defining the rights and obligations of the State."

I trust that the Mysore Government will publish the notes and memoranda left by statesmen like Rangacharlu and Seshadri Iyer to whom Mysore owes no little of its progress and eminence.

Seshadri Iyer has often been criticised, as other notable personages have been, for being autocratic and arbitrary ; but, it cannot be forgotten that he was an ardent supporter of the Indian National Congress from the time of its inception. Indeed, he persuaded the Maharaja to make a handsome donation to its funds. He was, however, a critic of what he termed, on a memorable occasion, "impatient idealism" ; and, not unnaturally, this attitude led to open attacks by some popular leaders, both in the Representative Assembly and outside it. The progressive party in the Assembly was still in the making and it must be said that they afforded easy targets for rejoinder, as they too often alternated between idealistic demands and personal requests for jobs and favours. It must, however, be conceded that Seshadri Iyer was one of those who held the view, in the language

of the poet, "for forms of Government, let fools contest". His generation had not begun to believe that good Government is no substitute for Self-Government.

At the same time, it must not be overlooked that Seshadri Iyer not only tolerated but actively encouraged different points of view. It is a matter of common knowledge that he acknowledged his indebtedness to men like P. Chentsal Rao and Thambuchetty, and even to an avowed opponent like P. N. Krishnamurti. Characteristic of Chentsal Rao and remarkably descriptive of Seshadri Iyer, was a letter from the former : "I have no object," Chentsal Rao says, "to flatter you. You can accept my assurance that I regard you as one of the very few men who are intellectual and, at the same time, generous and good-natured and not intoxicated with power. All intellectual men have the fault and quality of intellectual pride which is called strength of mind. But it is, on the whole, a necessary evil." A historian, Sir William Hunter, in one of his papers, spoke of Seshadri Iyer as one who has given his head to Herbert Spencer and his heart to Parabrahman ; and no one can adequately appraise the character of Seshadri Iyer who does not take account of his analytical and even sceptical outlook on many problems which, remarkably, co-existed with a fervid faith in the fundamentals of Hinduism manifested in many ways and not least by his loyalty and discipleship to the Jagadguru of Sringeri. He was, simultaneously, an avowed advocate of many social reforms. The progress of women's education, the discouragement of child marriages, the institution of scholarships for education in foreign countries, were amongst his contributions to the Reform Movement in India. He was deeply interested in Swami Vivekananda's mission and, along with Sir Subramania Iyer and my father, enabled the Swamiji to proceed to Chicago for the Parliament of Religions. He founded the Oriental Library in Mysore and one of his favourite occupations was to discuss religious problems with the representatives of our ancient culture.

Even after his death, Seshadri Iyer's opponents did not relax their enmity ; and a movement was set on foot to oppose a memorial to him. He had openly differed from Lord Curzon on many matters of policy, and especially in regard to the Kolar Gold Fields and the Cauvery Power Scheme. But, nevertheless, when Lord Curzon, who was distinguished alike by his dynamic

energy and capacious intellect and his essential sense of justice, found that there was evinced in Mysore very little enthusiasm for inaugurating a memorial for Seshadri Iyer, he insisted on such a memorial. He directed the Resident to arrange for a memorial meeting and wrote as follows to the organisers :

“ I hold very strongly to the view that the deeds and services of great men should be honoured by public commemoration in the places where they served, not merely as a posthumous compliment to themselves, but as an example and stimulus to others. There can be no question that the Maharani, the Maharaja and the Mysore State owe a debt of lasting gratitude to Sir Seshadri Iyer to whose abilities and labours are largely due the flourishing conditions in which the young Chief takes over the administration.”

To that tribute may be added a passage from a letter of Sir Dinshaw Wacha :

“ In him the country has lost an administrator of the highest capacity and most matured experience. He was one of the Indian statesmen who had shown himself capable of governing with as much skill and capacity, judgment and discrimination, tact and sympathy, as the greatest of administrators who have left their mark on British Indian history.”

Finally, Lord Hardinge, when Seshadri Iyer's statue was unveiled, uttered the following words of appreciation :

“ Seshadri Iyer has left a record behind him which marks him out with Sir Salar Jung, Sir Dinkar Rao and Sir T. Madhava Rao, as one of that group of Indian statesmen whose fame has deservedly spread far beyond the borders of their labours and whose names will remain as a lasting example to succeeding generations.”

## 14

### Dr Sir M. Viswesvaraya

ALTHOUGH Sir M. Viswesvaraya never formally adopted the teaching profession, yet, in truth, for over two generations, he has been one of the foremost educators of his countrymen. Born in a comparatively poor family, he had, however, the advantage of a background of learning as well as of simple living.

After a very brilliant academic career, he entered service in the Bombay State as an engineer and for over quarter of a century, his life was spent in Western India. He soon distinguished himself as an inventor and designer of new types of machinery and appliances and his system of automatic gates enabled him to ensure adequate water supply to Poona. It is also fairly well-known that the block system of irrigation which he inaugurated in Bombay and which, later on, he introduced into the Marikanave in Mysore, was due to his forethought and ingenuity. It made possible the reclamation of new lands brought under irrigation and was warmly commended by the Irrigation Commission of 1903. He specialised both in sanitary and irrigation engineering and, when expert advice was needed, he was sought after in places as distant as Aden. The flood protection measures devised by him for the Hyderabad State as well as the drainage scheme for the city, were also his achievements. In his forty-first year, after a world tour, during which he gained much valuable experience, he accepted the position of Chief Engineer in his own State of Mysore.

By temperament and by training, Sir M. Viswesvaraya has been fiercely energetic in his output of work and could not tolerate shirkers. As in Bombay, so in Mysore, he fought against laxity and corruption and, at the beginning of his career in Mysore, he trod on many toes and his insistence on discipline and strenuous work brought him no little unpopularity. Unmindful of all

these hindrances, and in a manner which elicited my unstinted admiration when I came into contact with his achievements during the time, much later, when I was engaged in planning the Cauvery-Mettur project, he struggled with the authorities and after much wrangling and negotiation, he overcame the resistance of the Governments of India and of Madras and started the Cauvery-Mettur project. While engaged on this stupendous task, he, nevertheless, organised engineering and technical institutions in the State as well as a far-sighted railway programme. All this work was compressed in three years of unremitting labour as Chief Engineer of Mysore.

It was in 1912 that Sir M. Viswesvaraya became the Dewan of Mysore and got the opportunity for the fulfilment of many of his ambitions for his own State. The work that he did as Dewan was many-sided and far-ranging. He established the Mysore University and re-constituted the municipalities of the State. The Krishnaraja Sagar project and the Badravathi scheme, which were both denounced at the inception, bore testimony to his constructive statesmanship. He started the Mysore Bank and the Sandalwood Oil Factory. In addition to the development of industries, of centres for technical education and of railway programmes, he gave his unflagging attention to village reconstruction; and some of his ideas which were discountenanced as impractical and new-fangled, are now the commonplaces of planning programmes. He emphasised the importance of rural education and of planned productivity and also that every agricultural family should have a subsidiary industry or occupation.

At a time when deficit financing was severely discountenanced, he made the remarkable pronouncement that the greater the spending capacity of a country, the more progressive will be its character. The total expenditure incurred during his administration of seven years as Dewan, was over three crores of rupees; and even during his Dewanship many of his schemes had begun to pay. It is characteristic of his stewardship that, while the growth of revenue during his administration was about one crore, the growth of beneficent expenditure was more than one-and-a-half crores. Sir M. Viswesvaraya retired from office in 1919, but it would be quite true to observe that as a publicist and as a wise and far-sighted critic and almost a gadfly to all conventional

administrators, his contribution to progress after retirement, has been as memorable as his official achievements.

His book, *Reconstructing India* is a thorough and comprehensive statement of India's desiderata. He was one of the earliest to insist upon a wise assimilation of modern methods of production, marketing and distribution; and he was never wearied of referring to countries like Canada and Japan as examples to be wisely, though not too slavishly, copied by India. He has dealt with social reform, with the building up of the political system from the village upwards, with insurance and primary and technical education, with the uplift of women and the depressed classes and, above all, with the problem of unemployment; and he has discussed all-round reorganisation in the villages and in the countryside as the sole means of economic stimulation and uplift. He himself gave a lead by concentrating on the Mysore Economic Conference which was one of his pet schemes and which brought rural cultivators and industrialists into contact with administrators and interested non-officials.

Education and industries were the subjects of his constant preaching and exhortation. To him we owe the inculcation of the importance of vital industries like ship-building, machine-tools, chemicals, paper and motor vehicles. After his trips to the United States, he put forward a scheme for nation-building, modelled on methods adopted in America, in order to cultivate the spirit of initiative and business discipline and eradicate obsolete practices. Over and over again, and when his oft-repeated statements were hardly appreciated, he called on the people of India to take a lesson from Japan and America, realising as he did, the fundamental importance of the application of science and up-to-date scientific methods to industry and to agriculture for the purpose of promoting food supply and for raising the low standard of living. Tardily and almost reluctantly, his outlook and his services were appreciated and he became successively the President of the Indian Science Congress, the Indian Economic Enquiry Committee, the New Capital Enquiry Commission and the Irrigation Enquiry Committee. The reports produced by these committees, form the basis of the present-day economic thinking in India.

During nearly twenty years, he had been the President of the

All India Manufacturers Association, and in that capacity, and in monographs like his *Planned Economy for India* and his memoirs on *My Working Life*, he has pleaded for an all-round development of agricultural and industrial planning. He, however, was fully conscious that, without improved social conditions, it would be a difficult task to bring about economic regeneration. He was one of the first to warn the country against the creation of slums in urban areas and, both by precept and practice, he emphasised the importance of parks, play-grounds, theatres, museums, art galleries and other means of public recreation and instruction. He was a champion of education of women and of an organised scheme to eradicate beggary, as well as to afford public relief and occupation to the deserving unemployed. On an important occasion, he made the following pronouncement :

“ The unfettered spirit of industrialism would result in anarchy and violence, unless the employing class meets the problem by peaceful methods of negotiation and conciliation.”

I had occasion to meet him and to have discussions with reference to problems of irrigation and hydro-electric development. He and I happened to differ on the question of the Cauvery waters when I had to negotiate, as a Member of the Madras Government, with the authorities in Mysore, prior to the inception of the Mettur Irrigation Project. We agreed to differ, but my discussions confirmed me in my estimate of Sir M. Viswesvaraya as a clear-sighted and tolerant disputant. Later on, he gave his unstinted support to the schemes initiated by me in the Bhavani river area, and with regard especially to the Pykara and connected hydro-electric schemes. But, more than anything else, I valued his open championship of the proposal I put forward, several years ago, for an inter-connected scheme of uniting and linking the rivers of India for the purpose of inland navigation, irrigation and hydro-electric production on the model of similar schemes in Russia, the United States, France and Germany. His support was especially welcome because, for nearly twenty years, my voice was a cry in the wilderness, and it is only quite recently, that a tardy recognition of the value of such a project has come about.

It has been a source of much concern to me that, during the last ten years, Sir M. Viswesvaraya's advice and co-operation were not more fully utilised in the planning programmes of the Central Government. But, nevertheless, what we are now attempting, is veritably the result of his example, of his unwearied preaching and his memorable achievements in many parts of this country in the fields of planning and social, industrial and economic regeneration.

As a young man commencing my career at the Bar, I had many contacts with Mysore ; and Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, Justice A. Ramachandra Aiyar of the Chief Court and Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao were my family friends. Of Sir M. Viswesvaraya, I used to hear alarming accounts with reference to his unapproachability and of his rigid formality. An anecdote used to be recounted as to how, even to take a stroll in his own garden, he would dress himself cap-a-pie and in his long-coat and turban. There is an amusing and perhaps apocryphal story that even to answer a telephone call he used to put on his turban.

Sir M. Viswesvaraya has never indulged in much public speaking. His work lay mainly in committees and in the office room and workshop. He was not easily accessible but, when confidence was deserved, he gave it in abundant measure. He had been a recluse in personal life, and his rigid self-control was proverbial. He was an unconventional thinker. He did not wear his heart on his sleeve ; but for those privileged to have enjoyed his intimacy, his warmth of affection was deep and sincere. Many and varied have been the recipes for a long life, but Sir M. Viswesvaraya's longevity can perhaps be attributed to his almost unapproachable regularity of personal habits and to his equanimity of temperament in the face both of triumph and neglect.

## 15

## Sir V. Bhashyam Ayyangar

IT is often asserted that law is a jealous mistress and there is a considerable amount of truth in this maxim as the pursuit of the legal profession is both engrossing and exacting. Nevertheless, throughout the history of the world, from the times of Demosthenes and Cicero down to those of Francis Bacon, Lord Brougham, Lord Bowen, Lord Reading and Justice Frankfurter, lawyers have proved themselves astute politicians, tried administrators and literary artists. Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was no exception to this maxim. He not only revelled in the infinite niceties and developments of the law but had no patience with those who trifled with that sacred subject. More by way of pointing a moral and adorning a tale than as a matter of sober fact, a story is recounted about him as follows : A young man of parts who divided his attention between law and literature was seen by Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar reading John Morley's book *Compromise* soon after it appeared. Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar noticed the book and asked if it contained the latest cases on *Compromise* ; and when the truth was out, he is reported to have gravely reproved the junior for his failure to concentrate on the law.

Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar belonged to a family which had furnished to the public life of South India some great administrators and many worthy officials. Born in 1844, he, like many other young men of his days, entered Government service and was a Sub-Registrar for some time ; but he very early became an assiduous student of law and, appearing for the B.L. examination, he took the first place leaving behind T. Muthuswami Aiyar who stood second and who afterwards became one of the greatest of Indian Judges. Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar joined the profession in 1872 having served his apprenticeship under Mr. P. O. Sullivan

who had been Advocate-General of Madras and under whom my father was also an apprentice at a later date. Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar had only a few years to wait before he came to the front in the profession. He specialised in all branches of Hindu Law as well as in the complicated system of land tenures including inams and zamindaris. His career at the Bar coincided with a period of great legislative and administrative activities in respect of land tenures in the Madras Presidency and it was the time also when the succession to several zamindaris and validity of adoptions made to several families of note, became subjects of litigation. The enterprising Nattukottai community began to extend its banking activities from the place of their origin (Chettinad), in the Madurai and Ramnad Districts, all over the country and even beyond the seas. Commercial suits conducted by these Nattukottai firms began to be a regular feature of the various courts in the State and, within a few years, none of the great Nattukottai Chetti merchants or zamindars failed to retain Sir Bhashyam's services.

Amongst the predecessors of Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar were men like Mr. A. Ramachandra Aiyar who afterwards became Chief Justice successively in the Travancore and Mysore States, Raja T. Rama Rao and a kinsman of Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar, the Hon'ble Sadagopa Chariar. But Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar soon surpassed them, both in the extent of practice and in income. He was in constant demand not only on the Appellate Side of the Madras High Court but at all important stages of litigation in the Districts. In the eyes of the litigant, to have retained Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was almost to have ensured success.

In addition to practising in courts, Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was almost invariably consulted by important men on all occasions of domestic disputes, settlements of property and commercial and other legal transactions. It used to be said that no big zamindar or Chetty merchant would embark on a matrimonial venture without prior consultation with Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar. I have myself seen documents drafted by him which demonstrated that, unlike many who distinguished themselves in advocacy alone, he was also remarkable for his patience and thoroughness in the difficult but neglected art of conveyancing and draftmanship. Indeed, one of his notable features was the care he bes-

towed on the pleadings that he drafted or insisted on revising before being filed in court. His powers of draftmanship were soon recognised and at a very early period of his career, he was nominated as a member of the Madras Legislative Council. His skill as a draftsman of Legislative Bills was justly celebrated and although there was an Advocate-General (who was a European in those days) as well as a Government Pleader, the Madras Government very rarely piloted a Bill through the Legislative Council before it was scrutinised by Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar. Indeed, for many years, he may be said to have been a super Advocate-General; and it was well known that the actual Advocates-General were very discontented over this state of affairs. As a matter of curiosity it may be noted that Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar discovered, for the first time, that a Vakil was duly qualified to be Advocate-General; and later on, he actually became the first Vakil Advocate-General in India. In his days, there were a large number of barristers who practised both on the Original and the Appellate sides of the Madras High Court; and I remember, when I was a young man, a story told by Mr. A. Ramachandra Aiyar, mentioned above, that when he first handed a regular appeal and appeared before a bench of the Madras High Court, a question was put to him in a tone of surprise, "Are you really appearing without a barrister to lead you?" Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was one of the first lawyers who determined to break the supremacy of the barrister element, and he was instrumental in having a resolution passed by the Vakils' Association that Vakils should not appear with barristers. After he had made his name, he declined to appear in any case where a barrister who was entitled to lead him according to the Rules of Practice, also appeared. It may be said that Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar, Sir Sankaran Nair, my father C. R. Pattabhirama Aiyar and later on, Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri, were the lawyers who helped, by their talents, to eliminate the barrister element in the Madras High Court, although both, Sir Sankaran Nair and Sir Kumaraswami Sastri had many intimate barrister friends.

Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was not only continuously consulted by the Madras Government but he was regarded, very wrongly, as an indiscriminate supporter of the bureaucracy and the Govern-

ment. It was when, as Advocate-General, I had occasion to glance through several of the opinions that Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar had given to Government, both as a lawyer and as Advocate-General, that I discovered how fearless and independent his views were and how erroneous was the general opinion held of him that he was an undiscerning supporter of Government policies. Indeed, it may be said that it was he who generally influenced Government policy.

It was at a great personal sacrifice that he accepted the position of a Judge of the High Court in 1901. He knew that he had only a short period during which he could signalise his career as a judge. He was such a ripe legal scholar and had formed such definite opinions after mature consideration on many legal topics, that he took time by the forelock and insisted on what an unfriendly critic termed "spreading himself out". He seized every occasion to develop recondite theories of law; and the Law Reports bear witness to the comprehensiveness, the thoroughness and the detailed analysis which he brought to bear on variegated questions of law during the three years which alone was the period of his tenure as a High Court judge. He resumed practice at the Bar after his sixtieth year and he literally died in harness because in November 1908 he collapsed in the High Court after arguing a regular appeal before a Bench of the High Court.

Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar, as already indicated, had very few interests or hobbies outside law; but he was a man capable of deep and loyal friendships and it was in tune with his character that such friendships were few and carefully selected. He was simple as a child and, outside the law, was remarkable for his unaffectedness and naivete. Clad in a *dhoti* and a long dressing gown, he used to take long morning walks on the Luz Church Road, Mylapore, and from each house, somebody would join him and get the benefit of his sage talk and counsel, not unmingled with pleasant gossip. He deliberately kept away from political and social agitations; but his views, nevertheless, though expressed in private, were strong and uncompromising. Like Sir Rash Behari Ghosh, Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar's conversation and arguments were slow and deliberate and gave the appearance of doubt and hesitation; but, if someone took down what he stated, it

would be found that every one of his sentences was not only accurate and lucid but a brilliantly concise statement or proposition. He was not an orator like Eardley Norton, A. M. Bose or Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, but he was recognised all over India as a jurist of unparalleled eminence who could instinctively discover and expose fallacies and bad logic. His forte consisted in the development of legal principles without undue insistence on precedents. His system of argument is now practically extinct on account of the multifariousness and quantity of judicial decisions.

A remarkable feature of Sir Bhashyam Ayyangar was that he made very few notes and practically carried all his arguments in his head. The same characteristics distinguished him as a Judge. Sir Sivaswami Aiyar who succeeded him as Advocate-General stated, "One had only to listen to him for some minutes to feel the fascination of that masterly intellect growing on one. It was a privilege and a feast for one's intellect to hear him unravel the facts of a complicated case or expound a difficult question of law." Subsequent to his demise, the *Madras Law Journal* which was a keen critic of him in many respects, paid a tribute to him in which it was stated, "He had a kind heart behind an almost icy reserve of manner which sympathised with the difficulties or sorrows of those who were in contact with him." His judgments on the Hindu Law, doctrines of the joint family and adoption, on the rights of widows, and on what is known as the pious obligation to discharge ancestral debts are well-known and justly celebrated. On such a variety of subjects as the legal aspects of agricultural warranties in insurance, tenures, the relative jurisdiction of municipal authorities and governments, the significance and import of government grants and the enfranchisement of service inams, his judgments are classical. His independence was manifested in his well-known judgments on the inam tenure, the rights of the public in respect of processions on highways and the conditions appertaining to sanctions to prosecute. In a case of government interference with private rights in the agency tracts, he stigmatised the officials concerned as a flawless crowd. Although, as aforesaid, he very rarely participated in public life, his deep culture and wise views on education were manifested in his well-known Convocation Address to the Madras University. He insisted as early as 1893

that Indian universities should be not merely examining and degree conferring corporations but be centres of teaching and research. A noteworthy sentence may be quoted from that Address dealing with lawyers : "The anxiety of the client is concentrated solely on the result of the case but yours ought to be in the conduct of the case."

It was in his later years that he realised the need for hobbies and second interests in life ; and he advocated these elements of culture in his Convocation Address as well as what he called a much neglected virtue, "intellectual honesty and candour". He was generally taken to be conservative in outlook and, indeed, he often insisted that no progress in society can ever be enforced by revolution, either social or legislative. He, nevertheless, strongly combated the doctrine of Trusteeship held by the bureaucracy, and he added that the so-called dumb millions can be adequately represented by the educated Indians whose duty it is to enlighten the masses and uplift them. He never obtruded his social, political or religious views on others ; but his life, characterised by an equable temperament and abiding courtesy and kindness, was a demonstration of religion in practice. Very rarely can one come across such a combination of concentrated yet vast learning, of analytical skill with essential simplicity, self-respect and kindness.

## Sir C. Sankaran Nair

SIR C. SANKARAN NAIR bestrode the legal and the political stage in India for nearly half a century before he passed away in April 1934. He was a contemporary of my father and both of them, for several years, were in close contact and friendly rivalry as leaders of the Madras Bar on the Appellate side. I had, therefore, many opportunities of coming into touch with Sir Sankaran Nair. He and I also served, for a short while, in the Upper House of the Central Legislature, then called the Council of State.

Sir Sankaran Nair was a brilliant student of the Presidency College and he gained many distinctions during his scholastic career, winning the coveted Elphinstone Essay Prize. After taking his B.L. degree, Sir Sankaran Nair had the good fortune to serve his apprenticeship under Sir Horatio Sheppard who afterwards became a judge of the High Court. From his early professional days, he manifested that independence of spirit which was his uniform characteristic throughout his life. When, for instance, the Vakils' Association of Madras, at the instance of Sir V. Bhashyam Ayyangar, brought in a resolution that no High Court Vakil should engage a European barrister as his senior, Sir Sankaran Nair stood out in opposition. Though, for many years, his practice was confined to cases from the West Coast, later on, he gained a wider clientele; but from the beginning he combined the practice of the law with lively interest in public affairs. Very early in his career, he became the President of the Amraoti session of the Indian National Congress and in that capacity he spoke vehemently against the law of sedition then in force. Until he became a judge in 1904, he continued to attend all the sessions of the Congress.

Moving from Mylapore to Egmore, he became the leader of one of the two groups of Madras lawyers severally designated

the Egmore group and the Mylapore group, the former including Sir Sankaran Nair, Dewan Bahadur T. Rangachari, Mr. Kasturiranga Iyengar and Dewan Bahadur M. O. Parthasarathy Iyengar, and the latter headed by Sir S. Subramania Aiyar and Sir V. Bhashyam Ayyangar. Sir Sankaran Nair became Government Pleader and Public Prosecutor and conducted the well-known Sivakasi Riot case. He acted as a judge for a short time and succeeded Sir V. Bhashyam Ayyangar as Advocate-General.

Sir Sankaran Nair was very closely associated with the Social Reform Movement and advocated, as early as 1906, the formation of a Council for India to consider and promote measures of social legislation. Almost from the very beginning of his career he was a kind of stormy petrel; and his appointment as Advocate-General and as judge did not take place without considerable public agitation by vested interests. Both as an advocate and as a judge, Sir Sankaran Nair was noted for the clarity of his views and his forcible and forthright presentation of his often unorthodox opinions. As a judge he discouraged excessive reliance on case law and insisted on the discussion of first principles. But what earned special esteem for him was his fearless independence and his constant attempt to interpret the law in consonance with what he conceived to be the spirit of the changing times. Sir Abdur Rahim and Sir Sankaran Nair were the best judges in criminal cases that have presided over the Madras High Court. Sir Sankaran Nair was instrumental in bringing about the appointment of District Munsiffs by the High Court as a body and not by the civilian judges alone.

In the evidence he gave before the Public Service Commission and as a writer on social reform as well as on political matters, Sir Sankaran Nair was essentially a dissenter. It was in 1915 that he was appointed a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and held the portfolios of Law and, later on, Education. He was responsible for the appointment of the Sadler Commission and also for a wellknown dissenting minute wherein he insisted that education to be successful should be national. He appended two dissenting minutes to the Montague-Chelmsford Report and insisted that the Congress was a truly representative body and that partial reforms are bound to be unsatisfactory and ineffective. He firmly opposed the exclusive claim of the I.C.S.

to have Governors and Lieutenant-Governors chosen from its ranks ; and in a well-known dissenting minute, he emphasised that the Secretary of State was too often a merely passive instrument in the hands of the Civil Services. Being a land revenue expert himself, he took the view that the legislature should have complete powers over land policy. He did not hesitate openly to ally himself with what was then called the Non-Brahmin Movement ; but he demurred to the proposition that responsibility should be postponed until the disparity between the Brahmins and the Non-Brahmins ended.

Mr. Montague, at one time, stated that Sankaran Nair was an impossible person and that he was communicating to the Congress, official and secret information ; but it should be noted that, nevertheless, he appointed Sir Sankaran Nair as a Member of his own Council.

The Punjab rebellion of 1919 led to the Jallianwalabagh tragedy ; and Sir Sankaran Nair resigned on the issue of permitting lawyers to defend the accused charged under martial law. It is remarkable that even after his resignation as a Member of the Viceroy's Council and when he was appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State, the inflexible individuality and independence of Sir Sankaran Nair was further exemplified when he broke his connection with the Congress in 1922 after publishing the wellknown manifesto "Gandhi and Anarchy". The famous libel case of O'Dwyer vs. Sankaran Nair marked a crisis in the relationship between England and India. In 1928, Sir Sankaran Nair was appointed President of a committee formed to co-operate with the Simon Commission. Having left the Congress, he became a member of the Hindu Mahasabha. Sir Sankaran Nair's numerous and distinguished services as a lawyer, as a publicist, as a judge and as an administrator were conspicuous ; but, perhaps, his greatest contributions were in the domain of social reform, in his championship of the devolution of power into Indian hands, and in his active work for the freedom of his country in whatever situation he found himself.

## 17

### Sri V. Krishnaswami Aiyar

SRI V. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR was born in an orthodox family ; and he and his brother, Swaminatha Aiyar, who ultimately joined the judicial service, were both trained in the traditional Sanskrit learning. Krishnaswami Aiyar also distinguished himself by his proficiency in English and was, along with his contemporary, P. R. Sundara Aiyar, marked out for distinction from his early days.

Having taken the Law degree, Krishnaswami Aiyar apprenticed himself to R. Balaji Rao, one of the senior advocates of his days. During many years, success did not come to him in the profession which was, at that time, marked by the domination of leaders like V. Bhashyam Ayyangar, S. Subramania Aiyar, Eardley Norton, P. O. Sullivan, Wedderburn and Spring Branson. The barrister element monopolised the work on the Original Side and was also specially in request in the Criminal Courts.

It is reported of V. Krishnaswami Aiyar that, after a long period of waiting, he became desperate regarding his own career and cast about for a means of escape. Fortunately, the great gift of creating friendships which characterised him throughout his life had attracted to him P. R. Sundara Aiyar, who was working with S. Subramania Aiyar, a disciple of Dr. Annie Besant who, later, became a celebrated judge of the Madras High Court and Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University and who, in later life, made history by his well-known letter to President Wilson demanding India's freedom. Subramania Aiyar whose instinct for recognising and rewarding merit were well known, began to encourage V. Krishnaswami Aiyar.

The legal profession engenders great virtues though it also engenders temptations ; but in its early days, the Madras Bar was the nursery of high character as well as of legal acumen.

There have, however, been very few leaders of the Bar who, like S. Subramania Aiyar and P. O. Sullivan, actively searched for talent and whole-heartedly encouraged it. Indeed, it is said of Subramania Aiyar that, at the height of his practice, he used very often to tell his clients that he had no time to devote to their cases because of his other engagements and, therefore, he asked them to engage either V. Krishnaswami Aiyar or P. R. Sundara Aiyar. The latter, after a brilliant academic career, had attached himself to Subramania Aiyar's chambers and was one of his favourite juniors. Subramania Aiyar's clients were often told by him both Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundara Aiyar would not only do justice to their cases but that the particular subject involved in a litigation would be better dealt with by either of them than by Subramania Aiyar himself. In such circumstances, after a period of discouragement, both V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and P. R. Sundara Aiyar came to the forefront. In those days, the main litigation on the Appellate Side to which they attached themselves, was concerned with the problems of zamindaris, with complicated questions of Hindu Law including adoption, testamentary disposition, alienation and reversionary rights as well as with the land tenures of the country.

From about 1891, my father, C. R. Pattabhirama Aiyar, M. O. Parthasarathy Iyengar, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and P. R. Sundara Aiyar and, later on, C. Sankaran Nair, became the recognised leaders on the Appellate Side, ranking immediately after V. Bhashyam Ayyangar and S. Subramania Aiyar. All of them, namely my father, M. O. Parthasarathy Iyengar, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, P. R. Sundara Aiyar and later on, P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, became Assistant Professors or Professors of the Law College which, in those days, held evening classes to conduct which the leading members of the Bar were offered and accepted lectureships. It is a matter worthy of note that the great Justice Holloway himself, very often, used to meet young lawyers and law students and discuss questions of law with them at his house. In those days, some of the European judges and many leaders of the Bar like Norton and Sullivan were not only distinguished for their legal learning and general scholarship but for their anxious desire to help the younger generation.

P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar rose to eminence by slow progression.

His manner of delivery was deliberate and marked by great thoroughness and erudition; and, unlike V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, the force of his argument lay through dignified persuasiveness rather than torrential eloquence. Krishnaswami Aiyar's manner of speaking and his advocacy, like a tornado, swept hearers off their feet. His locution was marked by great force but, unlike many other lawyers, his advocacy though impetuous, was, nevertheless, characterised by the utmost care in preparation and by logically serried argument. Sundara Aiyar was even more thorough and minute in his preparation than Krishnaswami Aiyar. He did not and could not rise to the rhetorical levels of Krishnaswami Aiyar but his analytical faculty and erudition made him a fit adversary and competitor of Krishnaswami Aiyar.

Both my father and M. O. Parthasarathy Iyengar joined the Judicial Service, and Mr. N. Subramaniam, who was also one of the leaders of the bar, became a Government pleader. Thereafter, the field was absolutely clear for Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundara Aiyar and, from about 1895 until the date when he accepted the office of Member of the Governor's Executive Council in Madras, Krishnaswami Aiyar was the undoubted leader on the Appellate Side of the High Court, Sundara Aiyar being a close second.

Not content with his work at the Bar, Krishnaswami Aiyar threw himself into politics and became a close associate and valued friend of Gokhale, Wacha and Surendranath Bannerjee. He was highly respected by Sir Phirozeshah Mehta and entered Congress politics with a furore and enthusiasm which made him a notable figure in public meetings, conferences and assemblies and in the Congress debates of those days when polished speech, forcible delivery and convincing eloquence in the English language were recognised and generously applauded. In the organisational work of the Congress as well as in the actual conduct of the Congress sessions held in Madras and elsewhere, Krishnaswami Aiyar easily assumed unquestioned leadership. Sundara Aiyar and Sivaswami Aiyar belonged to the Congress but neither concentrated in it nor attained the supremacy that Krishnaswami Aiyar commanded. At that time also, Krishnaswami Aiyar who had already signalised himself by his careful nurturing of younger lawyers in their profession, began to train a number of political

workers. One of the men on whom he had his eye and whose deserved rise to pre-eminence in politics and public life he foresaw and assisted — V. S. Srinivasa Sastry — owed a great deal to Krishnaswami Aiyar's generous appreciation and assistance which were next only to the appreciation bestowed on him by Gokhale himself. Krishnaswami Aiyar joined Phirozeshah Mehta, Gokhale, Wacha and Lord Sinha to form the Moderate or Liberal Party in contra-distinction to Bepin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lokamanya Tilak and others who became known as Extremists. Though formally designated a Moderate, his moderation itself was suffused with so much of impassioned enthusiasm and so much of fervour that the designation appeared to be quite a misnomer in the case of Krishnaswami Aiyar. His speeches in the legislature and in provincial conferences in the Madras State and elsewhere were regarded as models of forcible phrase-making and of vigorous and logical exposition. The editor of the *Hindu* of those days, Kasturiranga Aiyangar, who was a contemporary of Krishnaswami Aiyar, Dr. T. M. Nair and several others held opposite views in politics and Krishnaswami Aiyar was a person who was, like most forceful personalities, the object of strident criticism as well as of lavish praise. He had always the gift of making friends and his friendships ranged from Sir Arthur Lawley, the Governor, Bishop Whitehead and Mrs. Whitehead to many other European and Indian men and women belonging to all classes and groups in the country.

Krishnaswami Aiyar's generosity was proverbial. He founded the Madras Sanskrit College, the Venkatramana Dispensary and the Mylapore Club and the Ranade Library. He greatly assisted the Ramakrishna Mission and his public and private benefactions were widespread and discerning. It was perhaps a pity that, at the height of his forensic and political career, the offer came to him from the Governor, who was a personal friend of his, of the membership of his Executive Council after the demise of the Maharajah of Bobbili. His work in that capacity was marked by much legislative and argumentative activity and he displayed statesmanship and strength of decision. He ignored criticisms which attached to him as little as water to a duck's back. He was honoured and highly regarded by the British Government and was invited to the Delhi Durbar in 1911 to receive a decora-

tion. He fell ill in Delhi after he was decorated with a C.S.I. and he died before he was 50 years of age. He was a man of warm domestic affections, deep and devoted comradeships and of unmatched loyalty. His temper was, by no means, sweet and he could not suffer fools gladly. His outbursts of indignation did not conduce to general popularity but those who could discern between gold and alloy knew that he came bright from the mint.

Having been V. Krishnaswami Aiyar's apprentice-at-law and, for a short time, a junior in his chambers and later on, having been associated with him in politics and in some of the institutions he founded, I had special opportunities of studying him at close quarters. He struck me as bearing a remarkable resemblance to Dr. Johnson — somewhat quick to take offence but equally ready to forgive and befriend. He was also essentially large-hearted and spontaneous. He was a man you could oppose and still could not refrain from admiring. Of him, as of Dr. Johnson, it may be said in the language of the poet :

What a banquet of memory, fact, illustration,  
In that innings-for-one that he called CONVERSATION !  
And you felt on the whole, though he tossed you and  
gored you,  
It was something, at least, that he had not ignored you.

P. R. Sundara Aiyar became judge after an almost unparalleled career of success at the Bar. He also died young. He was more serene and placid than his compeer, Krishnaswami Aiyar, and also less spontaneously generous ; but he too, displayed great gifts of discovering and advancing talent in the younger generation. It was the active and purposeful encouragement of Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundara Aiyar that led to the deserving rise in the profession and elsewhere of men like K. Srinivasa Aiyangar, T. R. Venkatrama Sastry, C. V. Anantakrishna Aiyar, S. Srinivasa Aiyangar and S. Varadachari and many others who rose to fame later on. T. R. Venkatrama Sastry obtained his training in the office of P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar and made his mark, though slowly, as a scholar in English and Sanskrit, a conscientious and upright man and a meticulously accurate and

convincing advocate. Krishnaswami Aiyar attached the highest value to his character and capacity and became one of his steadfast friends. Venkatrama Sastry's later career at the Bar, as Advocate-General and as one who unhesitatingly rejected what he considered was a needlessly truncated offer of a seat on the Governor's Executive Council, are matters of comparatively recent history. It was also characteristic of Krishnaswami Aiyar's catholicity that he actively befriended and openly appreciated the literary and dramatic gifts of V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar who was, by nature, a *rasika* and a *bhakta* of a mellow type and who typified almost an opposite temperament to that of Krishnaswami Aiyar. Masilamani Pillai, whose work in connection with the Pachappa's hostel can never be forgotten, and P. Sambanda Mudaliar, the pioneer dramatist and protagonist of the Suguna Vilasa Sabha, were also among those who attracted the notice and admiration of Krishnaswami Aiyar. Whether he was studying and arguing with Sanskrit and Tamil pandits in his house, or was conducting cases, or presiding over or speaking at meetings and conferences, or was engaged in lively conversation with a band of chosen intimates, Krishnaswami Aiyar was always characterised by forthright sincerity and freshness of outlook with which he combined a faculty of spontaneous friendship and affection.

Krishnaswami Aiyar was the centre of a large group of adherents and enthusiastically loyal friends like G. A. Natesan, G. Venkataranga Rao, A. S. Balasubramania Aiyar and last but not least, A. Krishnaswami Aiyar, his lifelong associate who was a loving friend as well as a dispassionate mentor.

S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, already referred to, was undoubtedly helped by his father-in-law, V. Bashyam Aiyangar as well as by V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundara Aiyar; but his meteoric rise in the profession was due less to such encouraging help than to his analytic gifts and his profound juristic equipment. He also displayed some of Krishnaswami Aiyar's qualities of forceful leadership in the politics of the country and became President of Congress; but with the exception of S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, the Madras Bar became more distinctly professional and more concentratedly technical and less public-minded after the days of Subramania Aiyar, Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sankaran Nair.

The legal profession of Madras and its public life can never afford to forget or ignore the conspicuous services rendered by the early protagonists of the Bar like A. Ramachandra Aiyar who, afterwards, became the Chief Justice of Mysore, Rajah T. Rama Rao, whose legal and public eminence in his days was immense, V. Bashyam Aiyangar, S. Subramania Aiyar, C. Sankaran Nair as well as Krishnaswami Aiyar, Sundara Aiyar, Sivaswami Aiyar, K. Srinivasa Aiyangar, T. Rangachari, R. Sadagopa Chari and S. Srinivasa Aiyangar. I deliberately refrain from dealing with the leading members of the Bar who are happily with us now.

## Kasinath Trimbak Telang

WHEN unveiling, at the Madras branch of the Servants of India Society, a portrait of the Right Honourable Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, I pointed out the significance of the life and life-work of men of his school of thought of whom Kasinath Trimbak Telang was one of the earliest as well as a most notable representative. I likened the present independent Republic of India to a beautiful specimen of architecture with its spires, towers and domes aspiring to the sky and its interior adorned with traceries, mural paintings and mosaics. I added that the significance of that building and its meaningful symbolism depended ultimately on the strength and stability of its foundations. The task of Dadabhai Naoroji, W. C. Bonerjea, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale and, not the least, that of Telang was that of preparing the ground and laying the foundations for the structure that has now arisen and in which is enshrined the faith, the dreams and aspirations of the India of today. The labours of these men were utilised and supplemented by Dr. Annie Besant and the group that surrounded her, who were imbued with passionate zeal for freedom and whose contact with the masses and whose pioneer work of constitution-building are now apt to be forgotten by the generation that is growing up.

On the occasion of the birth centenary of Telang we may remind ourselves of what the great Ranade once remarked when speaking of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He said that in the case of Gods, saints and *rishis*, their birthdays are celebrated, while in the case of mere men, the anniversaries of their death are commemorated. Developing this thesis, Srinivasa Sastri, delivering an address during the Ranade centenary celebrations emphasised that it is incumbent upon us to keep in mind the ideal of the

*gurus* of the past ; and he said that “ by reviving our ancient traditions we may hope to instil into the minds of our young generations not only the lessons of devotion to learning, diversity of studies and loyalty to the preceptor, but a correct appreciation of the forces which are at work in the wider world outside. By realising the dignity of man, we shall correct all tendencies towards exclusiveness and subservience to outworn customs.”

Telang compressed into his short life of 45 years so much reading, writing, thought and action that, figuratively, we pant for breath as we follow the story of his career. Versatility and a wide range of reading characterised him from the start and made his conversation the delight as well as the envy of his contemporaries. At 17 years of age, he took his B.A. degree and, at 19, he passed the M.A. examination. In the same year, he completed his legal tests, and at 22, he had already qualified himself for the legal profession. He was a Fellow of his college for five years and then laid the foundations of an accurate and comprehensive scholarship. He soon acquired the command of an expressive English style ; and in his speeches and writings, he was noted for his freedom from levity and vulgarity, though he was endowed with a considerable sense of humour.

Starting under discouraging auspices, he was always self-reliant ; and when he made up his mind to join the Bar, he declined the tempting offer of a Headmastership of a Government High School made to him before he was 25. He underwent a self-imposed apprenticeship to public life by a sedulous study of parliamentary oratory, at a time when men like Disraeli and Gladstone were adorning the House of Commons. The generation to which Telang belonged was brought up on the intellectual nutriment furnished by Mill, Huxley, Tyndall and Herbert Spencer as well as Mathew Arnold and Browning ; and his temperament and mode of thought led him to cultivate moral and social discipline, in addition to the habit of questioning the fundamentals of all problems which was characteristic of that period.

From early youth, Telang devoted much of his time to a study of classical Sanskrit and, especially, of the Vedantic school of philosophy ; and by the time he was 25, he had already entered the lists of controversy with his essays entitled “ Was the *Rama-*

*yana* copied from Homer? ", " Was the *Gita* copied from the Bible? " and the " Date of Sankaracharya ". In these essentially polemical essays, his critical faculty was displayed to advantage, as well as his keenness in the detection of flaws in an adversary's argument. Telang's style, unlike Ranade's, was studiously devoid of emotional appeals, and his method in such essays as his contributions to the Age of Consent controversy, was severely logical. With such gifts, he succeeded very early in the legal profession and made his mark among his contemporaries, some of the most prominent of whom were celebrated barristers. Amongst his contemporaries were three men who were to be his co-workers and whose names will ever be cherished in India, namely, Ranade, Mehta and Tyabji. That great English judge and scholar, Sir Raymond West, remarked of Telang that he moved morally and dialectically on a platform, as elevated as that of his rivals although, he added, that there was, at times, an over-subtlety in his argument. Telang specially made his mark in the region of Hindu Law, where his Sanskrit scholarship and his acquaintance with the essential spirit of the *Smritis* stood him in good stead. During his life at the Bar, moreover, he displayed that anxiety which he never ceased to display for bringing law into line with modern needs and the complexities of a developing social life.

Telang accepted a judgeship at the age of 39 and, thereby, in the opinion of his contemporaries, mistakenly cut short a great public career ; but, even as a judge, he strenuously enunciated the principles for which he always stood. He insisted that the Hindu Law is not a mere farrago of arbitrary rules, but a coherent system based on logical foundation and that it is in accordance with the Hindu methods of interpretation to gather together the principles which can be collected with reasonable certainty. As counsel in the celebrated case of Rakhmabhai he had pleaded for the elimination of the husband's right to restitution, and sought to emphasise that the Hindu Law contained no remedy for the enforcement of any right of restitution by imprisonment of the wife. He argued that such a decision alone would remedy the evils of early marriage. As a lawyer and as a judge, he helped to formulate what he considered to be the basic ideas underlying the canons of Hindu Law.

It was during the height of his practice that Telang acquired

a parallel reputation as an erudite scholar ; and his two essays on the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavat Gita*, in refutation of the theories of Weber and Lorringer, are truly remarkable productions. He gave a conclusive reply to Professor Weber and showed that the *Ramayana* was older than Patanjali and that it was absurd to regard it as a Buddhist saga dovetailed to the Homeric story of the Trojan war. He reviewed the question of the originality and antiquity of the *Gita* and proved that it ranges itself as a member of the Upanishad group and must be dated not later than the 3rd century B.C., and probably much earlier. He also dealt with the *Sanstusujatiya* which he regarded as coeval with the *Bhagavat Gita*. His critical faculty is, perhaps, best demonstrated in his essays on the *Anugita* and the date of Sankaracharya, and on the *Sankaravijaya* of Anandagiri and in his Introduction to *Bhartrihari*.

As a scholar, Telang is best known by his researches on the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* ; and, in his well-known paper in answer to Professor Weber, he manifested a deep knowledge of the principles of historical criticism. As already stated, he successfully controverted Mr. Weber's theory that the source of the *Ramayana* was to be found in a Buddhist story which, in turn, was borrowed from Homer. His metrical translation of the *Gita* and his refutation of the theory that it was adapted from the Bible, are, perhaps, his greatest contribution to Indian scholarship, although his work in establishing the date of Sankaracharya and of the *Ramayana* in relation to Patanjali are also well known. Telang found time also to edit works like Bhartrihari's *Niti* and *Vairagya Shataka* and the *Mudra Rakshasa*, and to translate certain European classics into Marathi, as well as to deal with the social and religious aspects of the Marathi history.

It is not, however, so much as a lawyer or as a judge, that we shall remember Telang. He was constantly active in the field of social reform and his attitude was thus enunciated by himself : " You must rely more on a long, patient, toilsome process of diverting the feelings, or, to express it differently, making the soil unfit for the growth of misplaced sentiments and misunderstood traditions." It cannot be denied that, unlike the great pioneers of social reform, Telang and Ranade were not fiery prophets but gentle and persuasive, though convinced propagandists. Thus it

was that Telang, on some occasions, was led to compromise with the faith that was in him. We find this temperament illustrated in two of his lectures at the Hindu Union Club which he founded in order to bring about friendly social relations between the several sections of the Hindu community. In his lectures on the 'Importance of Shastra and Custom' and 'Compromise on Social Matters', as well as in his reply to Malabari's notes on 'Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood', his opposition to outworn orthodoxy was clearly manifested; but so was his disinclination to take precipitate measures. Whereas he insisted, during the Age of Consent controversy, that the British Government had no right to hold its hand and put forward a plea of *non-possumus*, on the other, he was an avowed disbeliever in excessive legislation; and it must be admitted that, imbibing the *laissez-faire* atmosphere of his times, he fought against what he called "hot-house growth". Telang always insisted on the duty of the State in respect of social reform, and one of his notable sayings was: "The liberty of man consisted in being forced to find out the right path and to walk thereon." His greatest contribution to social reform was the championship of the woman's cause, of mass education and the elevation of the depressed classes; but, it is characteristic of him that he often qualified his assertions with the statement that so long as there are differences in social usages, it would be wrong to proceed too fast. He has himself described his efforts thus:

"We must work as ardently as if our efforts were to be crowned with success at once. But, on the other hand, we must be content to take the fruits as they come, in the fulness of time, and not be despondent or impatient if the customs which have stood for centuries do not at once fall of a heap at the blast of our trumpet. The true reformer has not to write upon a clean slate."

Telang's motto was in line with Ranade's, and the latter has declared that

"the reformer's work is more often to complete the half-written sentence. We cannot break with the past altogether."

It is a rich inheritance and we have no reason to be ashamed of it. But while respecting the past, we may attack the parasitical growth which has encrusted it."

Telang's mental attitude and his fervent inclinations were towards a literary career and, throughout his short life, he was constantly at work, learning, reading, writing and speaking on economic, political and social matters. He displayed a wide and comprehensive knowledge of the *Smritis* in dealing with the relative importance of *Shastras* and customs, and he was quick to note and point out that, throughout our history, important changes were introduced in the canons of the *Shastras* by high-souled men, like Drona, to suit new conditions. He insisted that, if we do not restore to our *Smritis* the life and elasticity which they possessed in the palmiest days of Hindu society, our religion will cease to be a living force.

Telang translated into action his belief that a new purpose should be given to the life of every educated Indian, and that the tranquil spirit of his heritage must gather fresh momentum for action from the energising knowledge of the West. His work in the Senate of the Bombay University was based on this ideal; and his minute of dissent to the Education Commission Report is only one of the many contributions made by Telang in the field of higher education, which he insisted should partake of the characteristic of the Eastern and the Western civilisations. It is, of course, to be expected that, in such matters as religious instruction in schools and colleges and State and private enterprises, Telang, like his contemporaries, emphasised the importance of private enterprise and home influences.

Telang lived during a period of keen aspiration for political rights, but also a period when England's good faith was wholly relied upon. It was once observed that the political work of Dadabhai Naoroji and Bhau Daiji was manifested in an "animated moderation consistent with independence of spirit and informed criticism". Telang's contribution to politics was based, like that of most of his contemporaries, on an insistence on the pledges given by English statesmen, from time to time. But, those methods underwent profound modifications and became outworn, as the outlook and attitude of the British Government

also changed. By a curious fatality, English statesmen began to qualify their promises and to limit their implementation; and, even well-meaning statesmen like Montagu, were forced, later on, by a short-sighted public opinion in Britain, to whittle down their programme, and they formulated proposals for belated reforms which were wholly unsuited to the advancing ideas of this country. Fostered in the spirit of Victorian liberalism and influenced by the semi-aristocratic bent of their own minds and their belief in courteous persuasion, Telang, Phirozeshah Mehta, Tyabji and Gokhale resorted to methods of advocacy which, inevitably, yielded place to the eloquent and rousing mass appeals of Dr. Besant. But these latter proved equally infructuous and did not convince the statesmen of England. The average Englishman prides himself on being a sportsman and loves boxing for its own sake. He, instinctively, respects and is willing to deal squarely with an opponent who attacks him vigorously and gives two blows for his one. He is rather frigidly appreciative of his friends and allies, and it is a profound remark that was made by a French writer that you can never get anything done by an Englishman, unless you first knock him down. This aspect of the English character was instinctively sensed by Mahatma Gandhi and his boycott of Lancashire products and his concomitant cult of the *charka*; and, finally the practical workings of his doctrine of non-violence that united courage and self-sacrifice with a baffling practice of non-resistance which nullified the effects of repressive action, puzzled and ultimately conquered the English Government. The historic and self-abnegatory gesture of Britain in abandoning its control over India was, of course, accelerated by the consequences of the war which impoverished and disabled Europe, and England in particular, and made impossible the older type of Imperialism. But the work of Dr. Besant, and indeed, the labours of Mahatma Gandhi would have been infructuous if the generation of Telang had not built up public opinion and helped to rouse and vindicate the self-respect of Indians, and reiterated their insistent demand for equality with Englishmen. The transformation of a personal form of Government and the inauguration and improvement of the legislatures, were their immediate and, at that time, difficult objectives. Until 1889 when he became a judge, Telang con-

centrated on the evils of the bureaucratic system including its defiant attitude towards even reasonable public opinion, as evidenced by the reactionary measures of Lord Lytton. In his speeches on the Vernacular Press Act, Telang inveighed against patriarchal rule and personal government and stressed the fundamental need of a reign of law and of the liberty of speech and thought. In a pathetic passage in one of his speeches, Telang made this observation :

“Wishing as we do, from whatever motive, for the continuance of the British rule, we are anxious that our rulers should keep the public contented. We venture to say that the ruling race, in spite of its boast, has not succeeded in understanding us.”

It is, perhaps, in the caustic debates on the Illbert Bill that Telang rose to his greatest height. “One great lesson”, he said, “to be deduced from the history of Rome, is that all conquering nations must, to render their Government suitable and permanent, divest themselves of their privileges by sharing them with the conquered people. If Britons now fail to carry out those lessons, I should be sorry for them.”

No sketch of the career of Telang would be complete without advertance to the patient and constructive work in connection with the Bombay Association and the East India Association, in which Dadabhai Naoroji, Telang, Mehta and Tyabji collaborated. As a member of the Legislative Council, he resisted excessive Government action and interference with the free play of individual will. With this background, Telang occupied himself, from its inception, with the work of the Indian National Congress, which held its first session in Bombay in 1885; and until 1889 when he became a judge, Telang's part in its deliberations was of a notable and formative character. Believing, as most of his friends did, in the collective wisdom of the British Parliament, he insisted on the abolition of the India Council, and the reform and expansion of the Indian Legislature. It was on the Congress platform that Telang's great speeches on cotton duties were delivered; but the best example of his forcible reasoning is contained in his paper on Free Trade and Protection from the Indian point of view, read at the Sassoon Institute. It would

not be just to reproach Telang or his confreres, Mehta, Wacha, Surendranath Bannerjee and Gokhale, for their advocacy of the necessary gradualness of reforms, nor for their being content with the second best, when it was offered to them. They represented the spirit of the times, but everyone of these men was a bold and fearless champion of what was considered to be the right and true course of action. As Telang himself remarked, "a man may renounce his right, but he can never renounce his duty". This is true both of the State and of the individual. It can truly be declared of Telang that he never renounced his duty and that duty he discharged in a spirit of large-hearted charity and mellow courtesy.

It is not as a Sanskrit or Marathi scholar or as a student of Western literature and thought that Telang will be best remembered. His name will be cherished for his combination of culture and scholarship with the sturdy and fearless championship of the causes that he believed in. In his Commemoration Address on what he called "The Telang School of Thought", Telang's great elder contemporary, Ranade, characterised him as "a fine type of man who felt proud of the past and hopeful of the future, a disciplined man and one who sought liberation for his country, not in one department of life or one sort of activity or one sphere of thought". Telang, like Ranade, stood for fiscal, economic, industrial and political development. That work of liberation is still going on; but we, who are enjoying the fruits of the work of our predecessors, can, and should, never forget Telang of whom a European contemporary said: "To a large section of his countrymen, Telang became an evangelist. They looked to him for guidance on all graver occasions of national and social life."

One of the bye-products of British administration was that it checked the play of various forces which were working from within the community and used to bring about notable modifications from within. Men like Telang re-introduced this ferment by their spirit of enquiry which was, nevertheless, as tolerant as it was subtle. Telang once quoted Bhaskarachariar's maxim: "In astronomy, scripture is decisive only when it concurs with demonstration"; and this was Telang's own guiding principle.

At the present juncture, in spite of cataclysmic happenings and portents throughout the world and the rise of mighty and

strange forces whose ultimate trend we can only dimly envisage, the reactions of India vis-a-vis the outer world and also with reference to her internal situation must be of absorbing and anxious interest to all thinking men. From this point of view, it may not, perhaps, be unprofitable to learn some lessons from the life and example of men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Mehta, Telang, Gokhale and Srinivasa Sastri who united, with a deep study of political and economic problems, a fervent patriotism, although that patriotism was manifested differently from that of their successors. It is easy to criticise those who look to the past and to stigmatise with the Roman satyrist, the "laudator temporis acti" — the man who praises the past. The role of such a person is specially difficult when history is moving as fast as it is now, and when there is a very widespread restlessness and impatience with past precedents and past leaders. It is not necessary to resort to theories of psycho-analysis to realise the chronic rebelliousness naturally manifested by one generation towards the previous one, and it is not every type or race that can emulate the English temperament and venerate and keep alive, to the utmost possible extent, the past and its vestiges and even its conventions, while, simultaneously, progressing towards new ideals. The Memorial to Churchill in a House of Commons with a predominant Labour majority, and the survival of old pageantries and public memorials in England, are, characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon; but, in this respect, the British deserve to be copied.

The Constitution of India has made a deliberate and notable departure from the past. Not only has a Sovereign Republic been created, but there have been introduced the comprehensive sections dealing with Fundamental Rights and the ancillary remedies as well as wide-ranging Directive Principles. India has accepted the ideal of a Welfare State in direct and active operation, charged with the duty of supervising and regulating the activities and behaviour of the citizens in many departments hitherto regarded as outside the scope of Government. Telang and his contemporaries and Srinivasa Sastri, who was once even described as an extremist among moderates and a moderate among extremists, may have found it difficult to adjust themselves at once to the new situation, although one feels sure that they would

have soon adapted themselves to the impact of the new forces operating in the world of today. But, at this point, it may be advisable to analyse as, no doubt, Telang would have done, the present tendencies, with a view to guard against possible excesses inherent in the march of events.

Bernard Shaw wrote in *Time and Tide* that by democracy he meant a social order aiming at the greatest available welfare for the whole population and not for a class. He emphasised that unless the people can choose their leaders and rulers and can revoke their choice at intervals long enough to test their measure by results, the Government will be a tyranny exercised in the interests of whatever class or castes or mobs or cliques have this choice. He attacked the British party system on the ground that members hardly ever vote on the merits of a measure, but always on the question whether the reigning party is to remain in office, both sides risking the loss of their seats and incurring heavy expenditure and trouble if they unseat the Government.

In dealing with the workings of a democracy inaugurated under a Constitution like ours, it must be remembered that men generally follow a leader with a view to the acquisition of political and social power by the group which he commands, and the impulse of submission is just as real as the impulse of command. The problem of Government is, first of all, to secure willing acquiescence from the governed while, on the other, the problem of the citizen is to make the Government take account not only of its own interests but the interests of those whose life it regulates. Bertrand Russell has stressed that "tradition, religion, fear of foreign enemies and the natural desire of most men to follow a leader, are factors operating in favour of the Government".

For the protection of the governed, democracy is the most effective method under present conditions; but democracy can be successful only in so far as Government is obliged to respect public opinion, though, in all emergent cases, such opinion can often be expressed only retrospectively. The ordinary canons of democracy do not operate where a revolutionary situation arises. Furthermore, democracy can only act through elected representatives and cannot be sure that, in an unlooked-for contingency,

the representatives will adequately reflect real public opinion. The danger that has arisen in many democracies is that the wishes of Parliament may, in certain cases, be opposed to those of the majority of the nation and, if the Parliament in question has force behind it, the majority may be thwarted.

In the days of the "City States" in Greece and Italy, practically all the citizens assembled in the market place and voted personally on each issue. When the State was enlarged, the country was governed not by the people at large, but by selected representatives who soon exercised considerable power. At present, owing to the introduction of broadcasting and television and the growth of newspapers and numerous journals, even large countries have begun to resemble the City States, and there is a kind of personal contact between Governments at the Centre and voters at a distance. It also follows that propagandist devices which were formerly confined to the periods of election, can now be uniformly and continuously employed, especially with a Government in control of the Press and of broadcasting.

There is another aspect which must not be lost sight of, namely, that the voter in a populous democracy has little sense of personal power and is tempted not to vote or express his opinion at all. The same danger arises in great industrial undertakings where the shareholder, though theoretically all-powerful, is, in practice, impotent. "An elective system", Telang said, in one of his speeches, "is only a machinery, and to derive good results from it, it must be worked by good men. An elective system does not create good electors and good representatives. If a good system of election were conceded, the duty which we shall have to discharge will be greater and more exacting." Ultimately, the success of democracy depends on the character of the people who are the rulers. As has been well said, it may abolish the danger of caprice on the part of a single person, but it gives full reign to the expression of human nature. It is only, so long as the character of those who work democracy remains at a high level, that it would succeed. It was this consideration that impelled Rousseau to declare that democracy is a form of government suitable only to small communities. The larger the population, the less is the power of each person, and the smaller the value of his vote.

In his *Democracy and Reaction*, Hobhouse observes: "All that the ordinary voter feels about a given act of Government is that it is an act of men to whose return to power he contributed one vote out of some millions; it may be three or four years ago when, probably, quite other questions were under discussion and whom he will not be able to dislodge until perhaps two or three more years have passed by which time, again, other questions have come up". Thus, it happens that in many democracies power is separated from responsibility, and leaders and people sometimes judge an issue by different standards, the people too often, judging sentimentally, and the rulers by reference to practical expediency. There is another aspect that cannot be ignored. When democratic politicians are elected for short periods, as they must be, in order to prevent their possible abuse of power, the leaders are, as in the case of France and some other countries, unable to pursue a long-term policy as Governments are transient in duration and the easily roused and temporary rivalries and passions of political parties, create and break Governments and Coalitions, from time to time. In the result, it may be stated that democracy operates best where there is a strong national character and tradition. In *Man's Quest for Significance*, Lewis Way enunciates the doctrine that the best conditions for this form of Government are found when minor differences can be crystallised into broad streams of conservative and progressive opinion whose partisans are of nearly equal strength in the constituencies but of whom one has, for the time, a working majority. Where such a state of things does not exist, and where differences of a genuine kind are not present, they are often manufactured; and ultimately, what is called a caucus arises which, inevitably leads to grave abuses.

The obligations of a Welfare State have been accentuated by recent happenings. As is justly pointed out in the "Colombo Plan" for the cooperative economic development of South East Asia, changes have taken place on a scale unprecedented in world history. Independent Governments have come into being supported by democratic institutions. The horizon of thought and action, in the economic as well as in the political field, has been extended. The peoples of Asia have long felt the pressure of poverty and hunger and the new Governments are grappling with

the problem of promoting the indispensable economic improvement. The political stability of the area and, indeed of the world is possible only in conditions of economic progress involving a great increase of production and the raising of the standards of living. All these tasks involve large-scale planning by the State; and such planning has its undeniable advantages as also its drawbacks. Effective planning is possible only when subversive and disruptive forces are under strict control and the danger of the communistic movement lies, not so much in what may be theoretically understandable ideology but in its intrinsic doctrine of strife as an essential element of political and social existence. Communist parties contain, no doubt, a genuine proportion of idealists; but, in essence, they appeal to the frustrated and the impoverished. The attraction of this philosophy of politics is that it raises the significance of what has been termed 'motiveless cypher' which is the modern voter. It also satisfies the exasperated craving of persons who are oppressed, or think they are oppressed, to shatter the world to bits and remould it to their hearts' desire. The trouble is that the shattering is generally not followed by any remoulding nor are the hearts' desires clearly formulated or consistent. In a modern Democratic State, the issues that arise for solution are increasingly complex and, therefore, the political power and capacity of the electorate diminishes. One result is the growth of a bureaucracy, and the other is an increasing gap between the rulers and the ruled. When such a gap arises, newspapers and organs of public opinion, too often, become a channel for what has been termed 'organised clamouring' which becomes the only form of political expression allowed to the people at large. In all democracies, moreover, as time passes, the emphasis which was originally laid on liberty, is shifted to the ideal of equality. The first phase degenerates in many instances to impatience with authority and what is regarded as excessive individualism. Town-planning, for instance, becomes impossible when each house is separately owned, and a few owners may prevent indefinitely any scheme for improvement. As a reaction, the majority becomes more and more impatient of those who resist its desires, insists upon breaking through what they term red-tape, and ultimately matures plans for acquisition without compensa-

tion. A mentality of intolerance against the assertive individual ensues. Already, the interpretation by the courts of our Constitution, has given rise to difficult problems concerned with the security of the State which has to be safeguarded side by side with the fullest latitude for the liberties of the people and their fundamental rights, as declared by the Constitution.

On a survey of all these considerations, the main question that constantly arises for solution is, whether the power of the State is to be used to encourage individuality or collectivity; whether the attitude of being taken care of by the State is preferable to the attitude of independence. On the whole and after much experience, instructed opinion is veering to the position that no system of Government which neglects the individual is worth creating or preserving. At the same time, the individual will must be reinforced by tradition and prescription, in order that he should recognise the limitations on his self-expression. Herein lies the value of spiritual and religious training and tradition, whose absence or curtailment is responsible for much of the evil that we see around us. In essence, under vastly different circumstances and in a different environment, these were the maxims preached, and the practice inculcated, by those past leaders of India of whom Telang was one of the most distinguished representatives.

## 19

### Mahadev Govind Ranade

MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE was born in 1842. A few years before that date, Macaulay had started his deadening, though well-meant, educational curriculum for Indian schools. The dress, the deportment and the language of the Englishman became the standard for the Indian. During several decades, many so-called educated Indians used to wear fashionable, but uncomfortable frock coats, top-hats, stifling dinner costumes with high collar and stiff-fronted shirts. A story was told of an English traveller in West Africa who, though he lived in the midst of an isolated forest, insisted on a stiff shirt and black tie at dinner time. Eminent Indians who had lived in England, like Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, were almost as sartorially exacting. What was true of the outer vesture was true of the inner make-up of India between 1842 and 1890. The average Indian thought wistfully in terms of European food and dress and European outlook. The great orator and politician, Surendranath Bannerjee, one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, says in his *Autobiography* that as soon as he returned from England, he thought that the best thing that an Indian could do was to demonstrate his complete emancipation from the thralldom of orthodox custom. He even thought that beef was needful to make Indians strong enough to compete with the English. Such was the background at the time when Ranade was born. Macaulay had insisted that the Indian educational system, based on a few pages of Shakespeare and other noted English writers, was more significant and greater in value than all the recorded literature of India. He said that it was a positive disservice to the country that it should be allowed to be nurtured on the extravagant and deleterious classics when all the resources of European civilisation were at their disposal.

Mahadev Govind Ranade who became an authentic path-finder, went through the usual course of study which most of the bright young men of those days undertook. He was the favourite pupil of Alexander Grant, a discerning European professor of his college, whose contemporaries were dedicated teachers like Elphinstone and Powell of Madras and Porter of Kumbakonam. At that time, to be noticed by an Englishman and to be regarded as reaching a higher level than a purely memorising pedant, was to attain to prominence. The lawyer on the look-out for patronage from clients and encouragement from judges, students hoping for recognition from principals, felt a thrill of exultation when they were commended. A foreign degree earned without much intellectual travail, but after considerable financial outlay, counted far more than the degree obtained under the meticulous discipline of humdrum teaching.

Ranade was one of the first to arouse the spirit of nationalism in India by his revealing researches into Mahratta history and his vindication of Shivaji's character, by exploding many unfounded beliefs that surrounded the life of Shivaji and besmirched his reputation. He then returned to economics. He had, in those days, to emphasise and to stress and to re-stress that, in the mysterious dispensation of Providence, it may, perhaps, be given to India not only to produce raw materials for manufacturing industries elsewhere, but to industrialise herself and stand shoulder to shoulder with the other self-reliant and progressive nations of the world. He was one of the first economists to fight against the *laissez-faire* doctrine, which was indulged in by prosperous nations who built up an invulnerable supremacy in trade and commerce so that, under the blessings of gracious Providence, they may rule not only the seas but the markets of the world.

However, it is not so much as a historian, nor even so much as an economist or essayist, but as a compelling and persuasive personality, that Ranade counted. It was one of the misfortunes of India that, having inherited, nay, originated, the system of *Guru-Sishya Parampara* (the tradition of preceptor and pupil in Forest Universities), and the creation of *Gurukula*, none of our recent social and political leaders had built up a school, as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle did, though they had signalled themselves in various directions. In England, they had the school

of Darwin, of Herbert Spencer, of Bacon and of Newton. We had, in the distant past, the School of Panini, of the great commentators and philosophers, from Janaka and Yagnavalkya, to Sankara and Ramanuja. After the fifteenth or the sixteenth century, India was, intellectually, torpid and largely imitative.

The first and most conspicuous modern attempt to found a school of politics and a line of disciples was made by Ranade, and it is that aspect of Ranade's career which needs and deserves emphasis. Ranade rose, in the judicial service, to the position of a High Court judge. From his youth, he threw himself into the work of social reform, and he was one of the founders of the Prarthana Samaj, a leading institution of Poona. He braved many attacks from persons who denounced him as a rationalist and atheist. In his days, people dared not talk much about political reform. Ranade was present at social conferences which, generally, preceded or succeeded the Indian National Congress of which, however, he could not, owing to his official position, be a member; but he was one of its unseen architects; and one could find his handiwork in the Draft Resolutions that came up for discussion before that body. He desired to leave behind him a self-reliant group of persons, bound by ties of laborious work and devoted political service, to assert the claims and to vindicate the dignity and self-respect of India. In social conferences, his speeches breathed the loftiest patriotism, avowedly non-political, but inescapably political, in the outcome; and, in the labours of the Congress itself, he continued to play the part of mentor. But, more than all, he was the *Guru* and inspirer of Gokhale. Politics, in those days, was somewhat different from the politics of today. Then, the first sod had to be turned, and the roads had to be formed and the goal was beyond sight. The bits of granite were sharp and numerous. The cementing was not there. Rhetoric alone did not establish one's title. Ranade insisted on careful documentation and statistics as the foundation of all theories of Political Economy and History. Mass appeals were not known in those days. Public meetings, then, were not as big as many committee meetings today. Some of us, in those days, counted ourselves singularly fortunate if we had an audience of fifty. Also, too often, we relied on the literary graces of a foreign language and our resolutions were balanced, ponderous and academic. We

had, furthermore, to keep an eye on the sedition sections of the Penal Law.

But, having said so much on the debit side, let us now count up the reckoning on the credit side. We could not build an argument on clichés and on slogans and be satisfied. We could not use any particular catchword like "Colonialism" or "Imperialism" or "Inquilab Zindabad", and think that we have done our bit, feeling perfectly satisfied in our minds that we had started a train which would fire the gun powder. We had really to endeavour to be encyclopaedic in our chosen field of study. We had not much of a following; but certainly, we had to convince ourselves and a select and critical few. In the democracy of the present and the future, we depend upon our success in moving and enthusing great masses of men. People like Ranade and Gokhale sought to convince through the mind, and thereafter, came conviction to the heart. Of course, it was then not the politics of adult suffrage and extended democracy.

Beginning with Mahadev Govind Ranade, going through the names of Lal Mohan Ghose, Ananda Mohan Ghose, Pandit Malaviya, Surendranath Bannerjee, Gokhale and D. E. Wacha, down to our own times, we find that there have been great men who, quietly and patiently, built up the framework of Indian politics, having laid its foundation on secure soil. In this laborious task, Ranade's contribution was not spectacular, nor widely advertised, but was massive and creative. Gokhale, the disciple of Ranade, was a typical parliamentarian, anxious to convince his opponent through reason, willing to compromise, but not willing to give up essentials.

We have now achieved independence, largely as a result of methods and policies intrinsically different from those of Ranade and Gokhale and the so-called Moderate School. The combative period of non-cooperation and satyagraha have now been succeeded by the era of planning and large scale industrialisation and astronomically expanding financial commitments and outlays. Public administration has become a specialised branch of knowledge as also has business management of private enterprise. In the present era, the lessons taught by Ranade and his disciples, like Gokhale and D. E. Wacha, and the Poona economists and historians, are not only timely, but topical.

Politics is an unending struggle and it is, too often, a game of the second best. It is still true that compromise is of the essence of political transactions. In the game of present-day politics, apart from the management of crowds and caucuses and groups and deft bargaining, India has a great deal to learn. We need a great deal more of organisation, and organisation needs continuous loyalty to principles more than to persons as well as unity of impulse and instructed aspiration. We cannot afford to forget those patriots, those path-finders, those light-bearers, who put India on the sure and certain road to self-fulfilment by their study, reflection and research. Politics had been transformed with the inauguration of Mahatma Gandhi's great and irresistible programme of mass appeal for which Dr. Besant and Tilak paved the way. As a result of the very transformation and its fulfilment, we have arrived at a stage in our political and economic progress when consolidation, organised and fruitful research and instructed thought and comprehensive planning are not superfluous, but essential. Ranade is, therefore, neither out of date nor functionless. He speaks to us today as an invaluable guide, warner and inspirer.

## Bal Gangadhar Tilak

TILAK was primarily a man of action whose chief characteristics were his selflessness and his courage. He was, in addition, a brilliant student of Sanskrit and Mathematics and from his earliest years concentrated on a study of the Vedas, especially of the *Rigveda*, as well as of the later products of the Indian genius. By heredity and tradition he belonged to those who were resentful of superficial criticism of Indian scriptures and institutions. And although he approved of widow marriages and of sea voyage and ignored many other lately introduced taboos, he was yet fiercely intolerant of the British Government's patronising attempts at social uplift and even more intolerant of Indians who followed the European lead. He thus came to be known as the champion of orthodoxy. Side by side with this aspect of his life, there existed in Tilak an inherent passion to work for Swadesi and Swaraj; and indeed, he was one of the first to proclaim that India should attain complete independence and be free from all outside interference in politics and in the ordering of her social life. In this task to which he deliberately set himself and for which he underwent many sacrifices (having been convicted for sedition on three occasions and having given rise to three leading cases on the law of sedition), he was guided by his own theory of *Karma-Yoga*.

Tilak's grandfather had become a *sanyasi* and lived in Banaras during the troubled days of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. His father was a reputed Sanskrit scholar and under his tutelage, the son acquired a deep proficiency in that language; and, in his school and college days, he developed a love for Mathematics and Astronomy which stood him in good stead when he was dealing with the chronology of the Vedas based on an examination of astronomical data furnished by our scriptures.

Tilak had a powerful personality and would never suffer fools gladly nor adopt easy compromises. The result was that his differences with Gopal Krishna Gokhale and his followers and the other leaders of the Liberal or Moderate Party, led him into acrimonious controversies in which he gave no quarter to his opponents.

The success of the New English School at Ratnagiri started by Tilak with the co-operation of Agarkar led to the foundation of the Fergusson College and, side by side with it, Tilak gave his attention to the conduct of the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta*, newspapers in which vigorous and unfettered advocacy and exposures of public grievances were pursued consistently and boldly. From his earliest days, Tilak made light of the British Government's pretensions about preparing Indians for democratic Government and he asserted that the foreigners were only bent on political domination and economic exploitation. This bent of mind as well as his early training led him to oppose all those who wrote or spoke disparagingly about the institutions and customs of the people of India; and when Byramji Malbari advocated the cause of social reform and drew unflattering comparisons with the British system of life, Tilak was regarded as his main opponent and as the champion of orthodoxy commencing from the days of the Age of Consent legislation. This charge was only partly justified because Tilak himself educated his daughters and got them married after the age of 16, conceded to the members of the Depressed Classes equal rights with all others, crossed the seas and espoused the cause of widow remarriage. Writing in the *Kesari* of Professor Karve, the Founder of the S.N.D.T. University, Tilak approved of his line in not giving unnecessary offence or speaking contemptuously of other people with reference to their outlook on social problems.

Differing from the Deccan Educational Society in respect of many matters of policy, Tilak turned his attention exclusively to the career of a publicist and worked in the Bombay Council in company with Phirozeshah Mehta, Setalwad and Khare, though he referred to the work in the Council as farcical. He threw himself with zest into famine and plague relief and, when the Hindu-Muslim riots came to a head in 1893, he was regarded by the Government and the people alike as a champion of the

Hindus, though it is perhaps unjust to say that Tilak was actively anti-Muslim. He objected to the proposition that the Hindus should stop all music at all times of the day before each and every mosque and he made the point that the Government deliberately showed favouritism towards the Muslims. He became the exponent of the Ganesh festival which was regarded by his opponents as a deliberate replica of the Muharram for political purposes. Similarly, he promoted the Shivaji festival in order to demonstrate and foster the vitality of the Indian race which, in the person of Shivaji, gave India an able leader at a critical time. Sir Valentine Chirol, the great opponent of Tilak, interpreted the Shivaji festivities as involving the right, nay, the duty, to commit murder for political purposes.

Tilak joined the Congress in 1889 after resigning from the Deccan Educational Society and he was a devoted adherent of the Congress movement all through his life, although it is curious that he was never the President of the Congress. I remember very well at the Calcutta Congress of 1917 over which Dr. Besant presided, Tilak's speech supporting the resolution on self-government and also in the Amritsar Congress of 1919. Although at that time he had opposed Dr. Besant in many particulars, he tried to be a harmonising factor. But from the beginning, Tilak was anxious to transform the Congress into a body working all the year round and not merely a holiday gathering of people of all shades of political opinion.

Very soon, the differences between the Moderates and the Leftist group developed and Surendranath Bannerjee, Phirozeshah Mehta and Gokhale were ranged on one side and Tilak on the opposite side. Naturally, therefore, the authorities took advantage of the Rand murder in 1897 and prosecuted Tilak for sedition, and this notorious trial began before Mr. Justice Strachey. Notwithstanding that Mr. Asquith appeared for Tilak in the appeal from Mr. Strachey's judgment, he was convicted. While Tilak was in jail, the section appertaining to sedition was amended thus proving that Tilak was illegally sentenced. It fell to the lot of Tilak to test the law of sedition as he was again tried for the same offence in 1908 and once more in 1916. Remarkably, Tilak's release from imprisonment was due to the efforts of men like Max Muller who drew attention to the fact that an erudite

scholar like Tilak was undergoing rigorous imprisonment for alleged sedition. During the second prosecution, Tilak spoke for over twenty hours and his speech was, though not perfect in style, so penetrating that, in the language of the *Modern Review*, the judge, jury and prosecuting counsel shrank into insignificance before the towering personality of Tilak who delivered, according to the journal, a brilliant discourse on the law of sedition.

A remarkable characteristic of Tilak was his loyalty to his friends which was demonstrated in the Bapat Case and the Jagannath Maharaj Adoption Case during the course of which Tilak was charged with fabricating evidence and forgery. Justice Beaman however made it clear how vindictive the attitude of the Government was. All the subordinate judicial authorities consistently took an antagonistic view and it remained for the High Court to expose the campaign to tarnish the reputation of Tilak.

It is wonderful to realise that during the course of the criminal litigation and when he was suffering from many trials including the death of his eldest son from bubonic plague, Tilak published his well-known work on *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*. In the civil litigation, the Privy Council vindicated the action of Tilak. In the sedition trial, Tilak was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and sent to the Mandalay Jail.

All these difficulties and tribulations, however, did not prevent Tilak from pleading for Swaraj, following, in this respect, the efforts of Mazzini of Italy; and Tilak had always had the international factor prominently in mind. As a journalist and as an author, in addition to his being a deep Vedic scholar, Tilak became the protagonist of prohibition and Swadesi and Swaraj. During his stay in the Mandalay Jail, he wrote the *Gita-Rahasya* which has been translated into most of the Indian languages and into English; and during his incarceration not only did he make a deep study of Oriental and Western philosophy but he began the study of the German language so as to understand the work of German savants.

Tilak returned from Mandalay in 1914 and it is noteworthy that the enthusiasm of the public was so marked that actually the Government of Bombay issued an order prohibiting Government servants and students from seeing Tilak. When the war

broke out in 1914, Tilak made clear his realistic attitude and, in fact, is supposed to have stated that England's difficulty was India's opportunity.

I remember proceeding with Dr. Besant in December 1914 for discussions with Tilak regarding his attitude towards the Congress. The great fight between Gokhale and Tilak was in progress, the former holding that if Tilak re-entered the Congress, the old and fierce struggle will be renewed. In fact, very hard words were exchanged between Tilak in his *Kesari* and Gokhale in the *Dnanaprakash* and many people believed that the virulence of Tilak's attacks precipitated Gokhale's demise. I remember those days vividly because I was associated with Dr. Besant in her efforts to bring together Surendranath Bannerjee, Gokhale and Phirozeshah Mehta on one side and Tilak on the other. It was at this time that Tilak, in an article in the *Kesari* headed "Airs of Injured Innocence" stated: "You may or may not admit the Nationalists in the Congress which is your close preserve, but do not misrepresent what the Nationalists say and mislead the Government." In 1915 Tilak said that the Congress should be turned into a missionary body and a propaganda machine, and Dr. Besant started her Home Rule League with that view and wrote her book, *How India Wrought for Freedom*. Tilak started his own Home Rule League and although he, at one time, seemed to be willing to amalgamate the two Leagues, yet it was found difficult to do so notwithstanding the efforts of many persons including myself to bring about a rapprochement. The Home Rule agitation was viewed with great disfavour by the Government and the well-known proceedings of the Government against Dr. Besant and Tilak are now part of Indian history. Dr. Besant's internment after an unavailing conversation between Lord Pentland and herself led to a movement to adopt passive resistance; and in August 1917 Dr. Subramania Aiyar, Kasturiranga Iyengar and myself signed the passive resistance pledge. At this time and simultaneously, Gandhiji was adopting the plan of passive resistance in connection with the Champaran agitation.

Dr. Besant's unanimous election as President of the Calcutta session of the Congress was a sign of approval by the nation of her campaign and this election was one of the main causes which

led to the pronouncement of 20 August 1917 regarding Responsible Government. It was in July 1917 that Joseph Baptista and myself were commissioned with the task of popularising the Congress-League scheme to the British public. Then came Mr. Montague's declaration. Tilak, who had stated that the best retort that the nation could give to the Government's repressive policy and detention of Dr. Besant was to elect her as President, became the dominating figure at the Calcutta Congress. In the wake of Mr. Montague's declaration, Tilak made a tour of India in order to awaken the public to the facts of the situation and he had made up his mind to proceed to England to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee; but his passport was cancelled. The Home Rule deputations arranged by Dr. Besant and Tilak were both turned back from Gibraltar owing to the war situation. It was about this period that the Delhi War Conference was held to which a number of Home Rulers including Jinnah, Kelkar, Horniman, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and myself were invited, and Tilak's name was added as an after-thought. It was in this great Conference that Tilak said that "when we start appealing to the people to join the colours, we must be in a position to tell them that the Government were anxious about raising their political status".

In July the Montague-Chelmsford Report was published and after having read it, Tilak wrote in the *Kesari*: "It is dawn but where is the Sun?" Soon afterwards, Tilak was served with an order prohibiting him from addressing public meetings.

At this time the Special session of the Congress at Bombay took place, at which Syed Hasan Imam was President, Vithalbhai Patel was Chairman and myself, the Secretary. Patel's speech was a reflection of Tilak's views. Neither of them condemned the Montague-Chelmsford scheme but took the view that it should be adopted only as a first step. Tilak left for England in 1918 and received a telegram in Port Said that the Reception Committee of the Delhi Congress had elected him as President of that session. Thus, therefore, when in England, he had the advantage of being the President-elect of the Congress. He stayed in England for a year and it was at this period that the Rowlatt Act was passed, the Amritsar incidents took place and Gandhiji emerged into active politics. The Jalianwallah Bag

incident led to Sankaran Nair's resignation from the Viceroy's Council and to the appointment of an unofficial committee to enquire into the happenings in the Punjab.

When Tilak went to England for the purpose of filing the famous Defamation Case against Valentine Chirol, his main activity consisted in educating the British democracy regarding India's claim for Home Rule. During that period Tilak also prepared his evidence before the Joint Select Committee of Parliament. Close contacts were established with the British Labour Party through the mediation of Mr. Baptista ; and Tilak, although he made a demand for complete Swaraj, knew that it could not be secured at one stride. A number of deputations reached England from India and it is one of the notable features of the Joint Parliamentary Committee's proceedings that practically the entire committee non-cooperated with Tilak by refusing to put him even a single question. During his stay in England, Tilak sent a memorandum to M. Clemenceau, Chairman of the Peace Conference, in the name of the Indian National Congress.

Tilak returned to Bombay in November 1919 and received a tumultuous welcome though, at the same time, a controversy started between Dr. Paranjpye and himself both with regard to political reforms and social advancement. It was when Tilak toured through India after his return that the British Government issued the Proclamation granting him general amnesty and referring to the Reforms Act. Tilak was moved by this and sent a telegram conveying to His Majesty the grateful and loyal thanks of the Indian Home Rule League and of the people of India for the Proclamation and assured him of responsive co-operation. Mahatma Gandhi's attitude was very different and was one of complete and avowed non-cooperation. Tilak's view was thus stated :

"It is no longer a debatable point whether we are going to make the best use of the Reforms or not. It has been decided to make the best use of it and while doing so, to put in efforts to attain complete swaraj as soon as possible."

Tilak did not favour the boycott of the councils and was not in favour of outright non-cooperation. He desired to meet

Gandhiji to discuss the matter with him, but he died on 1 August 1920, and Gandhiji and Tilak never met.

Tilak differed from Gandhiji both at the time of the Montague-Chelmsford Report and during the days of the Non-cooperation Movement. As Gandhiji admitted, his methods were not Tilak's methods. On the one hand, Tilak did not approve of many of the aspects of the Non-Cooperation Movement and on the other, at the time of the Amritsar Congress, he thought that Gandhiji leaned too much on the side of the British. In truth, there was a profound difference in their respective attitudes towards life's problems as manifested in the life and career of Tilak and Gandhiji. Tilak did not set his face against revolutionary conspiracies and the use of physical force against his opponents. Gandhiji on the other hand, was averse to such a programme. Tilak was avowedly an extremist in the sense that he worked ceaselessly for the climax of Indian aspirations, namely, complete independence. He would not give credit to the British for any good intentions as Gandhiji so often did.

The divergence in the views of these two great leaders is well brought out in their approach to the teaching of *Gita*. Tilak's *Gita-Rahasya* interpreted the *Gita* as a gospel of resolute action which had little in common with the ideal of non-violence as promulgated by Gandhiji. According to Tilak, *himsa* is, in some cases, unavoidable but the teaching of the *Gita* is to the effect that when *himsa* is unavoidable, it must be undertaken after full and mature consideration and after exhausting all remedies to avoid it. Gandhiji, on the other hand, in his own language, threw off the slavery to the text and declined to be guided by the commentaries of grammarians on the *Gita*. He felt himself entitled to ignore or eliminate such passages in the *Gita* and such interpretations as did not suit his essentially Jainistic and Tolstoyan attitude. He was poles apart from Tilak in regard to what both respectively advocated as *Karma-Yoga*. There are many who believe that the outlook of Gandhiji was based predominantly not on the *ipsissima verba* of the *Gita* but upon Tolstoy and Jainism ; and even today, a large number of Indian scholars are inclined to the view that Tilak's interpretation of the *Gita* was more in consonance with the gospel. Notwithstanding that Mahatma Gandhi differed from him, it is noteworthy that when

Tilak died, Gandhiji stated that Tilak was so much a part of the people that no man of our times had the hold on the masses that he had.

Notwithstanding his intrinsic prejudice against foreigners who intermeddled in Indian life and politics, Tilak was able to appreciate the religious and political services rendered by Dr. Besant. Attempts were made by several persons including myself to bring the two personages together and to coalesce the two Home Rule Leagues which they had started so as to supplement and to invigorate and popularise the work of the Congress and to carry it to the villages. Those efforts failed not so much because of the protagonists but because the chief followers on both sides were uncompromising.

Tilak was impatient to get Swaraj and would obtain it by any means. He was willing to support a revolt by the Indian Princes. He was equally willing to adopt any campaign of conspiracy to strike terror in the hearts of the British and to make them leave India. He approved of the revolt of 1857 though he thought it was not an insurrection of the people but of discontented aristocrats. He did not however consider all means fair for the achievement of political power, as Savarkar was supposed to do. The British Government were anxious to connect Tilak with the murder of Rand; and Chitrol, in fact, tried to connect Tilak's writings with the murder of Jackson. But Tilak did not favour terrorism or actions like political dacoities and conspiracies. And indeed, Aurobindo who was his colleague in many of his campaigns, asserted that Tilak was no more than a militant constitutional agitator and therefore not useful to the secret society missions that had sprung up in Bengal. The lesson of Tilak's life is what Sri Chagla has stated :

"He brought politics to the masses, proclaimed that Swaraj was his birth-right and inaugurated an open conspiracy for the attainment of what he considered was the birth-right of the people."

But Tilak was unique in this respect. In addition to being a proclaimed and fearless political worker, he was a deep scholar firmly wedded to the fundamental concepts of the Hindu faith.

During the time of the Rand murder, of the Ganapathy festival and the Shivaji festival which he initiated and which were wrongly denounced as anti-Muslim during his bitter controversies with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dr. Paranjpe and other leaders of the liberal school of politics, during his stormy Congress activities as also in his reaction to the British pronouncements and the Montague-Chelmsford scheme, Tilak adopted a courageously practical attitude. He took what he got and worked for more. His patriotism was a passion with him and Gandhiji said significantly that "Tilak believed in the rule of the majority with an intensity that fairly frightened me". As a scholar, as a teacher, as a great champion and loyal defender of his associates and followers, as an inflexible patriot and as a man of action ceaselessly bent on his goal, determined on every sacrifice for the achievement of that goal and in the main, thinking more of the end than of the means, Tilak "The father of Indian unrest" as one of his critics dubbed him, was a unique phenomenon. He can be classified along with men like Cromwell, Robespierre, Mazzini and Bolivar. In truth, in their ruthless patriotism and their religious training and background and their revolutionary fervour, Cromwell and Tilak closely resembled each other. The history of Indian freedom cannot be written without assigning to him a prominent place in the hierarchy of those who wrought for the liberation of the country.

## Gopal Krishna Gokhale

In the chronicle of human endeavour and achievement, there are found to be at least three different types of leaders of thought and action. One type may be described as comprising those who affirm great truths or produce monumental results, who inspire, as well as spur to action. Amongst them may be counted the seers who produced the *Vedas*, the *Zendavesta*, the *Bible*, the *Koran* and other scriptures of mankind as well as Lord Buddha and Mahavira. Along with them may be included others like Euclid, Newton, Darwin and Einstein in the field of science and great protagonists of literature like Homer and Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe and also creative statesmen including Alexander, Julius Caesar, Asoka, Sri Harsha and Akbar. Another group may be described as comprising the critics, the doubters and the dialecticians who pursue the path both of enquiry and criticism and, by the methods of dialectics, question the foundations of belief and arouse and stimulate discussion and dialogue. Socrates and Plato, Voltaire, Renan and Marx, and, in our own country, the originators of the philosophies and *darsanas* not based on the *Vedas* and the agnostics and followers of what was termed the Higher Criticism at a later date, pursued the path of disputation. A third group may be termed conciliators or reconcilers — those who seek harmony and pursue the middle path between the practical and the real. These are not riders of the whirlwind but, according to a description given of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, “masters of the possible”. From the earliest days in India, the value of such men has been recognised and their watchword and their method of action have been described as *Samavaya*. In a great Vedic passage, persons are enjoined to come together,

to talk and discuss with each other and thus to attain mutual understanding and tolerance :

*Samgacchadhvam samvadadhvam sam vo manāmsi jānatām*

Rabindranath Tagore, in his life, typified an attitude of cultural reconciliation. When founding the Visva Bharathi, he said, “I experienced the want of an Institution in India which should be a true centre for all the different cultures especially the civilisation of India itself and those of the Far East and that of Islam”. He emphasised in his poems and dramas as well as in the Visva Bharathi the need of free co-operation with all nations, in a world-wide brotherhood, as the natural end of human history.

Swami Vivekananda approached and admired the organising power, the practical philanthropy and the beneficent canalisation of charity that characterised the West. In his own language, he meant to make use of the greatness of the West in order to reinforce and proclaim the spiritual heritage of India. His whole endeavour was to take the message of the *Vedanta* to America and Great Britain and to import the practical ideals of the West, to stimulate and to reform and reorganise the social and economic life of India. A similar but differently oriented outlook characterised the merger of Eastern and Western spiritual experiences, which was the task of Sri Aurobindo's life.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was the devoted disciple of Mahadev Govind Ranade who was a dynamic factor in the renaissance of Indian political and economic thought. His spiritual urges were turned to practical ends. Gandhiji may be said to be in a separate category by himself. He utilised his African and Indian experiences to pose the most searching of questions to a great Empire. Through the methods of peace and the exaltation of the means over the ends, he also solved the questions he propounded to Great Britain by constructive initiation of a new polity as a substitute for the British regime. In their different ways all these personages were great harmonisers.

Gokhale was essentially a scholar-politician : and politicians normally live for the moment. But he was a man who transformed the politics of this country and spiritualised it by insisting

on self-surrender as well as on tolerance and on purity of motives and action. In 1907 he stated :

"We are at a stage of the country's progress when our achievements are bound to be small and our disappointments frequent and trying. Such is the place which it has pleased Providence to assign to us in this struggle. It will no doubt be given to our countrymen of future generations to serve India by successes. We, of the present generation, must be content to serve mainly by our failures."

Thanks to the work not only of liberal statesmen headed by Ranade, Gokhale, Wacha and Srinivasa Sastri, but also of Dr. Besant and her colleagues of the Home Rule Movement, of Gandhiji, Nehru, Patel and the leaders of the Congress, the opportunity that Gokhale prophesied has now come to us. We are again passing through a trying period, face to face with economic difficulties and the crises of planning as well as unforeseen situations brought about by the aggression of our neighbours; and we are again confronted with the duty as well as the obligation of converting our difficulties into opportunities.

Gokhale's career has been compared by John S. Hoyland to that of Count Cavour, the constructive statesman of Italy. Both the men had the same political purpose and the same ideal, resulting in the determination to use what they had in their hands to the fullest advantage in order to gain more. In his thought-provoking *Life of Gopal Krishna Gokhale* published in 1933 Hoyland has characterised the two statesmen thus :

"They were both 'masters of the possible' setting before themselves limited objectives, using the existing machinery, however defective, for the attainment of those objectives and when they were obtained, going forward one step more to some other practical and limited objective. They were both inherently constitutionalists, i.e., men who perceived that revolutionary methods, even if they succeed for a time in realising the popular will, have, as their inevitable ultimate results, a reaction which may carry things backward. In consequence both of them were anathema to the hot-heads in their respec-

tive lands. The followers of Mazzini hated Cavour even more than they hated the Austrians and it is perhaps true that some Indian extremists hated Gokhale worse than they hated the British."

In 1914 at the instance of Lord Willingdon whose great merits as a true friend of India have not been adequately recognised, Gokhale prepared a scheme of reforms which it was hoped would be inaugurated by the British Government of their own accord. This scheme was entrusted to the Aga Khan and it was published in 1917 after Gokhale's death. It has been usually termed "Gokhale's political testament" and it embodied his conception of the next step that should be taken towards his ideal of a fully self-governing India. It is most illuminating as affording certain grounds of comparison and contrast with the Montague-Chelmsford reforms and later constitutional developments; but in the main, it embodies what this "master of the possible" thought might be of immediate value and significance. If it had been adopted, the history of political India would have been very different.

Two dominating traits of Gokhale were his love of order and his dislike of political hysteria and of direct action in any shape or form. He often used to quote Burke and said that the formation of opinion is of greater importance than laws or executive power in maintaining order and running governments; and in describing the Bengal disturbances of 1907-1908 and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's activities which led to his arrest in 1908, Gokhale announced and maintained doctrines which can be fairly compared with the ideals of Greece of the Periclean era. The law of life of Greece was embodied in the two maxims : (i) Nothing in excess, and (ii) Know thyself, or in other words, in self-discipline and self-regulation, the pursuit of the middle path and consequently the pursuit of the policy of making haste slowly (*festine lente*).

Gokhale was born in 1866 in a typical Mahratta village and his early life was lived in close contact with the life of the village peasantry. His family, in common with his fellow villagers, encountered dire poverty, and the struggles of Gokhale's mother and of his brother to go to the utmost limit in financing the

studies of Gokhale constituted an epic of self-sacrifice and a conspicuous example of the close family bond which has been so vitally strong throughout the ages in India. From his earliest days, Gokhale exhibited a marvellous capacity for memorising and for prolonged and hard intellectual labour. His ancestors had played an honourable part in Mahratta history and he belonged to a scrupulously orthodox and conservative community and family; many of his ancestors displayed qualities of responsible leadership which Gokhale inherited. His secondary education was financed by his brother, Govind Rao, who gave up all his prospects and accepted a small post on Rs. 15 a month out of which he spent more than half for Gokhale's support. From the time that Gokhale passed his Matriculation examination in 1881, he never looked back on his intellectual development and maintained himself on scholarships, specialising in Mathematics and in English. There was a period of hesitation when he had to decide between Law, Engineering and the Civil Service. Gokhale, with rare discrimination and rarer abnegation, decided to make education his life work and became an Assistant Master in a High School in Poona. When the Deccan Education Society called on him to dedicate his life to the work of the Society, he had no hesitations. At that time, there were many influences tending to call a young man to the service of the country. Tilak and Agarkar were conducting a new English school and Gokhale joined them and this meant his willingness to be content for twenty years with Rs. 75/- per month. It has been said that Gokhale's decision to join the Society was like taking up monasticism and involved a renunciation of all the usual ambitions for worldly prosperity.

When the Deccan Education Society opened the new Fergusson College in 1885, Gokhale began to teach English there as well as, when called upon to do so, Mathematics, History and Political Economy. His connection with the college continued till 1904. Gokhale's mathematical attainments gave him that grasp of statistics which was of great use to him later on. His contact with Ranade was a turning point. Ranade who was described as the uncrowned King of Poona was a sage whose political wisdom and whose historical and economic researches made him an admirable guide for Gokhale. Ranade perceived the latent

potentialities of Gokhale and deliberately set himself to develop them. For fourteen years, until the death of Ranade in 1901, Ranade and Gokhale were in constant contact and Gokhale received a rigorous training which included the study of original documents, of masses of Blue Books and of statistics. Gokhale was soon entrusted with the work of drafting memorials to Government, having, in the meantime, been made the Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha, an important political organisation which was an example to other political institutions in India.

Differences of opinion had arisen as early as 1887 between Agarkar, with whom Gokhale worked in close collaboration, and Tilak on many questions including the topic of social reform. Later, Gokhale became the Secretary of the Deccan Education Society and had to undertake, undeterred by opposition, the duty of collecting funds for the Society. In addition to the political experience which he received as a disciple of Ranade, he had the opportunity of editing Agarkar's *Reformist Sudhakar Weekly*, the English part of the journal being mainly written by Gokhale.

In 1899, Gokhale became one of the speakers at the Session of the Indian National Congress and one of his very early speeches was in respect of a cause which he made particularly his own throughout his life, namely, the Indianisation of the Public Services. Through Ranade, Gokhale became acquainted with Dadabhai Naoroji. The speech that Gokhale made on the occasion of Naoroji's 81st birthday is characteristic of the man. He said :

"I think it is to the infinite honour of British Rule and the wise and large-hearted policy followed in the administration of the country — especially in matters of education — that what was then almost difficult to conceive has now already become a fact and a reality. And to Dadabhai Naoroji and the earliest band of Indian reformers that worked with him belongs the credit of understanding aright the true meaning of the new order of things and the possibilities that it implied for their countrymen and of throwing themselves heart and soul into the work of realising those possibilities in practice. Since then one generation of workers has entirely disappeared.

from the scene, and of the next only a few are left — may they long remain with us! — to guide us. But Dadabhai Naoroji has all through remained in the forefront of the movement, and neither age nor disappointment has chilled his ardour, nor has absence diminished his hold on his countrymen."

Certain domestic difficulties including a second marriage during the lifetime of his first wife who was a permanent invalid, made it difficult for Gokhale to take up the leadership in social reform movements and gradually an estrangement developed between Gokhale and Tilak. They had been fast friends but perhaps Tilak was a difficult person to deal with as a colleague and many of the views of Gokhale and Agarkar diverged from those of Tilak. It was in 1890 that Tilak broke his connection with the Education Society and the work of the Fergusson College. As time went on, Tilak exercising an increasing influence in Poona, became one of the uniform and consistent opponents of every detail of Government policy and his views on the use of force to further political programme made a further point of divergence between Gokhale and Tilak. Tilak became, as the years rolled on, more and more devoted to the ideals of *Sanatana Dharma* and to the reorganisation of India along rigidly nationalistic lines so as to achieve independence of foreign rule and all foreign influences even if to do so meant the use of physical force. In these matters, as on the question of Hindu-Muslim relations the differences between the two great leaders of Maharashtra became more and more pronounced. Tilak accumulated a growing popularity whereas Gokhale was very often subject to criticism among groups that deemed themselves advanced and patriotic. It is at the same time remarkable that Gokhale was characteristically a great admirer of Irish leaders whose steady work and disinterested sacrifice he greatly appreciated.

One of the turning points to Gokhale's political career coincided with his insistence on the importance to India of the British connection; and the ideal of dominion status was always before him notwithstanding that Gokhale realised the defects of British administration, especially during Lord Curzon's regime. He

advocated from the beginning the attainment of India's ideals by constitutional methods, by the education of Indian opinion, by making the most of every avenue open to the expression of that opinion and by practical demonstration of the fact that Indians were capable of responsible self-government.

Gokhale became the Secretary of the Indian National Congress in 1895 and quarrels arose almost at once between Tilak's party and Gokhale's over the question of the venue and location of the All India Social Reform Conference. The *Sarvajanik Sabha* was captured by the extremist section and the great work done by Gokhale in the Welby Commission was not as fully appreciated as it should have been. Gokhale and his life-long friend, Dinshaw Wacha, went to England and appeared before the Welby Commission dealing *inter alia* with the economic and financial problems of India and the wasteful and excessive expenditure on items like the Indian Army. Before that Commission, Gokhale also pleaded for the Indianisation of the Services and the enlargement of the educational programme. He proposed an increasing Indian control over the financial transactions of India and displayed remarkable powers of analysis and criticism. It was at the time when he was absent in England that plague broke out in India and Gokhale, on the materials before him, sharply criticised the administration of the Indian authorities as well as the conduct of the British soldiers who were employed in enforcing segregation methods. His information was found to be inaccurate and he manfully tendered an apology. The famous apology incident created a furore in India; but the fact that Gokhale was manly enough to offer an apology, imparted to him the strength to stand alone against the world. It may be noticed that, after this incident, Gokhale did conspicuous service in connection with the sanitary methods to deal with plague and his services were widely recognised even by his erstwhile critics. A commission was appointed by Government to go into the plague measures and Gokhale was nominated as one of the members. Unfortunately, the findings of the Commission did not lessen the agitation. About this time Maharashtra nationalism manifested itself strongly and Gokhale had often to plead for Hindu-Muslim unity. His endeavours culminated in the Hindu-Muslim Pact of 1916.

From 1899 Gokhale began his work as a legislator, in the

Bombay Legislative Council. He was elected as the representative of the Bombay Municipal Council and took part in notable debates on the famine problem and the Land Alienation Bill, and it was here that he proved that he was not merely a negative critic but could make positive proposals. It was in the Bombay Legislative Council that Gokhale developed his remarkable powers of interpretation and criticism in a courteous though effective spirit. In 1902 following the resignation, owing to ill health, of Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, Gokhale was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council at the age of 36. From this date, for over thirteen years, he was the leader of non-official opinion and voiced the point of view of enlightened India in the supreme legislative organ of the country at that time. His annual budget speeches were an epoch-making contribution. Gokhale insisted that his function was not merely to oppose the government but to put before it the Indian point of view on every question. In the result, his budget speeches were listened to with attention by the representatives of the Government and they very often bore their fruits in succeeding years. As an advocate of retrenchment, his services were conspicuous. Even Lord Curzon, Gokhale's consistent political opponent, affirmed that "God had endowed him with extraordinary abilities and he had freely placed them at the disposal of his country. It is a pleasure to cross swords with him." Lord Minto, referring to his budget speech of 1906, stated that even in England there were few men on the parliamentary front benches capable of such an effort.

Gokhale's growing responsibilities in the Legislative Council led to his resignation as a professor in the Fergusson College after eighteen years. It may be remembered that Gokhale was throughout getting a salary of Rs. 75 and that after retirement his pension was Rs. 30 per mensem. When he took his seat as a Member of the Imperial Legislative Council, the Viceroy was Lord Curzon and when the budget of that year showed a surplus, Gokhale made a wonderful speech criticising the currency surpluses, the salt duty and the expenditure on the army. He inveighed against the delusion of regarding surpluses as indices of financial prosperity. The reduction of the salt tax and the re-organisation of Indian education, the Indianisation of the

public services and the criticism of what he called the policy of drift in the system of administration in the hands of the Indian Civil Service, were the recurring theses of his speeches. It is characteristic of Gokhale that he paid a tribute to Lord Curzon for what he termed his wonderful intellectual gifts, his brilliant powers of expression, his phenomenal energy and boundless enthusiasm for work. He added that the Gods are jealous and they had withheld from Lord Curzon a sympathetic imagination without which no man can understand an alien people.

Gokhale's criticism of the Universities Bill of 1903 as an essentially bureaucratic measure was one of the highlights of his sober oratory. The need for agricultural relief and for the association of Indians in the work of the Government were recurrent themes of later addresses and it was in 1905 that he delivered the greatest of his budget speeches.

Mr. T. V. Parvate in his *Life of Gokhale*, says :

"In Gokhale's rather short-lived but crowded career, 1905 is the most glorious year. A number of important events, all indicating that he had become a trusted leader and representative of the people, took place in this year. More than that, he officially began to describe himself as a Servant of India from 12th June, 1905 — which in reality he always was — because on that day was founded the Servants of India Society of which he became the President or First Member. He was elected to preside over the session of the Indian National Congress at the end of that year and only a few days before that, he had returned from his second visit to England, where he had gone as an accredited representative of the Congress, his other colleague being Lala Lajpat Rai. His countrymen were full of admiration for the educative propaganda he and Lajpat Rai had carried on among the British people on the eve of a general election. In the same year, Gokhale was elected for the second time President of the Municipality of his home-town, Poona. In the midst of all this work, he was busy collecting funds for the Ranade Memorial and subscribers and donors for *India*, the weekly propaganda bulletin conducted in London by the British Congress Committee."

The ideals of the Servants of India Society were thus set out :

"Its members will direct their efforts principally towards (1) creating among the people by example and by precept, a deep and passionate love of the Motherland, seeking its highest fulfilment in service and sacrifice ; (2) organizing the work of political education and agitation, basing it on a careful study of public questions, and strengthening generally the public life of the country ; (3) promoting relations of cordial goodwill and co-operation among the different communities ; (4) assisting educational movements, especially those for the education of women, the education of backward classes, and, industrial and scientific education ; (5) helping forward the industrial development of the country ; (6) the elevation of the depressed classes.

The headquarters of the Society will be at Poona where it will maintain a home for its members, and attached to it a library for the study of subjects bearing on its work."

The Indian National Congress session of 1905 already disclosed those fissiparous symptoms which were to come to a head in the Surat Congress of 1907 and to lead to an open cleavage. The opposition to the partition of Bengal and the resolution of the Congress that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, formed the main themes of Gokhale's discourses to successive Congress sessions and he continuously emphasised that India's political future should be analogous to that of the self-governing colonies. He was, as is well-known, constantly consulted by Lord Morley before embarking on the Minto-Morley reforms and Morley has described Gokhale as the most courteous of opponents whose great attributes were an abounding commonsense as well as an appreciation of the other side's point of view and responsibilities. His willingness to negotiate, Lord Morley added, was not a sign of weakness but exemplified his practical wisdom as it did that of Augustus Caesar. Tilak's prosecution and the announcement of the Minto-Morley reforms were unfortunately practically simultaneous. Gokhale expected that the announcement of the reforms would be satisfactory "to our side in India", the most important item being an elected

majority in the provincial councils with the power of passing resolutions on important matters of administration and finance. In his budget speech of 1908, Gokhale stated, "Whatever reforms are taken in hand, let them be dealt with frankly and generously and let not the words 'too late' be written on every one of them". The result of his appeal was the granting of the Minto-Morley reforms and it was generally agreed that Gokhale's explanations to the British public of the Indian situation contributed to the result.

Speaking at the Congress of 1908 Gokhale insisted on the growing Indian unity and the feeling of nationality. He added, "Hitherto we have been engaged in agitation from outside ; hereafter we shall be engaged in responsible association". In a spirit of generous appreciation, Gokhale remarked of Lord Morley that he had saved India from drifting into chaos. All the time, however, Gokhale was assailed by numerous opponents as a temporiser and as lacking in patriotic fervour.

It is needless to speak at length of Gokhale's work in respect of elementary education and his constructive proposals which culminated in 1911 when he introduced his Elementary Education Bill. It was in his last speech on the Bill that Gokhale concluded thus : "I know that my Bill will be thrown out. I make no complaints. I shall not even be depressed." But he added that he had always felt that "we, of the present generation can only hope to serve our country by failures".

In 1912, he raised a powerful voice against the indentured labour system and took up the cause of the Indians in South Africa. He proceeded to that country on the invitation of Gandhiji in spite of failing health. The arduous work done by Gokhale for the cause of Indians in South Africa and in connection with the Public Service Commission of which he was appointed a member, led to a rapid degeneration of his health and the last few weeks of his life were rendered miserable for him by the controversy regarding the Congress creed and the open split between those who wished to obtain self-government within the British Empire and those who wished to be outside the Empire. His health progressively deteriorated but he displayed marvellous fortitude and before he died on 19 February he is reported to have said in Mahratti, "this side of life has

been good to me. It is time that I should go to see the other."

One of Gokhale's most attractive features was his capacity for deep personal friendships and loyalties. His great respect and admiration for Dr. Annie Besant were fully reciprocated by her though they did not always agree. One of his great regrets before he died was that he could not complete his work on the Royal Commission dealing with Public Services. He stated :

"My end is nearing. I have deceived my country. It would have been better if I should have been spared for a couple of years more. I would have gone to England and striven hard to bring about a most satisfactory termination of the Royal Commission and thus would have repaid, although in the smallest degree, the debt I owe to my mother country."

Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (afterwards a Member of the Privy Council) joined the Servants of India Society in 1907 and as Gokhale's successor and India's unofficial ambassador he continued to implement Gokhale's message through his brilliant oratory and persuasive skill and enthusiasm for all good causes. Mr. Kodanda Rao who became an important member of the Society and who was closely associated in several capacities with Mr. Sastri has epitomised Gokhale's work in connection with the Society and his remarks have a wider applicability than to the Society itself.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale had founded the Servants of India Society in Poona in 1905 with a view to training national missionaries for the Services of India in the secular field in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. He was the chief disciple of Mahadev Govind Ranade, who was a judge of the Bombay High Court and was the main inspirer of all progressive movements in western India at the time. In politics he was the philosopher of liberalism, constitutionalism and gradualism, as opposed to extremism, direct action and revolution, which appealed to the School of Nationalists, led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The tablets of Indian Liberalism were thus inscribed by Ranade :

"The spirit of Liberalism implies freedom from race and creed prejudices and a steady devotion to all efforts that seek justice between man and man, giving to the rulers the loyalty that is

due to the law they are bound to administer, but securing at the same time to the people the equality which is their right under the law. Moderation implies the conditions of never vainly aspiring after the impossible or after the remote, but striving each day to take the next step in the order of natural growth by doing work that lies nearest to our hands in a spirit of compromise and fairness."

In fine it would be appropriate to evaluate the message of Gokhale's life and work as one of reconciliation and wise compromise. Lord Morley, the friend and admirer of Gokhale, has defined the significance and limits of such compromise. He says as follows in his book on Compromise :

"It is legitimate compromise — rationally to acquiesce in the fact that your contemporaries are not prepared to embrace your idea and to say 'I do not expect you to support this reform or to surrender your prejudices. At any rate it shall not be my fault if the reform remains unknown and undeclared.' It is illegitimate compromise to say 'I cannot persuade you to accept my truth. Therefore I will pretend to accept your falsehood'."

## Sri Bepin Chandra Pal

IN the language of the Irish poet, "Each age is a dream that is dying or one that is coming to birth". Bepin Chandra Pal was a child of the transitional period and he embodied in his own person the ideals of the past and the gropings towards the future. When speaking of great men, we should always remember that Nature bases itself on the law of rotation. The soul, as Emerson observes, is impatient of masters and eager for change. The heroes of the hour, as he insists, are such in whom, at the moment of success, a quality is ripe which is then in request and it is perennially true that great men exist in order that there may be greater men. The life and work of Bepin Chandra Pal is an illustration of these truths which are so often ignored or forgotten. His life also illustrates the endeavour, in many ways and several spheres of activity, of an essentially individualistic personage.

The movement for political freedom in Bengal was a sequel to the reformist urge initiated by the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj. Their object was to eliminate the abuses that had crept into our society in the domain of religion and of social practices. The literary movement was practically simultaneous and owed its inception to Bankim Chandra Chatterji.

In a book entitled *Memories of My Life and Times*, Bepin Chandra Pal, describing the culture and civilisation which the British brought to us, pointed out that many of the English administrators were steeped in the ideals of the French enlightenment. He added that Bengal, owing to her original spirit of personal liberty and social freedom, readily accepted the imported gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity. He further pointed out that though English education was simultaneously introduced in

several parts of India, Bengal was specially affected by the spirit of nationalism and individualism originating in the 19th century; and he ascribed to this circumstance the fact that Bengal practically led the freedom movement in modern India. The movement was not strictly or entirely political in character. Individual and social democracy had been preached by the Brahmo Samaj, and the Indian Association (the earliest effective political organisation in Calcutta) owed its impetus to many leaders of the Brahmo Samaj.

The outer life of Bepin Chandra Pal is easily recounted. Born on 7 November, 1858, he, like many leaders in India, started life as a teacher and worked as such in many places including Bangalore. He was in the van of Indian public life for nearly fifty years. He visited the U.K. and U.S.A. and lectured in those countries on religion and temperance as well as on politics. He came into prominence at first as a persuasive speaker in meetings of the Brahmo Samaj as one of the successors of Keshub Chandra Sen. Later on, when he turned to active politics, his nationalistic propaganda was uncompromising and full of fire. Along with Rabindranath Tagore and Aurobindo Ghosh, he has been claimed to be among the first apostles of the nationalist movement and he inevitably came into conflict with the British authorities. In 1907 Bepin Chandra Pal affirmed that the new national movement of India was essentially spiritual. To regard it as merely economic or political was to misunderstand it altogether; and in his speeches, he sought to emphasise these aspects. In that year he was sentenced to imprisonment for refusing to testify against Aurobindo who was accused of sedition. He accepted voluntary exile thereafter and spent nearly four years abroad. When in England, his outlook was profoundly affected by the new political thinking of the time which included in its ambit the federal idea and international outlook.

When he differed in 1921 from Gandhiji's Non-Cooperation Programme, speaking of it as an attempt to take the country back to stagnation, he was, like Dr. Besant, segregated from his political friends and former followers and adherents; and he had to give up the editorship of Motilal Nehru's newspaper, *The Independent*. But he preferred to stand alone and live in the light of truth as it was revealed to him. He was elected President

of the Provincial Conference in 1921 and encountered great opposition but his spirit never quailed.

He was a product as well as an exponent of the renaissance in Bengal that began with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and culminated in the many-sided literary, artistic and philosophic work of Rabindranath Tagore. Indian nationalism really began with Bankim Chandra Chatterji and with the fight for freedom and self-expression waged, consciously and unconsciously, in religious, social and educational fields by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda and Keshub Chandra Sen and his group as well as by the leaders of the Arya Samaj Movement.

Though a product of the Bengal renaissance, Bepin Chandra Pal, in conjunction with Tilak and Lajpat Rai, was one of those who claimed complete independence for an integrated India. In fact, he was one of the first to insist on Swaraj or complete independence which could not be reconciled with British rule. Lord Ronaldshay has stated that, "his pen played not an inconsiderable part in the social and political ferment that has stirred the waters of Indian life". Sri Aurobindo regarded Bepin Chandra Pal as one of the mightiest prophets of nationalism. Amongst the politicians who did their work in the first decade of the 20th century, he was universally regarded as the father of revolutionary thought. But he had also the consummate art of expressing the most advanced and extreme views in language which was not susceptible to legal attack. Indeed, the Advocate-General of Madras, dealing with his Madras speeches, stated that his utterances, though highly inflammable, were not seditious. It has been said of him that, however incompatible with the maintenance of British rule the propositions set forth by Bepin Chandra Pal may be, they contained no incitement to violence and no personal attacks. In an article published in the *Bande Mataram*, Bepin Chandra Pal has thus summarised his opinion :

"The time has come when, in the interests of truth and civic advancement and the freedom of the people, our British friends should be distinctly told that while we are thankful for all the kind things they have done for us already, the sacrifices they have made to make our lot easy and their yoke light, we

cannot any longer suffer ourselves to be guided by them in our attempts at political progress and emancipation. Their point of view is not ours. They desire to make the Government of India popular without ceasing, in any sense, to be essentially British; we desire to make it autonomous and absolutely free of British control."

It was this doctrine that he continuously and trenchantly preached as Editor of the weekly *New India* and of the *Bande Mataram* which he founded and handed on to Sri Aurobindo. Bepin Chandra Pal's enforced exile in England during 1908 to 1911 made him an advocate of a co-operative partnership with Great Britain based on perfect equality. He was thus one of the first Indian politicians to adopt a distinctly international outlook.

It was as an incomparably fluent and persuasive speaker that Bepin Chandra Pal made his widespread reputation. Sri Aurobindo, in the *Bande Mataram*, referred to the beauty of expression and the passion of vehement patriotism and pathos which animated his talks. An English critic has remarked, "He had the capacity to express extreme views in polite and civil language". Srinivasa Sastri said, adverting to his Madras speeches in 1907, "Oratory had never dreamt of such triumphs in India. The power of the spoken word had never been demonstrated on such a scale." It was during the Swadeshi Movement that he was recognised as an inspired speaker and his Madras utterances in 1907 were triumphs of oratory and profoundly influenced a large number of old and young men of whom I was one. At a time when no loud-speakers were available, his voice rose above the roar of the breakers and he literally over-powered his audience with his resonant and vibrant voice, his rhetorical expertise, his invocations of the past and his aspirations for the future. I was then a young lawyer and had been regularly attending the sessions of the Congress from 1903. I was, therefore, acquainted with the exuberant oratory of Surendranath Bannerjee and Lal Mohan Ghosh and the closely reasoned persuasiveness of Phirozeshah Mehta, Gokhale, Wacha and Sankaran Nair as well as the scholarly and meticulously finished periods of Srinivasa Sastri; but the speeches of Bepin Chandra Pal were in a class by themselves. They were packed with facts and, at the same time, suffused with emotion,

with indignation and hope. He constantly insisted upon spiritual emancipation and sublimation as a contributory influence in all political, social and economic endeavour. The only person who approached him, in Madras, in the matter of oratory was V. Krishnaswami Aiyar ; but the popular appeal of Bepin Chandra Pal was both unique and unprecedented ; and the memory still clings to me of his hold on the masses and his special influence over the youth of the country. As an impassioned and soul-stirring orator who was, at the same time, capable of taking mature views and forming generous judgments, he sustained a role in Indian politics equal to that of Lokamanya Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai.

Bepin Chandra Pal was a conscientious literary artist and one who was able to see all sides of a particular problem or situation. During his periods of imprisonment, he wrote, *The Soul of India* and *Bengal Vaishnavism*. These books show him as a comprehensive exponent of many aspects of Indian culture. He was a vigorous and influential journalist all through his life, and, as such, was responsible for "stirring the waters of Indian Life". He was a constant contributor to Bengal periodicals and was connected with *The Tribune*, *The New India*, *The Bande Mataram* and *The Swaraj*, which he started in England. He was also connected with *The Independent*, *The Democrat* and *The Bangali*. In a brochure entitled "The Beginning of Freedom Movement in Modern India", Bepin Chandra Pal, while paying a generous tribute to the East India Company for establishing centralised and settled Government, emphasised the handicaps of alien Government. He attributed to the Brahmo Samaj the enunciation of the message of personal liberty, social equality and emancipation.

In a series of character sketches which bear testimony to the wide range of his interests and his capacity to form mellow judgments, he has, for instance, analysed Dr. Annie Besant in a psychological study describing her physical features and her *Brahmacharya* and paying a tribute to her both as a realist and an incomparable idealist. According to him "there is no other person to whom the heart of awakened India goes with greater reverence and deeper affection than it does to this strange woman from beyond the seas". In Bepin Chandra Pal's words, she was

the first to point out that educated India had lost faith in itself and that the Hindus had lost faith not only in their ancient and medieval doctrines but also in their own powers and possibilities. He was one of those who realised the full import of Dr. Besant's labours, both educational and political. In his own language, while criticising Dr. Besant's political principles and methods, while dealing with the principle of passive resistance, he says "Passive resistance may be individual or collective and organised. It is permissible in all ethics and civilised policy and is perfectly constitutional." He remarks that Mrs. Besant learnt from her political activities and experience complete obedience to law and respect for constitutions, and he deplores that Dr. Besant did not fully understand the significance of Bengal nationalism in that she opposed what she called the de-nationalised spirit of Bengal. But it is symptomatic of Bepin Pal that, in spite of his criticism of many aspects of her life and policy, he recognised the statesmanship of this great fighter for truth and freedom and especially her attempts to bring about a united Congress. He was one of those who paid a tribute not only to her political work but to her psychic development and spiritual loftiness.

In Surendranath Bannerjee, Bepin Chandra Pal saw not only the founder of the Indian Association but the guiding genius of all political organisations in India. He described him as one who, from the very first, tried to correlate our patriotic sentiments to the history and achievements of all parts of India. Tilak, whose character also was sketched, knew, as Bepin Chandra Pal asserts, that every historic movement of our time must depend upon the consciousness of India as a whole and a federated whole. In his acute survey, Bepin Pal stated that Tilak saw that the real danger in India was inertia and listlessness — the *Tamasic* quality which threatened the peace and the future of the country. In another sketch dealing with Aswini Kumar Datta, he insisted that leadership in public life will and should be based upon a close and personal relationship between the leader and the followers. Such a message is never out of date and has been reiterated both by the late Sri Jawaharlal Nehru and Sri Jayaprakash Narain. Bepin Chandra Pal deals with the passion of Aurobindo for national development and with Sister Nivedita's illuminating exposition of Indian thought and aspiration. He describes Tagore as the poet

of the modern man who, nevertheless, built on the old foundations of Bengal Vaishnavism and Saktism. In all that he wrote, he insisted on universalising what was special and particular. Like a true critic, he appreciates greatness even in those from whom he differs in many matters, like Asutosh Mukerjea, Tarakanath Palit and Syamasunder Chakrabarti. The essays may be cited as finished examples of disciplined enthusiasm and unbiased appreciation.

In a volume entitled *Swadeshi and Swaraj* with a sub-title "The Rise of New Patriotism", Bepin Chandra Pal insists that a protest is always demoralising unless it is followed by action and remarks that the time has come when all lies must be eschewed from our political platforms. In the paper, *New India*, which he edited for some time, he, for the first time, and on a memorable occasion, declared that Indians are not loyal in any sense excepting in the original and radical sense of obedience to law. We are law abiding, he says, by heredity, by temperament, by training and by culture. Violence in any shape or form is not in our nature. He, nevertheless, appreciated Shivaji's contribution to national, religious and social upheaval as one which was based upon a consuming and fervid love of the people and for the people, the masses and not the classes. In his autobiographical sketch *Memories of My Life and Times*, he has asserted that the new movement in India was the beginning of the conflicts of cultures and national consciousness that have shaped and moulded the history and evolution of modern Indian thought and life during the past seventy or eighty years. A selection of his writings and speeches has been published and, unlike most reproductions of public speeches, the volume is well worth careful study. Throughout Bepin Chandra Pal's work there is the constant identification of the spirit of the race with ancient religious symbols and rituals.

Bepin Pal led a dedicated life and what specially signalised him was the staunchness of his faith and his unbending adherence to truth as he saw it. He adopted a life of poverty and was singularly free from personal ambition. In him, we find embodied many diverse and rare qualities. He was a stern realist although his realism was accompanied by deep religious convictions and yearnings. He was a born rebel; nevertheless, he preached

adherence to the law and the constitution. He started as a nationalist and ended as an advocate of federation and internationalism. But, in all his writings and speeches, he revealed himself as one who lived in the light of ancient racial traditions though he was willing to adjust them to newer needs and evolving world movements. He was a strong man who could stand alone and yet fight for unity and toleration. Such men are the salt of the earth and we do well to cherish and perpetuate their memory.

## Pandit Motilal Nehru

DR. ANNIE BESANT, during a conversation with some of her co-workers in the Home Rule Movement, described Pandit Motilal Nehru as "one of Nature's noblemen", and the description is both accurate and adequate.

He belonged to a generation anterior to mine and, indeed, he was a contemporary of my father. But I came across him in many capacities — as a persuasive and fearless advocate whose helpfulness to his juniors was proverbial; as a most entertaining as well as instructive conversationalist whose gifts of sarcasm, gentle but outspoken, were both feared and appreciated; and most of all, as the most generous and loyal of friends and a "prince among hosts".

His eminence at the Bar was readily acknowledged by his compeers, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (one of his junior contemporaries) not only acknowledged his personal debt of gratitude to Motilal Nehru for assistance during his early years at the Bar, but spoke of him once as "a legal whirlwind in action". Pandit Motilal loved the good things of life and his gastronomic tastes were alike refined and comprehensive. It was a real sight to see him returning early from court (he did not much care for exercise) and burying himself amongst the numerous cushions spread on *charpoy*s in the drawing room of his palatial mansion, "Ananda Bhavan", and to watch the apparently unending stream of lawyers, doctors, professors, politicians and officials — both European and Indian. Some of them coming for tea stayed on for dinner, the talk all the while directed by Motilal, turning on the most diverse topics, ranging from personal and domestic matters to high politics, the conversation being, on occasions, interrupted by music, vocal or instrumental. The North Indian

speciality of *Mushairas*, or impromptu verse recitations, was also one of the common features of these gatherings. Motilal, in fact, belonged to a generation that absorbed and mellowed the traditions of gracious living of the Moghul and the Rajput courts and also borrowed certain features of Anglo-Indian hospitality. His dinner parties were often protracted, because at any time between eight and ten in the evening, an approaching friend was not only welcomed but was insistently invited to share the repast. Pandit Motilal was reputed to be a good judge of wines and to possess a well-stocked cellar as well as larder. To be his guest was an intellectual as well as gastronomic privilege and his list included not only prominent Europeans, Hindus and Muslims but many in humbler circumstances. Motilal was anything but a snob in this matter. Many came to him for advice, in personal as well as legal matters; and amongst those who sought his advice and help were some who enjoyed high positions in the Government and in commerce and some among the poor and lowly.

Like many educated men of his generation, Motilal reacted violently against orthodoxy and ritual, but quite characteristically, he was quite tolerant and capable of understanding and allowing for rigidly orthodox views, both in his domestic and wider environments.

To have enjoyed such a position and then to have given up everything that he prized and loved, in answer to the call of what he conceived to be his highest duty, was quite characteristic of the man. His admiration of Dr. Besant and for her devotion to the Indian cause, led him to plunge into the Home Rule Movement. After a period of soul searching and hesitation and largely owing to his absorbing love for his son, Jawaharlal Nehru, and the insistent and compelling influence of that son, he joined forces with Mahatma Gandhi, shared the struggles and travails of the latter's campaigns, helped the Congress movement by financing every aspect of its activities and started a newspaper, *The Independent*, under a brilliant editor, Syed Hussain, who was introduced to him by an intimate friend, the Rajah of Mahummadabad. Finally, after working on several committees and conferences designed to bring home to the then Government the folly of its policy, he repeatedly courted

imprisonment and, in truth, shortened his life and became a martyr to his convictions.

Let us now examine his political life in some detail. Gandhiji, in his remarkable autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, refers to the woeful happenings in the Punjab under the Governorship of Sir Michael O'Dwyer; and adverting to the appointment of the Hunter Committee as well as the prevalent oppression, observes as follows :

"Owing to the principal Punjab leaders being in jail, their places had been properly taken up by Pandit Malaviya, Swami Sradhdhanand and Pandit Motilal. The others I had known intimately, but this was the first occasion in which I came into close personal contact with Motilalji."

After a full discussion in a conference, Gandhiji decided not to lead evidence before the Hunter Committee, but to create a non-official committee in which were included Pandit Motilal, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji, M. R. Jayakar, with Gandhiji as the chief organiser. The Report of this committee revealed such inhumanities as stirred the whole of India. Gandhiji says, "Pandit Motilal Nehru, at the sacrifice of his splendid practice, had made Punjab his headquarters." His services were suitably recognised by his election as the President of the Amritsar Congress. This Congress took place immediately after the British announcement of contemplated reforms. At that time, Lord Sinha was believed to have been responsible for them and Gandhiji says, "I felt, in the King's announcement and its language, the hand of Lord Sinha; and there was a ray of hope." Lokamanya Tilak and C. R. Das shook their heads. Pandit Malaviya was neutral. Pandit Motilal was not for a complete rejection of Government's offer. But ultimately, Gandhiji found that 'the gulf could not be bridged' and an amendment pronouncing that the reforms were unsatisfactory was carried in the Congress meeting.

Later on, there was the Calcutta Special Session of the All-India Congress Committee in 1920 over which Lala Lajpat Rai presided. It was then, that the Non-Cooperation Resolution was moved, after such a resolution had been passed by the

Khilafat Conference and in Gujarat. At a mammoth meeting, referring to this motion, Gandhiji said, "My plight was pitiable, indeed, I was absolutely at sea as to who would support the motion and who would oppose it." The resolution was postulated only with reference to the redressing of the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs. Salem Vijayaraghavachariar insisted that the demand for Swaraj should be included in the resolution. Gandhiji adds that Motilal was the first to join the movement, but both C. R. Das and Tilak were against the Non-Cooperation proposal.

From this time Motilal became more and more intimately concerned with Congress policies and the Congress movement. The history of his life and that of Jawaharlal were practically the history of the Congress. Jawaharlal was impetuously critical of compromises and moderate counsels and his father's love and admiration for his talented son gradually but inevitably influenced him in the same direction. It is needless to advert in detail to the history of the two Round Table Conferences and the meeting of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament in which the co-operation of Gandhiji and Motilal Nehru would have been priceless, but could not be secured. It is, however, to be borne in mind that an attempt was made to practise non-cooperation from within the legislatures; and C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal, in a historic statement, differed from Gandhiji in 1924 and pleaded for Council entry and non-cooperation from within. There is no doubt that, during the years that followed 1925, Pandit Motilal and C. R. Das not only did great work in the legislatures, but Motilal also accepted a seat on the Indian Sandhurst Committee (called the Skeen Committee). These were efforts on his part in consonance with his earlier views and training. Gandhiji did not wish to handicap the efforts of Pandit Motilal; but in 1925, Motilal had to write to Gandhiji thus : "Lord Burkenhead seems to spurn honourable co-operation. We must prepare the ground for a challenge to irresponsible and insolent authority."

About the same time, C. R. Das became the Mayor of Calcutta; Vallabhai Patel was elected Chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Committee, and Jawaharlal having become the President of the Allahabad Municipal Committee, soon

got tired of the position. By 1926, the cult of responsive co-operation had practically failed. Jawaharlal Nehru, at this time, left for Switzerland for the treatment of his wife, Kamala Nehru; and Pandit Motilal himself was expected to proceed to England to be present at the sittings of the Skeen Committee. About this time, during a debate when the budget was taken up, Motilal walked out of the chamber, accompanied by all the members of the Swaraj Party.

It was on 5 May 1926 that there was a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at which Dr. Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill which was drafted by the Home Rule League (of which I was then the General Secretary), was considered. Pandit Motilal suggested a committee to make a report on the Bill, but the Congress turned down the proposal. Then came a series of debates between Motilal and Jayakar, Motilal and Lajpat Rai and Motilal and S. Srinivasa Iyengar. The Gauhati Congress over which S. Srinivasa Iyengar presided resulted in what Pandit Motilal called "a veritable rout of the Swarajists". "Religion in danger," he added, "was the cry of the opponents and I have been freely denounced as a beef-eater and a destroyer of cows, because I stayed in dak-bungalows and ate food cooked in European style." Mr. N. C. Kelkar went to the extent of charging Motilal Nehru with an infatuation for power and position and wealth.

It was in the Madras Congress of 1927 that the resolution for the boycott of the Statutory Commission was passed. Pandit Motilal declared that in any such commission, an equal number of Indians must be appointed before they could cooperate. In spite of all provocation, Motilal continued in the legislature and on a historic occasion signalled himself by making the Government apologise to the people of India for the personal insult offered to Vithalbhai Patel, the President of the Indian Assembly. The attitude of Pandit Motilal Nehru was admirably set out in his Calcutta Congress address; and under his inspiration, the Congress recommended the adoption of the All Parties Report (or the Nehru Report as it is usually called) on the Indian Constitution. It was at this Congress that Jawaharlal Nehru and S. C. Bose proposed complete Independence for the Indian people and asserted that there could be no true freedom until

the British connection was severed. The position in the country became more troubled and confused until the Lahore Congress. At the instance of Gandhiji, Jawaharlal was elected President of that Congress, just before the historic statement of Lord Irwin in 1929. Jawaharlal, in his Presidential Address, emphasised that any form of Dominion Status applicable to India would not give real power. He added, "A test of this power would be the withdrawal of the alien army of occupation and economic control."

Notwithstanding the revolt of Maharashtra, a fight to the finish was resolved upon. The unfortunate arrest of Vallabhai Patel followed the letter of Gandhiji to Lord Irwin in which he declared that "he asked for bread and received a stone". It was at this time that Pandit Motilal Nehru burnt his boats and whole-heartedly stood by his son. He made the princely gift of his home, "Ananda Bhavan", to the Congress of which Jawaharlal was then the President. The father was the donor and the son was the donee though in his capacity as a representative of the nation.

The Satyagraha Movement spread all over the country and Pandit Motilal Nehru visited Bombay and was able to persuade the Bombay mill owners to support the boycott of foreign cloth, advocated by the Lahore Congress. Mill after mill accepted the Congress pledge; and thereupon, the meeting of the All-India Congress Working Committee was declared unlawful, and on 30 June 1930, Motilal was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. On 29 June 1930, Motilal gave an interview to Mr. Slocombe of *The Daily Herald* in which he stipulated the conditions on which the Congress might be willing to participate in a Round Table Conference. Mr. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar tried to act as intermediaries between the Government and Gandhiji and Motilal and Jawahar, who were all in prison. Ultimately, this attempt came to nothing but Pandit Motilal had to be released on account of his serious illness. Gandhiji, too, was, later on, released and the Working Committee passed a resolution reiterating the principles of Civil Disobedience.

By 3 January 1931, Panditji, whose health had been undermined by his imprisonment and the absence of the amenities to

which he was accustomed, was taken to Lucknow by Gandhiji. There he passed away and his last words are thus set out in the first volume of the *History of the Indian National Congress*: "Decide India's status in the Swaraj Bhavan. Let me sleep my last sleep not in a subject country but in a free one." Dr. Pat-tabhi Sitharamiah, the Congress historian, pronounces the following very just epitaph upon him:

"Though he was an aristocrat of wealth, yet, he recognised, under the inspiration of Gandhiji, the need to chasten life and character, by passing through the discipline of poverty and self-abnegation. His gift, to the Congress, of the Ananda Bhavan is not his greatest legacy; his greatest gift is the gift of his son."

Gandhiji said, "Motilal's death should be the envy of every patriot. He died having surrendered his all for the sake of the country and, up to his last, thinking only of the country."

As I have already indicated, it was my privilege to have known Pandit Motilal Nehru at close quarters during the Home Rule Movement; and with rare generosity, although I was then a junior at the Bar, he engaged me as his lawyer, to conduct a case in the Madras High Court, against a journalist whom he had often helped and who had vulgarly defamed him. It is interesting to record that, on more than one occasion, when I met him in 1915 and 1916, Pandit Motilal asked me to persuade Jawahar not to neglect the law but to build up his practice. He could not, then, foresee his son's future and unique eminence, wholly unconnected with a professional career. Like most prominent personages, he was often subjected to violent and unjust criticism but he had a pawky sense of humour which enabled him to ignore such attacks. Only on the occasion referred to above, was he driven to resort to legal proceedings against a person who turned against him, although he had been the continued recipient of favours, both financial and professional. Pandit Motilal, being very human himself, was able and willing to make allowances for others; and thus, he enjoyed the confidence and esteem as well as the deep affection of even those who were opposed to him politically, including the most conservative and

stiff-necked bureaucrats of his days. Though quick-tempered by nature, he had trained himself into becoming a polished man of the world, full of old-world courtesies combined with innate generosity. The motto, *Suaviter in modo fortiter in re* (Gentle in manner but resolute in action) aptly sums him up.

## The Rt. Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru

THE RT. HON'BLE DR. TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU, who, in all the essential qualities of greatness, was surpassed by none of his generation and equalled by few, first came into prominence as a careful and thoroughly conscientious lawyer who was as notable for the mastery of facts as he was proficient in the intricacies of the law.

His position at the Indian Bar was unique. Not the British provinces only, but most of the Indian States have been the scenes of his forensic triumphs, and with his unrivalled command of Urdu and Persian, he was able to conduct cases with equal facility, whether the language of the court was English or Urdu. Having been associated with him in some famous cases like those concerned with the Patiala, Bhopal and Darbanga States, I can bear testimony not only to his legal acumen but to the comprehensiveness of his legal outlook. I can also bear personal witness to his deep insight and the unrelenting care and enthusiasm that he displayed in the tasks that were entrusted to him. What struck me most in working with him was his infinite capacity for work and his desire to verify for himself each fact before he made a statement in Court. He was a relentless foe of any inaccuracy of statement and any confusion of thought. He was not one of those lawyers who rely upon their past reputation as a smoke screen for imperfect study; and not even the veriest junior at the Bar can plod through the details of documents and depositions as Sir Tej invariably did.

He was so meticulous that although he had a penetrating memory and was fully cognisant of all the aspects of a case, he still prepared and maintained elaborate notes so as to guard himself against the slightest inaccuracy or slipshodness. Not

even Lord Sinha, in the plenitude of his practice, had a clientele so diverse and so devoted as Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru commanded.

Not every advocate of eminence is a good consultant; but Sir Tej was a remarkable exception to this rule. From the humblest folk to most of the rulers of Indian States, men and women, all over India, had learnt to rely on his legal opinions with the assurance that they would be rightly and safely advised. His first and last preoccupation was with law and lawyers and he never felt so happy or so much at home as when preparing for and arguing a complicated case—civil, criminal or constitutional.

During his legal career, Sapru appeared in practically every important case that occupied the attention of the courts in his own State of Uttar Pradesh as well as in neighbouring Courts like those of the Punjab, Bihar and Bengal. He had the conspicuous advantage of being able to speak and write in Urdu and Persian which were the languages of the old Mughal tribunals and governments. In this connection, an amusing anecdote of what happened in the Nizam's Chief Court in Hyderabad may be adduced. Sapru had to appear against Jinnah in an important case involving the affairs of a big zamindari or principality in the Hyderabad State. The documents appertaining to the case were all in Persian. Jinnah, who spoke only Gujarati, apart from English, was completely unacquainted with Persian or Urdu, and could neither address the Court in Urdu nor read the Persian documents during the trial; and Sapru had to act as interpreter and translator for his opponent, Jinnah!

Sapru, in his early days at the Bar, owed a great deal to the encouragement and support of legal giants like Pandit Sunderlal and Motilal Nehru. He, in turn, was indefatigable in his active encouragement of all junior members of the Bar who showed signs of promise and whom, directly or indirectly, he assisted in many ways. This encouragement was not confined to his own province. From the time when I conducted a case in the Madras High Court against Dr. Besant involving the guardianship of the now famous, J. Krishnamurthi, Sapru kept in touch with my legal activities; and, when a very important engagement involving the Maharaja of Patiala was offered to him, he insisted that I should be engaged with him. Similarly, I remember that he spoke

warmly to some of his clients in favour of S. Varadachariar who, afterwards, became a judge of the Federal Court.

There was a crowd of juniors who attended his chambers and most of them not only derived considerable pecuniary advantage from their association with him but he was lavish of praise whenever they prepared a case well or argued well in court. In the years during which he devoted himself to the study of Constitutional Law in connection with the demand for self-government for India, he strenuously trained a large number of young men in Constitutional Law and Practice, and the "Sapru House" is a fitting memorial of his work in this direction. It is also characteristic of that generation that between Sapru, the leader of the Moderates, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and C. R. Das, personal relations were intimate and friendly; and it was largely at the instance of Jawaharlal Nehru that the "Sapru House" came into existence. Mr. P. N. Sapru, his worthy son, has inherited his legal instincts and his affability. He, like my son, C. R. Pattabhi Raman, Union Minister for Law, had the advantage of a training in Sapru's chambers.

In speaking of Sapru, one should not forget his deep enjoyment of every variety of journalistic and political literature. His other predilection was for every variety of smoking, comprising the *hooka*, the pipe, cigar and cigarette. Like many men of his generation in the U.P. he had been bred up in the Muslim tradition. Lucknow notables and the Oudh taluqadars and Delhi nobles fostered a taste for the *pilav*, *biryani* and Delhi sweets; and Sapru's daily guests, who were numerous, had the benefit of his catholic tastes. He was a complete teetotaler, but, as already indicated, he spared no effort nor expense to get from all over the world the best types of tobacco, in all its various manifestations. There was a standing order with Dunhills of Piccadilly, London, to supply him with the best specimens of cigars and cigarettes produced in Greece or Turkey, England or the United States. In the procurement of the appurtenances for smoking the *hooka*, his attendants were proficient and there was almost a ceremonial order observed by Sapru in the process of smoking, starting the day with the cigarette and finishing lunch with the cigar, while the *hooka* was in evidence during the evening *Durbar* when his friends gathered around him after his

return from court. During court hours when his adversary was speaking, Sapru used to steal into the corridor to enjoy a momentary cigarette puff. Apart from good food and tobacco, in his personal habits Sapru was very self-controlled and abstemious. His generosity to friends was proverbial but he spent very little on himself. When he and I were busily engaged in our joint preparation for the Patiala enquiry and when he used to vary, from time to time, his smoking apparatus, I cited to him to his great delight, Calverley's "Ode to Tobacco":

Sweet when the morn is gray  
Sweet when they have cleared away  
Lunch, and at close of day  
Possibly sweetest.

In later years, he often used to remind me of these lines when we met.

In addition to being a renowned lawyer, Sapru has played a notable part in the formation of political thought and the guiding of political action, functioning not as a popular leader or demagogue but as a tried mentor fearless alike of official disfavour and the uninstructed criticisms of the crowd.

Half-willingly, he entered active politics during the period of the Home Rule agitation; but once in politics he threw himself heart and soul into the study of all the aspects of administration and the conduct of public affairs. His convictions were deep-seated and in his expression he was definite and forthright. Although his political affiliations were with the so called Moderate or the Liberal Party there was nothing half-hearted or temporising in his estimate and judgment of men or measures and there was no Indian who more thoroughly vindicated the self-respect of India and Indians, at home and abroad.

Besides his legal studies, Sir Tej Bahadur's main activity lay in his strenuous cultivation of wide-ranging friendships. Professional men of all types—official and non-official—poets who wrote in Urdu and Persian, journalists from all over India, princes and landholders, flocked to his house in the evenings. Like his confrere, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sapru was not interested in sports and games and he devoted all his spare time and energy

to a continuous flow of conversation and anecdotage and the imparting of advice, from the time he returned from court until long past the dinner hour. His whole attention had been concentrated, in his early years, in building up his practice and he took only a mild interest in public affairs, until the time when he became one of the acknowledged leaders of the Bar with an all-India reputation. He was, however, strongly attracted, as was Motilal Nehru, by the flaming eloquence and the boundless love of India and Indian culture that were manifested by Dr. Annie Besant; and Sapru was one of those who helped her in her attempts to build up the Central Hindu College at Banaras and in her efforts to create the Banaras Hindu University, in collaboration with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Sapru did not belong to the religious type nor did he believe in observances and rituals, and his contacts with Dr. Besant were, therefore, mainly social and political.

During the years 1915-17, the Home Rule Movement grew from small beginnings to great importance, and the British Government became increasingly nervous; and, in their anxiety, interned Dr. Besant, G. S. Arundale and B. P. Wadia. It was then that Sapru was definitely drawn to the political movement. From that time, he devoted more and more of his time and energies to the cause of Indian self-government. It was in 1917 that the Imperial War Conference was held; and, for the first time, Indian representatives (namely, the Maharajah of Bikanir and Sir S. P. Sinha) were sent to such a gathering. It was suggested, at that time, that a deputation should also be sent to England to utilise the presence of these two persons and to strengthen the Indian claim for self-government. A deputation was thus proposed by the All-India Congress Committee, in April 1917, composed, among others, of Surendranath Bannerjee, Rash Behari Ghosh, Bupendranath Basu, Pandit Malaviya, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sapru and myself. Very little encouragement, however, came from England and the idea was given up. In the meantime, the Home Rule Movement grew more intense, and, in July 1917, a resolution in favour of passive resistance was drafted by Sir S. Subramania Aiyar, who was a great figure in the social and legal worlds and who had acted as the Chief Justice of Madras. This resolution was supported by many

others including Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, the Editor of the *Hindu*, and myself. It was soon after this that the famous pronouncement by Mr. Montagu was made in the House of Commons on 20 August 1917, and Mr. Montagu as Secretary of State and Lord Chelmsford as Viceroy toured India. Mr. Montagu refers to Sapru, in his diary, as follows:

"Motilal Nehru was a great fire-brand; but even he, and more particularly Sapru, and the old Pandit Mishra, seem to be quite willing to consider something less than the scheme, if only they were satisfied that we meant business and that they could get responsible government in, say, twenty years."

The Montagu-Chelmsford proposals were published in 1918 and, as is well known, Gandhiji's Satyagraha campaign was in full swing from that year.

In pursuance of what was regarded as a policy of active conciliation of Indian opinion, Sapru was appointed Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council; but many unfortunate events prevented the fruition of the British Government's hopes. Dr. Besant's activities were curtailed and she was prevented from entering the Bombay State. It was at this stage that I insisted on addressing a meeting in Bombay, as Secretary of the Home Rule League. Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay having heard of this idea, sent me a letter forbidding the meeting. I still insisted on addressing the meeting. Lord Willingdon, met me and after a long talk, allowed me to go on with the meeting. But all this was only a flash in the pan and the feelings between the Government and the people continued to be estranged. Sapru felt restless as Law Member and resigned in 1923. From that time, he began to take active part in the political efforts to secure responsible government. He presided over numerous conferences for discussing practical programmes for attaining self-government within the Empire. The political environment entered on a period of stalemate until Lord Irwin, after his appointment as Viceroy, issued a statement promising a Round Table Conference. Sapru, along with Pandit Malaviya and Dr. Besant, issued a manifesto, and promised co-operation and participated brilliantly in the Round Table Conference where

Sapru's advocacy carried great weight. The Congress, however, stood aloof; and in June 1930, Gandhiji and Motilal Nehru were imprisoned. In July, Sapru along with Jayakar, a very prominent lawyer and an active member of the Home Rule League and of the Congress, met Gandhiji in the Yeravada Jail, after the British journalist, Mr. Slocombe, had a meeting with Motilal Nehru. Efforts were made to induce Congress leaders like Gandhiji and Motilal Nehru to go to England. Sapru exerted his utmost to secure the presence of Gandhiji at the Round Table Conference and he sailed to England in the full expectation of Gandhiji's presence there. But events in India became critical and Gandhiji cancelled his trip and published a charge-sheet against the Government. A series of fatalities marked the mutual relationship between India and England. A general election took place in England and the Conservative Party practically made up its mind to break up the Round Table Conference, and Gandhiji was again imprisoned.

From this period started Sapru's active intervention as a mediator and reconciler between the Congress and the British Government. He sought to bring about peace during the Salt Satyagraha Campaign and took an active part in the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations. It is needless to recount the history of the Round Table Conferences of 1930 and 1931, of the Joint Select Committee of 1933 and all the protracted and troublesome negotiations that took place between what may be called the Liberal or Moderate group in India and the British Government. But England, in respect of India as in the case of Ireland, was difficult to be persuaded and bestirred itself only when there was violent agitation. Sapru, along with his comrade and colleague, Jayakar, kept up the thankless role of mediator. It was in 1941, after continued ill-success, that Sapru convened a conference at which he stated: "I maintain that there has never been a Government of India more isolated from public opinion and from the main current of thought in the country than the present Government of India." During this period, the Satyagraha Movement had again started and Sapru called another conference and asked for a declaration of dominion status for India. By this time, American statesmen had begun to take interest in Indian affairs and international opinion was converging on India.

Gandhiji started his fast after his famous declaration that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal will remove the bait." His fast produced a strong American reaction against the obstinate refusal of the British to grant self-government to India. Newspapers in the United States headed by the *New York Times* and personages like Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, voiced unequivocal opinions. Yet nothing happened, and in February 1942, presiding over a Leaders' Conference, Sapru stated that "the British Government always prefer settling with a rebel rather than with a loyalist".

With unabated patience, Sapru continued his protests and his demand for the release of Gandhiji and fresh negotiations; but his request to meet Gandhiji in jail was rejected as also the request made simultaneously by Mr. Phillips, the representative of President Roosevelt. After the arrival of Lord Wavell as Viceroy, Sapru again convened a non-party Leaders' Conference and insisted on the formation of a national government. The rejoinder to this appeal was a statement by Herbert Williams that "on the withdrawal of Britain's domination, India will be tyrannised by the worst aristocracy in the world, the Brahman class". Amery and Churchill continued to be recalcitrant and it was really the worsening of the war situation, as Sapru himself ruefully said, that compelled further moves.

Lord Mountbatten was sent as Viceroy ultimately with a definite mandate to negotiate with the Congress and to settle the Indian problem, effecting a partition of India if need be. But even before his arrival, it was obvious that the British Government did not set much store by the efforts of the Liberals and Moderates and took the view that they should deal, if at all, only with those who had the big battalions behind them.

Sapru's political efforts were, undoubtedly, most formative only in the early stages; and it must be confessed that he felt frustrated by the futility of his strenuous and well-meant efforts to bring about peace between the Congress and the Muslim League, on the one hand, and the British and the Indian political parties like the Hindu Mahasabha, on the other. Quite apart, however, from the ultimate result, the political work of Sapru from 1923, when he resigned from the Viceroy's Council, down

to his demise, was the result of an inflexible patriotism which induced him, in spite of obstacles and opposition, to continue the quest of reconciliation and self-government for India. He got little support from the Congress although Gandhiji personally had the highest esteem and regard for him. He failed with the Hindu Mahasabha in spite of his intimate friendship with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He failed with the Muslim League although the foremost Muslims in India were his friends and he was himself very sympathetic towards the Muslims in every aspect of their culture, and was a scholar in Urdu and Persian both of which languages he could speak, read and write with ease.

In his short career as Law Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council when he had to cross swords with brilliant representatives of the Indian Civil Service and in his whole public life as an organiser of discussions to end political deadlocks and for setting India on the path leading to a speedy realisation of her destiny, Sir Tej evinced a breadth of vision and freedom from communal or sectarian approach, which may be pronounced to be unique. At the same time, he always stood out against all cant and humbug and his intellectual affinities were with thinkers like Herbert Spencer, Huxley and Mathew Arnold. His conspicuous services both as a negotiator and as an unflinching and independent advocate of Indian rights were universally acknowledged, and his nomination to the Privy Council was peculiarly appropriate because he shone best as the dispenser of good counsel. This was also a token of ungrudging admiration on the part of English statesmen, whom he cornered at every turn and to whom he gave little quarter where fundamentals were concerned.

In the local Legislative Council, in the Central Assembly and in the numerous committees in which he has played a part (whether sponsored by the Government or initiated at his own instance), he was the central figure. His work in the Round Table Conferences and in the Joint Parliamentary Committee furnishes abiding evidence of unremitting and patriotic tasks fulfilled without fear or favour and with the sole aim of advancing the public weal according to his lights.

To those who had the good fortune to enjoy his friendship,

his legal achievements, his inflexible honesty of purpose and his independence of outlook, remarkable as they were, perhaps appealed less than his boundless capacity for comradeship and the essential humanity of his nature which was trained to tolerate misunderstandings and ingratitude and was willing to make allowances for anything falling short of his ideal. He unostentatiously helped many persons in distress and never worried about public appreciation of his beneficence.

He was ever charitable in his judgment even of those who were violently opposed to him and he contracted deep attachments not only towards his compeers but to his juniors also.

Generosity of judgment and freedom from communal, racial or personal prejudices were the outstanding characteristics of a man who, taken all in all, was an epitome both of strength and sweetness. Describing the Rt. Hon. James Bryce, who, as a public man and celebrated constitutional lawyer, greatly resembled Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, an English poet has penned the following lines, which seem to sum up Sir Tej Bahadur's life adequately :

“ One

Acquainted with the story of many peoples,  
Acquainted with the life of many peoples ;  
An honoured labourer for the amity  
And weal of peoples, loftier things than sway.”

## The Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI was a rare type of scholar, orator and patriot, whose academic career was brilliant and who, from his earliest days, laid the foundations not only of ripe and meticulous scholarship but of precise and persuasive use of the English language. He used that language as an apt vehicle both of analysis and of effective argument.

He started his life as a teacher in several institutions, including the Hindu High School, Triplicane, Madras, but was soon attracted towards the Servants of India Society.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale who was trained under that fervent patriot and mellow personality, Mahadev Govind Ranade, inaugurated in Sastri's own language, a type of sacrifice and *Sanyasa* to which he added a new significance in keeping with the times we live in. Soon after Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society in 1905 to carry out his programme, Sastri wrote a brief sketch of his own life, and after attending the Banaras session of the Congress, he applied for admission to the Society. Many discouraged him but he carried out his resolve and was admitted as a member of the Society in 1907, mainly owing to the good offices of V. Krishnaswami Iyer, a good friend of Gokhale. Almost immediately, he began his public work and it is worthy of note that, in his case, Gokhale relaxed the rule that members of the Society should not address public meetings or write to the Press for the first five years of their membership. During the repeated visits of Gokhale to England in connection with the Morley-Minto Reforms, Sastri deputised for him. He himself paid his first visit to England along with Dr. Besant and myself only in 1919 in connection with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

About the same time, Gandhiji who had returned to India from South Africa sought admission to the Servants of India Society; but many differences of opinion manifested themselves between Gandhiji and Gokhale, and Gandhiji himself withdrew his application. Nevertheless, as Sastri says, "Sharply contrasted as Mr. Gandhi and the Servants of India Society are in outward action, they would be found near of kin where motives were weighed and the spirit was taken into account". Lord Pentland, who had heard of Sastri from Sir William Wedderburn, became Governor of Madras in 1913; and he frequently used to consult Sastri and nominated him to the Madras Legislative Council where Sastri manifested his deep interest in education, in the co-operative movement and other topics of public interest.

The Congress-League scheme of reforms occupied Sastri's attention from the time that he succeeded Gokhale as the Head of the Servants of India Society in 1915 and he expounded the Congress-League scheme with zeal in his writings and speeches. Sastri was a member of the deputation which waited on Montagu, and, in the sessions of the Joint Select Committee he, in the language of Dr. Besant, "expressed admirably lucid criticism of the Bill in most polished English showing a firm grasp of the subject". Sastri left London in November 1919 and gave a series of lectures in Bombay in support of the Reform Bill and regretted the attitude of those who opposed what was termed the moderate point of view. The Congress passed a resolution on Reforms in 1919, but it lent itself to varying interpretations. Unfortunately, just at this time, the Hunter Committee Report appeared and the Khilafat agitation began. Sastri differed from Gandhiji, who threw himself into the Khilafat Movement and who, after the death of Tilak in 1920, strenuously advocated the Non-Cooperation Movement. In a great speech on the death of Tilak with whom Sastri had profound differences of opinion, he said that "left to himself, Tilak would never break the law openly and invite its rigours like Mr. Gandhi". In 1921 Lord Sinha was made a member of the Imperial War Cabinet and Sastri was made a member of the Committee set up to make rules under the Montagu-Chelmsford Act.

Between the years, 1921 and 1932, Sastri was constantly deputed overseas on official and non-official missions and he

visited Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Fiji, Malaya and South Africa. At the Imperial Conference of 1921 presided over by Mr. Lloyd George, Sastri made a memorable speech and openly differed from General Smuts representing South Africa. It was at this time that Sastri was made a member of the Privy Council, and the City of London conferred its Freedom on him. As a delegate to the League of Nations and to Washington, he rendered conspicuous services; and, as H. A. L. Fischer said, "By his eloquence and the impression his integrity and character has made, he spread the reputation of Great Britain all over the world." He added that Sastri stood for sane, reasonable and moderate views. The arrest of Gandhi in 1922 and the subsequent events isolated Sastri from the political views of the majority of Indians. A speech which he made at this time is typical of his attitude.

"The officials criticised the Liberals for lack of organisation and vigorous propaganda in support of the Government. When they attack us for indecision of thought, fear of unpopularity and a tendency to take up the most violent and passionate cries of the extremists and echo them feebly, thus affording no constant support to Government, we must repudiate the charges as unfounded. Our business is to promote our country's welfare, to enlarge her political status through the present constitution, to secure her ordered progress, and compatibly with these aims, but not otherwise, to support Government. . . . We will oppose and thwart them when they neglect their duty, or defy our wishes. . . . As our motto is Ordered Progress, we do not despise compromise in public affairs, provided it is honourable, advances the present position and does not bar further progress."

Sastri was sent to Kenya to negotiate on the status of Indians in that colony. But, as often happened in those days, practically none of his suggestions was adopted. After the Liberal Party in England came into power in 1924, and Ramsay MacDonald became Prime Minister, Sastri's plea that the Indian National Congress should take office was rejected; and he made his opinion clear that the rejection of the Budget and the

Finance Bill was wrong and may embarrass the new and friendly Labour Government, with Mr. Montagu as an influential member of the Cabinet.

The Hindu-Muslim Riot of 1924 led to Gandhiji's fast and the Unity Conference. It was at this time that Sastri made one of his finest utterances :

"Britishers have to understand that the fate of an Empire depends on the choice they now make between the pursuit, as heretofore, of their own momentary interests and the adoption of a policy which, in communal, if not in individual, matters, is not calculated to further the growth of a political nationality in India in place of the many sectional and communal loyalties which the law sanctions and British example stimulates."

Montagu was practically driven out of office but found a steadfast champion in Sastri.

After Montagu's resignation, the political situation in India worsened; and Sastri was then constantly engaged in entering a plea for national unity and a united front. He advocated Dominion Status and strongly criticised those who opposed it in favour of outright independence. His voice was then unheeded but his wisdom has been justified by later events. On the special insistence of Gandhiji and others, Sastri visited South Africa as a member of the Round Table Conference headed by Sir Mohamad Habibulla; and after the Cape Town Agreement which was a partially successful compromise, Sastri accepted office as the first Indian Agent in South Africa. Mahatma Gandhi, at this time, wrote to the South African Indians that it was impossible to find "a worthier, abler and more impartial representative of India than Sastri". He continued to stay there till 1929 and there were bouquets and brickbats; but, Mahatma Gandhi fully supported his policy in South Africa; and when he returned, India gave him a warm welcome. He declined to resume the Presidentship of the Servants of India Society and assumed the Vice-Chancellorship of the Annamalai University on an honorary basis. Soon after, the events in Kenya called him there, but neither the British Government nor the Kenya Government played the game; and his mission ended in failure in that a common roll for and

equality of representation between the whites and Indians were rejected. Later on, Sastri and his colleague, N. M. Joshi, became members of the Royal Commission on Indian Labour. When the Round Table Conference on Indian Reforms was announced by the Labour Government in 1929, Sastri took a prominent part, along with Sapru and Jayakar, in promoting conciliation between the British Government and Gandhiji; and it was in 1931 that the idea of a federation was contemplated. Events have proved that Sastri was, at this time, judging aright when he spoke in favour of Dominion Status for a Federated India including the Indian States. He played an important part in the Second Round Table Conference as well as in the Cape Town Conference. Sastri was, however, not invited to the Third Round Table Conference and it was suspected that the real reason for excluding him was to sabotage the scheme of Federation.

Although Sastri did not write a detailed biography of Gokhale as was expected of him, yet, he gave, at this time, a series of lectures on Gokhale which demonstrated the highlights of Gokhale's life and political and public career. In 1933, the White Paper on Indian Reforms was published but the phrase "Dominion Status" was conspicuous by its absence. Many in India, including some members of the Servants of India Society, were in favour of rejecting the new reforms; but Sastri insisted that they should be accepted and worked for what they were worth. When the Indian National Congress met in Bombay in 1934, Gandhi retired from it and the Congress formally brought forward the subject of Civil Disobedience and also sanctioned Council entry. The Congress accordingly participated in the general elections in 1934 and obtained a large majority. It decided to oppose the Constitution not only from outside the legislature but also from within.

Opening the Sastri Hall in the Annamalai University in 1935, Lord Erskine, the then Governor of Madras, referred to the "Sastri spirit, the spirit of renunciation and service adapted to modern life". When he was Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, Sastri went to Malaya in the interest of Indians settled there and he prepared a report which was hailed by all parties in India.

It would be only a partial truth to say that the mode of

approach to political problems associated with the names of Sir Phirozeshah Mehta and Messrs. Gokhale and Srinivasa Sastri has been wholly replaced by the new technique and the programmes with which the names of Gandhiji, Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru are connected. The qualities for which Sastri stood, his severe self-examination, his continuous resistance to the partisan spirit and all irrelevancies of thought and action, can never be outdated. What Sastri himself admired in Gokhale and what he has described as his master's "fine poise, dignity and moral earnestness" are the traits by which Sastri will be remembered. Even more characteristic than his oratorical triumphs or his sweet and persuasive personality, was his culture broad-based on his own country's classics and enriched by Western thought and diction.

One of the most remarkable things about Sastri as well as Gandhiji was the faculty of keeping private friendships alive amidst public differences. Events in India were, from 1934 to 1942, entirely directed and controlled by Mahatma Gandhi; and the Quit India resolution and the mass arrests of Congress leaders marked the year 1942. Sastri, at this time, wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, appealing to him "to ignore the narrow circle of official advisers and to invite the patriotism of the land which is now held at arm's length". At the same time, he very strongly criticised the Congress resolution of self-determination as applied to provinces. Fortunately, the Congress itself realised and soon retrieved this mistake. From and after 1942 Sastri was outside the main political trends but, being a voracious reader and a diligent writer, bestowed much time on writing and lecturing and on radio talks; and his literary activities included a remarkable series of unconventionally developed lectures on the *Ramayana*, which displayed much originality both of thought and of literary presentation. During the whole of 1945 and 1946, Sastri was in very indifferent health. Gandhiji called on him at the Madras General Hospital and, as Sastri said, "We have come together by some inner affinity. No external reason can explain our friendship. Gokhale was but the occasion of it." Gandhiji's estimate of Sastri was thus expressed: "Though we differed in politics, our hearts were one and I could never think that his patriotism was less than that of the tallest patriot." Sarojini Naidu has

stated, "His golden words conveyed to the young nations of the West, the gracious message of India's culture and philosophy." The political outlook of Gokhale and of Sastri may be described in the language of John Morley as insisting on "a wise suspense in forming opinions, wise reserve in expressing them and wise tardiness in trying to realise them. Their opponents often called these attitudes of mind, "disingenuousness, dissimulation and pusillanimity!" But they are very uncharitable and erroneous in this respect because no one could be more upright in forming and expressing their opinions than the leading Liberals of India typified by statesmen who were always conscious of the fundamental ideas which gave their creed its life and consistency.

In the transitional period, of which he was a product and an ornament, Sastri was not able to produce final or conclusive political results and his very virtue of self-analysis and the faculty of appreciating the other side's point of view, perhaps, prevented him from being fully effective as a man of action. Posterity will, however, always cherish his memory for the stimulus and inspiration which he gave to his generation, for the gentle and yet fearless examination of each question and each personality, as they came under his scrutiny, for his practice of and exhortations towards charity of judgement and definiteness of practical aims and, above all, for his pervasive love for the land of his birth and for its innate ideals which he commented upon and upheld.

## 26

## Sri S. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar

It is a noteworthy but regrettable fact that there are few outstanding biographies in any of the Indian languages and fewer memoirs and diaries. During the last five or six centuries the lives of great administrators, generals and men of letters have been vividly brought home to the readers of European literatures in a series of laudatory, critical or denunciatory books; Plato, Plutarch and Suetonius being the pristine masters of the art. On the other hand, we really know nothing of the lives, the struggles and the outer and inner achievements of the great men of India, beginning with Vedic seers and monarchs or with Valmiki, the *Adi Kavi*, and coming down to our own times. I do not forget the *Puranas* or poems, like *Raghuvamsha*, or the dramas, but they are, with a few exceptions, idealised versions of the exploits of heroes of action and of thought. It is only as late as nineteen thirty-six, that Pandit Jawaharlee Nehru let us into the secret of his inner conflicts and outer achievements. Pains-taking biographies of a few personages like Dr. Besant and Mahatma Gandhi have appeared. But, on the whole, we have not had the advantage of vivid presentations of epochs and personages that have made history, either in the domain of public affairs or of intellectual attainment. To produce a fine biography, the author has to preserve a balance between humourless appreciation and captious criticisms, to avoid, in other words, the shortcomings of Boswell, the idolator or Lytton Strachey, the iconoclast.

Contemporary journals, illustrative of the life and times of Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, throw a welcome light on an interesting and transitional period of modern Indian history. Mr. Ranga Raghavan, a relation of Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar,

in his biography traces the geneology of his ancestors and furnishes a history of their village of origin, Innambur or Inapura, and places before us the intellectual and administrative exploits of his forebears from the time of the Vijayanagar dynasty up to that of Maharaja Sarfoji Rao of Tanjore ; and we see that the members of his family during two or three centuries have been occupying influential official positions. This is an exceptional family whose members and cognatic relations are, even now, distinguished in several branches of administration, public life and journalism.

Inheriting such traditions and belonging to a historic family, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, who was born in 1849, exemplified a type of scholar-administrator which his generation produced in abundance in South India. T. Venkasami Rao, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, Sir A. Seshayya Sastri, Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar, Sir V. Bashyam Aiyangar, P. Ranganatha Mudaliar, T. Gopala Rao, T. Sundara Rao, Sir Sankaran Nair and my own father, and many others were the products of that era. They were, in their several ways, steeped in their ancestral traditions, but yet took full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them by the impact of new ideas, new philosophies and new literatures originating in the West.

Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar had the rare advantage of being trained under inspiring preceptors like Messrs. Porter and Gopala Rao of the Kumbakonam College, who aroused emulation and demonstrated the potentialities of generations of scholars who sat at their feet. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, and after him, R. V. Srinivasa Aiyar and K. Hanumantha Rao, made a great reputation for mathematical proficiency, which stood them in good stead in later life. Those were days in which men like Porter, Thompson and Powell took a delight in recognising and fostering merit and character.

As soon as he graduated in 1867, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar was invited by Mr. Marsh, the famous Principal of the S. P. G. College, Tanjore, to occupy a teacher's position on a salary of Rs. 120/- a month. It was easy for brilliant students to get an appointment in those days. Those were days, however, when an appointment under Government was considered to be the *sum-mum bonum* of life ; and thus, in 1867, when the Collector of

Tanjore, Mr. Morris, visited the S.P.G. College and was struck by the intelligence and alertness of Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, he offered him a clerical post on Rs. 35/- a month ; and it was accepted after some consideration. Those were days when there were no feelings of jealousy between European officers and Indians ; and recognition and promotion came swiftly.

During Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar's life in the Collectorate he encountered many pin-pricks and also enjoyed the generous appreciation of his talents. His abilities were manifested in the Reports on Famine Conditions, during and after the 1877 famine. Men like Seshayya Sastri and Sir Henry Stoke became aware of his talents, especially during the progress of the Famine Commission's labours under the chairmanship of Sir Richard Strachey. Among the members of the Commission were men like C. Rangacharlu, the famous Dewan of Mysore. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar's mathematical talents and proficiency in the handling of complicated reports and statistics enabled him to display his grasp of the principles of Political Economy. By 1879, he had obtained a position in the Revenue Board and made himself felt in the same. It was during this period that the great controversy between Sir William Hunter and Sir Charles Elliot regarding what was wellknown as the "Famine Cycle" controversy took place. Although occupying a subaltern position, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar's minutes and notes elicited the admiration of Sir Henry Stokes, who became his admirer, and helped him, at all stages, to advance his interests.

Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar was interested in the work on behalf of several institutions with which he was associated in Mylapore, such as the Mylapore Hindu Permanent Fund, and learned societies, like the Indian Association, which were then coming into existence ; and we have also glimpses of the recreational side of the activities of Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar and the group of Mylapore notabilities who started badminton and tennis. Later on, he joined the Cosmopolitan Club, sponsored by leading European and Indian citizens.

Madras, at that time, witnessed the beginnings of the Social Reform Movement. Along with his associates, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar took part in the animated debates that ensued regarding such topics as the problem of child widows, widow marriage,

foreign travel and other subjects, which have now become *choses jugées* ; but, at that period, were of burning and topical interest. In these discussions, he maintained the golden mean and followed a policy of *festina lente*. On these and most other occasions, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar was influenced by the prevalent liberal traditions of England. The middle path, the method of reasonable and persuasive argument, and refraining from extreme measures or violent speech, were the characteristics that he admired and displayed. But, notwithstanding his general moderation, he made no secret of his opposition to certain official policies, like those involving cotton excise duties and the implementation of the doctrines of the Manchester School of Economists. About this time, moreover, the Indian National Congress was inaugurated ; and Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, in public and in private, supported many of its resolutions, including, specially, the one asking for simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service. In short, he proved himself not only an efficient Secretariat officer and trained economist and statistician, but also one who took a vivid and patriotic interest in the problems confronting his country.

Official preferment, dignities and titles came to him in rapid succession ; and he was soon elevated to the position of Inspector-General of Registration which was then the highest post available to Indians in the official hierarchy, apart from judicial preferment.

He wrote his Report on "Forty Years' Progress under British Administration", in the midst of his official preoccupations. It was published under Government auspices, and his thesis was that, notwithstanding administrative shortcomings, the financial drain imposed on India and the insufficient encouragement given to Indian industries, the standard of life had notably risen, and that the verdict of posterity would be in favour of the British administration, especially in respect of matters like land revenue administration, settlement operations, the establishment of roads and railways, irrigation facilities, police administration and so forth. The book was received with deep appreciation and applause in official circles. It evinced a mastery of analytical treatment and a familiarity with details of administration which were truly remarkable. On the other hand, not only the newly

started Congress group, but most newspapers and public men, denounced it as a laboured apology for the British administration. Many persons who did not read the book, took isolated passages as furnishing evidence of an anti-patriotic bias. They indulged in the unfounded criticism that Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar was not for increase in salaries and status of Indian officers, but was only intent on supporting the Government viewpoint. I recall my own words when I unveiled Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar's portrait in the Kumbakonam College in April 1951. I then said,

"This book is not merely a eulogy of the British Government but is a minute and scholarly analysis of the benefits as well as defects of that administration. The irrefutable arguments contained in this book led to the realisation of the difficulties of the rural artisan and the agriculturist. The Co-operative Movement inaugurated by Sir Frederic Nicolson stems from this book. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar has also fearlessly exposed the evils of the economic burdens imposed by England on the Indian exchequer. He insisted, long before the politicians, on industrial development, on the need for lowering the land revenue and stabilising the position of the ryot. He really pioneered the ideas which are now widely prevalent, regarding the position of the agriculturist *vis-a-vis* the middleman and zamindar and the Government. Few, before him, had spoken with such emphasis on the economic backwardness of the country under British rule."

Sensitive as he was, Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar suffered much pain of mind by reason of the misdirected criticism and the social obloquy to which he was subjected. His book, however, has established his reputation as an economist of distinction and as a thinker ; and it is no wonder that Maharaja Sayaji Rao of Baroda thought of him when a vacancy arose in the Dewanship of that State.

The Maharaja of Baroda was justly celebrated as one who recognised and rewarded talent ; and he himself was responsible for many political and social reforms in the State, which was then regarded and described, along with Mysore, as a model

State. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar had to contend not only against the prejudice entertained in Baroda against foreigners, but had also to encounter the difficult and perplexing problems presented by the outbreak of plague, as also by the characteristic disposition of the energetic and talented Ruler of Baroda, to interfere in the details of administration and to give to the Dewan rather the position of a Secretary than that of an administrator working under a constitutional ruler. It must be remembered that, at that time, the British Government looked askance at the innovations and reforms introduced by the Gaikwar and used any stick to beat the animal they disliked. There was animated correspondence that took place with reference to the Gaikwar's repeated visits to Europe. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar wanted to return to Madras as soon as his term of three years was over in Baroda ; but, as the Gaikwar again made up his mind to proceed to England, he consented to prolong his term of office.

Amongst Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar's achievements in Baroda, may be mentioned the levelling up of the salaries of public servants, the inauguration of a large number of primary and secondary schools established to give instruction in the mother tongue, legislation to prevent child marriages and financial encouragement to handicrafts and small industries and the overhauling of the Baroda coinage. He also initiated a system of State Transport. But, taken altogether, although he proved himself to be a firm and knowledgeable administrator, he was not happy in Baroda ; and he gladly returned to Madras as soon as he could, with propriety.

On his coming back to Madras, he was engaged in dealing with the question of agricultural indebtedness which was, afterwards, handled by Sir Frederic Nicolson to whom, and to Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, we owe the initiation and growth of the Co-operative Movement. His evidence before the Irrigation Commission was most valuable and suggestive ; and in his Convocation Address delivered to the University of Madras in 1902, he has given us a survey of the Indian situation emphasising the need for a re-orientation of ideas regarding education, economic development and social reorganisation.

Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar rendered very valuable services as a member of the Police Commission, generally known as the

Fraser Commission. On this occasion also, he was criticised by various journals and political parties for not having appended a minute of dissent insisting on the immediate grant of equal terms and status for Europeans and non-Europeans in the matter of recruitment for the higher ranks of the police.

His premature death in 1903, was a real loss to India. Amongst the elder statesmen of his ways, he was the most qualified, by his concentrated studies and his aptitude, to take a formative part in the discussions and decisions relating to the economic development of India. It may be noted that just before his death, he received an offer of Dewanship of Travancore and was, in fact, considering the question of acceptance of the offer, when he passed away.

Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar was an exemplar of concentrated study of social and economic problems with which he united a deep knowledge of human nature under a quiet exterior. He nourished deep patriotic feelings which were not recognised by hasty observers. His great qualities were not on the surface but were known to many who counted.

## Sri Jawaharlal Nehru

OSCAR WILDE once remarked, "Most people are other people", meaning thereby that they are often too stereotyped and imitative. Sri Jawaharlal, on the other hand, had an unmistakably characteristic and individual as well as winning personality, and he may be aptly described also as a great visionary with a practical side to his vision.

The career of Jawaharlal Nehru, like his character, was exceptional. There have been few instances comparable with Jawaharlal's, where the children of rich and prominent parents in high positions have reacted against the benumbing influence of their environment and deliberately forsaken an aristocratic way of life. Having enjoyed the personal intimacy and close friendship of his father, Pandit Motilal Nehru, and having, in fact, acted as his legal adviser on more than one occasion, I am in a position to estimate aright those qualities in the father which burgeoned in the son. Motilal was literally a prince amongst men—magnanimous in outlook, princely in hospitality and generous to a fault. The scenery and the people of Kashmir ever attracted the appreciation, loyalty and deep attachment of the father and the son. They were part of the mental atmosphere of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru, alike. The composite culture of Kashmir was a blend of Sanskrit lore and age-long usage and the Persian tradition of overflowing hospitality and grave courtesy. Motilal Nehru admired and was an embodiment of Persian and Moghul manners, customs and social flair. The son was not unlike the father in this respect; but, in addition to the influence of Kashmir and of the Moghul and Persian tradition, Jawaharlal, in his passage through Harrow, Cambridge and the Inner Temple, was profoundly affected by the new

theories of economics sponsored by Laski and his group, by the activities of the Labour Party, by the aftermath of the doctrines of evolution propounded by Darwin and Haeckel, Herbert Spencer, Huxley and Tyndall and by the Socialist usages that began to develop rapidly in Europe. Jawaharlal Nehru, with a privileged position and with the additional advantage of training in an English Public School and University, travelled out of his chosen orbit and proved himself to be a proletarian in his sympathies and radical in his outlook. When he returned to India, his father soon found that his interests lay far away from a lawyer's life. Jawaharlal, in turn, found his father in the throes of a difficult transition from the life of a successful lawyer and of a generous host enjoying the friendship of Indians and Europeans alike, to that of a recent convert in the doctrine of Home Rule, preached in different ways but with equal emphasis, by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Dr. Annie Besant.

Jawaharlal's political career ran parallel with that of his father only for a short time during the early days of Dr. Annie Besant's Home Rule League, when he and I came together for the first time. Advancing, very soon, beyond the outlook and the tenets of his father, he attached himself with fervent enthusiasm to the pervasive and forthright gospel and leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, whose favourite disciple and chosen successor he afterwards became, despite their many intellectual and cultural differences.

Jawaharlal's first-hand acquaintance with the tragic problems of the peasantry, soon diverted him into militant politics and, as early as 1920, he organised the first Kisan March. He might have easily become an active revolutionary like Madame Cama, Chattopadhyaya, Mahendra Pratap and others, but for that innate hankering towards a constructive approach which never forsook him.

Jawaharlal's wide travels and participation in congresses and conferences in such far-flung centres as Brussels and Germany, Italy, Russia and Spain, widened his vision and made him a consistent partisan of the under-dog. His contacts with Chinese and Russian leaders made a deep impression on him and, he was, from the earliest days, more sympathetic than most of his political colleagues towards the Marxist ideology though, later on,

he diverged widely from some of the bellicose maxims and practices of world communist leaders.

He joined the Afghan delegation in 1920, attended the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels, addressed revolutionary meetings in Moscow, took part in the Spanish Liberation Movement and, in many other ways, qualified himself to pinpoint the demand for the independence of India. His views were outlined in the Madras Congress of 1926 and he also, thereafter, founded in London the Independence of India League. Apart from drafting the Nehru Report on Indian Reforms, he also actively opposed the Simon Commission. It was in 1929 that, as President of the Lahore Congress, he transformed the Congress policy into one advocating complete independence and the severance of the British connection.

The demise of his devoted wife in 1936 deeply affected him and he, with all his soul, concentrated on the problem of Indian Independence. He moved the "Quit India" resolution in Bombay in 1942 and was an active participant, with Vallabhai Patel, in those epoch making discussions with Lord Mountbatten that led to the formation of the Interim Government of 1946. Gandhiji delegated his full authority, as the unquestioned political leader of India, to Jawaharlal and insisted on his assuming the Prime Ministership in 1947. The history of his uninterrupted premiership of India from that year until his demise is, in effect, the history of India, in relation to both national and international affairs.

The Prime Ministership of Jawaharlal Nehru can be truly described as the reflection and implementation of his evolving intellectual processes. He, very soon, developed a global outlook on politics and avoided the excesses both of the communist left and the conservative right. Though the policies of co-existence and non-alignment stemmed from the teachings of Gandhiji and are in consonance with ancient Indian teachings, both religious and practical, they were, nevertheless, very largely founded on the personal experiences of Jawaharlal himself; and it can be justly claimed that the Bandung Conference and the Panch-Sheel policy marked the climax of his career. During his premiership, he concentrated on two main programmes, namely, (1) feeling and keeping in touch with the pulse of the

masses, and (2) the search for world collaboration and harmony. One can, therefore, well realise the deep sense of frustration and disappointment that he must have felt over the Chinese invasion and over Pakistan's kaleidoscopic shifts of policy. In both cases, Jawaharlal was, perhaps, misled by local advisers (on whom he largely relied) as to the significance of such events as the genocidal annexation of Tibet and the malignant verbal attacks and political trespasses of Pakistan. The developments on the Chinese and Pakistan borders practically prostrated him, mentally and physically. Especially was he hurt by Pakistan's attitude, because both he and his father were specially sympathetic to Muslim culture and to the Muslim way of life.

Jawaharlal dealt with problems in the mass and did not practically care for details. For instance, he cheerfully delegated to his colleagues and friends all the spade work and the detailed problems of formal administration and patronage. They hardly interested him and often bored him.

During his numerous incarcerations, Jawaharlal's creative activity turned, with resounding success, into the field of historical and epistolary literature in which he made an abiding mark. He discovered in himself creative urges in the fields of biography and narrative which were displayed conspicuously in his *Autobiography* and his surveys of Indian history and Indian life.

The friendship of Gandhi and Jawaharlal was of a unique character. Trained in the ideals and inhibitions of the West, it was, with no small effort, that Jawaharlal gradually, but irresistibly, adopted and followed most, though not the entirety, of the programmes of Gandhiji, the younger man making his mind to subordinate his differences for the sake of a great call and a tremendous social and political adventure. So thorough was his conversion and so unquestioned was his devotion to Gandhiji, that Motilal's affection for his son pulled him into the magic circle, albeit somewhat reluctantly, to start with. Gandhiji realised, from the beginning that the basic contribution that Jawaharlal could make to the cause of Indian politics was that of a forceful spearhead of fervent nationalism. He left wholly to Jawaharlal the enunciation and conduct of foreign and external policy and relied upon his specially intimate and loyal followers like Vallabhai Patel, Vinoba Bhave and others, for the implementation

of domestic policy, including the no-tax and non-cooperation campaigns. Jawaharlal, thus, became the sole repository of Gandhiji's confidence in respect of foreign affairs. It is a matter of profound significance that the independence of India was secured by the collaborative efforts of a spiritual pilgrim and constructive idealist like Gandhi, an unflinching down-to-earth realist like Vallabhai Patel and a restless and catholic-minded student of world affairs like Jawaharlal Nehru. This was a piece of great good fortune to India, and the combination of such qualities has helped to keep the ship of State on an even keel.

I knew Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as a young man and I have always deeply appreciated his cardinal virtues, his forthrightness in speech, sometimes assuming the form of impulsiveness; his warm affections and the inherent honesty of his outlook on himself and the problems of the world. He and I worked together during the early days of the Home Rule League, I being the Secretary and he, the Joint Secretary of the League in 1917-18. We parted company during the Non-Cooperation movement, and he became deeply critical of my acceptance of office under the Government of India during those days of political struggles; and the remarks contained in his *Autobiography*, are frankly, denunciatory. Gandhiji whom, in company with my political leader, Dr. Annie Besant, I opposed during the Non-Cooperation campaign, however, continued to be personally friendly to me, and our relations continued to be amicable, and, I may also say, intimate, until practically the day of his death, and especially during the Travancore Temple Entry Movement and its culminating scenes. Jawaharlal, however, never became personally intimate with me and he, very rarely, consulted me during the last twenty years and more. Knowing his temperament and in spite of our differences, I have never altered my views about him as a lofty-minded and generous patriot.

Jawaharlal Nehru did not undergo the domestic training in Indian religious ideals which characterised the previous generation, and he returned to India full of respect for the achievement of science and somewhat indifferent to, and indeed, oblivious of, formal and doctrinal, as apart from natural, religion. He was a man of warm affections and, like Yudhishtira in the *Mahabharata*, he would, on no ground, forsake a comrade or follower; and his

personal affection towards friends and followers was both consistent and unbounded. The secret of Jawaharlal's hold on his followers, as well as to a certain extent, his foible, was that he would never let down a comrade, and always rushed to his rescue, regardless of public criticism or clamour even when justified. Very few politicians are steadfast in their friendships, but Jawaharlal was a remarkable exception. He fully followed the policy thus described by Shakespeare :

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel."

Some of the disillusion of Jawaharlal Nehru originated from his unflinching loyalty to those whom he trusted; but, it can well be argued that even these faults were in the right direction. A passage in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, viz.,

"O! he sits high in all the people's hearts;  
And that which would appear offence in us,  
His countenance, like richest alchemy,  
Will change to virtue and to worthiness"

aptly describes the hold that Jawaharlal exercised over the minds of the Indian populace. From his early days, he loved crowds and the crowds loved him. He felt himself close to the people of this land and was never so happy as in the midst of an always responsive crowd whose unflinching loyalty he always commanded. They admired his bearing, they revelled in his brusque, though affectionate, familiarities with them, they ignored his occasional bursts of temper and his errors of judgment with regard to the character and the advice of those on whom he relied from time to time; and, even his very faults, seemed to be virtues in numerous eyes.

By reason of his ancestral background and aristocratic breeding, Jawaharlal Nehru could easily adjust himself to the pomp and circumstance of a great position; but, in essence, he was simple in his tastes and unaffected in his manner. He spoke of himself, sometimes, as an "uneasy combination of the West and the East". It is true that there was always in him an inner

conflict between his inevitable affinity with the heritage of the *Upanishads* and Buddha's teachings and the approach towards life's problems exemplified in Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus* and Frazer's *Golden Bough*. Similar were his more recent reactions, on the one hand, to the impact of Resurgent Moscow and, on the other, to the ever-present influence on him of the British way of life which strove for mastery with Marxian ideology. On striking a balance, it may be affirmed of Jawaharlal Nehru that his innate and sensitive love for the common people of India created in him an over-mastering passion to improve social and economic conditions of the village and the countryside. In the circumstances that developed after Independence, he had, perforce, to devote his attention constantly to such tremendous tasks as the formulation of the doctrines of non-alignment and *Panch-Sheel* and also, unexpectedly and tragically, to problems arising from the hostile acts of neighbours like Pakistan and China. But for these extraneous and lamentable impacts, he would doubtless have endeavoured, with undistracted energy, to translate into practice those ideals of all-round and balanced agricultural, industrial and economic developments on which his heart was set. The most remarkable characteristic of Jawaharlal Nehru, for which he will be remembered for a long time, was his intense humanity. He was quick on the uptake and generous in his judgment as well as with his purse. He was, naturally, short of temper, but always quick to forget and forgive. He was not only a great political and intellectual path-finder, but a man of the widest sympathies and tolerance and a convinced and constant humanitarian.

---

### Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar

THE life-history of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar is truly a remarkable one. After a brilliant academic career, he entered the Bar as a contemporary of his friend, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, from whom he differed in many particulars though both were alike characterised by legal acumen and a grasp of the complicated facts of any situation or case. Whereas V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and, to a certain extent, P. R. Sundara Aiyar, were emphatic and almost tempestuous in their presentation of cases, and in their advocacy, Sivaswami Aiyar, from the beginning of his legal career, concentrated on a careful, subdued and precise utterance hardly raising his voice and never over-emphasising his presentation, although his calmness of manner and uniformly equable temper were combined with a real pertinacity and a never faltering independence of judgment. These characteristics of his did not obtain immediate recognition, and some of his opponents in the competitive legal profession, sought to belittle his legal capacity although they could not but admit his faultless diction and his undoubted erudition not only in the field of law, but in the domain of Sanskrit literature and philosophy and also of English literature in its several departments.

From the commencement of his legal career, undeterred by want of immediate recognition, Sivaswami Aiyar maintained his evenness of temper and his philosophical outlook on life. He gradually collected a splendid library and treated each one of his books as if it was a jewel. Meticulously neat and fastidious by habit, he took particular and personal care of his house, furniture and other belongings. Indeed, it may be said that in food and clothing, in demeanour and conversation, he was a connoisseur. He made few friends but was steadfastly loyal to them. Although

his carefulness and economy were commented upon, his liberality to his friends was, at the same time, a marked characteristic. He did not seek popularity and was careful in choosing his companions.

Having known the difficulties of life, he was careful with his money and his promises, with the result that many persons misguidedly used to accuse him of stinginess, an ascription which was demonstrated to be false when, later in life, his lavish generosity began to be appreciated.

Sivaswami Aiyar rose slowly in his profession, but the judges and the clientele as well as discerning members of the legal profession grew to realise his worth, and, after some years, his opinion and legal assistance were sought whenever study and research as well as learned or sober advocacy, were needed. He became Advocate General in succession to Sir V. Bashyam Aiyangar and Sir C. Sankaran Nair; and having followed him as Advocate General later on, I can testify, as I have publicly stated, to his independence of judgment, the impartiality of his opinions and to his dignified, though quiet, assertion of his views, my view being based on a study of the opinions tendered by him to the Government of those days.

Sivaswami Aiyar succeeded V. Krishnaswami Aiyar as a Member of the Madras Executive Council and served his full term in that capacity. Here again, having followed him as a Member of the same Executive Council, I can, from personal knowledge, contradict those persons who regarded him as deficient in courage. Although, very often, he was in a minority of one, he never failed to express, with instructed insistence, his own viewpoint. But what was characteristic of Sivaswami Aiyar was that he never let people know what he had done. The vow of official secrecy which he took was uniformly observed by him, although this vow was too often facilely broken by those who sought temporary popularity as independent and liberal-minded statesmen. Sivaswami Aiyar's gift of silence was as marked and as valuable as his gift of measured speech.

After retirement from the Executive Council, he devoted himself to study, to the publication, at rare intervals, of thoughtful utterances and monographs, and to such duties as those of the Vice-Chancellorship of the Madras and the Banaras Hindu

Universities. In the latter University which was under the sway of that remarkable person, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Sivaswami Aiyar, though he enjoyed Pandit Malaviya's personal confidence, found that there were temperamental differences between them; and therefore he withdrew with dignity from his charge.

To my mind, his later years truly manifested Sivaswami Aiyar's consummate qualities. With great frugality, though with no stinting of the few luxuries which he loved, he saved considerable sums of money. He augmented his library and engaged himself in travels as well as philosophical studies and discussions. Later, he began a series of benefactions, remarkable both for their unostentatiousness and their magnitude. The Tirukattupalli School, over which he spent several lakhs of rupees, is a monument of his discerning munificence; and he lavished his resources on the girls' school in Mylapore which he founded and maintained with an attention to detail which specially signalised him. So greatly intent was he on improving the institutions that he started, that he came to the conclusion that to make this possible he should deprive himself even of his favourite house. He accordingly sold it and removed himself to smaller quarters. Only those who had noticed how Sivaswami Aiyar cherished every chair and table and object of art in his house and how he used to prize every bit of his garden and furniture, can realise the sacrifice involved in giving up his house.

It was only during the last years of his life, that his innate qualities of self-abnegation and generosity were recognised at their true value; and it was then that his wise counsel, his recognition and encouragement of men like T. R. Venkatrama Sastry, S. Varadachari, Srinivasa Sastry, G. A. Natesan and several scholars in various departments of intellectual activity, were demonstrated to the world. He died, as he lived, an integrated personality who was the embodiment of sweetness and light, of quiet dignity and yet of inflexible will, devoted as he constantly was, to intellectual pursuits and to spiritual realisation.

## Sri G. A. Natesan

G. A. NATESAN, above everything else, was a self-made man; and except for the ungrudging counsel and assistance of his brother, he received no help from any source. Starting with no background of wealth or influence, he was a pioneer in many directions. He started the *Indian Review* and, for the first time in India, made a financial success of a periodical. He was also one of the first to discern the signs of the times and produced a number of popular biographical sketches of the great philosophers, statesmen, jurists and patriots of India.

As the Secretary of the Presidency College Literary Society, he made it a point to introduce to the Society and to enlist for its support every prominent visitor or tourist who visited Madras, and whom he persuaded, willingly and often by sheer force of his personality, to address the Society. In addition, his compulsive persuasiveness was utilised to start many shy newcomers like myself on their career of public speaking. Then, as later, he had his own detractors and opponents as well as deeply attached friends, and I was one of his opponents whom he converted into a co-worker and comrade.

Soon after leaving college, the speedy choice of a career was forced upon Natesan owing to his financial circumstances; and although his brother was a well-known and rising member of the Madras Secretariat staff, he unhesitatingly chose a career in journalism which was then neither so well established nor had such financial possibilities as is now the case. Every notable man in the field of scholarship, science, law and public affairs, sooner or later, became a contributor to his magazine and the brief apprenticeship which Natesan underwent under Mr. Glyn Barlow as well as the affectionate helpfulness of C. V. Munu-

swami Aiyar — that greatest of Indian reporters and most warm-hearted person of his days, who made and marred men's political reputations in Madras—made Natesan understand the intricacies and potentialities of journalism. The fact that a philosopher and scholar with an enormous capacity for philosophical exposition and versatile public speaking like Professor M. Rangachariar of the Presidency College, a shy and undemonstrative savant of multifarious acquirements like Prof. K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar, a critical and discerning student of history and public affairs like G. Venkataranga Rao, all rallied around Natesan and made steady contributions to the *Indian Review* and enabled it to establish its reputation from the start, demonstrates the organising genius of Natesan.

Later on, he concentrated on the popularisation of our epics and *Puranas*. His first outstanding success was the cheap edition of the *Gita* as translated by Dr. Besant to whose support and sympathy, he owed a great deal at the beginning of his publishing career. By laborious self-education, he became a competent critic of books and affairs.

He took a leading part in the work of the University and the Corporation of Madras for a series of years and was one of the best known workers in the early years of the Indian National Congress and, later on, in the Liberal League of which he was one of the founders and organisers. He was, for a number of years, a member of the Central Legislature and served on various committees and was, generally speaking, one of the most active of public men.

Natesan had the rare capacity, without sacrificing any of his opinions, to comprehend and appreciate the other man's point of view. Those who have enjoyed his friendship will, for long, remember his championship of his friends and his emphasis on the importance of personal relationships uninfluenced by political or social controversies or differences. His convictions were strong and he gave no quarter when the principles for which he stood were assailed. But this pugnacity co-existed with a rare capacity for being affectionate and loyal even in respect of those from whom he openly differed on public questions.

Natesan will perhaps be best remembered for the example he set of a great capacity for friendship and for the utmost tolerance

in behaviour. To have been closely associated with and to have earned the comradeship and affection of persons so various as K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar, G. Venkataranga Rao, Professor Rangachari (men of inflexible character who were his earliest coadjutors), that tempestuous but most generous lawyer and public benefactor, V. Krishnaswami Iyer, that calm and philosophic but acutely discerning jurist, P. S. Sivaswami Iyer and his lieutenant, the brilliant lawyer and clear thinker, T. R. Venkatarama Sastriar, Gandhiji, C. Rajagopalachariar as well as Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, C. Y. Chintamani and Mudolkar, is to demonstrate a rare combination of faculties and endowments. Men of his own generation like T. R. Venkatarama Sastri and myself, have owed much to his steadfast friendship and support. Through C. V. Munuswami Aiyar, with whom, as referred to earlier, he was in close touch in the field of journalism, he contracted the friendship of Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar during the period when he was displaying to the full his talents of convincing and dynamic advocacy, and his generosity in spending money as lavishly as he earned it. Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar was not only the leader of a very competitive Bar but was one of the formative figures of Madras politics in the early days of the Congress; and he and Natesan formed a kind of political partnership which was of great assistance to both. Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar, side by side with his legal acumen and his rhetorical gifts, also possessed a quick temper and a faculty of righteous indignation which made him somewhat inaccessible and contributed to a misjudgment of his undeniably conspicuous and very human qualities. It was Natesan's pride and duty to smooth the political differences which arose between Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar and his group of co-workers on the one hand, and the influential group led by Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Dr. T. M. Nair and T. Rangachariar on the other. The early chronicles of the Congress, and especially of its Madras session, are inseparably bound up with the activities of Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar and G. A. Natesan, with whom many of us worked.

As very often happens in public and professional life, those who supported Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar could see no virtue in a person who did not share either his qualities or his outlook; and men like Natesan were at one time unsparing critics of that great man, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, who eschewed all ostentation and display and was content to let time vindicate the

greatness of his soul and manifest his far-sighted beneficence and the integrity and inflexibility of his moral and professional standards. Later, Natesan radically revised his opinions and during the latter days of Sir Sivaswami Aiyar, was one of his staunchest supporters.

Almost from the beginning of his journalistic career, Natesan took an interest in the lot of Indians in South Africa and had corresponded with Gandhiji during the period of his titanic political struggle in that country. It was given to Natesan to be the host of Gandhiji when he made his debut before a Madras audience. From that date until the demise of Gandhiji, Natesan, differing as he often did from Gandhiji's teachings and programmes and while expressing his divergences, sometimes in public and more often in private, continued to enjoy the close sympathy and unstinted friendship of Gandhiji.

The same was the case with Dr. Besant, and the first notable financial success of Natesan was due to that great friend of India, who gave him the publication rights in respect of her translation of the *Gita*. Its sale was phenomenal and Natesan never forgot his indebtedness to Dr. Besant. During the days of the Home Rule agitation, Natesan, who belonged to the group—Krishnaswami Aiyar, Mehta, Gokhale, Wacha and Surendranath Banerjee—looked askance at Dr. Besant and her dynamic methods of political agitation, which were too fierce and outspoken for him. Nevertheless, throughout their lives there were sincere bonds of sympathy between them.

I first came across Natesan, who was my senior, as a student in the Presidency College. He had already built up that reputation for cultivating friendships on a lavish scale and for the organisation of publicity which distinguished him throughout his life. It was given to me to be associated with him in the Madras Corporation and in the Senate and Syndicate of the University, and later on, to be of help to him in his nomination to the Council of State and the Tariff Board. I differed from the Moderate or Liberal Party and worked under the leadership of and in close association with Dr. Besant in the Home Rule League, and from that moment my contacts with the Liberal Party became infrequent and minimal. Nevertheless, nothing

prevented the fullest possible private ventilation of political differences between Natesan and myself ; and we agreed to differ on many important occasions.

Natesan served the country manfully in several capacities in India and outside and he always stuck to his guns although he was often exposed to the open criticism of his so-called friends. With him, there were no half-measures. He was a doughty and uncompromising opponent and a fierce adherent and champion of the causes and the men he believed in. His characteristics are especially valuable at the present juncture when we have to guard against confusions between political divergence and personal relations. All in all, it may be asserted that Natesan was a man who made a real mark on his generation by his personality and his many-sided enterprises.

## 30

---

### Sri S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar

EACH race and each culture possesses its own attributes and excellences. By way of example, epic and lyric poetry and the drama, as well as wide-ranging and subtle philosophical speculation and dialectic, were characteristic of India ; and the Tamil country has excelled in its hymnology and its didactic and descriptive literature. History and tragedy were the specific contributions of Greece to the world. The Biography and the Essay have been among the special achievements of England and France ; but India is very deficient in these branches of literature. Such "lives" as have been reproduced have been too often uncritical and in the nature of exaggerated or even fabulous narratives and in many instances have been polemical and controversial. The collection and arrangement of biographical material, the presentation of such material in an attractive and arresting manner and the conception of biography as literature, are very rare. Quite recently, however, steps have been taken to remedy this deficiency, and excellent accounts of the lives of Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, Akbar, Aurangzeb, Shivaji, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda have appeared. Brilliant work in the direction of biography has recently been done in England and France. Recent ventures in this line have concentrated on presenting unvarnished and veracious, even if occasionally unflattering, estimates of the life, character and career of eminent people. The present tendency is to insist not only upon appreciative but also upon critical and balanced treatments of life and character.

The Government of India have been engaged in the task of producing authentic biographies of Indian leaders ; and Sri V. K.

Narasimhan, the Deputy Editor of *The Hindu* and an accomplished journalist, had been charged with composing the biography of Sri S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. In the days preceding and co-eval with the struggle for Indian self-rule, noteworthy editors and journalists played a creative part in the formation of public opinion and the dissemination of news and views relating to the evolution of India in the social, educational and spiritual as well as in the political spheres. The names of men like Surendranath Bannerjea and Motilal Ghosh, of Tilak, B. C. Pal and Dr. Besant, can never be forgotten in this connection ; and side by side with them may be placed the names of G. Subramania Aiyar and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, both of whom were helped by extremely competent associates, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar having been particularly fortunate in having been assisted by his nephew, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, who was a pattern of journalistic efficiency and acumen.

One of the ancestors of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, namely, Sessa Iyengar, seems to have been a person of conspicuous administrative genius. As is well-known, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's brother was a renowned administrator and became the Dewan of Baroda. He also wrote a well-documented memorandum on the progress of the Madras Presidency during forty years of British Administration.

Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, like many bright young men of those days, studied in Kumbakonam and, later on, proceeded to Madras and completed his law course. After making a trial of public service as Sub-Registrar, he began his legal practice in Coimbatore, but, in truth, his heart was not in the profession. Moreover, he was far too sensitive and retiring by disposition to make any spectacular success in that competitive profession. He soon devoted much of his attention to politics and public affairs ; and it may be noted that he was one of the founders of the Madras Mahajana Sabha, the successor of the Madras Native Association which, under the leadership of a very great Indian leader, Gazula Lakshmi Narasimha Chetty, had done fine work in ventilating public grievances.

In 1878, that stalwart, Sri G. Subramania Aiyar, founded the Hindu Newspapers. Very soon thereafter, the famous Salem Riots Case took place and a reactionary regime began in Madras with

the Governorship of Mount-Stuart Grant Duff, and the *Hindu* played a notable part in assailing its policies. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar played an important part in local politics as well as in the activities of the Mahajana Sabha, and he was one of those who, along with Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Salem Vijayaraghavachariar and P. Ananthacharlu, attended the Calcutta Session of the Congress in 1890. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar also signalled himself by his successful conduct of what used to be called the Padre's Case in 1891, resulting from a clandestine conversion of a Hindu boy by a missionary.

In 1894 Kasturi Ranga Iyengar shifted to the Madras High Court following the example of S. Subramania Aiyar, Subba Rao and C. R. Pattabhirama Aiyar. However, as soon as he settled in Madras, he was caught up in politics to such an extent that he had no opportunity to build up a legal practice befitting his talents. He became the legal adviser to *The Hindu* in about 1900 when M. Viraraghavachariar and G. Subramania Aiyar were uneasily yoked together in the editorship of the paper, both being masterful and unyielding personalities and neither being inclined to bother about accounts and finance. *The Hindu* had been started as the weekly organ of the Triplicane Literary Society, and the two survivors of the original group of founders, had little experience of the hard realities of life. Nevertheless, G. Subramania Aiyar, who was a dauntless patriot and a forcible writer, established the tradition of closely reasoned editorial articles which were characterised by a deep knowledge of political and economic problems. The paper soon became a tri-weekly and shifted to Mount Road where the National Press was inaugurated. The Mahajana Sabha, for a long time, conducted its business in the premises of *The Hindu* office. The newspaper also obtained the support of leading persons like S. Subramania Aiyar and Sankaran Nair. It was in 1889 that *The Hindu* became a daily paper. In that period, newspapers in India did not have the advantage of large-scale advertisements, nor did the big European firms encourage Indian owned papers. Some Indian States and far-sighted patrons like the Raja of Vizianagaram were the mainstay of *The Hindu*, and after the death of the Rajah in 1897, the financial condition of the paper worsened. G. Subramania Aiyar withdrew from the newspaper and it was

run, for some time, by Viraraghavachariar, who, however, soon realised that it was essential to transfer the ownership to a public limited company. That company was influentially sponsored, but the public response was poor. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, at this juncture made up his mind, in spite of opposition from his own friends and relations, to purchase and conduct the newspaper. This was a brave step, and his assumption of editorship in 1905 was venturesome, to say the least. Within a month of such assumption, C. Karunakara Menon, who had been working in *The Hindu* for many years, resigned; and A. Rangaswamy Iyengar, nephew of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, who had started practising as a lawyer, was invited to join the newspaper.

From the beginning, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar made up his mind that one of the principal functions of a newspaper was to furnish accurate, up-to-date and varied news from every part of the world, and this decision as well as the practice of adequately paying Indian and foreign correspondents, were the chief contributing factors in the speedy progress of *The Hindu*. Very courageously, also, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar ceased to rely on donations or special subsidies from Indian States, and he invited journalistic contribution from leading publicists from all over India. But what was equally important in the editorial policy of the paper was that Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, in addition to his pre-occupation with national politics, took a wide perspective of international affairs. On the national scene, from the beginning, he espoused the policy of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, in preference to what were termed the ideals of the moderate school.

The failure of a mammoth English concern, Arbuthnot and Company, gave rise to public agitation culminating in a famous trial; and *The Hindu* took the lead in the movement for exposing the frauds perpetrated by Sir George Arbuthnot and to bring the offenders to justice. At this time, *The Hindu* was almost alone in this campaign; but the conviction of Sir George Arbuthnot and the founding of the Indian Bank, as an aftermath and reaction against the previous state of Indian banking, gave an impetus to *The Hindu's* popularity. It also consistently championed the Swadeshi Movement and exposed the reactionary policies of the Government. In connection with the Tuticorin Sedition case, and other matters relating to the separation of the executive and

judicial functions, it played a crucial part. G. Subramania Aiyar, who had taken up the Editorship of the *Swadesamitran*, was arrested and there was a wide rumour that Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was also being proceeded against. The Advocates-General of Madras and Bombay gave courageous opinions which alone prevented the prosecution of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar.

The Surat Congress of 1906 and the development of the differences between the moderate school of politics and the so-called extremists brought to the forefront Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's sympathies. This led to an estrangement with V. Krishna-swami Aiyar, who was responsible for the Convention Congress of 1908. The unrest all over India culminated at this time in the conviction of Tilak and the deportation of leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai. When the Morley-Minto Reforms were ushered in, *The Hindu* welcomed them; but it soon realised that "what is given by the Secretary of State and the Government of India, is being taken away by local gods and demi-gods". It is symptomatic of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's general attitude that he declined to attend the Delhi Durbar in December 1911, unless all discrimination between European and Indian journals was ended.

Between the years 1912 and 1914, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar interested himself, along with Dr. Nanjunda Rao and Dr. T. M. Nair, in the Besant Case, which I conducted against Dr. Besant, at the instance of the Editor of *The Hindu* newspaper and Dr. Nanjunda Rao. The aftermath of this case was the concentration by Dr. Besant on Indian Home Rule. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar gave evidence before the Islington Commission on Public Services, in the course of which he outlined the attitude of the Indian public towards the Indian Civil Service and the policy carried out on its insistence. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, notwithstanding his personal prejudices against Dr. Besant, supported the Home Rule Movement and was also a member of the All India Congress Committee which worked out the Congress League Scheme.

When Mr. Montagu arrived in Madras, a large number of Indians met him, including C. Vijayaraghavachariar, B. N. Sarma, Srinivasa Sastri, Subramania Iyer, Sankaran Nair, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, T. M. Nair and myself. Montagu referred to Kasturi

Ranga Iyengar's Memorandum presented to him, as a crushing indictment of the Government of Madras. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar also presided over a special session of the Provincial Conference held in Madras and urged that, unless the Executive Government was made subordinate to the Legislative Council, and the latter was made fully representative of the people, no essential improvement can be brought about. Unfortunately, the Rowlat Committee Report and the happenings in the Punjab produced a revulsion of public feeling.

In August 1918 a group of Indian editors, including Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, was invited to England. In reply to a toast proposed in London by the President of the Institute of Journalists, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar pointed out that neither the press nor the people of England had given adequate attention to the Indian press and its expressions and opinion. When Kasturi Ranga Iyengar met King George V and Queen Mary, he tried to dispel the impression that the people of South India were not fit for active military service. The Indian editors visited the war front, and returned with the conviction that unity of action was essential if the cause of Indian reforms were to succeed.

On his return to India, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar became the President of the Anti-Rowlat Committee and invited Gandhiji to visit Madras; and very soon thereafter, the fateful Amritsar happenings culminated in General Dyer's disgraceful performances. It is noteworthy that, at this time, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, with characteristic consistency, attacked Sankaran Nair, his life-long friend and helper, for not resigning from the Viceroy's Executive Council after the Amritsar incident. The Press Act was put into operation against *The Hindu* on account of its article on the Punjab affairs. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar attended the Amritsar Congress, and took an important part in framing the resolution stigmatising the reforms as unacceptable, unsatisfactory and disappointing.

It is superfluous to recount the successive events from 1920 that ended in the Non-Co-operation Movement and Programme. At this juncture, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar made his own attitude perfectly clear. He objected to Gandhiji's proposal favouring the withdrawal of children from schools and the abandonment of practice by lawyers. He was also against the boycott of elections

and Councils. He, however, made the significant remark, in an editorial, that "majorities are not always in the right, but it is politically convenient, except when individual convictions admit of no compromise, to assume that they generally are". The Nagpur Congress effected a new orientation of Congress policy and, at this Congress, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar supported the resolution of non-cooperation.

Gandhiji's programme had suggested close co-operation between the Congress, labour unions, working classes and the depressed classes; and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar identified himself with many of the labour unions and also associated himself with the *hartal*, on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Madras. Soon after, an All Parties Leaders' Conference at Bombay was projected, but it failed to secure the support of Sankaran Nair; and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar had no hesitation in saying that Sankaran Nair had done a great disservice by publishing, just then, his attack on Gandhiji.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the breathless events that followed the riots in Chowri Chowra and the arrest of Gandhiji in 1922. One of the last important acts of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was his participation in the Civil Disobedience Committee, headed by Pandit Motilal Nehru. His strenuous work, in connection with that committee, contributed to the break down of his health; but notwithstanding his ill health, he kept up an active interest in *The Hindu*, and in the formulation and maintenance of its policy. He was also improving the premises of the paper and established the first rotary printing press in Madras. During his illness C. R. Das visited Madras, in connection with his campaign for Council entry. *The Hindu* dissented from C. R. Das, and one result of this attitude was that A. Rangaswamy Iyengar who sided with C. R. Das, started a new weekly, entitled *Swa-desamitran*. The Swaraj Party succeeded in its efforts, and the Delhi Special Session of the Congress voted in favour of Congressmen entering into the legislatures. *The Hindu* reflected the change in public opinion, and welcomed the new unity attained by the Congress. During the whole of this period, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's health was getting progressively worse and he passed away in 1923.

Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's life work was the reorganisation and

development of a truly national journal which, in addition to espousing national causes and interests, was deliberately international in outlook and comprehensive in the matter of publication and dissemination of news and views. Mahatma Gandhi gave expression to the general sentiment when he said that "those who followed the columns of *The Hindu* cannot fail to recognise that whenever there was a change in the editorial policy, it was because, with an unerring instinct, the Editor recognised which way the country was going. A journalist's peculiar function is to read the mind of the country and to give definite and fearless expression to that mind." Objectiveness and a judicial attitude were amongst the conspicuous features of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's mental discipline and journalistic practice.

## 31

### Sir Muhammad Iqbal

IQBAL'S life was not, outwardly, eventful ; and, as anyone who reads the account of the relations between him and Sir Fazl-i-Hussain can perceive, it is obvious, that Iqbal did not possess the gift of compromise, and thus, failed to obtain the worldly positions to which his talents entitled him. He was of Kashmiri Brahmin ancestry, and after a short period as Lecturer and Professor, he entered the Bar ; but he was not particularly successful in that profession. The State of Bhopal awarded him a pension of Rs. 500/- a month and enabled him to pursue a literary life. He attended the Round Table Conference but resigned his membership, returned to India and strongly denounced the British Government. Attempts made by his friends to help him were often frustrated by his want of tact and his impracticability. As early as 1931, he spoke on the importance of constituting a North Western Indian Muslim State, and he was, thus, one of the originators of the Pakistan idea ; and, although, in his early poems, he had sung of the unity and greatness of India, yet, he gradually began to emphasise what he considered to be the radical differences between Hindus and Muslims. He consistently opposed territorial nationalism and favoured the creation of a theocratically-governed Muslim State.

His first important work, *The Secrets of Self*, was translated by Professor Nicholson of Cambridge, and Iqbal was knighted in recognition of his work as a philosopher and a poet. Although he took part in politics and, at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in 1930, stated unequivocally, that he would like the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Provinces, Sind and Baluchistan, amalgamated into a consolidated North-Western Indian Muslim State, his chief interests in life were intellectual and cul-

tural, rather than political. As occasion arose from time to time, he alternately criticised severely the policy of the Congress and of the Muslim League. According to Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, Iqbal's books do not give a correct impression of the man who was less of a communalist, in his private life, than he appeared to be, in his books.

It is noteworthy that Iqbal came first into prominence through a poem which has been called the National Anthem of India. He started writing in Urdu, and authorities, like Dr. Sinha and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, think that his best work was in Urdu and not in Persian, which he chose as his medium of expression in later years. In his poem on the "Himalayas", he goes so far as to say :

"The mountain of Sinai was only the scene of a temporary  
manifestation to Moses who conversed with God  
But thou art an illumination throughout for every  
observing eye",

and, in the Anthem, to which reference has been made, the following lines occur :

"Religion does not teach people to bear enmity to one  
another ;  
We are Indians and India is our Motherland.  
Greece, Egypt and Rome — all have been obliterated  
from the world.  
But our mark and name are still there.  
There is a reason why our existence is not wiped out,  
Though the revolutions of time have been inimical to us  
for centuries together."

Iqbal wrote a poem on Rama and on Swami Ram Tirth, who, deliberately, sought union with the Infinite by drowning himself ; and finally, he composed verses entitled "Naya Shivala" (New Temple). This poem was written at a time when Hindu-Muslim relations were strained, and the following lines are worth quoting, as illustrative of the catholicity of his views, during the early years of his political career :

"Come, let us lift up together the veils of strangeness  
once again,  
Let us reconcile the separated ones once again and erase  
marks of dualism.  
Come, let us build a new temple in this land,  
Let our holy temple be the highest amongst the world's  
holy places.  
Let us raise its spire so high as to reach the sky."

So strong was the poet's disgust with the communal life in the country, that, in a poem, "Voice of Anguish", he expressed his desire to leave the country for good :

"What to talk of unity, here the very nearness is the  
cause of dis-unity.  
My countrymen have forgotten the secrets of love.  
That is why they are not suited for the battle-field of  
existence.  
Instead of one-ness, the separation is extremely galling."

Strangely, however, and by a speedy transition, a new phase of Iqbal's mentality began to be manifested. Dr. Sinha's analysis, in his book, *Iqbal, the Poet and his Message*, of Iqbal's mental development, from the time of his return from Europe to the period when, in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he pleaded for Pan-Islamism and the non-territorial character of Islam, is penetrating. He began to advocate a return to early Islam and held that Hindu intellectualism and Islamic Sufism had destroyed the capacity of Muslims for action. He was inspired by the vision of a world-wide State in which all Muslims should live as one fraternity, the idea of territorial patriotism and nationalism becoming hateful to him. According to Sir Ahmed Hussain, a discerning Muslim thinker, it is clear that views on the relation of God and the world, vary according to the stress laid on the knowledge-side, the feeling-side and the striving-side (which correspond to the *Gnana*, *Bhakti* and *Karma Yogas* of Hindu philosophy). Iqbal has been less than just to himself in not realising that Islam, like Hinduism, has developed all the three sides and that Sufism is not inconsistent with Islam.

There was a period when Iqbal became a specifically theological poet, and took to writing, almost exclusively, in Persian. He, at that period, also began his attack on Hafiz and sang in praise of his Guru, Jalaluddin Rumi. He became severely critical of Western life and thought and carried on a crusade against Western civilisation, contending that Western democracy was autocracy in disguise, and discussions in the legislatures, a camouflage of capitalists.

The development of Iqbal's ideas may be divided into three periods, during the first of which, his conception of God was as eternal beauty and can be rightly described as intrinsically Platonic. In the second period, he became a mystic and almost a pantheist; and, finally, under the influence of Bergson and Nietzsche, he became an advocate of the Philosophy of Change, the eternal purpose being conceived as nothing but a forward movement in consciousness. And each of these modifications of opinion, found their expression in successive volumes of his poems, all of which, however, were distinguished by brilliant craftsmanship which, according to the best authorities, were more pronounced in Urdu than in Persian.

Before leaving this aspect of Iqbal's literary and philosophical activity, it may be well to realise that his devotion to Rumi involved his belief in doctrines which are the antithesis of Sufism. As this distinction is of great importance in the appraisal of Iqbal's work, it may be useful to clarify it. Rumi's conception of God is that, just as the intellect rules over a man's body, without being part and parcel of it, so the Infinite and Universal Intellect pervades the whole of the Universe, without being part and parcel of it. Rumi does not attach much importance to the exact form of worship. On the other hand, the Sufi thinker and poet approximate to the Vedanta system. The Sufi mystical poet, Nuruddin Abdur Rahman Jami, in his *Salaman and Absal*, sings as follows :

"Thou movest under all the Forms of Truth,  
Under the forms of all Created Things :  
Look whence I will, still nothing I discern  
But Thee in all the Universe, in which  
Thyself Thou dost invest, and through the Eyes

Of man, the subtle Censor, scrutinise.  
No entrance finds — no Word of This and That :  
Do Thou my Separate and Derived Self  
Make One with Thy Essential ! Leave me room,  
On that Divan which leaves no room for Two."

The so-called ten states of Sufism are paraphrases or modifications of the mental and psychological states outlined in the Vedanta. In the language of a notable exponent, Sufism means that God makes thee die to thyself and alive in Him. Such a creed did not accord with the later temperament of Iqbal and it was no wonder that he was a fierce opponent of Sufism, in all its forms.

Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha, in the book referred to earlier, says that Iqbal could have written the poetry of Universality, but instead, has produced dogmatic literature. Similarly, in his political activities and his opposition to nationalism, which he denounced in all its forms, he rejected all modern political systems and upheld the early Islamic polity as against Imperialism, Bolshevism and Nationalism. Dr. Sinha points out that Iqbal's idea has not been kept in view in Turkey or Arabia; and he refers to the Arab League and proves that it is non-religious and secular and that Iqbal's basic sentiment was, therefore, not shared by latter-day Muslim statesmen. Iqbal fell foul of the League of Nations and spoke of it as an example of selfish design and machinations terming it "an organisation of thieves sitting in a graveyard for the distribution of shrouds". He insisted that nationalism was a cloak for capitalists to play their games undetected. He reproached modern democracy as representing nothing but the oppression of the poor by the rich under the guise of commercialism.

In a posthumous work of Iqbal, the irreligiousness of the present age, the orthodoxy of the Brahmin and similar matters are dealt with. At the same time, in that work occurs the following message to humanity :

"Art thou in the stage of 'life', 'death' or 'death-in-life' ?  
Invoke the aid of three witnesses to verify the 'station' :  
The first witness is thine own consciousness,

The second witness is the consciousness of another Ego,  
The third witness is God's consciousness."

Iqbal was less than just to his own genius in that he reacted too often to mass psychology. In fine, it would not be unjust to characterise Iqbal as a genius who failed to rise to the heights of his own potentialities, by reason of his succumbing to hastily acquired prejudices.

## 32

### Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar

It has been said, and rightly too, that every culture and each country and city has its own special genius or its specific and particular spirit. Latin poets have called this atmosphere the *genius loci*, meaning the spirit of the place. The Tamil country has a very definite and characteristic genius and atmosphere. It forms, and truly forms an integral part of the great *Bharatavarsha*. The Tamil race has been for many millennia distinguished by a combination of somewhat disparate qualities. There is, perhaps, no literature in the world which can surpass Tamil literature for its devotional and spiritual yearning exemplified in the hymnology and writings contributed by its *Alvars*, *Nayanmars* and *Acharyas* — so universal and so appealing. But side by side with that devotional outpouring and along with a spiritual urge, the Tamil race has been an exemplar of practical idealism typified by the *Kural*, the *Attichudi* and *Nanneri*. Looking back to the history of the Tamil land, we find that it was a country essentially middle class and business-like in composition and ideas. The Tamils specialised in commerce and navigation and adventurous colonisation. They were great in the practical achievements of husbandry, irrigation, the building of tanks and bunds and of artisanship and many arts of utility and ornament.

Among the worthy representatives of the great Tamil tradition, Sir Annamalai Chettiar, who distinguished himself as an industrialist and philanthropist, ranks very high indeed. He made his fortune in commerce. He was single-minded in his far-ranging efforts for the purpose of securing the wherewithal to implement his dreams and cherished projects. Having gathered great wealth, he made up his mind to distribute it with vision. He realised, as the *Kural* says and as most Tamil master-

pieces have enunciated and re-emphasised, the doctrine of the trusteeship of the possessors of wealth for the benefit and on behalf of the community. Recognising this trusteeship, he started the Annamalai University as the logical outgrowth of earlier Tamil, Sanskrit and Music colleges. He envisaged and recreated the ancient Gurukula ideal and founded an institution which is today the nearest approximation to a residential university in India. Two-thirds of the students and teachers live within the precincts of its campus. It now comprises many departments of study and it has great Engineering and Technological centres attached to it. But, fundamentally, the spirit of the Annamalai University is the spirit of reverence for tradition, reverence for the disciplines both of the North and the South including reverence for Sanskrit and Tamil, along with the joint pursuit of old cultures and new developments stemming from England and America and other Western countries.

Raja Annamalai Chettiar inaugurated the Tamil Isai Movement which has played a great part in promoting music and art. *Isai* means harmony. It also means a tone or a musical note. But *Isaippu*, one of the primary derivatives of *Isai*, also means combination or reconciliation. In addition to what has been already and justly claimed for it, I regard the Tamil Isai Movement as truly endeavouring to realise the precious spirit of reconciliation. Annamalai Chettiar, a prince among benefactors, sought to reconcile the old with the new, in bringing together the Tamil college, the Sanskrit college and the Music college and centres of modern technology, modern science and modern engineering. The Annamalai University is one such combination. The ancient tradition of Tamil music, vocal and instrumental, wedded to the Tamil speech, was emphasised and reconciled with the musical accomplishments of Telugu, Kannada and Sanskrit composers and musical savants. The founder of the Annamalai University proceeded with that task in the context of his chosen motto: "With Courage and Faith".

I look upon the Tamil Isai Movement not as a separatist movement, not as a fissiparous tendency, but as a process of reconciliation of two great cultures and a union of two great streams of Indian thought and artistic endeavour. Indian civilisation cannot be surveyed without advertence to the North.

Indian civilisation cannot, at the same time, be contemplated without constant remembrance of the contributions of the South to the integrated intellectual culture and spiritual enterprise of the whole of India. Who can forget what the *Nayanmars*, the *Alvars* and the *Acharyas*, Sankara and Ramanuja and Madhva have achieved? All these were South Indians. I am not saying this in the spirit of narrow patriotism. I am not forgetting that the North has produced a large number of seers and saints and great visionaries and artistic pioneers and master-minds. India is basically one, and ought to be unified. But such unification cannot involve the discouragement or neglect of the several components. What is needed is their co-existence and reconciliation — "*Samavaya eva Sadhuh*" — said Asoka in one of his pillar inscriptions. By that, he meant reconciliation of different cultures and different outlooks by means of which alone ultimate harmony is produced. The Tamil Isai Movement is a movement of harmony. Let that harmony be continuously pursued and attained!

## Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

BORN in 1872, Aurobindo Ghosh was educated in England and spent nearly fifteen years in that country. His academic career in London and Cambridge imparted to him a marvellously deep acquaintance with Greek and Latin literature. He also became conversant with French, German and Italian and could read with facility Dante and Goethe, in the original. He got record marks in the Indian Civil Service examination, but failed (some say purposely) in the riding test. And so, he came back to India, worked as a teacher in Baroda, made himself a profound scholar in Sanskrit and spoke and wrote in many Indian languages. The partition of Bengal made him plunge into politics, and though his political activity lasted only four or five years, he became a leader of the newly-formed National Party and brilliantly conducted three short-lived but famous journals — *Bande Mataram*, *Karmayogin* and *Dharma*. Declaring Swaraj as the goal of India and disdaining the methods adopted by the protagonists of constitutional agitation, he pleaded for the nationalisation of education and of industries and the training of Indians in self-defence. Violence broke out in Bengal and Aurobindo was prosecuted for sedition and acquitted. Later on, he was prosecuted in the Alipore Conspiracy Case along with his brother and was again acquitted. A third prosecution was started after he underwent a year's incarceration. During his detention in jail, he had a profound spiritual experience which he has himself described in a very famous speech and which came to him as a call to dedicate himself to a different kind of work which was to be spiritual and not political. He retired from public life in 1910, went very shortly afterwards to Pondicherry and lived there until his death. There, he started a monthly philosophical

journal called *Arya* in which he embodied his thoughts on the Hindu Scriptures, on Yoga and on the Spiritual programme which he formulated for India.

It may be asserted, with some justice, that Sri Aurobindo transformed the Hindu heritage into a doctrine of spiritual evolution which, in his own language, was described as an "integrated human development which should deal with all aspects of human life". He analysed the materialism of the 19th century and many forward-looking movements like Communism and Socialism. He was equipped to judge, and deal with, the heritage of the East and the West, though his roots were in the *Vedas*.

Romain Rolland, writing in 1928 on Swami Vivekananda, described Sri Aurobindo Ghosh thus: "He is the most noble representative of a great Neo-Vedantic spirit". His interpretation of the revelation of the Vedas was characterised by Sir Francis Younghusband as the greatest philosophical work which has been produced in India in recent times. His literary contribution was signalled by a wonderful prose epic, *The Life Divine*. In it, he pleaded for a psychological and spiritual transformation as a result of integrated consciousness. Sri Aurobindo preaches that there may be truth in all views of existence; but what is needed is to reconcile them in a larger truth from which will result an integrated liberation of Soul and Nature. A complete revolution of our Soul and Nature is requisite which demands an exploration of all domains of consciousness and experience. As he himself states in *The Life Divine* (p. 572), the integral knowledge of *Brahman* involves the possession of the Being which is beyond all relation, but immanent in the very multiplicity of cosmic existence. He insists that the soul of the individual must awake to universality; but, at the same time, he insists on the realisation of the truth of the terrestrial Being and the need to bring a wider meaning into our ordinary human life. Equally important is sensing the truth of the supra-terrestrial. As he puts it, "an integral knowledge demands an unveiling of all the possible domains of consciousness and experience". Sri Aurobindo boldly affirms that the knowledge of the Supra-Physical has been associated with Mysticism and Occultism, and Occultism has been banned as a superstition and a fantastic error. But, the occult is a part of existence. It attempts the

discovery of the secret laws of mind and mental energy, of life and life energy. He quotes the celebrated affirmation of the *Mundaka Upanishad* : "The Self is to be won by Truth and a perfected knowledge".

Proceeding on these lines, Sri Aurobindo deals with what he calls the Divine Equation — the total sense of Creation and the entire will of the Creator (*The Life Divine*, p. 602). What is essential is to give its full legitimate value to each part of our complete composite Being and many-sided aspirations and find out the key of their unity as well as their difference. He postulates that this discovery must be by a synthesis or integration. The evolutionary synthesis to which Sri Aurobindo refers was attempted in ancient Hindu culture which, according to his interpretation, recognises and satisfies the claims of a man's physical, vital and emotional being. The eclipse of the synthetic view occurred when the symmetry and completeness of human life was affected and superseded by an exaggeration of the impulse of renunciation. Sri Aurobindo says that a wrong interpretation of the *Sanyasa* ideal produces two movements of life in opposition to each other : the normal life of interests and desires with an ethical and religious colouring and the abnormal or super-normal inner life founded on renunciation.

With this background, Sri Aurobindo interpreted the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* in the following manner. Founding himself on the two Upanishad statements : "*Sarvam kalu idam brahma*" and "*Ekamevadvathiyam*" ("All this is Brahman" and "Brahman is one without a second"), Sri Aurobindo accepts life with all its multiplicity. In his own ashram which the Mother is conducting with dedicated zeal and inspiration, physical culture, intellectual training and maturity, emotional unfolding and fulfilment are intended to lead up to the process of raising, illuminating and spiritualising existence. Evolution, he says, has proceeded from Matter to Life and from Life to Mind. Man is now largely a mental being and his troubles, according to Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, arise because he views things with a finite mind. He believes in and insists upon the existence of a higher faculty lying dormant, which has to be developed and perfected so as to result in the Life Divine not in any Heaven or Paradise but in this Life and even, perhaps,

in this body. This Divine Power, Sri Aurobindo calls "Rita Chit" (Truth Consciousness or the Super-mental). He is clear in his mind that the ills of the present world cannot be remedied by new political or economic arrangements. A new race of men must be deliberately evolved in whom the higher spiritual powers have been brought into operation.

The ancient Indian *Dharma* was thus summed up : "It called for an ingrained and dominant spirituality, and an inexhaustible vital creativeness and gusto of life ; and mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence, combining the rational, ethical and aesthetic mind at a high intensity of action—all creating the harmony of the ancient Indian culture."

Sri Aurobindo himself traced back his teachings through the *Tantras*, the *Gita* and the *Upanishads*, to the *Rigveda*. This Veda, according to him, may be regarded as a book of Mythology and Ritual ; but it is also and chiefly a book of Divine Knowledge. In his articles in the journal *Arya*, entitled, "The Hymn of the Atris" and the "Angirasa Hymns", he states that the *Rigveda* hymns are the symbolic gospel of the ancient Indian mysticism, their real sense being spiritual and psychological and not mythological and ritualistic. The *Angirasa* legend and the *Vritra* story symbolise the struggle between Light and Darkness, Truth and Falsehood and Death and Immortality. Sri Aurobindo takes the view that the earlier *Upanishads* reflect the true message of the *Rigveda*, while the later *Vedanta* became more ascetic in character and developed a different set of values. It is this aspect that Sri Aurobindo develops in his essays on the *Gita*.

In the Introduction to *The Message of the Gita* edited by Sri Anilbaran Roy, it is stated, "We start with the Vedic synthesis of the psychological being of Man and with the cosmic existence of the Gods pursued behind the symbols". "The *Upanishads* take up the crowning experience of the earlier seers and make it a starting point for the synthesis of the spiritual knowledge." The *Gita* starts from the Vedantic Truths and builds them up into a harmony of the three great means and powers — *Karma*, *Gnana* and *Bhakti*. The *Tantras* seize even on these obstacles to spiritual life and compel them to become the means of a richer spiritual conquest, embracing the whole

of life as Divine. Having said so much, Sri Aurobindo states that we are on the threshold of a larger and newer synthesis based not only on the ancient heritage but also on a new interpretation of Buddhism and the revelations of modern knowledge. In one of his essays, Sri Aurobindo says that all religions have saved a number of souls, but none has been able to spiritualise Mankind. For that, a new Self-Revelation is needed. The Descent of the Divine, the recurring *Avatara*, is the descent of the Divine into Matter or the Involution of the spirit. What is now called for is a return movement of Ascent from Matter. He emphasises that Man, today, embodies a transition from vital activities to those of reflection and thought. Henceforth, by conscious effort, humanity must proceed inwards into a knowledge of the secret principles of Nature and outward and upward towards a Cosmic Being. The salvation of humanity, henceforth, lies not in transcending the world, but transfiguring it so as to make the Universe fit for the Descent of the Supra-Mental. The *Sadhana* that he prescribes, involves *Atma-Samarpana* (absolute surrender), by means of which alone the Divine *Shakti* can effect the transformation referred to above.

In the official handbook of the Pondicherry Ashram, occurs the following passage :

“Man can grow out of his present imperfections into a perfect individual. The perfect man can become a nucleus and a force for the evolution of a perfect society. This achievement is through the evocation and development of all his faculties, so that Man has to cease to live on the surface and to learn to live from within, outward.”

Differing from many exponents of the Yoga doctrine, Sri Aurobindo's contention is that the aim of true Yoga is not to reject Nature, or even to escape from births and deaths, but to divinise the whole Man, and thus, to bring down the Super-Man and transform the body, soul and mind and make them assume the nature of the Super-mental. The aim, ultimately, is to create a Kingdom of God on Earth, ushering in a composite Unity and Harmony.

*The Life Divine* itself is not easy to comprehend at the first

reading. The very perfection of its inherent profundity and erudition may confound or stupefy the casual reader ; but as an appropriate introduction to a study of the book, one may read and re-read that great poetic *tour de force*, “Savitri”.

In a monograph entitled *The Future Evolution of Man*, the seer outlined his basic idea thus : If the final goal of evolution were only to awaken Man to the supreme Reality and to release him from ignorance and bondage so that the liberated soul could merge into the Supreme Reality, the task would be accomplished with the advent of the Supreme Man ; but there is also an aspiration for the transformation of Nature and for a greater perfection of the earthly existence itself. The law of the Super-mind is Unity fulfilled in Diversity. Matter will resolve itself as an instrument of the manifestation of the Spirit ; the body will become a faithful and capable instrument responsive to the Spirit. Health, strength, liberation from suffering, bodily perfection and ease are a part of the perfection which the Evolution is called upon to realise. Personality and Impersonality will become inseparable aspects of one and the same Reality. Finally, to be wholly and integrally conscious of oneself and of all the Truth of one's Being, is what is implied by the perfect emergence of the individual consciousness. “All Being is One” and to be fully conscious is to be integrated with the consciousness of All, with the Universal self.

In a volume published by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, entitled *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on The Mother*, occurs the following resume of Sri Aurobindo's teaching :

“Life is the first step of a release of consciousness, involved originally in Matter ; the Mind is the second step. Evolution does not finish with the Mind. It awaits a release into a consciousness which is spiritual and supra-mental. The next step in Evolution is the development of the Super-Mind and Spirit in the conscious Being. This cannot be done at once, and many preliminary steps have to be taken. Many intervening stages are indispensable in the process of *Sadhana* (self-discipline), bringing about the ultimate result. An opening of the Mind or an emergence into what has been called

the Cosmic Consciousness, does not involve an outward asceticism ; but it emphasises that the conquest of desire and attachment and a control over the body and its needs, greeds and instincts are indispensable. Sri Aurobindo's object is not to develop any one religion or to found a new religion. It is, on the other hand, a Yoga of inner self-development by which those who follow it can in time, evolve a higher consciousness than the mental — a supra and super-natural consciousness, by which alone human nature can be transformed and uplifted and an evolved humanity can bring about the veritable 'ascent of man' and the appearance of the supra-mental by which the world can be transformed and sublimated."

## 34

---

### Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar

CERTAIN communities have, in India as elsewhere, specially distinguished themselves in the fields of commerce and banking ; and, during the 18th and the 19th centuries, the Parsees of Bombay and the Marwari and Gujarati communities and the Armenians of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, like the Jews in Europe, have evinced special expertise in these fields of activity. The Nagaratar community, whose members are generally called Nattukottai Chetties, are not the least notable among such communities. It is a matter worthy of remark that the leaders of all these communities demonstrated, in their lives, not only a profound knowledge of human nature and of the potentialities of banking business but, in addition to studying the markets and making their profits, they also demonstrated, in private life, their discerning philanthropy and great piety. The benefactions in favour of numerous hospitals and charitable and educational institutions made by the Tatas, the Sassoons and, in later days, the Birlas, are matters of history. In America, similarly, a group of philanthropic bankers and manufacturers have signalised themselves by founding universities and starting institutions of world-wide significance, like the Carnegie, Ford and the Rockefeller Foundations.

The Nagaratars, during many years, conducted their business of banking in the old-world style and without much outward fuss. They established a comprehensive system of widely ramified *hundi* transactions and banking centres operating from their head offices in Madura and the Ramnad districts. Their position was specially unique and noteworthy in Malaysia, centering in Singapore and Kaula Lampur, and their activities, later on, extended to Burma, Saigon, and even Indonesia and Thailand ; and,

in all these places beyond the frontiers of India, they rapidly became, as a result of their investments, large landholders and owners of plantations. Today, the Nagaratars have become as influential and important in the field of industrial development, as they were formerly in those money-lending, banking and financing.

Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar was one of the most successful and enterprising of the previous generation of bankers and financiers; and, inheriting a sizeable competence, he soon multiplied his resources and became one of the chief capitalists of Madras State. Following the example of many of his compeers, he repaired and renovated temples, initiated a large number of charities and started schools, colleges and other centres of public utility. An early achievement of Rajah Annamalai Chettiar was the foundation of the *Sri Meenakshi College* at Chidambaram, which became the precursor of the *Annamalai University*, inaugurated in 1929 with the support of the Madras Government and based on his personal donation of twenty lakhs of rupees, equivalent, in present value, to more than a crore of rupees. In addition, he gave to the University its campus extending over a large area including a sizeable arable land. In recognition of his munificence, and public-spirited activities, the hereditary title of "Rajah" was conferred on him by the British Government.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, the eldest son of Rajah Annamalai Chettiar, was born in 1905 and was educated in the Presidency College. Whereas Rajah Annamalai Chettiar, until towards the end of his life, did not take part in public affairs, excepting indirectly by way of encouragement to such causes as Tamil Isai and to such worthy political stalwarts as the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar entered the Legislative Council in his twenty-fifth year, served on the Madras Franchise Committee and also became a member of the Indian Constituent Assembly. During the British regime, he was a member of the Defence Council. He was the Chief Whip and Chairman of the Justice Party which came into power as a by-product of the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme and was successively Mayor of Madras for two terms. He has filled, with distinction, the responsible position of Minister in charge of Education, Public Health and Local Self-Government in the Madras State. He has

taken an active part in educational matters and in the cause of English and Tamil learning. He became the President of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Board of the Imperial Bank. He has been actively functioning in the spheres of banking and industrial enterprise, benefiting by the circumstance that his ancestors had established traditional and important contacts with Ceylon, Malaya and Burma. The Rajah identified himself with one of the great textile industries in South India, as a Director of the A. & F. Harvey and the Madura Mills. The Indian Bank, of which his father was one of the founders and, in whose inception I was associated with him, is now one of the foremost banking concerns in India, and Rajah Muthiah Chettiar is its Chairman. He was an important member of the Pachiappa Charities and, ultimately, its President.

There is no field of industry, banking or politics in respect of which Rajah Muthiah Chettiar has not formed and expressed mature and well-considered opinions which are characterised alike by clarity united with commonsense and refreshing frankness. He has been the Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University from 1948, having succeeded the founder, his father. During my tenure as Vice-Chancellor of this University, as well as throughout his incumbency as Pro-Chancellor, he has taken a lively and beneficent interest in the welfare and progress of the University and in the maintenance of its high academic standards.

It is not a small thing to have distinguished oneself in such varied fields as commerce, industry, banking, civil life and the legislature, education and philanthropy. In addition to his abiding interest in Tamil literature and music, manifested in the active support extended to the Tamil Isai Sangham, his fervent support to several cultural movements and his emphasis on the importance of maintaining high standards of educational attainment, and especially his enthusiastic propaganda in respect of the acquisition of a working knowledge of a global language like English, are well-known and deserve wide recognition. But apart from such public activities, he has endeared himself to the members of all classes and communities, Indian and non-Indian, as a generous host and as a loyal colleague and comrade, his

genius for friendship being one of his most noteworthy characteristics.

The above account is only a partial statement of the qualities and achievements of Rajah Muthiah Chettiar. If I were asked to describe his career compendiously, I would characterise it as that of a person who is specially remarkable for his loyalty to chosen friends and to public causes in which he believes. His gift of friendship, which is as consistent as it is selective, is accompanied by a capacity for hard-hitting and fearless criticism of public men and measures when, in his opinion, they proceed along misdirected paths. He has been able to demonstrate marked administrative talent along with balanced perspectives in public affairs and a correct appraisal of human values.

## 35

### Madras Presidency College and its Alumni

WHEN the Court of Directors of the East India Company in 1830 made up their minds to "train a body of persons qualified to take a larger share and occupy higher positions in the civil administration of the country" on lines which had already been tried successfully at Calcutta, they built far better than they knew. In order to bring about their object, the so-called Committee of Native Education came into existence charged with the task of starting four English schools in the suburbs of Madras and for establishing normal classes for teachers in English. Doubts were expressed, however, as to whether there were any Indian boys who would benefit by a collegiate education and the scheme was apparently kept in abeyance until a decade later when Lord Elphinstone proposed to establish in Madras what was called a Collegiate Institution or University for the purpose of teaching Literature, Philosophy and Science, and a High School as a department of the University. How curious it now sounds to read that entrance to the High School was confined to boys able to read and write English intelligently? This institution was opened with about seventy boys on its rolls and took over ten years for it to be organised. The Committee was followed by a University Board of Governors; and it was left to that great pioneer, George Norton, to diffuse Western learning, but his view was mainly to impart education leading up to tests for candidates for Government service.

To those who are justly proud of the phenomenal progress made by Southern India in English education even to the detriment, it must be admitted, of indigenous culture, it may be a matter of surprise that fifteen years after the foundation of the

High School which was the forerunner of the Presidency College, lamentations were heard that education had not made the same progress in Madras as in the North of India. The Presidency College came into existence as the High School of the Madras University, and comprised a High School and later a college, the latter being started only in 1853, the High School continuing till 1884. Pursuant to the original idea that the university and the college should be helpful to the administration, a legal side was soon developed as lawyers were needed to help the courts both at the Bar and on the Bench. Law classes were part of the Institution from 1855 and so every lawyer was automatically a student of the Presidency College unless he studied privately, and successive generations of distinguished lawyers and judges, although they took their degrees in other institutions, became technically students of the High School and later on, of the Presidency College, during their legal course. Thus, for instance, my father, although he was a distinguished student of Messrs. Porter and Gopala Rao of the Kumbakonam College, attended law classes in the Presidency College and subsequently became Law Professor in 1891. My connection with the Presidency College can, therefore, be described as hereditary and has been continued to the next generation. I can claim another link through Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri, my legal guru, whose family for three generations studied in this college and who was the grandson of the first graduate of the High School, Mr. C. V. Ranganatha Sastri. I have heard it said that in those old and spacious days, the graduates were not marched in a row during the Convocation opposite to the Chancellor's dias, but were presented one by one to the Governor who slipped a ring on the finger of the graduate as a token and recognition of merit. But, of course, the graduates of those days could be counted on the fingers of the two hands, if not of one hand.

In dealing with the Presidency College on the occasion of its centenary, one is definitely reminded that its history is, to no small extent, the history of South India. I have referred to Mr. C. V. Ranganatha Sastri as the first graduate of the college who, beginning his English studies late in life after a thorough grounding in Vedic and Sanskrit lore, not only distinguished

himself in the English language and literature but became a polymath of distinction and was a competent student of twenty Indian and European languages and was deeply versed in Greek, Latin and Sanskrit literature. He was the Official Interpreter of the Supreme Court in Hindustani, Persian, Urdu, Arabic, French, German and Italian, and, in leisure moments, learnt about a dozen more languages. In addition, he applied himself to the law and retired as a judge of the Small Causes Court, having reached one of the highest legal distinctions then open to an Indian. In addition to his intellectual talents, he was a person who devoted great attention to bodily exercises and was known, in his days, as a prominent athlete and horseman. On a particular occasion he is reported to have reinforced verbal arguments by more striking methods of persuasion when confronted with arrogant specimens of underbred humanity.

One of the earliest and most famous products of the High School was Sir T. Madhava Rao who, with Sir Salar Jung, occupied the centre of the stage of Indian administration for a number of years. He presided over the destinies of Travancore for fourteen years and was also Dewan of Baroda and Indore. His superb talents and his command over the English language and versatility of tastes were proverbial. He took pride in calling himself a High School boy.

The Lord Elphinstone Prize was founded in 1846 and was awarded for the best English Essay written by a Hindu in race and religion, the tradition being that it was awarded only to compositions which attained a fairly high standard. There are few distinctions that I prize more highly than that of having obtained this prize in 1899. But the list of the prize winners will serve as a representative epitome of South Indian achievement. When one compiles such lists one always realises, however, that in scholastic as in other careers, the battle is not always to the strong nor the race to the swift, but these are rough and ready human tests and not to be regarded as decisive. For instance, there was a profound student of Sanskrit who, by all laws of equity and commonsense, should have obtained the University Sanskrit medal, which came to me because my knowledge of English was better than his. There was a brilliant mathematician who, for want of encouragement, subsided into

the Judicial Department. There was a keen student of Chemistry who ornamented the Accounts Department. One of the earliest on the list of the Elphinstone Prizemen was A. Seshiah Sastry, who became a finished and witty writer of limpid English prose and whose despatches and memoirs would surely repay publication. After a brilliant career in the Madras Secretariat and the Board of Revenue, he became Dewan of Travancore and, later on, the Regent of Pudukkottah. Next came C. Rangacharlu, a rough diamond of a man who united with disconcerting frankness of expression, high ideals of duty and patriotism and rare gifts of statesmanship, and who started Mysore on its path of progress. He was the first Dewan to the Maharaja of Mysore after restoration to the Gadi of the present dynasty. The great lawyer, Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar, whose marmoreal style and judicial qualities are commemorated in marble in the premises of the High Court, was one of the galaxy of students of the High School. Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar, probably the greatest constructive statesman whom South India has produced during the last century, who has been more responsible than any other single person for making modern Mysore for what it is today, was another brilliant alumnus, and so was S. Srinivasa Raghava Aiyangar, the author of a most thoughtful economic study which was far in advance of its times and a statesman of rare distinction who, after a brilliant service in Madras, was chosen by the late Gaekwar as his Dewan. Then there was P. Ranganatha Mudaliar, one of the most finished examples of culture produced by the Madras University, a person of mellow learning who was a mathematician, philosopher and teacher of English by turns and whose powers of exposition both in the classroom and on the platform, were regarded as supreme in his days. Space forbids my recounting the other celebrated names that could be enumerated, but I cannot refrain from mentioning Sir C. Sankaran Nair, who followed Ranganatha Mudaliar after a decade; Sir T. Desikachari and that brilliant mathematician, R. Ramachandra Rao, who devoted to the Secretariat, talents which might have gone to the great enrichment of mathematical science; Justice Seshagiri Aiyar, who did fine work both as legislator and as lawyer; that brilliant and versatile advocate, administrator, sanskritist and orator, V. Krishnaswami Aiyar; and Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar,

an embodiment of true scholarship and "humanity" in its widest sense and a mine of administrative experience. Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri, who hid beneath persiflage and an appearance of cynicism rare gifts of scholarship in many tongues and a sublimated commonsense which made him a unique Judge, was an authentic successor of these giants. Not long after Sir Kumaraswami Sastri, there came out of our college one of the subtlest of the lawyers of our generation, Mr. S. Srinivasa Aiyangar. In between, there arose the phenomenon of R. S. Sheppard, whose name has now been perhaps forgotten but whose compendia were the refuge and the bed-side companions of Indian students. He was a versatile student of history and English literature, but he devoted his great talents to the dubious task of writing examination guides and short-cuts to study which made a fine art of "cramming" and which, for about ten or fifteen years, positively discouraged the study of original text-books. The student population swore by Sheppard and the professors swore at him but the examiners succumbed.

I now come to days nearer my own and my first collegiate memories cluster round P. Sambandam, who was known to be a keen student of English and Tamil literature. He has, in later life, become one of the foremost exponents of the Tamil drama and of the amateur histrionic art. Mr. Ramarayaningar (as the Raja of Panagal was originally called) was also a prize winner in his days but few then could have foretold his evolution as a determined and sagacious political leader. One of the legendary heroes of our student days was C. S. Balasundaram who, like my father, was apparently unable to appear in any examination without standing first in the class. The number of prizes that he succeeded in winning and the quietness and ease and absence of ostentation that marked his behaviour, made him an object both of admiration and of respect. Quite naturally, he stood first in the Mysore Civil Service examination and rose very rapidly in service. He could have risen to the highest position but for the failure of his health. To go back to the Elphinstone prize and to revert to anecdote (or is it dotage), from 1889 to 1898, it was awarded only once and it was won by Ramunni Menon, the talented zoologist, who afterwards became the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University. In 1898 Upendra Pai, a

discriminating student of English literature, who entered the Provincial Civil Service and thus voluntarily buried under a bushel, talents which should have received greater recognition, was the recipient; and a year after me, N. Vijayaraghavan, who united rare gifts in music and mathematics and who chose a career in the Finance Department of the Government of India, received the prize. I do not deal with the present generation for obvious reasons, but to mention the names of Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari, Sir V. T. Krishnamachari and N. Gopalaswami Aiyangar is to demonstrate that the spirit and the tradition of the College are very much alive.

So far, I have been dealing with the achievements of the students of the College in scholarship and in the activities of the outer world. But not less noteworthy is another characteristic of the Presidency College which arises from the fact that for a long series of years—I do not know what happened now—the pupils were more or less left alone. They were hardly seen, if at all, shepherded and were left to their own devices in the matter of their studies and the utilisation of their leisure hours. Though this led to calamitous results in some cases, it produced in most instances, a wideness of reading and a selective habit and catholicity of taste which the Presidency College student is proud to regard as an accompaniment of his residence in the Institution. Although sport, in the modern, strenuous and almost professional sense, was not practised by the less robust generation of the past, whose mode of life will be infallibly characterised as that of a dry-as-dust book-worm today, and whose abysmal ignorance of the complicated minutiae of the present day performances would draw down all ill-concealed contempt, nevertheless, there was always redolent in the atmosphere of the Presidency College, an air of what is perhaps more important even than sport, namely, sportsmanship, chivalry and the sentiment of give and take. Some of our academic neighbours and gentle critics may term this quality priggishness or uppishness, but there it was, and it had its undoubted value in building up the distinct Presidency College personality. In some, the result may be philistinism but the feeling of being one of the "Elect" has a few redeeming advantages. In the last resort, it serves to keep up standards. Such standards are always indefin-

able, but the significance of life nevertheless lies in these imponderables.

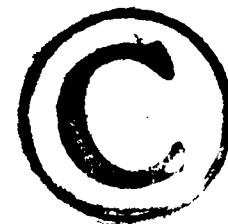
One main aspect of our tradition may be illustrated by Browning's lines:

Strive and hold cheap the strain,  
Learn not account the pang.

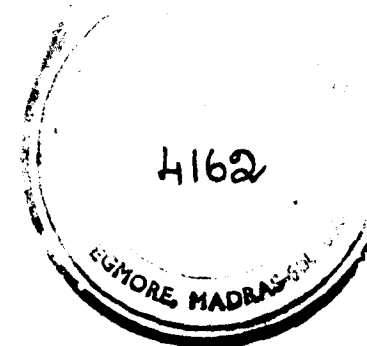
But our mission and the mission of Indian education and thought is perhaps best expressed thus:

This, then, is yours: to build exultingly High,  
and yet more high,

The knowledge towers above base wars  
And sinful surges reaching up to lay  
Dishonouring hands upon your work, and drag  
From their uprightness your desires to lag  
Among low places with a common gait.  
That so Man's mind, not conquer'd by his clay,  
May sit above his fate,  
Inhabiting the purpose of the stars,  
And trade with his Eternity.



W 2, NO  
N 67



## Index

- 
- Akara bhuvanam Chidambara rahasyam*, 58  
 Akbar, 38, 245  
 Alasinga Perumal, M.C., 67  
 Almorah Ashram, 69  
 Alvars, 71, 259, 261  
 Amery, 213  
*Anandakalippu*, 57  
 Anantacharlu, P., 247  
 Annamalai Chettiar, Rajah Sir, 259-61  
     founding of the Annamalai University, 260  
     motto of, 260  
     spirit of the Annamalai University, 260  
     starting of Tamil Isai Movement, 260, 261  
 Arbuthnot, Sir George, 248  
 Arts and crafts in the *Ramayana*, 2, 3  
 Arulnandhi Sivacharya, 53  
 Arunachalam, Sir P., 86  
 Arundale, George S., 103, 104, 210  
 Aryasamaj, 190, 192  
 Ashtanga yoga, 15  
 Asoka, 261  
 Avatara, 17  
 Aveling, Dr., 94  
 Aurangzeb, 245  
 Aurobindo Ghosh (*see* Ghosh, Aurobindo)  
  
 BACON, FRANCIS, 130  
 Balasundaram, C. S., 277  
 Banerjee, A. R. (Dewan of Mysore), 121  
 Banerjee, Sir Gurudas, 112  
 Banerjee, Surendranath, 97, 161, 193, 195, 210, 243, 246  
 Bar, Madras, 144  
 Barlow, Glyn, 240  
 Basu, Bupendranath, 210  
 Baudouin, 14, 15  
 Besant, Dr. Annie, 90-106  
     early life, 90  
     marriage, 91  
     on population, 92-3  
     Fabian society, 94  
     entry into Theosophy, 96-7  
     lands in India, 97  
     India to shed inferiority complex, 98  
     awakens India from long slumber, 98  
     starts *New India*, 101  
     Besant policy, 101  
     leader of Hindu thought and religion, 101  
     President of Indian National Congress, 101  
     real spirit of, 101  
     invitation to Dr. C. P. for collaboration in educational and political work, 100  
     successes, 102  
     generosity in judgment of others and money, 103  
     translation of Bhagavad Gita : Song Celestial, 103  
     oratory, 104, 109  
     gift of friendship, 104, 105  
     reveals India to Indians, 105

- main aim, 106, 146, 168, 170,  
171, 174, 178, 188, 191, 194,  
195, 199, 202, 216, 223, 231,  
241, 242, 246, 249  
Beethoven, 44  
Beschi, Fr. (*see* Veeramamunivar),  
52  
Bhakti, 34, 35, 48  
Bharati, Suddhananda, 77  
Bhashyam Aiyangar, Sir, V., 120,  
130-35  
astute politician, tried adminis-  
trator, literary artist, 130  
art of conveyancing and drafts-  
manship, 131, 132  
Madras Legislative Council, 132  
first Vakil Advocate-General, 132  
Judge, High Court, 133  
fearless independence, 133, 134  
jurist of unparalleled eminence,  
134  
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar on,  
134  
*Madras Law Journal* on, 134  
convocation address to Madras  
University, 134, 135  
life 'religion in practice', 135  
Bhave, Vinoba, 234  
Bikanir, Maharajah of, 210  
Biligiri Aiyangar, 67  
Birkenhead, Lord, 201  
Birlas, 269  
Bland, Mrs. and Mr., 94  
Blavatsky, Madame, 96, 97  
Bose, A. M., 134  
Bose, J. C., 87  
Bose, Nandalal, 87  
Bose, S. C., 201, 202  
Boswell, 223  
Bower, Lord, 130  
Bowring, 113  
Bradlaugh, Charles, 91, 92, 93, 94,  
95  
Brahmasamaj, 190, 191, 194, 207,  
210, 211  
*Brahmavadin*, 69  
Bright, Mrs., 104  
Brougham, Lord, 130  
Browen, Lord, 130  
Browning, 279  
Brunton, Paul, (*Search in Secret  
India*), 76  
Bryce, Rt. Hon'ble James, 215  
Burnshaw, Stanley, 111  
Burrows, Herbert, 94  
CALVERLEY, 'Ode to Tobacco',  
209  
Canning, Lord, 113  
Carlyle, 62  
Carnegie Foundation, 269  
Carpenter, Edward, 69  
Castelar, Senor, 104  
Chakravarthy, G. N., 103  
Chakravarti, Syam Sunder, 196  
Chatterji, Bankim Chandra, 190,  
192  
Chattopadhyaya, Dr Aghorenath,  
107  
Chelmsford, Lord, 211  
Chentsal Rao, 121, 123  
Chitrasala grhani, 2  
Chowri Chowra, 251  
Christine, Sister, 68  
Churchill, 213  
Cicero, 130  
College, Madras Presidency (*see*  
Madras Presidency College)  
Communism, 159  
Conscience (inner mentor), 8  
Coomaraswamy, Ananda, K., 86-89  
national consciousness of ancient  
and medieval art of India, 87  
national education in Lanka, 87  
*The Mirror of Great Paintings*,  
88  
exponent of Indian art, 88  
*Why Exhibit Works of Art*, 89  
Cosmic dance, 56  
Coue, 15  
Cubbon, 113  
Cultures, attributes of different, 245  
Dante, 44  
Das, Dr. Babu Bhagavan, 103  
Das, C. R., 200, 201, 208, 251  
Darwin, 231  
Datta, Aswini Kumar, 195  
Democracy, 156, 158, 159  
Demosthenes, 130  
Desikachari, Sir, T., 276  
Dharana, 15  
Dharma, 4, 11  
Dinkar Rao, Sir, 112, 124  
Dodge, Miss, 104  
Duff, Mount-Stuart, Grant, 73, 77,  
247  
Dutt, Romesh Chander, 112, 113  
ELLIOT, SIR CHARLES, 225  
Elphinstone, Lord, 273  
Elphinstone Prize, Dr. C. P. Jaci-  
pient of, 275  
Emerson, 71, 190  
Erskine, Lord 'on Sastri spirit',  
220  
FATE, 5  
Fischer, H. A. L., 218  
Ford Foundation, 269  
Frankfurter, Justice, 130  
Free will, 5  
Freud, 14  
GANDHI, MAHATMA, 81, 84, 97, 98,  
101, 199, 201, 203, 212, 214,  
217, 219, 221, 223, 232, 250,  
251, 252  
Ghosh, Aurobindo (Aurobindo  
Ghosh), 72, 262-68  
on scriptures, 72  
academic career, 262  
politics, 262  
spiritual experience, 262  
doctrine of integrated human  
development, 263  
*The Life Divine*, 263  
Romain Rolland on, 263  
interpretation of Vedas and  
Bhagavad Gita, 265  
*Message of the Bhagavad Gita*,  
265  
aim of yoga, 266  
*Savitri*, 267  
*The Future Evolution of Man*,  
267  
*Sri Aurobindo on Himself and  
the Mother*, 267-68  
Ghosh, Lal Mohan, 193  
Ghosh, Motilal, 246  
Ghosh, Rash Behari, 133, 210  
Gladstone, 104  
*Gnanavasishta*, 54  
Goethe, 44  
Gokhale, Gopalakrishna, 176-89  
early life, 179-80  
scholar politician, 177  
Hoyland on, 178  
constructive statesman, 178  
political testament, 179  
love of order and dislike of  
political hysteria, 179  
contact with Ranade, 180  
Deccan Educational Society, 180  
differs from Tilak, 182  
Secretary, Indian National Con-  
gress, 183  
as legislator, 184, 185  
capacity for friendship, 185  
Servants of India Society, 186  
Lord Morley and, 186  
Gopala Rao, 224, 274  
Gopalswami Aiyangar, Sir N.,  
278  
Gosse, Edmund, 107  
Govindarajulu Naidu, Dr., 107  
Grant, Alexander, 162  
Gurtu, Iqbal Narain, 104  
Guru, Mouna, 52, 53  
HAEKAL, 231  
Hanuman, 8

## 284 INDEX

- Hanumantha Rao, K., 221, 224  
 Hardinge, Lord, 124  
 Haridasa, Sister, 68  
 Havell, E. B., 87, 88  
 Headlam, S. D., 95  
 Heimann, Dr. Betty, 34, 35  
 Hinduism, 25, 32, 33  
 Holloway, Justice, 140  
 Hoyland, 178  
 Huien, T. Sang, 83  
 Hull, Cordell, 213  
 Hunter, Sir William, 123, 225  
 Hussain, Sir Ahmad, 255  
 Huxley, Aldous, 13  
 Huxley, T. H., 231
- INTUITION, 13, 14**  
 Iqbal, Sir Muhammad, 253-58  
   one of the originators of Pakis-  
   tan idea, 253  
   *The Secrets of Self*, 253  
   *Himalayas*, 254  
   Dr Sachchidananda Sinha on  
   Iqbal The Poet and his Mes-  
   sage, 254, 257  
   Poems: *Voice of Anguish*, 255  
   *Reconstruction of Religious*  
   *Thought in Islam*, 255  
   development of his ideas, 256  
 Irwin, Lord, 203, 211  
 Ismail, Sir Mirza, 117, 121
- JAGADGURU OF SRINGERI, 123**  
 Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya (see  
   Sankaracharya Jagadguru)  
 Jami, Nuruddin Abdul Rahman, 256  
 Jayadeva, 41  
 Jayakar, M. R., 200, 202, 203, 212,  
   220  
 Jinarajadasa, C., 103  
 Jinna, Muhammad Ali, 101, 109,  
   207  
 Joshi, N. M., 220  
 Jung, 14  
 Jung, Sir Salar, 112, 124, 275
- KALIDASA, 84**  
 Kanniah Bhagavata, 45, 46  
 Kant, 18  
 Karunakara Kadavul, 60  
 Karunakara Menon, C., 248  
 Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, S., 211,  
   245-52  
   one of the founders of Madras  
   Native Association and Madras  
   Mahasabha, 246  
   *The Hindu* as a weekly of Tripli-  
   cane Literary Society and as a  
   daily as from (1889), 247  
   Gandhi on *The Hindu*, 252  
   memorandum of Kasturi Ranga  
   Iyengar in London, 250  
 Katha Upanishad, 14  
 Keezhkanakku, 51  
 Kelkar, N. C., 202  
 Kempis, Thomas, A., 67  
 Keyserling, Count Herman, 82, 106  
 King George V, 250  
 Knowlton, Dr. Charles, 92  
 Krishna Aiyar, Tirukodikaval, 48  
 Krishnamachari, Sir V. T., 278  
 Krishnamurthi, J., 99, 100, 207  
 Krishnamurti, Sir P. N., 121, 123  
 Krishnaswami Aiyar, V., 67, 139-45,  
   194, 216, 237, 242, 243, 247,  
   249, 276  
   advocacy, 141  
   Member, Governor's Executive  
   Council, 141  
   politics, 141, 142  
   and V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, 142  
   generosity, 142  
 Kshetragana, 41, 43  
 Kumaraswami Sastri, Sir C. V., 132,  
   274, 277  
 Kumarila Bhatta, 18  
 Kural, 259
- LAKSHMINARASU CHETTY, GAZULA,**  
   113  
 Lanka, 2, 9  
 Laski, 231
- Latagrahani, 2  
 Lawyers, Egmore Group of, 137  
   Mylapore Group of, 137  
 Leadbeater, 103  
 Leaders, types of, 176  
 Lotbiniere, Captain, 121
- MACAULAY, 87, 161**  
 Macdonald, Ramsay, 218  
 Madhava Rao, Sir T., 112, 113, 114,  
   124, 224, 275  
 Madhava Rao, V. P., 119, 121, 129  
 Madhwa, 71  
 Madras, legal profession, 145  
 Madras Presidency College and Its  
   Alumni, 273-79  
   East India Company's efforts to  
   train persons for administration,  
   273  
   Lord Elphinstone starts collegiate  
   institutions, 275  
   starting of the High School  
   (1853), the forerunner of the  
   Presidency College and the  
   Madras University, 274  
   legal studies at the Presidency  
   College, 274  
   C. V. Ranganatha Sastri, first  
   graduate, 274  
   spirit of the college, 275  
   distinguished alumni, 275, 276,  
   277, 278, 279  
 Maharshi, Devendranath Tagore, 78  
 Maharshi, Ramana (see Ramana  
   Maharshi)  
 Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan,  
   200, 210, 211, 239  
 Mallet, 76  
 Malthus, 72  
 Marsh, 224  
 Marthanda Varma, 43  
 Max Muller, 44, 168  
 Mehta, Sir Phirozeshah, 97, 121, 134,  
   162, 193, 221, 242, 243, 245  
 Meikandar, 52  
 Mephistocles, 9
- Mill, John Stuart, 92  
 Milton, 9  
 Mirabai, 34-40  
   early life and adoration of Divine  
   Krishna from childhood, 34  
   on art, 38  
   drama of her existence in 'The  
   Beggar Princess' by Dilip  
   Kumar Roy, 35-8  
 Mishra, Pandit, 210  
 Montagu, 211, 219, 249  
 Montague-Chelmsford, 129  
 Montagu-Chelmsford, proposals,  
   211  
 Morley, Henry, 78  
 Morley, John, 113, 130, 222  
 Morris, William, 94  
 Mountbatten, Lord, 213, 232  
 Mozart, 44  
 Mudolkar, 242  
 Mukerjee, Asutosh, 196  
 Muni, Vasishtha Ganapati, 73  
 Muthiah Bhagavata, Gayakasikha-  
   mani, 49  
 Muthiah Chettiar, Rajah Sir, 269-72  
   Nagarathar community, 269-70  
   education, 269  
   philanthropy, 269  
   as legislator, industrialist, banker,  
   269  
   politician, administrator, 270  
   interest in Tamil Isai, 271  
   views on English, 271  
   gift of friendship, 272  
 Muthukumaraswami, Sir, 86  
 Muthuswami Aiyar, Sir T., 112,  
   130, 224, 276  
 Muthuswami Aiyar, C. V., 240, 241,  
   242  
 Muthuswami Dikshitar, 41
- Naladiar, 51**  
 Nair, Dr. T. M., 242, 249  
 Nanjunda Rao, Dr. M. C., 67, 249  
 Naoroji, Dadabai, 121, 245

## 286 INDEX

- Narasimha Bharati of Sringeri, 43, 77
- Narasimha Chetty, Gazula Lakshmanan Chetty, 246
- Narasimhan, V. K., 245
- Narasimhaswami, B. V., 72, 77
- Narain, Jayaprakash, 195
- Narayaniyah, G., 99
- Narayana Tirthaswami, 41
- Narendranath Dutta (*see* Vivekananda)
- Natesan, G. A., 237, 240-44  
started the *Indian Review*, 240  
popularisation of epics and puranas, 241  
Gandhi and, 242  
Besant and, 243  
Dr. C. P. and, 243
- Nayanmars, 71, 259, 261
- Nehru, Jawaharlal, 90, 199, 202, 203, 221, 230-36  
qualities of, 230, 231  
Afghan delegation, 232  
Congress of oppressed Nationalities, 232  
President of Lahore Congress, 232  
Kisan March, 231  
Prime Ministership, 232  
love of common man, 236  
*Autobiography*, 233  
friendship of Gandhi, 233  
Bandung Conference, 232  
Panch-Sheel, 232, 236  
Dr. C. P. and, 234  
unflinching loyalty to friends, 235
- Nehru, Kamala, 202
- Nehru, Pandit Motilal, 101, 198-205, 207-12, 230, 251  
Besant on, 198  
eminence at the Bar, 198  
gracious hospitality, 199  
and Congress movement, 203  
gift of Anand Bhavan, 203  
Gandhiji on, 204  
Pattabhi Sitaramiah on, 204  
Communism, status of, 202
- Nicolson, Professor, 253
- Nicolson, Sir Frederick, 228
- Nivedita, Sister, (Margaret Noble), 195
- Norton, Eardley, 134, 139, 140
- Norton, George, 273
- PADMAJA NAIDU, 110
- Pal, Bepin Chandra, 190-97, 246  
early life, 191  
national movement, 191  
essentially spiritual, 191  
*Memoirs of My Life and Times*, 190, 196  
on Aurobindo, 192  
founded *New India* and *Bande Mataram*, 193  
as speaker, 193, 194  
literary artist, 194  
*The Soul of India* and *Bengal Vaishnavism*, 194  
*Swadeshi* and *Swaraj*, 196
- Palit, Tarakanth, 196
- Paradise Lost*, 9
- Paripurnanandam, 60
- Patel, Sardar Vallabhbhai, 201, 203, 221, 232, 234
- Patel, Vithalbhai, 202
- Pattabhirama Aiyar, C. R., 67, 132, 208, 247
- Philips, 213
- Plato, 75, 77, 223
- Plutarch, 223
- Pole, Graham, 104
- Porter, 162, 224, 274
- Powell, E. B., 114, 162, 224
- Pratap, Mahendra, 231
- Pratyahara, 15
- Prince of Wales, 251
- Psycho-analysis, 14
- Purandaradasa, 41
- Purnayya, 119
- QUEEN MARY, 250
- RADHAKRISHNAN, DR. S., 13
- Raghunatha Rao, Diwan Bahadur, 247
- Rai, Lala Lajpat, 192, 194, 200, 201, 202, 249
- Rajagopalachari, C., 242
- Ramachandra Aiyar, A., 119, 129, 131, 132
- Ramachandra Rao, R., 276
- Ramadas, 41
- Ramakrishna, Paramahansa, 62-65, 66  
the spirit of the Upanishads, 62  
66  
practice of other religions, 64  
accepting Vivekananda as his disciple, 65  
testing and schooling, 66  
oneness of all religions, 66  
reveals India to the West, 67  
sojourn in Madras, 67  
recognition of spiritual qualities, 68  
*Sri Krishna, the Great Master*, 62  
*Sri Ramakrishna Leela Prasanga*, 62
- Ramana Maharshi, 71-77  
Sahajasamadhi, 73  
pithy utterances : *Ulladu Narpadu* (or *Sad-Vidya*), 73  
phenomenality of the world, 73  
outlook, 73, 74  
*Five Hymns to Arunachala*, 73  
necessity of a guru, 75  
personality, 76  
Paul Brunton on, 76  
*Self Realisation — Life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi*, 72, 77
- Ramanatha Aiyar, Professor K. B., 241, 242
- Ramanathan, Sir P., 86
- Ramanuja, 71, 261
- Ramarajya, 11
- Ramarayaningar, M. (Rajah of Pannagal), 277
- Rama Rao, Raja T., 131
- Ramaswami Aiyangar, C., 68
- Ramaswami Aiyar, M. S., 42
- Ramayana* on Art and Crafts, 2, 3  
on dharma, 4  
on conduct and culture, 5, 6  
on saranagati, 6
- Ram Tirth, Swami, 254
- Ramunni Menon, K., 277
- Ranade, Mahadev Govind, 161-65  
background, 161  
and prarthanasamaj, 163  
background of his life, 161  
inspirer of Gokhale, 163  
researches in Mahratta history, 162  
personality of, 162  
school of politics, 163  
Indian National Congress, 163  
as a guide, warner and inspirer, 165  
'uncrowned King of Poona', 180
- Rangachariar, Professor M., 241, 242
- Rangachariar, T., 242
- Rangacharlu, C., 114, 115, 119, 120, 122, 225, 276
- Ranganatha Mudaliar, P., 224, 276
- Ranganatha Sastri, C. V., 274
- Rangaswami Aiyangar, A., 121, 248
- Rasakrida, 40
- Ravana, 9
- Reading, Lord, 130
- Religion, 13, 16
- Religions, Parliament of, 68
- Renan, Ernest, 236
- Rhys, Ernest, 81
- Rockefeller Foundation, 269
- Rolland, Romain, 62, 66, 72, 263
- Ronaldsley, Lord, 192
- Roosevelt, President, 213
- Roy, Anil Baran, 265
- Roy, Dilip Kumar, 35, 40
- Roy, Raja Ram Mohan, 192
- Rousseau, 157
- Rumi, Jalaluddin, 256

Russell, Bertrand, 156

SACHCHIDANANDA SIVAM, 61

Sadagopachariar, Hon'ble, 131

Sadasiva Brahman, 41

Sages, types of, 71

Saivasiddhanta, 55

Sakti, 56, 59

Samarasa Vedanta Saivasiddhanta, 51

Sambanda Mudaliar, P., 144, 277

Sanjivi Rao, 104

Sankaracharya, Jagadguru, 13-33

date of, 17, 18

founding of mutts, 18

dynamism of, 18

and Kumarila Bhatta, 19

philosophy of, 23

on bhakti, 29

as a bhakta, 32

on anubhava, 25

attitude to Veda, 23

significance to unreality, 25, 28

as a sanyasin, 18

his times, 32

synthesis of various ideals, 33

on moksha, 28

on Prasthanatraya, 22, 25

doctrine of maya, 26, 27, 28

uniqueness of, 20

Karma, upasana, ancillary to jnana, 25

Absolute, 25, 27, 28

jiva, 15

lyrics, 21, 22

on sruti, 24, 31

personal god, 22, 23, 28

as a bodhisatva, 21

on renunciation of action, 32

pervasive influence of, 29, 30, 31

Jagadguru, 13, 14

advent, 17

and Spinoza, 22, 30

and contemporary science, 30

crypto Buddhist, 31

on Buddha, 31

realistic and speculative, 2

Ruysbrock on, 29

Aldous Huxley on, 29

Dr. Rhine on, 30

knowledge by investigation, 22, 24, 25

encounter with chandala, 19

birth of *Manisha Panchaka*, 20

*Soundaryalahari*, 21

works, 20, 21

*Dakshinamurti Stotra*, 27

and Eckhart, 22

Sankaran Nair, Sir C., 136-38, 193, 276

and Indian National Congress, 136

Judge, 137

Advocate-General, 137

social reformer, 137

Member, Viceroy's Council, 137

Montagu-Chelmsford report, 137

non-brahmin movement, 138

Sapru, P. N., 203, 208

Sapru, The Rt. Hon'ble Tej Baha-dur, 203, 206-15

as lawyer, 206, 207

political thought and guide of action, 209

wide ranging friendships, 209

Law member, 211, 214

as mediator and reconciler, 212

Joint Parliament Commission, 214

patriotism, 214

affinity with great thinkers, 214

Privy Councillor, 214

Saraba Sastri, 41, 43

Saraboji, Maharaja, 43, 224

Saradananda, 62

Sarma, B. N., 249

Sarojini Naidu, Srimati, 107-11, 221  
experimenting in English verse, 107

*Golden Threshold*, 107

*Palanquin Bearers*, 108

*The Bird of Time*, 108

*The Feather of the Dawn*, 109

Lieutenant of Gandhi, 109

gift of mellifluous verse, 109

humour and persuasive speaking, 109

President of the Indian National Congress, 109

Protagonist of women's emancipation, 109

Round Table Conference, 109

Governor of U.P., 110

*The Broken Wing*, 110

Discovery of the inner self, 111

Sassoons, 269

Sen, Keshab Chandra, 191

Sesha Aiyangar, 246

Seshadri Aiyar, Sir K., 112-23, 276

John Morley on British Indian Policy, 113

unenviable position of Dewan in an Indian State, 116

Sir William Hunter on, 123

Lord Curzon on, 124

Sir Dinshaw Wacha on, 124

Lord Hardinge on, 124

Seshagiri Aiyar, Justice, 276

Seshiah Sastri, Sir, 112, 113, 114, 224, 225, 276

Shakespeare, 44, 161, 235

Shantiniketan, 83

Shaw, Bernard, 94, 156

Sheppard, R. S., 277

Sheppard, Sir Horatio, 136

Shivaji, 162, 245

*Siddhar Kanam*, 57

Singh, Rajaratan, 36

Sinha, Dr. Sachchidananda, 254, 255, 257

Sinha, Lord, 142, 208

Sinha, Sir P., 210

*Sivagnanasiddhi*, 53, 142

*Sivagnanabodam*, 52

Sivaswami Aiyar, Sir P. S., 134, 237-39, 242, 276

legal acumen, 238

Advocate-General, 238

Member, Executive Council, 238

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras, 238

Vice-Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University, 238

benefactions, 239

Slocombe, 212

Sobani, Umar, 109

Socrates, 73, 75, 77, 162

Spencer, Herbert, 123, 231

Sriniketan, 83

Srinivasa Aiyangar, C., 121

Srinivasa Aiyangar, K., 145

Srinivasa Aiyangar, S., 144, 202, 249, 277

Srinivasa Aiyangar, V. V., 144

Srinivasa Aiyar, R. V., 224

Srinivasaraghava Aiyangar, S., 112; 223-29, 276

family tradition, 224

report on famine conditions, 225

social reform, 225

*Forty Years' Progress under the British Administration*, 226

Dewan of Baroda, 228

convocation address, Madras University, 228

Dr. C. P. on, 227

Srinivasa Sastri, The Rt. Hon'ble V. S., 193, 210, 216-22, 249, 270

admission to Servants of India Society, 216

Congress-League Scheme of Reforms, 217

deputation overseas on official and non-official missions, 217, 218

Privy Councillor, 218

Indian Agent in South Africa, 219

Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, 219

finest utterances, 219

Lord Erskine on, 220

Gandhiji on, 221

Lectures on the Ramayana, 221

State, Welfare, 155

Stead, William, 95

- Stokes, Sir Henry, 225  
 Strachey, Lytton, 223  
 Strachey, Sir Richard, 225  
 Subba Rao, 247  
 Subramania Aiyar, G., 246, 247  
 Subramania Aiyar, Sir S., 68, 101, 123, 139, 210, 247  
 Suetonious, 223  
 Suggestion, 15  
 Sullivan, P. O., 130, 139, 140  
 Sundara Aiyar, P. R., 237  
 Sundararao, T., 224  
 Sunderlal, Pandit, 207  
*Sutra, Brahma*, 14  
*Svaranavam*, 42  
 Swati Tirunal, 41, 43, 46  
 Syama Sastri, 41, 43  
 Symons, Arthur, 108
- TAGORE, ABANINDRANATH, 87  
 Tagore, Maharshi Devendranath, 78  
 Tagore, Dr. Rabindranath, 78-85, 177, 191, 192, 195  
*Chitra*, 79  
*The Cycle of Spring and Sacrifice*, 79  
*Stray Birds*, 79  
*Gardener*, 79  
*The King of the Dark Chamber*, 79  
*Post Office*, 79  
*Gitanjali*, 79, 81, 84  
 Letters of, 80  
*Hungry Stone etc.*, 80  
 Personality, 80  
*My Reminiscences*, 80  
 Kabir and Tagore, 80  
*Crescent Moon*, 80, 85  
*The Call for Truth*, 81  
 Nobel Prize award, 81  
*Sadhana*, 81, 82, 83  
*Sheaves*, 82  
 Tamil, features of civilisation, 51  
 bhakti and, 54  
 its poetical charm, 54
- characteristics of language, race and tradition, 259  
 Tansen, 38  
 Tata, Sir Jamshedji, 121  
 Tatas, 269  
 Taylor, 114  
*Tejomayanandam*, 61  
 Telang, Kasinath Trimbak, 146-60  
 versatility, 147  
 intellectual nutriment, 147  
 law and modern needs, 148  
 on Hindu law, 148  
 essays on the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, 149  
 as a scholar, 148, 149  
 as a social reformer, 149, 151  
 and education, 151  
 self respect of Indians, 152  
 evils of bureaucracy, 152  
 reign of law and liberty of speech, 153  
 Indian National Congress, 153  
 Ranade on, 154  
 on free trade and protection, 152  
 culture, scholarship and fearless champion of worthy causes, 154  
 Thambu Chetty, Sir, 118, 121, 123  
 Thayumanavar, 51-61  
 very early interest in spiritual matters, 52, 53  
 proficiency in Tamil and Sanskrit, 52, 60  
 reconciles Vedanta and Saivasidhanta, 57  
 author of impassioned hymns on sakti, cosmic dance, etc., 56, 57, 58, 59  
 Thirumal Rao, 113  
 Tilak, Bal Gangadhar, 97, 98, 166-75, 192, 194, 200, 231, 246, 248, 249  
 Sanskrit learning, 166  
 Sivaji, 169  
 Swadeshi, 169  
 starts New English School and Fergusson College, 166
- Ganesh festival and Shivaji festival, 168  
 and Congress, 168  
 and Max Muller, 168  
*Arctic Home of the Vedas*, 169  
*Gitarahasya*, 167  
 and Gandhi, 172, 173  
 divergence of views, 173  
 interpretation of Gita, 173  
 Aurobindo on, 174  
 Chagla on, 174  
 uniqueness of, 174, 175  
 contribution, 175  
 Tippu Sultan, 119  
*Tirukkural*, 51  
 Tolstoy, 81  
 Tyabji, Abbas, 200  
 Thyagarajaswami, 41-50  
 and Narada, 42  
 music, an adjunct to spiritual quest, 50  
 gospel of, 49  
 Ramarajya, 49  
 age of, 43  
 image of Rama as heirloom, 42  
 compositions of, 43, 44, 45  
 pilgrimage, 45  
 invitation to Travancore, 45, 46  
 disciples of, 46  
 conception of raga as having a distinct personality and shape, 47  
 the Supreme as the only object of approach through music, 48  
 supreme bliss (*ananda*), 48  
 outstanding contribution, 48  
 Tyndall, 231
- UNDERHILL, EVELYN, 80, 81  
 Upendra Pai, 277
- VALMIKI, 1-12  
 student of human nature, 9, 10  
 scheme of existence, 3  
 on dharma, 4, 5  
 learning and culture, 5
- conscience as guide, 8  
 on Lanka and Ravana, 9  
 love of nature, 10  
 polity and art of government, 10, 11  
 financial propriety, 10  
 Ramarajya, 11  
 Vanivilas, Maharani, 119  
*Vannam and Ahaval*, 59  
 Varadachariar, Sir S., 208, 239  
 Varma, Marthanda, 43  
 Veeramamunivar (See Fr. Beschi), 52  
 Venkatarama Bhagavatar, 46  
 Venkasami Rao, T., 224  
 Venkatarama Sastri, T. R., 143, 239, 242  
 Venkataramayya, Vainnika, 42  
 Venkataranga Rao, G., 144, 241, 242  
 Vijayaraghavachari, Salem, 201, 247  
 Vijayaraghavachari, Sir T., 278  
 Vijayaraghavan, N., 278  
 Viraraghavachariar, M., 247  
 Visvabharati, 83  
 Viswesvarayya, Sir M., 117, 121, 125-29  
 inventor and designer, 125  
 established Mysore University, 126  
 Engineering projects, Krishnarajasagar, Badravati scheme, 126  
 constructive statesmanship, 126  
 many-sided and far-ranging programmes of development, 126  
*Reconstructing India*, 127  
 application of science to industry and agriculture, 127  
*Planned Economy for India*, 128  
 Vivekananda, Swami, 66-70, 72, 77, 123, 177, 245  
 (Narendranath Dutt) student days, 66  
 reveals India to the West, 67  
 sojourn in Madras, 67  
 recognition of spiritual qualities, 68

292 INDEX

- Gita classes, 68
- social philanthropy, 68
- travels in Europe, 69
- revelations to India, 69
- humour, 70
- patriotism, 70
- no separation of the sacred and  
the secular, 70
- WACHA, SIR DINSHAW, 124, 142,  
164, 193
- Wadia, B. P., 103, 210
- Wallas, Graham, 94
- Warner, Sir William Lee, 119
- Wavell, Lord, 213, 221
- Webb, Sydney, 94, 96
- Whitehead, Bishop, 142
- Whitman, 84
- Wilde, Oscar, 230
- Willingdon, Lord, 179, 211
- Williams, Herbert, 213
- Wodiyar, Mummadi Krishnaraja,  
113, 114
- Wodiyar, Chamarajendra, 115, 118
- Wordsworth, 1
- YEATS, W. B., 78, 79, 81
- Younghusband, Sir Francis, 263

W 2, NO

N 67

