

THE WORD, MEN AND MATTERS

(1940 - 1983)

(BEING A RESCRIPT IN FIVE VOLUMES OF THE
WRITINGS OF THE RT. REV. DR. S. KULANDRAN,
BISHOP OF JAFFNA DIOCESE C. S. I. (1947 - 1970)

Vol. I

WORD & MEN

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Vol. I

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FOREWORD

THE RT. REV. D. J. AMBALAVANAR

(Chairman Institute for the Study of Religion and Society)

BISHOP KULANDRAN has lived a long and eventful life which coincides with the 20th century, for he was born in the year 1900. As a minister of the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C., its Chairman and Executive Officer for some years and then as Bishop of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India from 1947 to 1970 he played a crucial and decisive role in the history of the Christian Church, particularly in the North of Sri Lanka and in the Councils of the Churches in India itself. As a high ranking Asian theologian he has made his contribution to the wider ecumenical movement and has left a legacy of outstanding theological writings. For most of his active years he has been a keen and critical observer of national and international events and his interests and concerns have never been confined to the religious and ecclesiastical spheres alone. His first hand knowledge of the significant events in our people's history, his part in the various movements and developments in the Church, his wide travels and his contacts with many important national and international personalities make him eminently suitable to write a memoir that would have without doubt been not only of immense interest to the present generation but also an inspiring document of our times for generations to come. Despite the pressure and persuasion of many of his friends just to do that, Bishop Kulandran with characteristic modesty declined the invitation in the mistaken belief that one takes one's self too seriously in attempting to write a memoir.

Bishop Kulandran however, agreed as an alternative to the publication of his shorter writings which in many ways embody his observations, comments and reflections on events, movements and personalities. "What I like in a good author is not what he says, but what he whispers" said a modern writer of repute. Bishop Kulandran will be remembered for his important theological books but even his whispers are worth listening to.

The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society therefore persuaded the Bishop to allow a collection of his shorter writings like essays, articles, addresses and sermons to be published. The Bishop not only kindly consented to this but also himself assisted in arranging the material for the press. The collections have turned out to be a veritable five volume pentateuch or panchagamam! There is in these volumes so much of interest for readers of every possible taste that no one is likely to be disappointed. The five volumes represent the Bishop's reflections, judgements, critical comments and observations on his time, personalities and events. His readers whom we are confident will be many will remain grateful for the care and effort that went into those writings. They are bound to read them with much pleasure and derive great profit.



PREFACE

THE five volumes herewith introduced would not have come out, if I had my way. They consist of addresses and sometimes sermons delivered and articles written from time to time during the last forty years or so. Except for the articles and addresses in the last volume they were written for the passing hour on subjects which were of interest at that particular time and were not meant for republication. It was then my opinion that what was meant for the passing hour and in the context that prevailed just then would be of no interest and relevance when that hour had passed.

The committee of the Institute for the Study of Religion and Society on the other hand however, held on that very basis that the future had a right to know the opinions of those who thought and wrote during those passing hours in those very contexts. That is, it held that those addresses and articles had a historical or antiquarian interest, and for that reason compelled the writer to bring out these volumes.

There are now five volumes before you, the main title given to them is "Word, Men and Matters". The first volume holds what the writer had to say on the Christian Gospel and on the prominent persons he had known; and the last four volumes deal with "Matters". It may look odd that as an author whose main task in life was preaching and who had known many prominent persons during fifty years should have condensed that what he had to say on these two subjects into just one volume. The reason is that I always preached from notes (except on special occasions) and I could not be expected to rewrite my sermons for publication — a task too heavy for me and would be of real relief to readers. I have however, here dealt with a considerable number of men (and one woman); as for the others I hope I have spoken at the Funeral or Memorial services of many and hope I have done sufficient justification to the matter.

The writings which range over a period of forty years would form a considerable bulk. Since in the original files they were not classified. The task of arranging and classifying all these material was very heavy and took two months to accomplish. I am grateful to Mr. Chelliah Samuel for having helped me to do this. When this was all over, the task was further complicated by the discovery of a further bulky file which had to go into the classification.

The four volumes after the first generally entitled "Matters" are classified into four sub-sections entitled "Ecclesiastical", "Sundry", "The Column" and "The More Pretentious". There will be a pre-factory note at the beginning of each volume explaining the nature of the contents.

Apart from the opinion held by the Committee of the Institute and my own original opinion, do the articles and dicta on passing subjects lose all relevance and validity when the moment in which they were uttered has passed away. Few of the writings that Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote carefully are read today. What live today all his conversations with Boswell and his Club; and they were remarks uttered on passing subjects. G. K. Chesterton was chiefly a journalist and wrote for the "London Daily News" about seventy years ago; but his articles were reprinted in book form and went into 17 editions in as many years, inspite of the interruption of World War I. Dean Inge also wrote to the Daily Press on passing subjects and these writings have become literature. Human thought being what it is, it will be seen that many valid and abiding thoughts can be uttered in the context of a passing situation. Particular situations will pass away but underlying problems and issues raised remain. The mind does not go topsy turvy though situations change.

The above is the reason why inspite of all changes through which the world has passed through there is a continuity in human life. Reading through these articles written years ago I was surprised to see with how much of what I said then I agree now. Very often I have felt I would make the same remarks if the same contexts occur now, and probably make the same jokes.

It may also be borne in mind that the nature of the subject is not a necessary index of the quality of observations that may be made on it. Hence what is considered the triviality of the subject does not imply that the comments made on it need necessarily be trivial. Some trivial occasions must have occasioned some of the profoundest remarks in Law, Literature and Philosophy. As for instance: (1) Do not poison wells (2) Nobody becomes wicked all of a sudden (3) Let the buyer be careful (4) Philosophy begins with a sense of wonder.

Dr. Benjamin Jowett, the famous Master of Balliol College, Oxford, was once asked what he thought of God, he replied, "What

is more important is what He thinks of me". A pious lady once said to Abraham Lincoln, "I am praying that God should be on our side". He replied "what is more important is whether we are on His side". The occasions were trivial, but the remarks were profound. So it is possible that the comments on many subjects of merely fleeting interest treated here may actually be of great consequence. It may therefore, be seen that the publication of these volumes inspite of the lapse of years have a certain justification.

These volumes were expected to be out in 1985 and with a view to avoid our burdening any particular Press, the printing was distributed among four Presses; but in view of the fact that compositors are not sufficiently acquainted with English, and the prevailing situation in the country, the printing has not been as rapid as the author would have wished. As it is, it would be fortunate if all the four are out this year. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my friend Mr. A. I. Sinniah for his invaluable help in proof-correcting. The reader may take comfort in the fact that each sheet which he reads has been proof-read six times, (except in the case of one.) Nevertheless, errors may still lurk, as they sometimes do, even in books printed in the highest quarters.

It remains for me to thank the Institute for voluntarily offering to publish these volumes, relieving me of the very unequable task of finding a publisher on my own.

S. KULANDRAN,
BISHOP.



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E. K. ...
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The Faith by which the Church Lives

(This was a paper read in March 1938 before a meeting of the (National) Christian Council of Ceylon, Colombo, which was held in preparation for the Third meeting of the International Missionary Council in Madras in December of the year. That meeting used to take place once in ten years. The International Missionary Council was integrated into the World Council of the Churches in 1961.)

ONLY after accepting the invitation to discourse on this subject did I learn with considerable uneasiness of mind, that it was one of the subjects that was going to be considered by that august body, the International Missionary Conference. Any attempt to offer views upon the theme of the Conference, just a little before the Conference is to meet, particularly when there are delegates going from here to the Conference, might look like venturing to offer advice and guidance to that body. Such a task is beyond my capacity; anyway it is far from my intention now. All that is attempted here is to record for discussion by this group a few ideas suggested by the subject to one with the background of a little rural evangelistic wandering here and there.

Before anything is said about what the Church *ought* to live by, I would like with your permission to notice a few things the Church in many places *is* trying to live by, things the Church is often using as a substitute.

(1) Tradition is one of the things the Church tries to live by. There is the great and overwhelmingly impressive heritage coming down through centuries of history in many parts of the world, a tradition that pertains to the Church Universal. There are again local traditions pertaining to particular churches or congregations. Some historic memory or association attaching to a church gives that church a place in history. Churches with such historical traditions are far more numerous in Western

Countries than here, though our country is not altogether devoid of them. Here the Missionaries first landed. Here such a one lies buried. Here such a one worked. It is easy to multiply examples. Such traditions are valuable—very valuable. But neither the greater tradition nor the lesser is in any measure a substitute for a living faith. Each Church or section of the Church Universal, each generation, must make for itself its own spiritual food, by which it may live and thrive and work.

(2) Compulsion. Going through my own country in North Ceylon, one would come across many imposing ruins. On inquiry, one would be told that they were churches when the Dutch, and before them the Portuguese, ruled. I was surprised when I read in Baldaeus that at a spot where I seldom had more than 25 people present on a Sunday, my Dutch predecessors 250 years ago easily had a 2,000. "What was a church", S. Augustine is reported to have said in a novel of Kingsley "is a church". But in the long run, compulsion it will be admitted, does not work. "It is either compulsory religion or no religion" said, I believe, Chas. Wordsworth, then an Oxford Don. "My mind fails to notice any distinction between the two", said the young man he was talking to. Some of you may be amused at my taking notice of a method of Church work which you might think is more or less a historical antiquity. Yet many small churches out in the villages are living on the virtually compulsory attendance of Vernacular Teachers, who left to themselves would have preferred other forms of occupation to attending churches. The compulsion is only virtual, one might say psychological, and therefore cannot be reported to the Director of Education. Such a form of illicit soul-force of which all of us will straightaway pronounce ourselves innocent, but which nevertheless is a fact in certain places, may fill churches; but as a staple diet of the Church it is certainly highly unsatisfactory.

(3) While certain churches in remote areas are trying to keep themselves going on the above method, churches in certain fashionable urban areas are trying to live on Respectability. It

is a source of pride to certain churches that certain individuals belong to them. When I was a young boy attending school, a certain Evangelist used to come and sing and preach at our school. I heard only a few years ago that the usual substance of these lyrical homilies was that while the exponents of Christianity were so many Bishops and Archbishops, the only defenders of Hinduism were the Brahmins. A predecessor of mine in a village centre years ago is said to have exhorted all school children to embrace Christianity, as the Christian congregation present there was well dressed, and all their relatives were well employed; whereas the children themselves were ill dressed and ill nourished. At any time this would have been a highly illegitimate method of evangelisation. Just now, in addition to its moral illegitimacy it has the disadvantage of utter powerlessness as a *modus operandi*. Christianity has ceased to be here, and in many other places, a hall mark of respectability. In fact, it seems to be a bad liability to intending politicians. A Church that has prided itself on its respectable or notable members had better look sharp. It may lose them. In these times respectability does not seem to be able to find comfortable shelter in Christian Churches. It is good it is so. Churches may live and thrive, grow purer on struggle and suffering. But respectability chills the centre of life.

(4) The fourth and last substitute I am mentioning is by far the commonest substitute to faith. That substitute is Routine. Everyone here who has had anything to do with Church work will immediately recognise it as such. It is a paradox with organisations; which does not hold good with individuals, that they continue functioning long after their spirit is fled. The structure of the organisation is so masterly, so carefully planned, that various people do various things, and the Church may be said to keep going; but there is no life, no enthusiasm, no expectancy. It is the grinding of a mill. I am no ecclesiastical anarchist. I am not suggesting a clean sweep of rules, regulations, forms of discipline and settled methods of work. They all have a place; but you will agree with me that Routine can be a very dangerous foe, because insidious. It is dangerous, because it can

be a very imposing form of self-deception. I know of ministers who overburden themselves with an excessive number of meetings. This is specially so where the Church is intimately connected with one or more big Mission Institutions in the locality, like Hospitals and Secondary Schools. It is a severe strain to go through all the engagements which a conscientious minister may fix up in connection with these Institutions. It is a pathetic sight to see a Minister thinking it his duty to hold a meeting for two or three elderly ladies, who in their turn think it their duty to attend, when the time could be better devoted outside in God's cause. Most ministers one talks to these days have no time. It is possible to find ministers who have no time for evangelism, either in the form of meetings or in the matter of attending to various details necessary for getting at people. It is good for a minister to be busy. But it will be wise for people occasionally to consider how much of what they do is worth while being busy about. Organisations must necessarily express themselves in rules and regulations. But we must realise that there is something beyond them. We must fight against the fatal temptation to mistake means for ends. Much of what we consider God's work may be really man's work. While not neglecting the routine of parochial administration and denominational obligations, one has to be perfectly aware that sometimes God's work may be best done by brushing all of them clean aside. A journalist sent off to report some minor meeting or other, seeing a big building on fire on the way, took the law into his own hands and gave his journalistic attention to the fire. Who would deny that his master was right in commending him, for disobeying instructions? Indifference to immediate instructions may often be the best way of obeying higher and more fundamental expectations. We are servants of our Parishes, Synods and Councils, but more than all we are the servants of God.

What then is the Faith by which the Church lives, by which it has lived, by which alone it can live? I am not attempting to define it; because it has already been defined for us in Scripture. "One Lord, one faith.." says the Letter to the Ephesians. It is faith in a living, Lord and saviour, ever faithful, ever active,

ever ready to receive and remake the wayward and sinful race of man. It is not a faith in creeds but in one who is behind all creeds; who made a captive of Paul on his way to Damascus, and made him a devoted servant ever after, which led John Wesley to his endless wanderings, which has led missionaries to go to the ends of the earth; which has led saints to treat the world as mere dust and made martyrs face death not merely with undaunted courage but sheer joy. This is the faith in its heart by which the Church has lived and by which alone it can live; but it is one which must be renewed and kept ever undimmed from age to age and from generation to generation.

The Call of the Christian Ministry

(Formerly there used to be a custom for parents to dedicate a child to the Ministry if it fell seriously ill. The result was when the child grew up and became a man, he greatly resented the act of the parents and became a misfit in the Ministry. This essay is an attempt to call young men themselves to make the decision.)

AT a time when our thoughts are focused upon the young, the Committee in charge of arrangements for the coming week did not evidently think that it would have carried out its task completely, unless an effort had been made, however slight, to remind everyone of the challenge of the Christian Ministry to the youth of our community.

Is it proper to recruit candidates for the ministry, as they do for the army, the navy and the civil service? The Missionaries of old used to go about canvassing young men, both in and out of Jaffna College. Considerable doubt has been expressed of late about the propriety of attempting to recruit candidates for the Ministry. Should not the young men choose for themselves? Why should any external influence be brought to bear on them? If they are not already persuaded by their own conscience, has any other person the right to try to persuade him?

It is far from our intention to persuade anyone who does not already have to some extent an inner urge on the point. It is not our intention to sound a call, when God has not sounded or will not sound it to any particular person. In fact, one of my reasons for writing this is to dissuade those without any inner prompting from entering the ministry. On the other hand, there may be those whom God has called, but who may not for various reasons have heard the voice as it said "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me". The vision might be there, but the eye might

not have seen it, the voice might be there, and the ear not caught its accents. Who are we to know whom God has called and whom he has not? Our business is merely to say, "The Lord needeth servants to proclaim his word, and carry out his work. It may be you; We don't know. Find out."

As parents everywhere, and particularly in our own country, have a great share in deciding what a young man is going to do in his life, may I say this to them? It is sometimes customary for parents to dedicate their children to the ministry at time of birth. Sometimes such a dedication takes place when a child falls ill, and prayers are being offered for his recovery. If he recovers the parents want to do something to show their thankfulness to God. In these cases, no account is taken of the wishes and aptitude of the person most concerned. It may quite be that when the child grows up he may not take kindly to the ministry. He may feel that he has been forced into something without his consent or knowledge. If a parent desires to dedicate his child to the ministry, while the child is still young, let the dedication be conditional on the child's wishes and ability. Let the parent urge the claims of the ministry, and leave the decision scrupulously to the child when it grows up.

The ministry is often called the highest of callings. I wish very much that parents would really show their belief in this dictum, when they think of assigning their children to the various available callings or professions. It is not enough to do lip service to the ministry, and see to it that other walks of life get the cream of their family. It is sometimes imagined that while other callings or professions need definite qualifications, anybody could make a good minister. There is also occasionally a tendency on the part of the parents as well as the young men to consider the ministry as a resort in case of emergency. Recently a parent who, like many other parents, had sent his son for the London Matriculation inquired of me what chances there were of his son being adopted as a ministerial candidate. Some days later news of his son's success were received. The parent's inquiries also ceased. To think of falling

back on the ministry, if possibilities in other directions failed is a shabby trick to play upon God.

The ministry ought not to be regarded in the light of a mere profession, to be chosen first or last from among other professions. A person who ought to come into the ministry does not balance pros and cons, does not compare and contrast it with other possible callings. His choice is not the result of any meticulous exercise of distinction or discrimination. He chooses it because he has no other choice. He feels that whatever be the blandishments of the other callings, so far as he is concerned, he is not free to choose any of them. The fact that they may each one of them be good in its own way cannot influence his judgement. "This is my work; and there is an end of the matter", is very often the only satisfactory way of accounting for one's choice in the matter.

I am not, therefore, in this article comparing the ministry with anything else a man may do, and pointing out where it scores over other callings. I am merely saying that here is God's own fight to be waged against sin, against falsehood, against every kind of error and iniquity and darkness. Here is the grand crusade to make the world conform to God's will. It is no doubt everybody's business, but a minister has a special place to fill. It is his to call men forth, his to lead, it is his to rally the wavering, to cheer the dispirited, to be ever in the vanguard, guiding, inspiring, pointing through the strife and smoke, through all danger and disappointment to the vision of the city of God.

Complaints therefore about the hardships of a minister's life are summarily ruled out. A minister may be poorly paid, and yet be expected to keep high state. It may be thought that the minister's actions are lawful subjects of everybody's criticism. There may be few to praise, and many to blame. All these are inherent in the thing. A young man once went to Bishop Temple (father of the present one) and told him that if he went as minister to the place the Bishop had asked him to go, his relatives had told him that he was probably going to his death.

The Bishop listened to him patiently and said, "But you and I don't mind such little things". To those who come to the ministry as just a profession like many another its prospects will by no means be attractive. But those who come to it for the cause it involves will not be deterred by difficulties and disadvantages. Such difficulties will be regarded as being "all in the game", as being inherent in the adventure undertaken.

The book called "Re-Thinking Missions", published some years ago referred to a class of young people who might be drawn to the ministry, inspite of its poor pay, because of the security it afforded in times of economic depression, security and of the comparatively light work involved. Light work might be an inducement to lazy people. I believe there is an impression among some that the work of a minister is light. It is no use disguising the fact that one can be idle in the ministry, as in many other professions. Only since supervision is lighter, chances of retribution are also supposed to be lighter. A person who comes to be idle succeeds in deceiving neither God nor man. He that is in the thick of the battle knows he is doing something; but he who thinks he can idle away simply "cumbereth the ground". He is a misfit in God's strategy. He courts futility, and earns ridicule. Work! There is enough in the ministry to break anyone's neck. To be priest, prophet, pastor and evangelist requires enough preparation and effort as to make twenty four hours far too few for a day. He who speaks of idleness and the ministry in the same breath has not sensed the spirit of its great adventure. He who has read the life of Wesley and can speak of a Minister's life as easy does not deserve to be called intelligent.

Work! Work! There is an enormous amount to be done. There is a great world to be cleaned and purified and made conformable to His will. "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" saith His Voice. I wonder how many voices will say in response "Lord here am I; send me."

Homiletic Norms in Missionary Lands

(During the second half of 1945 to the end of first half of 1946, I was a member of a group of representatives from nearly 10 or 12 countries, who toured the U.S.A. to tell people there about the needs of Mission Lands. Andover Newton Theological Seminary, near Boston, was our base of operations. This paper was read to a class there in August 1945.)

WHILE the term "Missionary lands" covers a large section of the earth and automatically disqualifies a person of my experience from speaking of the prevailing standards of preaching, of preachers and their methods in that area, the word "norms" considerably restricts the scope of the subject. It restricts it in such a manner as to make the conclusions set forth capable of wide application. The whole point about norms is that they are capable of wide application; but they are not arrived at by the method of enumeration. One does not wait till all the arithmetical sums in the world are solved to deduce the multiplication tables. While therefore I am naturally talking against the background of India and Ceylon, I trust that what is said here has an application to more lands than my own.

During the few days I have been here I have been greatly struck by the interest in preaching. It may be because there is a course in preaching on. It may be because those attending the Summer School are mostly ministers who are already in charge of churches. Anyway it was heartening to a preacher to hear so much talk and see so much interest in his own work in a land so far from home.

There is hardly anyone who does not like to be told that he has preached a good sermon. We all like to preach successfully. Lord Macaulay, the historian, however, says of Charles II of England that the great tragedy of his reign was that he succeeded in all that he set out to do. A preacher has

certain objects when he sets out to preach, and feels satisfied if those have been realized. Yet the question that ought to be pondered is not whether the sermon has realized the aim of the preacher but whether it has realized the aim of a sermon.

I trust therefore you will let me examine this subject of preaching, against the background of my own countries. In missionary lands preaching cannot be merely an item in a Sunday morning service. Preaching will have to take place not merely to Christians in churches, but sometimes to those who have never heard of what you are going to say, and certainly often to those who have never owed even nominal loyalty to your Master and mine. The crucible of such circumstances is a very effective test of your efforts. The criteria of success or failure will be more obvious there than in a country like this. As a discussion of the matter may be of use to anyone engaged in preaching, it does not matter where, and as it is students from seminaries like this who go out as missionaries to the East, I do not suppose any apology is needed for examining the norms of missionary preaching.

A man setting up in business has got to consider the following four questions: 1. What have I got to sell? 2. Does it satisfy a real need? 3. Is there anyone else who can as easily satisfy this need as I? 4. If people need it and do not know it, is it my duty to tell them of what they need? It may be said that these are the questions which anyone must face who is not merely a business man, but anybody who has any job to do, or anything that he wants other people to accept. Therefore, these are questions it is necessary for a missionary preacher to ask himself.

He has, got first to examine the ware he is taking out. After 30 days or more the missionary's boat is nearing the harbour of Bombay or Colombo, or is going up the waters of the Hoogly. The skyline of the city is discernible afar off. The missionary stands by the rails on the deck beholding for the first time the land of his future labours. It is a moment for great heart-searching. What has he brought to

this land? He had better be quite clear in his mind as to what he has brought. Is it something that isn't here and something that the country needs vitally? If he doesn't feel that what he has come to say and do is absolutely vital and urgent, how pitiful is his plight as he stands there, almost like one going out on penal servitude.

It is of course this question of the missionary that the preacher asks himself as he stands on a Sunday morning in his pulpit. Here are so many people who have left their work to come here in great expectation. "What have I got to say?" It is the same here question but it comes with greater force to the missionary as he has travelled over thousands of miles and goes to live for many years in an uncongenial climate amidst people with unfamiliar customs. A great deal of stress has been laid, and rightly laid, upon a preacher's sincerity and his personal experience. These are important, but what is vastly more important is what is he going to say with his sincerity? Is it worth while? Sincerity, in point of fact, means without wax. It referred not to the man but to his goods. Roman householders didn't want to be cheated with bogus goods, so they insisted in their contracts that their furniture should be without any covering defects, without deception. Sincerity of the preacher is important, but the sincerity — that is, the worthwhileness — of the message is of far far greater importance.

It is related that a young man went to Dr. Stubbs, the Bishop of Oxford, and asked him for his advice about preaching. Said the great Bishop, "Preach about God, and preach for about 20 minutes." The main question for a missionary approaching his task is whether he has the word of God. I will shrink before I undertake such a task as the missionary's if I do not feel I have brought the Word of God.

The late Lord Lloyd George once characterized the regime of another Prime Minister with characteristic pungency when he said, "It was no ministry; it was a yawn." A sermon might sometimes be a half-hour yawn, and a missionary's life might be

a 40-year yawn. Just a round of trivial duties for five years, then a furlough, and then a repetition of the same, time after time, with no sense of discharging a high mission, of being ruled by a message so momentous that it makes 40 years of trivial duties sublime.

One often says at home: "People don't like theology or doctrine. I shall therefore preach practical sermons." The question, however, is not what they like but what they should like. The chief question is not what people would like to hear from you as a missionary, but what you as a missionary have set out to tell them. Unlike a business man who may change his goods to suit peoples' wishes, a preacher must deliver what he has been given. He cannot change the ware of his message without ceasing to be a Christian preacher or missionary. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received", says St. Paul. I shall not try to inquire how many people preach about God now-a-days. Some do. Perhaps many do, but the question is what they preach about God. Has one the right then to preach anything about God. Most religions are about God. Can you teach just any religion from the Christian pulpit? Among philosophers there are various conceptions of God. There is the Deistic conception popular in the 18th Century. There is Spinoza's conception of a single substance composing the Universe. There is the Hegelian conception, still popular with some, of a God who is always becoming and realizing himself. Are all these legitimate in a Christian pulpit?

It has been quite properly said that no minister should ever go beyond what he himself believes. Nobody should ever do anything else. If, however, a missionary feels that he cannot conscientiously preach God's redeeming grace through Jesus Christ he should keep away from the missionary's calling. Principal Whale of Cheshunt College, Cambridge, England, gives a sensible piece of advice to anyone who feels he cannot preach either the Incarnation, or the Crucifixion, or the Resurrection. His advice is that such a person should take to gardening.

Does the Christian message not merely supply a real need; but does it satisfy the human need? It is not merely “a human ultimate but the human ultimate”? It is good for a missionary to test his message in the light of this question. You may go with the laudable ambition of telling men about the possibility of building a brave new world, of a better society. One has lived long enough in the world to know of many grandiose schemes for rebuilding the world that have come to naught. As a schoolboy the present writer carefully cut out and treasured up the words of the late President Wilson, who spoke of a new world. It took him many years; it took the Italian campaign in Abyssinia, to convince him that the League of Nations had really failed. You realize that it is not institutions that must be changed, but men. So you may go with the more laudable intention of asking men to practise the great virtues of love and other qualities. There is a fatal temptation, I believe, in modern America to detach the *Didache* from the *Kerugma* and preach it as the solo Gospel. The *Didache* is born out of, and stands on, the *Kerugma*. It does not stand by itself. Why should a man be courageous, or loyal, love his neighbours, or repent of his evil ways just because you ask him and what authority have **you** to ask him? Just because Jesus asked you to? Yet why should he admit the right of Jesus to dictate to him, when he does not own Him Lord? One does not let a good man or a great man dictate to him what he should do and what he should think, especially if the demands are pretty taxing. Ethical preaching has a definite place in the pulpit, but the preaching of the *Didache* apart from the *Kerugma* is often, I think, a waste of time, satisfying only to the preacher and profitable only for getting him a name as a good preacher. In the East it has an effect that is at first curious but which is quite logical when you look at it closely. That is, if you preach a system of morals apart from the context that gives it meaning, makes it necessary and makes it possible, then you are giving the right of private interpretation of these virtues into the hands of whoever hears. Do you know that all your talk about love will not make a high caste man (who is not under compulsion of the

Christian gospel) let a low caste man come up the steps of his house and stand on his verandah? A Supreme Court judge in my country, speaking about our jury said, "When it is a case between two parties of the same caste I can always expect justice. When it is between somebody of a high caste and somebody of a lower one I never see justice." I don't know if it still holds good. If it does I don't want you to think my countrymen have been doing something terrible. The chances are they have been quite conscientious. The Jew will not take a cent of interest from another Jew; but he has no compunction about getting the proverbial pound of flesh from the Gentile.

You preach about honesty. Do you think that preaching will be repudiated? No. That honesty is a praiseworthy virtue has long been known in my country. I was once going to read a paper, among other things, on the elasticity of Hindu ethics when I came across a case in point I felt strongly tempted to quote. A gentleman travelling with me, finding that I did not have luggage enough to come to my allowed quota, asked me to claim temporary ownership of his excess luggage when the inspector came in. You may say that there are rogues here also. Sure, I know. But the whole point is this was no rogue but a highly honourable gentleman and the very fact the he asked me to oblige him after such slight acquaintance shows he thought there was nothing wrong about it. A highly cultured gentleman, headmaster of a school, who later gave up his position to devote himself to a life of contemplation was once telling me how with a small number of platform tickets he had managed to let a large number of people on to a railway platform. He was held in high respect by his community. Nor has he lost my respect. A priest who takes an occasional liberty or even habitual liberties with your accepted moral standards will not feel himself disqualified from performing his duties in the temple or expounding the Shastras. A humbug! you say. No. You are giving my countrymen certain terms like justice, honesty, love, purity, which in the context of the Christian gospel have a certain meaning. You will have to remember that outside they have many other meanings. My countrymen feel quite justified in exercising their

inalienable right as human beings to decide to what they should mean. Nor should this appear strange. The Greeks preached the greatest virtues known to man and went to the dogs.

The Sermon on the Mount contains precepts so difficult of realization by the normal man that it has been supposed to be the chief contribution of Christianity to the world. It has often been considered the central point of Christianity. It is not unusual for young missionaries to take up the missionary calling with the intention of making non-Christians acquainted with the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount. That the Sermon on the Mount represents the highest sublimity of ethical thought is undoubted. It is often built not so much upon an extension or intensification of teaching then current, as upon its reversal. The current teaching then was built upon an enlightened and reasonable self-interest. The sermon on the Mount is almost unreasonable as being built upon self-abnegation. The Sermon on the Mount looks so difficult of realization that many have wondered whether Jesus ever intended it to be practised. Such a doubt is scarcely tenable.

The Sermon on the Mount however is not central Christianity. It can never be. The collection of sayings known as the Sermon on the Mount is taken by the author of St. Mathew's Gospel from a little book of sayings that scholars have called "Q". "Q" was compiled for those who were already Christians. They held certain beliefs about Jesus; that is why they were Christians. This community wanted to know what Jesus had taught about everyday life, about duties to one's neighbour, and all such matters. It found its place in the context of the Christian Church. The Sermon on the Mount is meant for those who have acknowledged Jesus Christ as Lord and who know His power. To others it is hardly more than a series of high-sounding suggestions, perhaps meaningless, perhaps sublime, but usually outside the realm of practical effort. To preach the Sermon on the Mount without the Preacher of the Sermon on the Mount is to delude people with false hopes. I might have said it is preaching an attenuated Gospel. But Paul says there

is no gospel other than the gospel he was preaching. Christians are asked to proclaim the good news to everyone. While asking men to lead sublimely normal lives has its place in Christian teaching, it does not in itself constitute the good news that a missionary should bear.

A sermon has been defined as "presentation of truth through Personality." What truth? There are various truths in the world. It must be the presentation of the Truth, that goes to the bottom of the matter, that reaches down to his inmost needs. Ten years ago, Stanley Jones was speaking in my country. He was snowed under with questions about the truth of astrology. He tried to answer them but finally lost his patience and said: "I am concerned with a new and better world, but if you want to be concerned with questions like this you are welcome. I can't spend any more time on this." But the whole point was astrology touched the Hindu in his inmost being. He felt that if astrology was true, he was not free. He was the bond-slave of unseen, uncontrollable powers. What is the use of talking of a new world to one who believes that it does not matter what one does, the stars will have it their own way. While ethical preaching has an important place in the missionary's programme, his central message, what he considers to be his chief business to preach and promote, must satisfy man's deepest longings, cure his deepest ills, give him a power and faith that cannot come from inside of him. It must be the human ultimate. Speaking of the Unitarians, Dr. Joseph Parker, the famous minister of the City Temple London, many years ago said: "Of James Martineau and Stopford Brooke, we might well be proud as men of literature and genius. They gather round them the cultivated, if not the pedantic; but they have nothing to say to the broken heart of the world. When the world's heart is aching it sends for C. H. Spurgeon, D. L. Moody, or William Booth." The message of a divine Saviour's grace is what gives meaning to the Christian Church and Christian ethics.

The third question a man asks himself when he sets up in business is whether what he can supply cannot as easily be

supplied by others. If it can be, he usually switches on to something else. It is wrong to bar from the pulpit a consideration of social, economic and political problems. This would eliminate the prophetic ministry of the Christian Church. The confessional Church of Germany has in our time made a most notable stand for the Church's right to pronounce on any event question or opinion that may hold an issue. Like the ancient Roman poet, the Christian Church except when it was insensitive to its high responsibility has said, "nihil humanum alienum puto". (I count not alien (or irrelevant) anything that is human). On the other hand, if the Church is to consider an economic question and can give only the answer of an economist, is it not far better that the matter should be left to an economist who can do it much better?

Now there are many estimable missionaries who go out to the East feeling that the East is lacking in educational and medical facilities, and suffers from various other ills, and that therefore they shall make it their life-work to see that these facilities are provided. They are quite right in their assessment of the needs of a country like India. Medical and Educational work have formed an important part of missionary work. But William Adams Brown of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, said long ago that while such work had hitherto formed an integral part of mission work, it properly belonged to the Government and would increasingly be taken over by the respective governments. This is proving true. While there are great tracts of medically or educationally unoccupied areas in India just now, there is every indication that the national or provincial governments of the future would begin to supply such needs quite rapidly. In fact the Sargeant Report in India plans for such a state from an educational point of view. A purely educational institution run by the Mission may exist side by side with a government institution, but if it is nothing more than a mere educational institution it has become meaningless. In Ceylon a very anti-Christian government, realizing that control of education has been the chief source of the influence of the Christian community, is determined on depriving the Christian

Missions of this. I may say that all the anti-Christian ministers were educated in Mission schools. I believe the most anti-Christian in the group received his education free. Now when this happens the missionary who has gone out to preach and practise the uplift gospel feels a little dazed. He cannot realize why his services are not appreciated, or even required. Selfless men and women who went out with the best of intentions are increasingly feeling the ground sink under their feet. About 15 years ago, Mahatma Ghandi said "You may come to teach and heal, but don't try to take people into your religion." Whether governments of the future will extend this concession to Missions always I don't know. But it has seemed to me that if governments or people want to and can run their own social services there is no point in Missions running social services, as social services. A certain ecclesiastic in England was once described as a fanatic who had nothing to be fanatical about. Nothing can be more tragic than a missionary on the Mission field who has lost his mission. A missionary organization that thinks it can run independently of the great Christian Message has decided on a career of progressive disillusionment and futility. The mission is but the Church on the mission field. If any Mission for any reason begins to think of the Church as an inconvenient appendix, it is writing out its own death warrant. So that when a missionary goes out to India I would like to ask him this question: "If you want to do for the outcastes of India no more than what Dr. Ambedkhar wants to do, if you want to do in the field of education no more than what the Sargeant Report contemplates, if you generally want to do for India what Mahatma Ghandi and Nehru want to do and may be able to do shortly, why are you really going there? If your message is no different from theirs don't you think there can be found in that country many who can be as good missionaries as you? Why don't you send your money to the Ramakrishna Mission or the Servants of India Society, or the Government of India, and save yourself the trouble of going there?"

"What however is one to do if the Indian feels he can get along well without the Christian message?" you might ask. A learned Christian minister in my country, addressing a group of

Hindus at an evangelistic meeting many years ago, talked long on every subject except Christianity; and when he had finished what his colleagues thought was the introduction, he sat down. When questioned later, he said: "They wouldn't have listened to me if I had talked Christianity to them." Why he wanted them to listen to him at all I can't understand. The same sort of feeling that prompted that minister is I suppose responsible for many ministers in American pulpits to purvey the kind of stuff that the congregations want.

Anybody who has a message must consider how to get it across, how to get it accepted. If everybody who has got something to say is always heard by everyone who ought to hear it, and if every message is acted upon by everyone who ought to act upon it, the world might be quite a pleasant place for the person with the message. It may not always be quite pleasant or safe for the others. There are good messages and bad messages; but if a person believes in his message then it is his duty to see that somehow his message gets across. He may have to examine and decide which of the many methods possible will be the most successful. If he has any faith in the urgency of his message, the one technique he should not adopt is the common method of preachers, of backing off from such a message. Dr. Dale of Birmingham when cautioned by a brother minister that his church members would not stand theological sermons replied: "They will **have** to stand them." The preacher wanting to teach something may consider anything else except how not to teach it.

The difficulty of preaching the Christian message in a non-Christian country is different from that experienced by the preacher in America. The preacher will encounter not so much spiritual indifference or moral turpitude. It is not always even the natural hostility to new truth. The fact is the preacher will encounter a different spiritual background. To a person to whom every spiritual background has equal validity this is a sign for an immediate and respectful retreat. He does not evidently carry this attitude into the political realm, nor for that matter into any other realm. Yo do not retreat at the sight of another

ideology. I have found many of your newspapers actually calling certain ideologies wrong. In matters of scholarship, the habit of distinguishing between right opinion and wrong has long been prevalent. In religious matters however, some good souls imagine that no belief should be interfered with; that each person's religion is good enough for him. This is not even going as far as the learned Hindu Swami who told us "Error is not so much a stage on the road to Truth; it is the other side of Truth." Obviously to these good souls there are not two sides, but only one.

To teach that Christianity was a superior religion was the older method. To teach that Christ was the greatest teacher the world ever saw was the later method. Both these methods have had their day. The only kind of success for a missionary is that a person should surrender himself to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. To the Hindu salvation is release from the circle of births and deaths. It is effected in the four different ways of Action (*karma*) Devotion (*Bakti*), *Yoga*, Contemplation, and Knowledge (*Gnana*). In spite of the violent dispute between Synergism and Monergism as represented by the monkey school and the cat school in Vaishnavism, Hindu Soteriology at bottom inclines to a monergism in which man is his own saviour, except in the doubtful case of *Bakti Marga*. In *Bakti Marga* it would seem as if God intervenes to save. On the other hand, on closer scrutiny it would be seen that when *Bakti* is performed God, is under compulsion and that he "can do none other". The story of Hinduism is full of the lives of saints who by the performance of untold acts of asceticism made Siva bow to their will. The free pardon to the undeserving sinner is alien to the whole atmosphere of Hinduism. Moreover, as you go further on the path of *Bakti* the personalities of the devotee and the Deity get badly mixed up, till one gets lost in the other.

The need for a Saviour will have to be felt. Along many highways and byways. The cry must go, "Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Let every valley be filled and every mountain and hill brought low." What I want

to say is that the best way to make your message acceptable is not by toning it down to suit the taste of the hearers, but by making your hearer realize that he needs it.

May I say that you greatly misjudge the tastes and temperament of India if you think that a purely humanitarian and secular creed or the philanthropic gifts of education and medical aid can satisfy her. Badly as these are needed, her deeper needs are different. India is "incorrigibly religious" said a Western observer. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so the ancient country of India has panted after God century after century. Go and look at the crowds of footsore pilgrims bathing at the ghats of Benares or at the Sangam in Allahabad, or bowing in the vast temples of South India. They want many things and would be grateful for them. I don't know if everybody in these crowds paid his train fare. But it is sacrilege to think that your schools and your hospitals and all the paraphernalia of Western civilization can satisfy them. The Indian has bowed to the snow-capped Himalayas and the vast stream of the Ganges, before things great and small. He is in search of God. If you cannot go to him with a message about God, don't go. The greatest gift you can take to the Indians is the message of a loving, forgiving Saviour, who can satisfy their deepest longings. All that you can do to make their lives cleaner, healthier and their minds more enlightened, their Society more debt-free and more self-reliant, all these have a place in the context of that message.

**“Hear O Heavens, and Give Ear
O Earth for the Lord has Spoken”**

(This was a sermon preached before the International Congregational Council which met at Wellesly College, Mass, U. S. A. in 1949. It was soon after the War and was a great occasion for the members who attended, particularly the British and the Americans.)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the well known British writer of the early 19th century, once heard another member of the same great race as Isaiah crying out in the streets of London, “Clothes, old clothes:” Coleridge remembered the words of Isaiah which constitute this text and he wrote: “What a difference!”

Wherein does the difference lie? Isaiah moved among the great ones of his nation. He was an object of fear to political parties and was the most commanding figure of Jewish politics for nearly half a century. The old Jew, hawking cast-off garments, belonged to a different social and economic level. He belonged to the anonymous millions who have made up the great bulk of the race of man in the world. Yet is that the difference? We are made aware in the Bible that purple and fine linen and living in kings' houses do not have any essential significance. Elijah would have hardly cut a figure in a modern drawing room; nor would his spiritual successor, John the Baptist, have been decided improvement from that angle. And I do not think that anyone would be inclined to regard the profession of Amos—that of following the flock and dressing sycamore trees—as among the world's high-ranking careers. We know little of most of the men whose books make up the last section of the Old Testament except that they prophesied. Their social and economic status, if it was high, does not seem to have been high enough to have received any mention.

Where, then, is the difference? We might suggest that what Isaiah had to say was of general concern and that what the London Jew had to say was of a very limited concern. Width

and range and applicability are usually a handy test of the importance of anything. Yet there are many matters which have an almost universal applicability and yet possess no fundamental significance. The general is not necessarily more important than the particular. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord" says Jeremiah, with the air of one asking everyone to be prepared for a world-shaking announcement. That announcement when it does come, hardly seems to fulfil such awesome expectations. "Thus saith the Lord", says he, "write ye this man childless, for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David ruling any more in Judah". The childlessness of Zedekiah, or the end of his line cannot be regarded as having possessed a wide range of interest when we take into account the earth and its fulness. After all, many of the announcements made in the Bible are announcements to particular people, at particular times. That people who have nothing else to cover themselves with must protect themselves with old clothes at least is necessary. To such persons the matter is of great concern. To many persons in the war-ravaged Europe, it is perhaps of acute concern. To each person the meeting of his own needs has its own relevance which refuses to be swept aside by a mild interest in general welfare. It is on the whole, difficult to hold that anything addressed to the few has any intrinsic inferiority to what is addressed to all.

What gives momentousness to the message of Isaiah is not that it is addressed to the heavens and the earth, but it is the Lord God who hath spoken it. In every situation there are alternative courses open; and proverbially much can be said on both sides. But ultimately what does matter is what the Lord doth say. It is the one fact of incontrovertible significance in conceivable situation. Do you imagine that Elijah felt no secret sting of fear, or hesitation as he went to fortell Ahab's downfall for what he had done to Naboth? Only a short while earlier, hearing the threat of Jezebel, he had fled for his life forty days and forty nights beyond the southernmost city of Judah. Do you imagine that Jeremiah relished the task of telling a complacent generation the awful fate that awaited his country? He says:

*“I am become a laughing stock all the day. Everyone mocketh at me.....
Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me
A man of strife any contention to the whole earth.”*

Do you imagine that Bishop Latimer relished the task of standing before Henry the VIII to denounce the rather obvious shortcomings of that terrible monarch, who knew few inhibitions and no qualms? How came it then that these men went through their tasks in spite of their natural human shrinking? “The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy”, says Amos. That the Lord had spoken was a just, perfect and sufficient cause, why everything else should be set aside. It was the final and deciding factor, the factor that made the difference.

When God speaks, whatever be the issue involved, what He has said is the one thing that men should know. Whether it is about matters of ultimate interest, or about the issues that press upon each generation in the inescapable relationships of its social, political or economic life, if the Lord, God is speaking, it is the one judgement about which anyone need trouble himself. That God should have no interest in Theology is scarcely to be expected. That the whole sphere of questions it gives rise to is merely a battle-ground for professors who often do not understand one another—that God’s interest lies altogether outside it—is a view scarcely borne out by the New Testament. Whether it is about such themes or about the questions of race, or international understanding, or economic justice, if the Lord hath spoken, it is the one thing that matters, and man should listen.

We have come here from far and wide. And as we look out upon the world, what do we see? It is as if we looked upon a city after an earthquake. There are still many familiar landmarks left standing. But many lie shattered in ruin. Confusion reigns in many areas. Uncertainty and fear play havoc. It is not merely a scene of physical devastation, though that is grave enough. It is that the whole set-up of life, as it was some years ago, has been rudely shaken. The possibilities latent in the fission of the atom have caused doubts in the minds of many experts as to whether the whole lay-out of the present scheme of

things may not have to be regarded as tentative; and whether many of the characteristic features of what is called modern civilised life may not have to be overhauled. It is not merely the consequences of the split-atom that are uncertain. It is not merely the kind of cities we shall live in, our mode of travel, and the fuel power of our industries that are uncertain. Many of the basic assumptions that lie back of individual and social relationships seem indeterminate. The very nature of man's outlook upon life in future generations is extremely indeterminate.

Many of the paganisms now at work are by no means new. But for long they were only paganisms, that is, they were wanderers and strangers in the intellectual and spiritual life of society. Certain Christian assumptions held life together in the shape of a culture, though there were differing emphases. Those assumptions have ceased to have any hold upon large masses of people. Many have grown up almost without knowing them. Without the organising principle of a Christian moral or intellectual outlook, paganisms have become respectable. They are now equal competitors with Christian view of life in the open market of the world's intellectual life. They have able and powerful exponents. Add to this, the accession of many other cultures into one global view, cultures with their own characteristics and problems, but under the same disintegrating influence, and we have the modern world before us. It is a world full of the wreckage of the past; but a seething world, where ideas, doctrines and faiths are almost engaged in a death grapple for mastery.

What is needed in this world? Advice? What is this confused welter, this turmoil and almost chaotic struggle but differing programs of advice fighting one against any other? Everybody has advice ready to be given,—journalists, politicians, and philosophers, and perhaps many who are not anything in particular. Of what use is another piece of advice within a vortex of programs of advice? Why one piece of advice and not another? Because I like it, or it appeals to me? But it may not appeal to many others. My preference is no argument for acceptance by others. What inherent guarantee has anyone's preference against anyone else's?

What is needed in the world? It is the voice of one who can say, "Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken." What is needed is that amidst the doubts and perplexities of the world and the desperate and contrary efforts of human wisdom, the word may come through saying: "This does the Lord thy God require of thee." No one will say that implies any automatic obedience by man. The Word of the Lord hath often been declared in unmistakable terms and men have preferred their own way. Therefore, was it necessary for Isaiah to say, The Lord hath a controversy with his people. But the relief, the assurance, the joy, the certainty of being able to know where the Lord wants you to take your stand! "Hear O Israel" was the one central cry of early centuries. As the perspective widens the Biblical writers became aware of the purpose of God and realize that it is the whole earth. He is concerned with. Would that in our generation the cry begins to ring out again "Hear ye peoples, all of you; hearken O earth and all that therein is".

Who or what can do this better than the Church? Amid the turbulent whirl of modern life the Church has every appearance of being unique. It seems to have certain obvious characteristics. It is 20 centuries old and can claim a spiritual descent that goes much further back. But after all, what is 20 centuries or 40 centuries in view of the tremendous stretch of human life opened up by science? The Church has been closely identified with Western civilization. But Western civilization is not the only civilization in the world. Moreover every civilization is a changing thing. The endurance of Western civilization in its present form is extremely problematic. Again, as against, the cares and anxieties of the world the Church looks otherworldly. But if the Church is not concerned with this world, why is the Church here?

No! these do not tell us the purpose of the Church; nor the real reason for its peculiar status in the world. The Church is here to tell man what God has done for him and what He wants of man. This is its duty and this is its glory; the awful responsibility and the immeasurably sacred right of crying out "Hear O heavens and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken."

But what is the Church that it should do this? Cyprian the ancient Bishop of Carthage said the Church is in the Bishop. Many branches of the Church however do not have an episcopate and seem to think that they are getting on very well with it. The clergy are often supposed to be the Church; and when many ministers are present anywhere, it is customary to say the Church is well represented. The clergy may be part of the Church; and even a Congregational gathering will allow that Bishops may also be part of the Church. But they do not form the Church. The saints of Rome or Corinth were not at all of episcopal or ministerial rank. The social and educational status of Church membership may have improved considerably since the time of St. Paul or Celsus. Instead of employees only we now have employers as well. Instead of cobblers and wool dressers only, we now have judges, Prime ministers, Presidents and Kings as well. But who are there to say "Hear O heavens and give ear O earth?" In all ages the membership of the Church has constituted one of the most powerful arguments against the Church. Not that there have not been many good and great Christians. But men at their highest and best are still men, unfortunately not all men in the Church through the ages have been good and great. Many people have therefore been repelled from the Church by finding in it only men of like passions who lived in the same villages and towns, whom and whose bretheren they know and of whose sisters they could say "Are they not with us?" As against the claim of the Church, everyman who has been a member has looked puny and woefully inadequate.

Man will always be inadequate in the setting of the Church. But we had better be clear as to what the Church is expected to do. When I was recently coming through Rome the guide took us to one of the major churches of the city and to show us the peculiar acoustic properties of the arches he pretended to give us a reception of the Vatican radio. He went into a corner and proceeded to produce various subdued noises which certainly resembled a radio message rendered indistinguishable by atmospheric disturbances. The task of the Church is not to produce a voice it does not hear. It is not to indulge in any religious

ventroloquism. It must speak only what it hears. Sometimes one stands in the midst of an old pagan temple. It is full of the memories of the past. But silence reigns in its courts. The courts of the Lord are not a museum of ancient historical figures. Thou O Lord art a God who said I am. Thou art verily a God who speakest.

No generation may say as Israel used to say according to II Isaiah "Jehovah hath forsaken me and the Lord hath forgotten me." God is a God of the living. God is a God of this generation, as he was of the time of Amos or Isaiah or any of the Biblical figures. God does speak to this generation as He always does to each. The task of the Church is to catch that message and proclaim it.

In the message of God to the various countries of the world and to the various generations that succeed each other on this planet there must be much difference. But there must also be much that is common. Whatever the country and whatever the age, it is God that speaks. He does not detach Himself from His message. He is in fact the chief element in His communication. How we react to him determines our attitude to every other question. How we should react to God in Jesus Christ cannot help being the basis of the Church's message to any question. If what we believe about God be true, His message on any question cannot be independent of His cardinal act in Jesus Christ. If God is God, it cannot be that He will say, "This should be your attitude to Me and this should be your attitude on the question of race or the question of power. This should be your attitude to Jesus. This should be your attitude to the international question." God speaks as God. He speaks to man whom he created, to whom in His Son He has stretched His redeeming hand, man as he lives in the midst of his problems. Fundamentally our attitude to His message is simply one attitude to Him. We may not break up God's message to man at any time, as demanding a series of isolated and particular attitudes, some optional and some compulsory. When God speaks, there may be many problems facing us, but fundamentally there is only one attitude. We have to take up our attitude to Him.

How may we set about finding out what God requires of us? Is it only Churches in their corporate capacity and not in individuals who may attempt it? We may go as individuals; we may go as groups, but we go as part of the Church. Do we go with uncertainty as to whether we may hear or do we go with assurance? We go humbly, but we go as sure of the promise of guidance of His spirit.

And we go to Scripture. Why? Does not God speak elsewhere? It would be utterly blasphemous, if it were not mere ridiculous to suggest that the Lord Almighty may speak to us only in the Bible. God speaks to us in the Bible. But scripture is certainly not the only place where He speaks. We go to scripture not because He speaks only in scripture, but that we might learn to catch His voice whenever or wherever He speaks. *Sola Scriptura!* Only Scripture! *Sola Scriptura* was one of the cardinal principles of the Reformation. *Sola Scriptura* as a test and guide for us, not something by which God Almighty is restricted in His approach to man! It is a lamp unto my feet and guide unto my path by which I may guide my way to my rendezvous with God. It is in no sense His Guide-book. We must be quite clear about the greatness and littleness of Scripture. In point of greatness it is exceeding great. In point of littleness it is exceeding little. But as far as the wayward race of man is concerned, it is the irreplaceable method by which he comes to the knowledge of the ways of God.

The Scribes searched Scripture and did not discover the truth we are told; and Paul says when reading Scripture there was a veil upon the heart of the Jews. This is not an accusation levelled against scripture, but an accusation levelled against those who would not see what was there. We bring scripture to bear upon our situation and we endeavour to catch the voice of God speaking to us.

The fact that scripture is often misused merely shows that even into the courtyards of the Lord we go as ourselves. We belong to certain countries. We belong to certain political or economic interests. We have inherited prejudices from the past

and we have been influenced by voices of the present. It happens therefore that we may misread and unconsciously misinterpret the dictates of the Lord. And nothing is more objectionable and more dangerous than a human predilection put forward with the certain and authority that belongs to the divine imperative. It is therefore our duty to clear our minds, as far as we can, of what we consciously realise as issuing from our own aversions and preferences or those of our groups.

Notwithstanding all our efforts, we shall always be earth-bound. In the last analysis it is doubtful if we shall ever free ourselves wholly from the traits that make us what we are; and perhaps it is greatly to be wondered if God wants to become disembodied spirits "without a local habitation and a name." He speaks to us where we are, in the context of our economic, social, political and intellectual situation. He speaks to us as men who are a part of our surroundings. He speaks to us because the problems of our situation are our problems. And we have no right to shirk the responsibility of finding out the message of God on the pretext that we might misinterpret it. It is as if a man refused to walk for fear that he might stumble. The risk of error must never deter the attempt to discover the truth. We must never let ourselves fall into despair of thinking that the will of God can never be known because of human frailty and feebleness. That is a despair that has ever haunted philosophy and led to its repeated attempts at suicide. But fortunately for itself philosophy is a thing that can continue to flourish in spite of this, like the Irish member of Parliament, who wanted to die on the floor of the House fighting a Bill and then go out and stir the country against it. God is God and man is man. His ways are not our ways. Nevertheless, the Church exists to declare the ways of God with Man. That means it can know. The Church may never without committing treason switch off the lights and let man potter about in the light of his own reason.

Do we see the end of an epoch? Do we see the slow-built culture of centuries crumbling? Do we see ideas and doctrines swirling in a chaotic struggle to gain mastery in the world? We

may. But this is God's world. He made man and He speaks to man. The I-Thou relationship between God and himself is a thing man cannot abrogate.

Through long ages men in the East have been dazzled by the prospect of realising God. The story of the quest has been a source of admiration and awe. But the prospect of realising God is based on the final disappearance of the I-Thou relationship. God has been a vision, and a vision in itself may be helpless; something waiting to be taken possession of. God has never been a voice, insistent, beyond and outside man.

Man spreads himself out over the face of the earth and becomes "the people thereof." He stretches himself through generations and becomes mankind. But he can never get himself out of the relationship of being spoken to by God. And on the Church has fallen the task of speaking the word on behalf of God. The Church cannot close its ears and say, "This is a complex situation. It never existed before. Intellectual horizons have widened. The moral assumptions of this generation are more like those associated with the Kinsey report, than those associated with the Pilgrim Fathers and the Puritan movement. Its political and economic problems are scarcely the ones that existed in Biblical times. What can the Bible say? What can God say on these things."

God is concerned with all these problems. He is concerned with each generation and each member of that generation. He speaks to us in the midst of our problems, because He wants us to solve our problems right. However difficult the times are, of one thing we may be sure, God is surely speaking. We may make mistakes in our efforts to catch His message. But surely it is worth the risk. Let therefore the Church strain its ears to hear the voice of its living Lord and Master and when it has heard it, let it raise its voice above the din and confusion of warring ideas and doctrines and cry out saying:

"Hear O heavens and give ear O earth for the Lord hath spoken".

Significance of an Independent Ceylon

(Ceylon was granted Independence by the British in 1948. For the first time the Christians of the Island celebrated the event officially on 4th Feb. 1951. The service was held in the historic church of Wolfendal, with the Governor General, Lord Soulbury, being present.)

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like unto them that dream. Psm.—126.

THE land of Palestine was small. But it lay athwart the high way of the nations. On one side at various times flourished the powers of Egypt, Greece and Rome and on the other side the great powers of Continental Asia, Syria, Assyria, Babylon and Persia. The history of the people who inhabited the small land of Canaan or Palestine was a history of constant struggle, punctuated often by long periods of dependence or subjection. Nearly 600 years before the birth of Christ the great king of Babylon came against this nation, crushed it in battle, wiped out its capital and carried into captivity the King and a great body of the inhabitants. Two generations passed and then the Persian King who had conquered Babylon decided to let the captive people, much to their surprise, return to their own land if they wanted to. And an unknown singer from among the returning captives seeing the mountains of Jerusalem in the distance put into words the feelings of his compatriots, as he sang:

*When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like unto them that dream,
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the nations,
The Lord hath done great things for them,
The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad.*

Every nation since then which has regained its liberty after a long period of subjection must have found in the words of this beautiful Psalm an echo of its own emotion. But we who are living in this small Island may not perhaps be far wrong if we find

more than a superficial resemblance between our own history and the history of this people. The history of our Island has a record of invasions for a 1500 years that is perhaps hard to parallel even for those days of constant warfare. An Island's civilisation and economy always suffer more from an invasion than a continental country does. As the struggle between the Tamils and the Sinhalese died down, three successive European nations came upon the scene and for 400 years the country was under their partial or complete domination.

There were many times when Israel on its own had to fight desperately for its freedom, sometimes holding on with a desperate valour when all hope of victory had gone. They had so held out against Nebuchadnezzar, for a year and half when he beset Jerusalem. The fight of the Maccabees against the Seleucids in the 2nd century B. C. has a legendary quality. When much later the Romans besieged Jerusalem the Jews, though finally crushed, showed a tenacity and heroism that almost pass belief. But on this occasion however when they had settled down to what they considered a permanent state of exile, in Babylon, the Royal decree most unexpectedly set them free. "We were like unto them that dream" says the Psalmist. Most nations have had to engage in long and bloody warfare before they regained their liberty. Our neighbouring continent of India had to go through the ordeal of a new and untried method to obtain its goal. Without belittling the efforts of our own patriots, I think it is true that compared with the efforts usually associated with the attainment of freedom by a nation we have been let off rather lightly. And so almost suddenly after the lapse of centuries, we find ourselves free, entirely free.

"Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing", says the Psalmist. It may be perhaps said with a good deal of justification that one could hardly have chosen a more unsuitable time for such demonstrations at attaining national freedom, than now. While certainly everyone must be happy that the country is free to shape its own destiny, there are many who would wish that the assumption of the tasks and respon-

sibilities involved in being free by a nation like ours had come at some other time. It has been customary and quite natural that at various periods in all ages men have felt that dangers threatening their time were about the greatest the world had ever faced. But as years have gone by, things have begun to fall into perspective and people have wondered why there should have been so much excitement over such minor crises. So a future generation may say about the dangers that seem to overhang our own time. This may only prove that later generations do not have the same existential interest in a crisis as the generation that experience it; or it may prove that with the march of time the forces of ruin that beset man are increasing in strength. Perhaps the dangers of the future may prove to be greater than the dangers of the present. But we can see the world only through the eyes of this generation. And as we look out upon the world we see that in spite of immemorially divisive factors as geography, race and language, and more temporary factors such as contrary ideologies, this world is a world that has been drawn together as never before, not merely by speedier means of transport and communication, but by the realisation of basic kinship, an identity of problems and an identity of solutions. The danger overhanging us is not a danger that will destroy one nation or civilisation, or a group of nations and a brand of civilisation. It is a danger that threatens all civilisation of whatever kind. As far as we know, the very existence of man hangs in the balance. Is this a time for rejoicing and the ringing of bells? Is it not rather a time when we should say with the prophet, "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears", than to say with the Psalmist "Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing?"

There is therefore much excuse for those who wish that the attainment of our independence had come at a time of greater tranquillity, when a small nation like ours, lacking in strength, the resources and accumulated skills of the bigger nations, would have had a better chance to feel its way about and establish itself with a greater sense of certainty among the nations of the world. Then we could have looked forward to a future of

increasing happiness among our people and increasing prosperity in our country. How easy seem the problems of an earlier era to us. How tranquil it was 25 years ago ! The problems of those days came within our understanding. They accorded more with historical experience, conformed more to precedent and tended to stay more within the calculable. As for the Victorian era what serenity, what calmness belongs to it! It is almost difficult to believe that such a peace once rested upon this world of ours. If we could only take our Independence with us and go back into the world of 25, or 50 years or 75 years ago, how soothing !

But we cannot go back to those eras. It is to live in this era we have been called as individuals and as a nation. It is idle for us to want to solve the problems of an earlier era. It is idle for the Physicist of the Atomic era to want to solve the problems of the Newtonian era. It is not that the solution of earlier problems becomes irrelevant to the present; their solution has entered into, and become part of the texture of the present. Ancient machinery is not meaningless in the age of the jet-propelled plane. It produced the time and the conditions which could invent the jet-propelled plane. The solutions of the problems of 25 years and 50 years ago have gone into the making of the present. We cannot go back to them, because we are standing on them.

It may well be that we are witnessing the birth-pangs of an epoch. It may well be this is not just one of the many occasions of mere war and uncertainty and economic dislocation which have all been too common in the history of the world. It may well be that new factors have entered history. But new factors are constantly entering history. This is why human history cannot be equated with any natural science. Man has constantly faced new situations. The human race has constantly experienced the birth of new epochs, when it has become obvious that a major break with the past was taking place. This is the great privilege of man; that he had ever to say :

*Lo before us gleam the camp fires; we ourselves must pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflowers and steer boldly through the desperate
wintry sea.*

Fortunately the problems of today are not to be solved with the help of a God of yesterday, but with help of one who liveth and reigneth always, the same yesterday, today and ever.

The purpose of a State was once said to be two-fold: that of securing justice and that of establishing security. Even in the light of those aims it may well be questioned whether any State has really ever succeeded. It was in the greatest city State of Greece that Socrates was put to death by a judicial verdict. The famed *Pax Romana* had to put up not merely with external wars but with civil wars and wars of succession; and Caligula, Nero and Domitian could sit to dispense Justice. A British Parliamentary candidate at the turn of the century, who was canvassing support in a London slum to further the interests of an Empire on which the sun always shone, was told by an old woman that sun light never came through into her own street. Perhaps the only justifiable verdict on the palmy days of most countries and empires is that some classes have certainly had a good time of it. Of course the States of those days were living according to the light of those days. But we living at this time may be permitted to wonder whether the justice and security of those days were any kind of Justice and Security at all. And living at this time we well may wonder whether these aims are attainable by any nation.

The conception of a Welfare State that underlies modern thinking is very different from earlier conception. The problem of security has always been difficult. To guarantee security to anyone has always seemed to trench upon the prospect of Justice for some one else. And now the Security of the individual and the nation is involved in a very complex situation. And statesmen pick their way through with a crushing sense of responsibility. The security of the world itself seems to be poised very delicately indeed. But we now want to go beyond the old conception.

There is one circumstance however in these troubled days upon which we may congratulate ourselves. This nation is not merely free, it is responsible. What is done in the name of the nation is ultimately under its control. A govt. not responsible to the

nation may bring glory to itself but it is also a most fruitful source of danger. Irresponsible rulers have victimised their own people and played havoc with the peace of the nations. For this reason it is impossible to disguise our relief that we have attained our independence when our kings are no longer with us. They might have been an extreme inconvenience in these days. Some of them perhaps would have been a source of inconvenience at any time. We may be even more profoundly thankful that we are not under a system that is neither monarchical nor responsible to the nation. The old kings, if they wielded absolute authority, may often have been guided by kingly virtues. The modern dictator may wield the same authority without being guided by any virtue. We have, therefore, this in our favour, that this nation can make itself felt and ultimately control all action done on its behalf.

If the attainment of responsibility takes away our sense of helplessness and frustration in national matters, it also takes away the possibility of our finding excuses. If the State is our organised Will, in the last analysis it is only doing what we wish. Neither the British Govt. nor any other ruler in our capital, but we the people of Ceylon shall hereafter be responsible not merely for what goes on inside the borders of our country but for a share of what goes on in the world. Faced as we are with a history in which human affairs show a chronic tendency to fall into a state of disruption, what chance is there that we shall not get into the usual muddle? Archbishop William Temple has bemoaned the break-up of the integrity of mediaeval culture which took place at the Renaissance. Since then each department of human activity has shown an increasing trend to declare its autonomy. Politics and business and art and even education, and almost every other sphere has claimed to create its own rules. "Business is business", "Art for Art's sake" are common slogans. Perhaps nowhere are the results of this tendency more clearly seen than in politics. Even Frederick the Great felt that his decency and integrity were being soiled when drawn into the vortex of European politics; and Cavour, the Italian statesman, felt that rascality though it

was quite proper in national affairs, it was entirely improper in the affairs of individuals.

The trouble however is much older than the Renaissance. The tendency observed to be at work with so much force since then has existed right from the beginning of things. Though in the history of Europe we have seen it most clearly since the break-up of an old culture, what is at fault fundamentally, immemorially yet ever a new, is not the break-up of a culture, but the break-up of a relationship. It began not when any particular brand of activity began to proclaim its autonomy, but when man began to put an interpretation upon his autonomy. Almost from the outset man has felt that in his dealings with others he was free to do what he liked. Good men therefore have been good in their dealings and bad men bad. Finding himself in the world of men, man has felt that he could do what he liked. Disobedience is listed as man's first sin. Disobedience is a switch-off, a refusal to acknowledge anyone higher. Having switched off from God, a man may do good, he may do evil; but he has committed the fundamental sin. Man's freedom is given that he may serve God. A man may fall from a tree and defy the law of gravitation; he will break his legs if nothing worse happens. A man may take poison with the inevitable result. But he is not given his freedom to break his legs or die poisoned. He is given his freeddeem to live.

There are many things we must do in the world. But they must be done as part of our obedience to God. We speak of serving man. We may, we must, serve man if it means obedience to God. A great thinker having discussed whether Machiavelli was an idealist or not, concludes by declaring that he was an unscrupulous Idealist. Unscrupulous idealism can be far more dangerous than no idealism at all. The notion that service, devotion to a cause and sincerity are enough has been at the bottom of a great deal of trouble. A notorious American criminal, who in his life-time used to be called Public enemy No. 1 of America, said that in his heart he harboured no ill-will towards anyone; his only aim was to provide people with a few

harmless pleasures. Service to country has a habit of leading to the position of the orator who cried, "My country right or wrong". The Allied Commission for the Trial of War Criminals refused to admit the principle that underlies this kind of action and thought. The fact that you are serving somebody or some cause does not exempt you from obeying what is higher.

Our Lord could acknowledge Caesar's right to levy taxes, yet coolly tell Pilate that he had no authority over Him unless it were given from above. And St. Paul could admonish the Christians of Rome to be subject to political authority, and yet set aside all human authority when he wanted.

The world is suffering from a heritage of chaos, divisiveness and contradiction. Some of it no doubt was left by evil-minded men, large-scale careerists, blood-thirsty ruffians or diabolical schemers seeking personal profit or personal renown. But a large share of it was left by men of unquestioned sincerity, inspired by ideals of service and bound by a sense of duty. We have this complex of centrifugal factors, because not merely bad men but good men have been serving diverse and often irreconcilable causes.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and Him only shalt thou serve". "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". Loving man may often involve a refusal to bow to his standards, his passing fancies and his clamours for the time-being. Thou shalt serve the Lord thy God always. Service to man, service to a cause or country, movement or project, that is not ultimately service to God is illegitimate. However well-intentioned, however well applauded at the time, such service contributes to the sum total of human folly and sin in the world. However lightly we might be let off for the time being, we have stored up one more divisive factor in the world full of such factors.

We may live at a time full of menace. We may live in a world that has seen fire and blood too often. But it is a world in which the will of a God who has called men to be his children

is the ultimate principle. Let us love our country with a love that is ultimately a love of God, let us serve our country with a service that is ultimately the service of God, that we may on this day of glad rejoicing say without undue foreboding, as was said centuries ago,

*When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like unto them that dream
Then was our mouth filled with laughter
And our tongue with singing:*

*The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whereof we are glad.*

The Office and Function of a Bishop

(This was preached at the consecration of Rev. David Chellappa, a dear friend of mine, as Bishop in Madras at St. George's Cathedral, Madras on 25th January 1955. Bishop D. Chellappa died on 25th August 1964.)

Faithful is the saying that if a man seeketh the office of a Bishop he desireth a good work. 1 Tim. 3 : 1.

THE phrase, "faithful is the saying", introduces and gives the writer's opinion about a maxim current at the time in circles of the Church. The writer wants to add his own weight to the prevailing and somewhat off repeated belief that the office of oversight was a good work. It would seem that it was customary for members of the Church to stand for this office. It is also apparent that there was some hesitation on the part of some deserving candidates to come forward. The purpose of this verse is to lend encouragement and dispel their misgivings so that the office may be in the hands of good men.

A False Contrast: We have a habit often of setting up false contrasts. In religious matters we have a habit of erecting an altogether unwarranted distinction between New Testament times and ours, like the Sunday School boy who, asked how it was possible for the paralytic to be let down through the roof of a house, answered "In those days anything was possible!". There may be quite a few who, when confronted with our text, would say: "Oh! that was in those days." They may say that to be a Bishop in those days required qualities which are no longer required; conditions were different; times were dangerous; prominence in the Church was at that time a dubious qualification. It was an invitation to persecution or death. Even when they did not have to face danger or death, persons mentioned in Scripture are in the popular mind endowed with virtues no longer existing in the world; and offices then held a sanctity that has long since disappeared. To make the world of Scripture so wholly different from the world we live in, is to deprive Scripture of its relevance to the present.

It has been said that mankind progresses but that man remains the same. The world has changed in many respects, but in many more respects, in all its deepest things, it still remains as it was in New Testament times. In its struggles and the clash of elemental forces, its emotions and ambitions, its hopes, its failures, its possibilities and its visions of better things, it is still the same. It is a world wherein lives man, created in God's image but who has rebelled against Him, and tries to build round himself securities of his own making, yet never feeling safe, and haunted by a persistent misery; it is a world where the story of God's great act to save man is proclaimed to scarcely believing ears. It may be a world where more and more problems are creeping in, scattering men's wits and tearing up human solutions to ribbons. But if the world is a place where the gospel of God's longing for man and His saving grace has a place, then surely it is a place where the task of oversight also has a place. And the words of Scripture therefore are true and will always remain true—that the office of oversight is a good office.

Baptism the Significant Break: Some years ago, after I had been elected a Bishop, but not yet consecrated, I was attending a Conference in South Ceylon and being congratulated by various members. An Anglican episcopal friend walked up to me and half in jest and half in earnest, said, "You are being congratulated now. You will soon find it a matter for deepest condolence." I have often pondered those words during the last seven and a half years in which I have been Bishop. Before I became a Bishop, I was Chairman and Executive Officer of my Church Council. I therefore used to do many things which I have since been doing. The famous Dean Stanley of Westminster once writing to an ordinand, said that the one fundamental distinction between people was the distinction made by baptism; that beside it neither Confirmation nor Ordination was of much significance. The chief thing that matters is that one is a Christian, not whether he belongs to the order of the laity or the clergy. It must certainly be admitted that the tremendous significance of Baptism is seldom sufficiently realised; and also that the difference between the clergy and laity often has a tendency to be exaggerated.

An Overwhelming Responsibility: But it is undeniable that being a Bishop imposes a burden that is too heavy for anyone's shoulders. A Bishop is expected to be holier than any other human being, perhaps holier than any human being can be, to have a faith that is never troubled by doubt, a courage that is never shaken by any human situation, a wisdom that can find a way out of the biggest chaos created by human sin and folly, to bear the troubles and sorrows of various sorts of people who feel, and perhaps rightly feel, when they have a burden, that the Bishop should also have a share in bearing it. While possessing all these qualities and bearing the wide-spread burdens of a multitude of people, a Bishop is also expected to be a ripe scholar and an eloquent preacher. He must answer letters by return of post and do a large variety of routine things necessarily involved in the maintenance of oversight of God's work. A periodically elected officer may have to work hard; but he is not expected to have all the virtues a Bishop is expected to have, nor any to the same degree. He also has the advantage that he can think aloud and may discuss things and ask for advice more freely than a Bishop. More than all these, a periodically elected officer may divest himself of his responsibilities any time he likes. A Bishop takes a big risk when he thinks aloud, for he is very soon quoted as having made a considered pronouncement. He may have good friends; but humanly speaking, he has to face things out alone. A Bishop does not complain. He does not usually resign. I have wondered whether any human being was meant to be a Bishop. I have wondered whether any office of divine institution would have placed so great a load of responsibility upon a single individual.

Functions of a Bishop of the Church: The Constitution of the Church of South India lays down the functions of a Bishop. They are:—Pastoral Oversight, Leadership in Evangelisation, Teaching, Regulation of Worship, Ordination, Authorisation and the Exercise of Discipline. No one can say that these are things which should be left undone. A devastating thing in this respect that may be said against Bishops is that these are things which should be done by every Christian. But because the

Bishops were doing this, on the one hand, it was possible for some to assert "Where the Bishop is, there is the Church"; and on the other, because in certain branches of the Church these functions were carried out without Bishops, Episcopacy was abolished, and a violent campaign was carried on against it.

Such a strong cleavage of opinion seems unaccountable, with one side saying, in effect, that the Bishop is the Church and the other side so keen on pushing him out of the Church. The explanation is not far to seek. If we look at the functions of the Bishop in the Constitution of the Church of South India—and these are more or less the functions of a Bishop anywhere—one would realise that these are the main functions of the Church. On the one hand, because in times of great persecution or doctrinal confusion, one had to regard some one person in the last analysis as the representative of the Church, the Bishop came to be looked upon as that person. On the other hand, there has always been a strong tendency to refuse to associate things high and holy with definite human beings. It is easier to believe in a holy Catholic Church that does not exist than in one that does. Martin Luther said that "people take offence at the poor and mean form of our Church which is subject to many infirmities—for they say the Church should be altogether pure, holy and blameless." And Luther goes on to add: "the Church in God's eyes has such an esteem." No human being is considered good enough to be a representative of the Church which is the Bride of Christ. But the Church that is the Bride of Christ is the Church that exists and has many failings; and some poor frail creature, by being appointed to the task of over-sight of its functions, comes to be looked upon as himself having special responsibility for them. Are the qualities of a Bishop too lofty for a human being? They are qualities expected of the Church! Therefore are the functions laid upon him too heavy? We shall see as we go on.

Catholic and Protestant View-points: The first meeting of the World Council of Churches that met at Amsterdam said that the dichotomy between the Catholic and Protestant view-points

appeared to be basic in the Church; and Amsterdam was speaking about the non-Roman Catholic branch of the Church. Different people and different denominations may be used to or even pledged to either one of these characteristics. But the fact must be faced that the Catholic view-point and Protestant view-point belong together and are inherent in the Christian Church. For it may be seen that, in a very important sense, in the Reformation itself, Protestantism was trying to assert the Catholic principle of holding fast to something once and for all delivered to the saints; and Catholicism was trying to assert the Protestant principle of the validity of new insights. The Bishop in his person is the custodian of both these characteristics of the Church: the Catholic viewpoint, as represented by the need for maintaining the principle of continuity, and the Protestant view-point as represented by the need constantly to subject all continuities, however hoary and however sacrosanct, to God's judgement, as revealed in Scripture by means of His Holy Spirit. He is the guardian of the *Kerugma* of the Church, expounding it, and on his guard against heresy, error and mutilation; but he is also a prophet looking at the ever-changing scene of the world and declaring to it the will of God, in the light of His revelation in Jesus Christ our Lord. He combines in himself the two traditions of the Church, the one representing an element that comes down the centuries, unchanging and unchangeable, and the other an element that takes account of every new situation as God reveals Himself.

A Bishop in India today: We have seen vast changes come over the face of this country within about fifteen years. It is only a recent memory that a Bishop travelled about the streets of Madras in a motor-car decorated with the glittering emblem of the British crown. Because of the historic relic of the Establishment, the Church was supposed to be a handmaid of Imperial rule. The existence of the British Power in India was considered an argument against Christianity in this country. Now all this is changed. British rule has disappeared. The whole of South East-Asia is undergoing a tremendous political and cultural renaissance. An Indian is now being consecrated

as Bishop in Madras. Here is a great opportunity. There are some opportunities which men longed for, but which, when they come, find them surprised, unprepared and helpless. But there is a clear duty laid on the Christian Church to show our countrymen that we are not tied to an era, or a culture, or a political set-up; to show them that the Christian Church is at home in this atmosphere and will spring to a new life. The duty of a Bishop is to see that in this readjustment the Church does not lose its bearings. It is his duty to see that, while the Christian Church begins to express itself in terms of the new environment, it remains the Christian Church, loyal to its purpose, unwavering in its commitment to its Lord and obedient to Him at all times. The City of Madras has great importance in South India, if not all India. The Bishopric of Madras has great importance in all South-East Asia. The responsibility laid on the Bishop in Madras in this matter therefore is great.

The Enabling Grace of God: We have asked whether the burden of him who is going to be invested with this responsibility too heavy? It has been rightly said that Infant Baptism is the extreme illustration of the sacramental principle. An unconscious infant, being brought to take part in a sacrament, is meant to show how independent God's grace is of human merit. Is the burden of the Bishopric too great for human shoulders? Does the Bishop, not merely when he is about to take up his office, but continuously, feel a sense of unworthiness, a littleness, a misgiving that he is the last person whom the Almighty should have chosen? How else could it be otherwise? Is it not the Almighty Himself showing us the utter bankruptcy of all human pretensions and the need to know fully well that, when we do His work, it is His grace we require and not our own righteousness or ability? We must know how miserably poor we are before we can hope to receive the riches of His mercy and grace.

Are you, my brother, feeling yourself at the end of your resources, almost wondering why you accepted this responsibility? Take heart; for it means that you have come to a rendezvous with a God before whom all human holiness would be pre-

sumption, and human worth unmeaning folly. But He is a God whose faithfulness faileth never.

There are many gathered here this morning; and there are many more throughout South India and Ceylon and perhaps far beyond who are thinking of this Service at this time. Their prayers and our prayers go with you as you ascend the steps for your Consecration to the high and solemn office of a Bishop. May the Lord, who has called you to this office and who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, endow you now and always with the power of His Holy Spirit that you may serve Him faithfully and well! Unto His Holy Name be praise! Amen.

The burden of him who is going to be invested with this responsibility is too heavy. It has been rightly said that Infant Baptism is the extreme illustration of the sacramental principle. An infant being brought to take part in a sacrament, is meant to show how independent God's grace is of human merit. Is the burden of the historic too great for human shoulders? Does the bishop not merit when he is about to take up his office, but contentedly feel a sense of unworthiness, a littleness, a misgiving that he is the last person whom the Almighty should have chosen? How else could it be otherwise? Is it not the Almighty Himself showing us the utter bankruptcy of all human pretensions and the need to know fully well that when we do His work, it is His grace we require and not our own righteousness or ability? We must know how miserably poor we are before we can hope to receive the riches of His mercy and grace.

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A Diocesan Charge

(Extract from the Charge to the Annual Diocesan Council meeting of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India, held on 28th February 1957.)

EVER since our country began to experience the possibilities of self-government some twenty five years ago, there was a struggle for mastery between two opposing doctrines. While it was true that our country wanted to be freed from the dominion of a Western power, it was also true that it had derived its zest and inspiration for freedom from the history of that power. The leaders of our country had mostly been influenced by the ideas and political philosophies of the thinkers of the country against which they were struggling ; and this might be said not merely about our own leaders but about the leaders of all countries which were struggling against the dominion of Western powers in Asia. Some of these countries were much bigger than others. Each had a long history, but it is beyond all doubt that the revolt against Western imperialism was due largely to the ferment caused by the ideas of Western liberal thought.

Many, therefore, who had engaged in the fight for the independence of Ceylon imagined that when Ceylon was free, her government would be run on Western democratic lines. They had imagined that government would be religiously and racially neutral; that it would take no sides between one community and another and that the resources and talents of all would be used for the benefit of all. They would have considered it a slander if it had been suggested that the lofty sentiments they were uttering cloaked a desire to collect the resources of political power in the interests of a particular racial or religious group.

As against this attitude and the doctrine it embodied there was a contrary doctrine. It might have been living dormant, while the struggle itself lasted. But the moment the struggle had

begun to bear fruit, and the results had begun to be gathered in, that doctrine began to make itself felt. That doctrine implied that the country belonged to those who were racially and religiously in a majority and that the government should be run in the interests of that majority.

That there should be such an attitude was not unnatural. In fact, it would have been unnatural if such an attitude had been absent. The four and a half centuries of foreign rule in Ceylon were looked upon as an interruption. When that interruption ceased, it need not be considered strange that there would be those who would regard it as legitimate to resume life as it had been. This was dictated not so much by a desire to go back to the past for its own sake, as by a desire to go back to what was regarded as normal life. We sitting here cannot ignore the fact that this attitude has its roots in the time honoured chronicles of the Mahavamsa and the Chulavamsa, and the aspirations and assumptions around which those chronicles are written. It is no wonder at all that an attitude that has such associations with such age-long traditions should hold an attraction for a considerable number of people.

But modern commentators on these chronicles and modern historians who use them constantly admit that they were written from a definite view point, for a definite, if not limited purpose. Their interest in political events and the struggles of dynasties was incidental. Even for those days it may be questioned whether those chronicles represented a universal view point in the country; and as for the present, it is more than a mere academic question whether, when the British left, power devolved on those whose political genealogy goes back to the group whose point of view was expressed by the Mahavamsa. The Europeans when they were here tried to unify the country politically and administratively. The British established one central government and one central legislature. It was recognised that there were divergent racial, religious and linguistic groups; but the administration was supposed to be conducted on behalf of all groups. This was assumed when the government was handed over to us.

I do not think anybody would seriously like the past to come back. If certain of its aspects have an appeal to some other aspects do not have an appeal to others. If there were times in the past when doctrines of race and religion prevailed in government, it must be remembered that the past was also full of times of uncertainty, constant conflict and ever recurring turmoil. On the otherhand, to what extent can it be said that Ceylon will be resuming normal life, if she resumed the principle of those very early days? Standards of normalcy are always changing. What is normal must be judged in the light of events that have been happening and the conditions that are prevailing. What was normal before Mahinda came ceased to be normal after he came. What was normal a 1000 years ago cannot be regarded as normal now. What is normal for the present time is what will best fit the conditions that prevail now.

Those who want to govern Ceylon must try to govern it as it is, with its divergent races and religions and languages. Anybody who wants to ignore this will be leading the country to ruin. There are countries where governments in the past attempted to use all the resources of the State drastically to eliminate divergence, In the long run those countries ruined themselves.

That was why in Ceylon for a long time there was much heart-searching as to the wisdom of adopting a principle that would cause so much dislocation. After the attainment of full independence the struggle between the principle of governing the country on behalf of all and the principle of governing it on behalf of the majority became more acute than before. In spite of the obvious political appeal of the principle of governing the country in the interests of the majority, there was much hesitation in adopting it. But by the end 1955 it was obvious that the principle with the greater electoral appeal was definitely winning.

Throughout last year it looked as if that principle had been adopted permanently at least by the party in power.

Now it looks as if the struggle between the two principles is far from ended, not merely in the country outside but in the minds of the ruling party itself. It almost looks as if the government is suffering from a seizure of schizophrenia. It is not that different ministers are speaking differently on the issue at stake, but that some ministers are speaking differently at different times. One cannot find fault with this vascillation on an issue like this. It shows that Government has begun to have serious doubts as to whether a principle that has electoral appeal is without reason necessarily right or wise. One cannot find fault with the government for its awareness that an issue like this is too important, too fraught with far-reaching consequences, to be settled according to the mere demands of electoral consistency.

Whichever government is in power will do well to realise that where there are more communities than one, administration must not tie itself down to the interests of any one of them. To tell the other communities that the country does not belong to them is not justice or wisdom. The acceptance of the fact that the country belongs to all and must be governed in the interests of all is the sure foundation for a safe and lasting peace.

And Walk in Love...

(This was preached at the wedding of Mr. Oliver Thurai-singam to the daughter of Mr. R. R. Crossette Thambiah, Q. C. and Mrs. Thambiah in July 1957. The invitation to preach came by Marconigram when the writer was on board a ship.)

THERE are three words in the Greek language which may be said to have a bearing on the relationship between a husband and wife. They are firstly *eros*, having to do with sexual love; secondly, *phile* indicating affection between two companions; and thirdly *agape*, the word the New Testament uses, when it wants to speak about God's love to man. In his first Epistle when St. John wants to say God is love, he says God is *agape*. In that climactical verse in which the New Testament may be said to sum itself up, we are told "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life". It is the verbal form of *agape* that is used in this verse. When St. Paul comes to speak of the relationship between a husband and wife, it is this verb he uses; and he gives his reason, "as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for it".

It is not that the New Testament does not attach importance to the aspects denoted by *eros* and *philia*; but that when the New Testament wants to speak of the essential relationship between husband and wife, it thinks that the only adequate word is *agape*, God's love is unrequited love. All other types of relationship to others have their faults; but God's love to man has no fault. It belongs to God. It is the property of God. It belongs to the divine sphere. It is this love that, the New Testament says, should characterise the relationship between husband and wife.

There is an old Greek myth which speaks of Prometheus stealing fire from heaven and bringing it to earth; for which he was punished eternally by Zeus. The ancient Greeks seeing fire felt it could not belong to earth. It could have come only from heaven; and since they felt that the gods would not have parted with it willingly, they concluded it must have been stolen. The British author, G. K. Chesterton, once said two and two in marriage do not make four; they make a star. The relationship that grows up between husband and wife in married life cannot be accounted for by the ordinary laws of logic. It is based on sex; but it is far more than sex. It is based on mutual helpfulness to each other, in discharging daily tasks and meeting common problems; but it is far more than appreciation of helpfulness. It is based on companionship that grows out of devotion to common interests in life, like bringing up a family; but it is something far more. It is based on them, growing up out of them. But it is something rich and strange, not to be accounted for in terms of the elements out of which it arises, as violin music cannot be accounted for in terms of cat-guts.

Theodore Roosevelt who was President of the U. S. A. about 50 years ago, after many years of married life, was once asked the question: If you were given a second chance to live, what would you like to be? Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "To be second husband of Mrs. Roosevelt", The book of Genesis which hands down to us the earliest tradition among the Jewish nation of how the universe came into being records how God having created heaven and earth and man still felt the work of creation incomplete. So he endowed the world with the gift of married life. Much has happened in the world since the tranquil days recorded in the earliest chapters of the book of Genesis. But in this world beset by trouble and sorrow, where people may rage and imagine a vain thing, the relationship between a husband and wife still has about it the wonder and magic that belongs to a gift of God.

Does it, therefore, mean that every marriage is a success; and that every married couple will be able to testify that the experience, marriage has about it the radiance of another world? To say so would be obviously false. But every gift, it must be realised, from the point of view of the recipients represents only a possibility. A parent presenting a wireless set or a cricket bat to a son confronts him with a possibility. A possibility is not a guarantee of attainment. Pearls cast before swine represent a possibility. That they are not turned to good use is no reflexion on the intrinsic worth of the gift. Marriage may have been abused, desecrated or deliberately smashed, but whatever man may have made of it through the years, it represents the possibility of realising within human life a foretaste of the character and situation of another life, an experience within the limits of finite existence of the divine agape.

You are presented with this possibility. What you may ask should be done that this possibility be availed of and not endangered. I would like to suggest three things :

In the first place, the experience and enjoyment of the gift should not lead to forgetfulness of the giver. Marriage should not be treated as a human institution devised by man for his benefit, evolved during the process of civilisation. What is of purely human invention may be considered bankrupt, exhausted of possibilities, which may be thrown into the scrap-heap when it suits us. It must be enjoyed as a divine gift, charged with the possibility of realising the divine agape and therefore treated with gratitude and thankfulness to God. Some branches of the Church have considered marriage a sacrament. All have called it holy. Meet marriage as a divine gift, behind which stands the divine giver.

Secondly, remember God has called two to receive the gift. It is strange, but nevertheless true, that the only way in married life of being one is by remembering that you are two. Neither of you has the right in meeting your problems and planning your lives to think alone. There should be

a healthy regard for the wishes of each other and a consideration of the other's personality; and the personality of each other should be cultivated with tender care. Marriage requires that constantly, almost continuously you walk into the garden of each other's soul. You must therefore, be careful not to tear down the flowers and the plants in the garden of either. Agape requires two personalities for its exercise. It does not allow rough riding and vandalism in the region of the soul.

Thirdly, it must be asked why husbands and wives should love each other, what is the purpose or marriage? What is the use of each keeping on loving the other always? God Almighty in the beginning created man and woman. Why? Love simply centred in two people has no meaning. So husbands and wives should love each other so that their love would lead them to love, help and serve others. So marriage finds its true fulfilment, if it enables the couple to extend God's agape to the world.

Christian Attitude to Non-Christian Faiths

(Chateau de Bossey in Switzerland belongs to the World Council of Churches and is used for Conferences, Seminars and for the training of Christian workers. It is the scene of many important conferences. The writer has read more than one paper at these conferences on the relationship of Christianity to other faiths. This was read in March 1958.)

I. Historical Background

T*WO Approaches.*—In the phenomenon of religion, we note two different stresses regarding the relation between God and man—one on man's search for God, and the other on God's search for man. The problems of the relation between religions and of their worth have been approached from these two angles—from a human concern for the greatness of God, or the dignity of man, and in the light of the divine initiative.

The main trend in Hinduism holds that Ultimate Reality is one and undifferentiated. There is really this and nothing else in the Universe. So that from whatever angle you look at it, you can see only this and nothing else. All religions are *darsanas* or view-points. Whether you are in the grand-stand or the six-penny enclosure, it is the same thing you see (except, of course, for the difference, that you are really seeing yourself all the time). Reviewing a book by Mahatma Gandhi, some fifteen years ago, E. C. Dewick complained that the Mahatma "was not willing to compare carefully the teachings and practices of one religion with those of another and indeed deprecated any such attempt". Dewick was surprised that the Mahatma "did not shrink from the startling conclusion that the higher religions have nothing to give to the lower—not even to aboriginal animism". Dewick was challenging the attitude not of an individual but of a religion, which indeed considers that it is religion itself, for, *Sanatana dharma* with which its exponent equates it "is not to be identified with any particular religion.

for it is the religion which transcends race and creed and yet informs all races and creeds". The science of Comparative Religion grew up among Christians. Hinduism does not compare.

The Hindu attitude towards all religions is shared by another group which has no necessary connection with Hinduism. Hinduism is so concerned with God, that it is not willing to allow anything else to exist; so it has made His character so vague, as to accommodate everything that can exist. Statesmen, scientists and historians are often so concerned with the activities of man, that the character of God never assumes any definiteness in their minds. They, therefore, tend to think of all religions as equally valid, as legitimate expressions of human aspiration. Even when a politician is attempting to further a particular religion, he is careful to declare that he is doing it to promote religion in general. This squares well with Hinduism.

Arnold Toynbee, viewing the onward march of people through the ages, is distressed at the attitude of the communities which appear intolerant and exclusive. So when he can take his eyes off the sweep of history he indulges in frequent rebuke or exhortation to the Christian Church, about the need for a changed attitude in regard to other faiths. W. E. Hocking, the Harvard Professor, thinks of religion as "a passion for righteousness conceived as a cosmic demand". Both Toynbee and Hocking draw a distinction between the higher religions and the lower. This denotes a difference from the view taken by Hinduism. Here there is a judgement involved; but the judgement is from man's point of view and not God's. A religion is high or low, in so far as it promotes human welfare. Hocking talks frequently of "the one true God". But His character hardly ever seems to acquire any definiteness for him. Therefore, the Christian idea of a scheme of salvation carried out by God does not seem to him to merit consideration. Says Hocking,

The idea of a divine plan of salvation, as a dated product of God's wisdom and goodness, is, I fear an ingenious invention of St. Paul. To take it up to-day is to place a halter around the neck of Christianity.....It is time for a robust and honest Christianity to have done with all this rattling of ancient moral chains.

As a sensible possibility for validating moral values, God is a convenient entity; but for Him to want to become anything more definite would be anti-social and therefore not to be entertained.

There is, however, another and an altogether different atmosphere in which the attitude to religions has been considered, namely in the light of God's initiative. For the reason that God seeks all men, some attribute worth to all religions. God is a God who reveals Himself. He is a God who speaks. He must therefore have spoken to all races and at all times; and since; He is a God of truth; truth may be found in varying degrees in the religions. In Christianity this point of view began to be put forward quite early. Justin Martyr claimed that Socrates and Heraclitus were Christians, since they "lived for Christ and Christ is truth". Clement of Alexandria says. "So then Barbarian and Hellenic philosophy has torn off a fragment of eternal truth, not from the mythology of Dionysius but from the theology of the ever living Word. And he who brings again together the separate fragments and makes them one, will without peril, be assured, contemplate the perfect Word, the truth". Even the great Augustine allied himself with this stand; and this has been the official stand of the Roman Catholic Church through the centuries

The Reformation and Its Aftermath — The Reformation broke away from this stand in the sixteenth century, setting up an antithesis between God's offer of pardon in Jesus Christ and all efforts of man in the form of religion, however high and noble, to win salvation. But the theological reason for this break away from the Roman Catholic position came to be forgotten in Protestant circles, and it began to be imagined that non-Christian religions were a mass of superstition, intellectually contemptible and morally degrading. A close acquaintance with the non-Christian religious systems, which began to be opened up to the world at large with increasing copiousness, specially during the last century, overhauled this opinion, and created a new situation.

In the first place, there arose those who from the data provided by the phenomenon of religions, concluded that there was a common religion. Though this conclusion approximates the main trend of Hinduism and the opinion of political orators and other well-meaning people put forward on the subject sometimes, it differs from both in important respects. The God of Hinduism fills the Universe. The God of Comparative Religion is a poor, weak and lifeless being, cut to the measurement of an agreed common factor between religions, waiting on the pleasure of man, allowed to exist because man is willing to concede his existence. The common religion conceived by politicians, historians and philosophers *a priori* hypothesis. It can also be an *a posteriori*; conclusion arrived at by studying the agreements between religions and arriving at position that after all they all say the same thing. But somebody may come along and say what is said by every one need not be said at all.

The opening up of non-Christian religions and the discovery of their virtues however led to the rise of another school. This school merely represented a revival of the old school of Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria. It not merely arose without the Christian Faith, but was actuated by the desire to promote the interests of that Faith. It was led in India by the great British Missionary, J. N. Farquhar. This school was convinced that the God and Father of Jesus Christ is a God who has spoken to all men. But it also found in other religions many elements it could not approve of. Those of the Farquhar School wanted to discard the bad elements and complete and crown the good elements in them with the Christian revelation. But, however well meant from missionary angle, the Farquhar School was undertaking a risky venture in the field of Comparative Religion. The attempt to evolve a common religion out of the data supplied by the religions themselves, while a thoroughly fatuous procedure, has at least the quality of neutrality. It is not undertaken on behalf of any particular religion. It is pure scientific research, though its labours may hardly be worthwhile, whereas the labours of the Farquhar School had a vested

interest. It had its conclusion ready before it started its inquiry. All judgments, after all, depend on the criterion adopted. Farquhar arrived at his judgment according to the criterion he had adopted. Others could and did come to other conclusions according to their criteria. The Farquhar School did not reap any of the benefits it had expected. Non-Christians were not greatly impressed by its show of impartiality; neither was the missionary able to secure the establishment of the superiority of Christianity.

“The Laymen’s Commission” which came out to India about 1931, suggested the formation of study groups among the various religionists in a common search for truth. What was there for Christianity to preach? It was on this attitude of incoherence and flabby uncertainty that Kraemer launched his tremendous attack eighteen years ago.

II. Religions and Religious Men

Every Religion a Totality.—In his book, *Living Religions and a World Faith*, W. E. Hocking recalls an incident reported by H. Kraemer, as having taken place in the Island of Bali. Kraemer wanted certain old customs of the converts to be preserved, with a view to retaining “as much as possible of the charm of the native ways”. But the converts would have none of it. To them a change of religion necessarily meant also a change of the customs and observances they had known. Anyone with an experience of evangelism anywhere will testify of this desire of the converts to make a clean break. It may be pointed out to them that their old religions had many harmless, indeed valuable features, which did not need to be scuttled. But they would rather be done with both the good and the bad. Their attitude and action are the expression of their instinct that the old system in which they had lived formed one coherent whole.

Kraemer’s basic stand in his *Christian Message in a non-Christian World* was that each religion constituted a whole and should not be taken to parts. Others of course had anticipated this position. Rudolf Otto quotes it as having been taken

up by Schleiermacher in his fifth "Discourse on Religion", to the effect that a religion is "determined" by its central idea from which everything radiates, as it were, and which penetrates and characterises everything". "For this reason" says Rudolf Otto, "Schleiermacher is also right in another profound remark, namely, that a gradual transition to Christianity is not possible. This implies that, in spite of the greatest external similarities between *Bhakti* religion and Christianity, the former cannot be the lower form from which it is possible to reach a higher form by way of a gradual transition. The transition from one to the other must necessarily be achieved through a more or less violent breach, even if the person himself is not fully conscious of it."

What is wrong with an undue concern with parts is that a person tends to forget what the parts add up to. The existence of common elements may provide no basis for safe prediction about the wholes. The statement that the sun rises in the east and the statement that the sun rises in the west have a number of important common elements. Both admit there is a sun, that it rises and that I exist to observe its rising. Nevertheless, each statement is engaged in asserting the opposite of the other. Most religions teach about God, but they proclaim different methods of salvation. All inculcate moral virtue; but in each, notions of moral virtue are determined by its teaching about God.

We may even find that different religions proclaim different messages not merely in spite of common elements, but sometimes actually because of them. In regard to Christianity, we find that while Buddhism exalts ethics like Christianity, because of this very exaltation it dispenses with God. It exalts its ethics into the place of God. ("Buddhism also has an Absolute, but calls it *Dharma*"—Radhakrishnan) Islam is monotheistic like Christianity, and because of its very monotheism denies the cardinal Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. In a sense Vaishnavite Hinduism readily accepted the doctrine of the Incarnation, and because of this very readiness sets

at naught what to us is the very point of the doctrine, by teaching a virtually unlimited number of incarnations, and even including among the nine main ones the Buddha, who has no use for God.

Even in a recent article E. C. Dewick says, "We should firmly refuse to follow Kraemer when he would have us abandon the attempt to compare our faith with others. Certainly we should always remember that our human judgements are liable to error. But to refuse to follow our reason and our moral judgment in such matters would be to neglect a trust God has given us."* Is it not however possible that the very use of our reason may dissuade us from an act of comparison? If we take the Christian message as our criterion for judging other religious faiths, we shall naturally find them inferior. The adoption of any other criterion will be an admission that there is something of greater worth than the Christian message, in the light of which you are willing to judge all religious faiths. Then why not preach it instead of the Christian message? In the second place, the criterion must command mutual acceptance. What may appear a natural criterion to one party may not appear equally natural to the other. The capacity to promote a certain type of morality may be the criterion with one side. It may not be with the other. Bernard Shaw makes Julius Caesar intervene with a Roman officer who is horrified at the Egyptian custom of a brother marrying a sister, by saying that ideas of morality differed in different countries. Non-Marxists, puzzled about the Marxists for a long time discovered that there was a difference in the conception of truth between themselves and the Marxists. In ultimate matters, such as religion is concerned with, an accepted criterion of judgment is difficult to secure. We know and believe that the Christian message is the true message from God. But we shall find it difficult to establish our case by the method of comparison.

The different religions may proclaim different messages in spite of or even sometimes because of the common elements

* *The Indian Journal of Theology*

present in them. What appears to be common elements may not be the same after all. At the vision of God Isaiah cries out. "Woe is me for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for I have seen the King, the Lord of hosts". But the Hindu devotee worshipping God sometimes gets mixed up with Him. Why? Because:

Asti Brahma iti ced veda paroksham jnanam eva tat,

Aham Brahma iti ced veda pratyaksham jnanam asti tat.

(If it is said) "*Brahma* (God) exists", that is second-hand knowledge. (If it is said) "I am *Brahma*", that is first-hand knowledge. To the main trend of Hinduism, God is evidently not the God of Isaiah. There is a passionate longing in the Saivite poets to get rid of sin; but the sin (*pasa*) of Saivism is something that has co-eternal existence with God and the human soul. *Maitriya* (love) in Buddhism has a high place, except that human personality neither exists to express it as subject, nor receive it as object. Elements resembling one another may have widely different meanings and functions in the various religions.

We are asked whether God has not spoken in all religions; and we reply that each religion is a whole, and that since each religion has a distinct message, which is different from the Christian message, we cannot see how the position implied in the question could be maintained. As for the various elements which constitute these religions, we say that since these very elements are the basis of these messages we cannot abstract them from the context. We also say that each element in its context may have different functions from that of its counterpart in another context.

Non-Christians as Individuals. — The question that was debated at Tambaram and earlier in respect of revelation outside the Christian Faith has of late shifted to a new ground, a ground on which a much better case for such revelation can be made. From non-Christian religions, as such, it has shifted

to non-Christians as individuals. The issue in this form was, I believe, raised for the first time by A. G. Hogg in his article in the post-Tambaram series of volumes, issued by the International Missionary Council. It was on this ground that the subject was discussed at the Conferences convened by the Department of Evangelism of the World Council of Churches at Davos in 1955 and in Madras in 1957. The view that non-Christians as individuals showed enough evidence to prove that they are "near the Kingdom of Heaven" has usually been advocated by men whose work has been in educational institutions, or who have moved with certain great national figures. It is significant that this view should have come from persons like A. G. Hogg, E. C. Dewick and C. F. Andrews.

That such a view can be urged with great force and must be considered with the greatest seriousness is undoubted. A non-Christian religion is a system. It is a logical unity. It may not admit ideas or experiences rising out of alien presuppositions. And like any other kind of system it is spun out by the human mind. But the religious life and experience of a non-Christian individual on the other hand is different. One may dismiss all systems of doctrine as showing no evidence of God's revelation, but how can any one dare to say that God, the Maker and Father of all men, who is no respecter of persons and to whom all men are dear, has not made Himself known to the people of China and Siam as He made Himself known to people in Palestine? Can it be maintained that those who call Him by the name of *Elohim* could hear His voice speaking to them, but not those who call him by the related word *Allah*. The Christian Faith is after all professed by a fraction of those who live in the world. Have the others been denied divine communication?

In the second place, a considerable number of Bible verses can be rallied to support the position that God has been speaking through the ages to those who have not held the Biblical faith, notably such passages as: "Of a truth I perceive God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that heareth

Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him"; "He left not Himself without a witness"; St. Paul's speech at Athens, and certain verses in the opening chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. Peter's words: "In every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" seem to leave the matter in no doubt.

Besides, there is a good deal in the writings of non-Christian saints that has the power to move us to tears or lift us to heights of sublimity.

"To-day, to-morrow, or the day after or some other day, the Lord will show His Mercy—in this hope has my whole life been spent; what shall I do?"

"I know no *mantras* nor *yantras*, nor hymns of praise, I know no invocation nor contemplation, nor stories in your praise,

I know not your *mudras*, nor even to cry out to you,

I only know, Mother, to run after you, which (itself) destroys all distress."

In these words addressed by a great Acharya to Krishna, and (of all persons in the world) Sankara to the spouse of Siva, do we not get down to the heart of all real religion? The Saivite and Vaishnavite saints of South India. Tukaram, and Namdev of the Maharashtra country and a host of others who have lived in various parts of the world at various times, who have either never heard the Christian message or ever accepted it, yet may constantly be found to write almost in the same vein as St. Paul, when he said "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain". Is there any reason to believe that they, by far the greater in number, have never heard the authentic voice of the living God but that only St. Paul did?

A final argument is the saintly lives lived by those professedly belonging to non-Christian religions. Gandhi some years ago and Vinoba, at the present time in India, leading lives, that

for purity and self-sacrifice must put most Christians to shame and towering above the rest of their fellowmen in moral stature, lend force to this argument, hard to resist. There have, of course, been many men and women in many other parts of the world, the beauty, simplicity and religiousness of whose lives have been sources of inspiration to millions. In fact, it has been said with much justification that what commended the teachings of Buddha to people was, not so much the doctrine he taught, as the grandeur and holiness of his life and the background of his great renunciation.

To persons who hold that all religions are equally true or, in any case; that all systems contain varying but undeniable elements of divine truth, the question is of course easy; but to others it is not. Almost every person who does not find it possible to dispose of the matter with the summary, but facile, solution that all religions reveal God equally, is constrained to struggle with the question whether, whatever might be said about religious systems, the case of individuals is not different. Admitting the difficulty of the question, I desire to put forward some arguments for our consideration.

The Arguments Examined.—To what extent do we have the right to isolate an individual from a system? An individual is born into a country and a time. In spite of all his autonomy, and his mind are shaped by the beliefs and customs prevailing in his country. He might break with one system; but has usually to enter another. However high a man might stand above his fellowmen, to a large extent, he shares the thoughts and beliefs of some group. His roots have to be somewhere. He may differ here and there, and himself be instrumental in shaping the thought of others. But men do not live in religious or intellectual isolation. The late C. F. Andrews, when asked how he preached the gospel to Hindus replied, "I do not preach to Hindus; I preach to the people of India". But we shall scarcely consider it legitimate, if a person from India returning after a visit to Europe, having interviewed the Archbishop of Canterbury and the President of the Methodist Conference, in England, and Pastor

Niemoller and Bishop Dibelius in Germany, and on being asked about the opinion of European Christians on some subject, replies, "I know nothing of European Christians. I merely talked to two Englishmen and two Germans". Christians are supposed to be rooted in their system but not non-Christians!

This does not mean that non-Christians do not rise to heights which we consider Christian. But the heights and depths are usually in the system to which they belong. Tukaram's sublime piety was bestowed with single-minded determination on the image of Vithoba at Pandharpur, about which it has been said "to the Western mind it is almost incredible that the image of Vithoba could arouse ardent feeling of any kind save that of repulsion". His biographers say that to forget Tukaram's veneration for the image of Vithoba "would be to forget half of Tukaram's spiritual life, wrapped up as it was so closely with the condescending love that God was supposed to have shown in accepting incarnation at Pandharpur". It was not that there were two detachable halves, which it would be easy to detach from each other; but that what we do not approve of was as much part of his religion as what we approve of. The same may be said about his monism and dualism. There is enough of both in his poetry to leave his biographers and commentators still discussing whether he was a monist or a dualist. This ambiguity on a vital point is a characteristic that may be observed in many *bhakti* poets. When was Tukaram expressing God's revelation, when he was a monist or a dualist? We would say when he was a dualist. Yet to him, his monism was as important as his dualism. He found no contradiction between the two.

Hogg asks whether we should deny the divine activity of revelation in case of the founder of a non-Christian faith, because of what we regard as the unsound and misleading character of the religious and philosophical conceptions in which he had couched his message. "In India," he says, "what of divine truth and reality has owing to the initiative of the self-revealing God, succeeded in shining through to man is inevitably

stained by the medium of monistic tendency through which it has had to break." Hogg attempts a piece of de-mythologisation. But will Hindus allow us to say that the message was detachable from the myth? And if so, which was the message, and which the myth? Have we the right to impose our valuation in this matter and having done it, to conduct a process of abstraction? Are we not compelled to hesitate a little before deciding on which was the real thing, and which the medium of expressing, when we find that the person (Sankara) who sang one of the most popular Hindu songs of all time:

Bhaja Govindum, Bhaja Govindum

Bhaja Govindum moodamathe

Samprapte sannihite kale

Na hi, na hi, rakshati dukrinjkarane.

(Worship Govinda, worship Govinda,

Worship Govinda, you fool

When the appointed time comes,

A knowledge of grammar will not, will not (save you).

But consider the following monistic lines from the same author.

There is neither teacher, nor science; neither pupil nor teaching;

Neither you, nor I, nor the Universe (itself)

I am consciousness of reality, not admitting of distinction

The one without a second, the only one, Siva.

III. A Christian Theological Approach

The attempt to see revelation in systems and writings not associated with the Christian Faith is of course dictated by the desire to do justice to a loving God who is concerned with all men. Yet the moment we begin to think of revelation we have begun to give definiteness to God's action. Radhakrishnan holds up for admiration the Hindu doctrine of "This and that" to the disadvantage of what he calls the Christian doctrine of "Either or". But acceptance of a doctrine of Revelation definitely

involves the rejection of the doctrine of "This and that", at the point where revelation takes place. It definitely involves an insistence on "This". *Quot homines tot sententiae* certainly; but not *tot sententiae verissimae*, by any means. The idea of Truth involves the idea of non-Truth; nor can we subscribe to the doctrine that both are two sides of the same thing. To a Christian a dichotomy, if not an antithesis between the two is inescapable. St. Stephen and the Sanhedrin could not both have been recipients of God's revelation on the point at issue between them. St. Paul and the crowds that cried him down, or drove him out (often composed of pious men, though inflamed by strong emotion) could not have been both speaking for God.

God's revelation, we believe, may be conceived of in two ways. In the first place, there is His action in Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The Christian message centres in this drama, which took place at a certain time and place. If any theorising on our part, at any time, minimises the absolute and central significance of God's action here, then such theorising has ceased to be Christian. So the fact remains that the gospel is a story, the story of Jesus "who suffered under Pontius Pilate". God also reveals Himself through all time both in man and out of man, struggling to get a hearing. In either case, it is something definite which man must accept. It is into a world where Socrates had taught and Plato had put forth his wonderful visions, where most of the *Upanishads* were known and the beauty of Gautama's personality had fascinated the imagination of men for many generations that Jesus commissioned his disciples to go. Many noble teachings prevailed in the world when the gospel went forth. Yet how much obloquy, suffering and martyrdom were endured by those who wanted the Christian gospel to be accepted? If Jesus and His traducers, Paul and his opponents were each standing equally for God's revelation, life loses its meaning. Is it unthinkable to us that the world should split over a diphthong, that there should have been a difference *sub specie aeternitatis* between him who shouted to *El* and those who shouted to *Baal*. Yet the Bible leaves us in no doubt that the one was on the side of God, and the others were not.

Any idea of revelation that does not involve self-limitation is monistic. If Christians are to accept that those other than Christians are also voicing authentic revelation, they accept an identification of every message with the revelation in which God's revelation of Himself finds its culmination, namely that of Jesus Christ. Was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius acting under revelation when he persecuted Christians? It may be said that he was not acting under revelation at the point at which he persecuted Christians, but did so when he said "The best way to avenge thyself is not to become like the wrong doer". Yet, neither when you think of God as having revealed Himself unrepeatably in Jesus of Nazareth, nor when you think of Him as struggling with men all through time, can you acknowledge Him as working through one, who all the time that he was uttering his noble sentiments was also striving against God's plan of salvation for man. To say that God's self-revealing operation was present equally on both sides, would make it an illusion, just as slayer and slain are, when the *Bhagavad Gita* declares "He who thinks of the one as slayer and the other as slain are both mistaken. The one does not slay and the other is not slain".

Various Bible verses have been quoted in this controversy. Yet what the verses usually prove is that God is concerned with all men, has been revealing Himself at all times and peoples and is ceaselessly striving with them to bring them to Himself. But what is at issue is whether man shows evidence of having heard and responded, accepted the invitation. Nobody disputes that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them: for God manifested it to them", (Moffatt: "For whatever is to be known of God is plain to them; God Himself has made it plain to them"—(Romans 1:19). But we have to reckon with the fact that "they refused to have God in their knowledge" (Romans 1:28). The verse "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that heareth Him, and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him" by no means runs counter to the imperative that sounds from almost every page

of the New Testament, namely that the gospel should be proclaimed. On the other hand, it merely emphasises it. The verse is meant to settle a great doubt in the mind of the early Church whether the gospel should be proclaimed to the Gentiles. Peter now declares that he is convinced that the barrier between Jews and Gentile has gone. The gospel of salvation is not meant only for those descended from Abraham according to the flesh. The upshot of Peter's declaration was not the conclusion that Cornelius did not need the gospel, but exactly the opposite, namely, that he was worthy of listening to the gospel.

It cannot be denied that the great religious figures, who have lived in the world, have swayed men's minds. Their lives have left a profound impression not merely on their generation but over many succeeding ones. Were not these men, "men of God"? All men are prone to hero-worship. It is a worship we give, not merely to religious figures, but to all men who tower over us, for whatever reason. We must therefore not be quick to attach spiritual significance to such power. The basis of the power of religious figures over people is not in the authenticity of their experience or message, but the power of their quest. A young man in South India, now a Christian, (and living in a Christian *Ashram*, in the Tinneveli District) has testified how in his days as a Hindu, the fact that he had lived for six days without food or drink absolutely over-awed people. The sight of those engaged in the religious quest will always appeal to people. We cannot however on the basis of it form any conclusions about the authenticity of their message or of the discovery made.

The reason why educational missionaries are often impressed with the similarity in the life, experiences and beliefs of the non-Christians they come across and their own, is that they are usually coming across very Christianised non-Christians. Under different social conditions many of them may have become Christians not merely in fact, but in name also. The proportion of conversions in educational institutions in Malaya, among the Chinese, is much higher than among Hindus in

India where the social conditions are not the same. Yet we are dealing with the people who have gone through the same influences and whose minds have probably attained to, or approached, the same intellectual and religious stage as those who go through Christian missionary institutions in India. The religious beliefs of both groups would probably show a good deal of approximation to one another. Yet because of different social conditions the crossing over is done easily in the one country and usually not done in the other. Hindu young men who have spent four years at Christian College, Madras, or Hislop College, Nagpur, may not be considered to provide reliable data about Hindu religious experience. Christian educationalists looking into the minds of their College Hindu graduates are not looking round about, but looking into a mirror and beholding their own faces.

Conclusion.—We have argued the matter so far. We realise that as Christians, who believe that it is in Jesus Christ that God saves man, we cannot say that either the thought of non-Christian religious systems or the thinking of non-Christian individuals show evidence of saving knowledge. But I am also aware that argument, even theological argument, may not settle the matter. All that I can say is, as far as I can see, non-Christian thinking both of systems and of individuals seems to be different from what I know to be God's revelation for the salvation of man. If our Lord has asked that His gospel be preached for the salvation of mankind, it cannot be that "other gospels" can save, as there is "not another gospel". But I am not willing to set bounds to the mercy of God. May not God deal with those who do not accept the gospel of Jesus Christ in love, as He deals with them in justice, for is not the righteousness of God also His love? He may. However, we who have the task of Christian discipleship, are asked to decide on our attitude to non-Christian faiths. This can be done only on a theological basis.

A SERMON

22nd June 1958.

(Probably the occasion for this sermon was a large scale ethnic rising in South Ceylon during the latter part of May of that year. There have been two other risings of the same kind in later years; but this was the one when the greatest number of Tamil lives were lost.)

ONE of the most obvious things, that we see in the world is injustice. Constantly we see the mighty oppressing the weak, the rich oppressing the poor, and generally the hand of man raised against man.

This phenomenon may give rise to three wrong ideas. In the first place, it may give rise to the idea that there is no God. During the Italian War against Abyssinia twenty years ago, I found a good Christian man I knew, who had lost his belief in God, because he could not reconcile the existence of God with the existence of injustice in the world. Secondly, it may give rise to the idea that the gods are also mixed up in the ambiguities of life; that they are as selfish, as quarrelsome, as jealous and as cunning as human beings. According to the Greeks, the Trojan war was caused by the disappointment and jealousy of Juno, the wife of Zeus, at Venus being adjudged more beautiful than she. Opinion therefore grew among the Greeks that the quality of justice was something higher than the gods. This may be seen in regard to the incident of Prometheus. The third idea that may arise in this connection is a belief that God is without qualities. To raise God above the evil in the world, some thinkers have found it necessary to raise him above evil as well as above good. This would be like a man wanting to cash a cheque, and, unable to do it anywhere else, goes into a bank and finds, the bank empty. Unable to find justice in the world, man goes to the high heavens and finds God devoid of all qualities.

The Bible says 'justice and righteousness are the foundation of God's throne. Thomas Carlyle, the great 19th century writer, said:

In this God's world, with its wild - whirling eddies and mad foam oceans, where man and nations perish as if without a law and judgment for an unjust thing is long delayed, dost thou think that there is no justice? It is what the fool has said in his heart..... I tell thee again there is nothing else but justice. One strong thing I find here below; the just thing, the strong thing.

Carlyle was a historian who had written the story of the French Revolution. He knew that the whole story of the human race was stained by injustice; yet he says justice is the chief thing in the world. Why? Because he looks beyond this world to where there is justice.

There have been some who say that God is good because it is the good thing He asked us to do. There are others who say that a thing is good because God has asked us to do it. Both these opinions are very right from one point of view, and very wrong from another point of view. It is right to believe that God can ask us to do only the right thing; and it is quite right to think that a thing is good because God asks us to do it. Goodness can come only from God. But both opinions are wrong in the implicit suggestion they contain that goodness and God can be separated.

We do not see justice in the world. Does it therefore, mean that there is no justice? Justice and righteousness are the foundation of His throne, says the Bible. In times of discouragement it gives me great solace to repeat the words in St. Paul's epistle to — Timothy: *Ekeinos pistos menei*. He remaineth faithful. It has been suggested that religion is an opiate of the people. Religious teachers may fail to teach about justice; but justice is with God and is the foundation of His throne. The faithfulness of God is really the basis of all natural science. Nature cannot play tricks because God is faithful.

Nietzsche said in the last century, "The greatest moments of our life are when we rebaptise our badness into goodness." Does calling badness goodness solve problems? Yet why cannot we do it? Because whatever name we give to it, badness remains badness. It does not become goodness by a change of name; and goodness remains itself. Justice is the foundation of God's throne.

A little more than 90 years ago, on the day, that President Lincoln was shot by an assailant, the rumour began to spread in the country that the entire Cabinet had been assassinated. There was great consternation. A large concourse of people had gathered in the great square at New York, tossed with anxiety and confusion. At that moment General Garfield mounted a large stone and raising his voice over the confused hubub cried out saying "Fellow citizens, clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne. Fellow citizens the Lord reigneth,"

We do not see justice in the world. Does it therefore mean that there is no justice? Justice and righteousness are the foundation of His throne, says the Bible. In times of discouragement it gives me great solace to repeat the words in St. Paul's epistle to Timothy: "Ekkeine pistos menon." He remaineth faithful. It has been suggested that religion is an opiate of the people. Religious teachers may fail to teach about justice; but justice is with God and is the foundation of His throne. The faithfulness of God is really the basis of all natural science. Nature cannot play tricks because God is faithful.

Some Thoughts at Christmas-tide of 1961

To

Workers of J. D. C. S. I.

May I put down here some of the ideas that occurred to me during Christmas-tide this year?

1. For many years past every service on Christmas morning in which I had taken part was a Holy Communion Service. I, therefore, believed that wherever there was an Ordained Presbyterian in our churches, there always was a Communion Service on Christmas day. But finding two services this time on Christmas day that were not Communion Services, I made inquiries and discovered that a Communion Service on Christmas day, if it was held at all, was an exception.

It seems to be felt that the atmosphere of a service that recalled the Last Supper and the Crucifixion was inconsistent with the atmosphere of a birth-day party that should pervade a Christmas service.

A Sunday Service is called a "Service", because it is a piece of work we do towards God. A service, therefore, has reference to God; the jolly atmosphere we are thinking of is quite valid at the Sunday School Prize-Giving. The Communion Service is called "The Eucharist", meaning a Thanksgiving. A Thanksgiving for what? For the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Resurrection. It is therefore for God's gift of His only begotten Son and all that the gift implies.

The history of Christian Worship from the outset shows that till the Reformation every Sunday morning service was a Communion Service. Why? Because a Communion Service is not a mere memorial rite, and because in the Bread and Wine you came into communion with the Lord Himself. The Reformers were anxious to preserve the old practice; but adopted the present practice only to prevent people who did not want to communicate from walking out during the Service.

The Christmas morning service is one of the highlights of the year. There will be no better way of performing it than through a service, where we shall be in communion with the Lord. I trust, therefore, that wherever there is a Presbyter, the service on Christmas morning will be a service of Holy Communion.

2. I notice that for most of you the Christmas week has become a week of incessant activity. Almost everyday is packed with some meeting or other. Is this as it should be? This season is one that must be filled with a deep thankfulness to God; but is a long programme of unremitting busyness the best way to express thankfulness to God? It is a time of rejoicing; but is going from one activity to another without ceasing a form of rejoicing; Please do not think that the holding of many meetings is an expression of religion. Quite a number of you conduct a Carol Service, a Carol Party, and a Christmas morning service; also a Watch Night Service and a New Year morning service. Don't you think there is too much duplication here?

3. Carols on Christmas Eve in Western countries are sung by poor boys to collect a little money for their needs. It is too cold for a Church Carol to do a systematic coverage of all houses. Carols came into our Church life a little more than 50 years ago, against the wishes of the Pastors. They have been a feature of our Church life for some years; but you may seriously consider whether they have not outlived their usefulness.

4. Whether Carols are conducted by the Church or not, you may seriously consider whether it is the business of a Minister to go round with them for two or three successive nights. If no senior member of the church is willing to accompany them, the obvious conclusion is that they need not be held.

Witnessing to Men of other Faiths

(An Address before a Commission of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council in Mexico City on 15th Dec 1963. The writer regards this as a major utterance of his.)

THERE are three questions round which a discussion of the subject of this Conference will have to converge, viz: the Why? the What? and the How? of it. The first arises from a doubt; the answer to the second will decide whether that doubt is legitimate or not; and it is only if it is not that we can go on to the third.

A doubt as to whether we have a right to preach our gospel to people of other Faiths is a late-comer into the Church. There was of course some doubt in the matter at the start among the Palestinian Jews who were Christian (the Hellenistic Jews had none); but that doubt was not merely confined to a certain group or a certain area, it was technical and temporary. It was technical because, though the Palestinian Jews had come across many nations in their history and were even then living under the Romans, they had looked upon them almost as a part of Nature, and had never allowed them to enter into their religious thinking. It did not strike them that these nations needed to be saved. The Palestinian Jews were living in a narrow mental world. It was temporary, because once Paul widened their outlook, that doubt was lifted from their outlook, that doubt was lifted from their minds.

In the long centuries that followed, doubt on the subject reappeared in the Church; and neither in the Dark Ages, nor the Middle Ages, nor through the greater part of modern times did the matter become a live issue. The behaviour of the Portuguese, who came East in the wake of Vasco da Gama's discovery of the Cape route, might have laid itself open to question from many points of view; but

nobody could have questioned their evangelistic zeal. And after the Reformation, as soon as Protestantism realised it was still alive after its life and death struggle, it began to send out Missions in successive waves.

There have, of course always been many individuals who for reasons of their own have disapproved of efforts to convert people of other Faiths; but in each of these cases the reason has been particular and not general. For instance, Sydney Smith, the English clergyman and humorist, was always making fun of William Carey's efforts in Bengal; but he was also making fun of the Methodists and the Evangelical clergy in England. He was not grieved at Brahmins being asked to give up their Faith; he was against enthusiasm in any form.

A general doubt in the matter may be said to have crept into the Church only in the twentieth century; and the explanation commonly given is that only now have Christians begun to realise that there are other great and enlightened Faiths in the world besides their own; until now they had believed that all other religions were masses of debased superstition. Throughout the nineteenth century the great systems of Eastern religions were being opened up; and in this present century Christians have begun to feel the full impact of that new knowledge. The doubt of the Palestinian Jew was caused by living in a narrow intellectual world; the doubt of the modern Christian is caused by his living in a wide intellectual world.

The doubt that had crept into the Church became embodied a little more than 30 years ago in a movement of considerable momentum and expressed itself in such books as "The Re-thinking of Missions" issued by a band of American thinkers headed by Dr. W. E. Hocking of Harvard. That movement was handled rather roughly by Hendrik Kraemer in his famous book, "The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World", and since then the doubt has expressed itself more mildly and with far greater hesitation. But however it might express itself it is reasonable to believe doubt will continue to exist in the

Church as long as it has to face numerous closely reasoned out and highly coherent intellectual and religious systems.

Does it mean then that ignorance can be the only sure basis for Evangelism? Ignorance has been considered a basis for many things, including the Universe itself. Writers from such widely divergent backgrounds as the great ninth century teacher of Hinduism, Sankara, and Bertrand Russell can give no other reason for the existence of the Universe. "There is nothing but prejudice and habit for the view that the world exists at all", says Russell. Whether the Universe likes to owe its existence to Ignorance or not, Ignorance as a basis for Christian Evangelism is quite unsound. Ignorance is temporary; and is always meant to be displaced by Knowledge. "When the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away". The security of a narrow, intellectual world is illusive because that world is now large and will become larger.

But those who think that an urge for Christian Evangelism can exist only when there is Ignorance about other religions must reckon, in the first place, with the fact that for long the Church's evangelistic efforts were directed towards people whose Faiths it knew, and not to people whose Faiths it did not know. If there were many Faiths it did not know, neither did it make any evangelistic efforts among those who professed them. The Hellenistic Christians who took the gospel into the Graeco - Roman world knew that it was a world where Plato and Aristotle had taught; and they knew the various religions that had come into Rome from the various parts of the Empire. Origen, Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria knew all the systems that prevailed in their time; yet they preached the gospel. In the Middle Ages, when these religions had faded and Islam had swept into dominance it became well known in the Christian world. The great Islamic Universities in Spain catered to most European scholars of the time, The Islamic philosophers, Avicenna and Averroes, were held in high respect in Christian circles. If the Crusades did not express evangelistic zeal, they certainly enlarged Christian

knowledge of Islam. The interest in that religion was sufficiently deep to produce a translation of the Koran into Latin as early as 1143 (though the book itself was published much later); and Martin Luther himself issued a German translation in the 16th century. All this knowledge did not create the slightest doubt in the mind of Church as to whether the gospel should be preached to Muslims. It may be seen, therefore, that Ignorance did not in practice provide the basis for Evangelism.

In the second place, if Christian evangelists in later times went out to preach the gospel among those whose Faiths the Church did not know, the fact must be reckoned with that these men played a major part in opening up these faiths to the world at large. B. Ziegenbalg, Constantine Beschi and Philip Fabricius opened up the Tamil language in the eighteenth century: and a host of American and British missionaries did so in the nineteenth. William Carey put out one of the earliest Sanskrit dictionaries and translated the Ramayana in three volumes; H. R. Hoisington, G. U. Pope and Schomerus opened up Saiva Siddhanta; Bishop R. S. Coplestone was one of the pioneers in presenting Thera Vada Buddhism to the West, and Nicol Macnicol in throwing light on the Hindu poets of Western India; more German names could be added to this list. It may be seen, therefore, that Ignorance was dispelled to provide a basis for evangelism.

And, whilst it has to be admitted that evangelism has often been carried on when there was Ignorance of other religions, it has also to be admitted that more often it has been carried on when there was Knowledge. Obviously then, though Ignorance might co-exist with Evangelism, it could not be its basis. Therefore, we must conclude that a Knowledge of other religions may be an occasion for doubt about the legitimacy of evangelism, but cannot be its cause. Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, professed a sublime admiration for the Upanishads and for Buddhism, and affected a supreme contempt for Christian Missions (refusing even to believe that they could have

succeeded). But his attitude to the Upanishads and to Buddhism was not the cause of his attitude to Missions. Doubt or certainty about the legitimacy of evangelism arises not from one's attitude to anything outside Christianity, but from one's attitude to something within it. Both arise from one's attitude to "The What" of the Christian Faith.

The What

All religions have certain common features: places of worship, rituals, priests, laws that favour order rather than disorder, customs and ceremonies bearing on social and domestic life, differing no doubt from country to country, but suited in their diversity to the various places where they prevail. The tendency at the first sight of this fact is, therefore, to equate them all, and to account for their differences by the variety of their origin. This is what the Roman Magistrates did: they found all of them equally useful. Peace-making on the basis of these common features is quite easy.

These features, however, in each religion cluster around certain affirmations about what is considered ultimate Reality. The Graeco-Roman philosophers regarded all these affirmations as equally false; but they were asserted, and are asserted now, because they are considered true; and religions exist because they want to assert them. As against the Graeco-Roman philosophers, it is declared by the author of "Upon the Earth" (1962) that no religious system is of purely human origin. Religious systems are vast and complex things and may contain great and noble ideas; but we are concerned with their basic affirmations.

The obvious difficulty about attributing all affirmations to divine inspiration is that often the basic affirmations of one religion contradict those of another: and God is a God of order and not confusion. Islam puts a great gulf between the creator and the creature; Hinduism identifies both, and Buddhism denies both. To push the doctrine of the sovereignty of God to such lengths as to attribute divine inspiration to all affirmations is to push monism beyond itself, because monists are always arguing with non-monists, trying to convince them that

they are wrong. When we want to fix responsibility outside the realm of human agencies, it is also scripturally unwarranted to fix it solely on God: St. Peter makes it clear that outside that realm there are other agencies also at work.

Religions often co-exist because of political necessity; but a concordat based on a mutual recognition of equality can be possible only on two grounds: either that of regarding their affirmations, though different, as not very important, or on the ground that opposites may still be equally true and be two sides of the same Reality, meaning by this that as long as they are opposites they do not have real validity and do not amount to much. It is on the basis of the first that a recent Christian scholar of Buddhism takes up the well known Christian hymn, "Immortal, Invisible, God only wise, etc.", and sweetly suggests that if only we could leave out the word "God" from the entire hymn, the Buddhists could fill it with such words as "*dharma*", "*karma*", "*Buddha*" and "*Nirvana*", (and we can all live happily ever afterwards). It is on the basis of the second that Hinduism is willing to accept every view-point, affirmation and religion, holding that at the level of Reality differences do not exist. Therefore, the Bhagavad Gita makes Krishna say, "Even those who worship other gods come to me", and Vivekananda goes to the extent of saying that all religions are forms of the Vedanta.

It will, however, be apparent that neither of these grounds is a sound basis for a concordat. It might perhaps be asked how it is that the basic affirmations of a Religion ever come to be regarded as unimportant. The answer is that because of their importance they are put at the centre; and because they are at the centre, they are taken so much for granted that they often come to be overlooked, their very importance being the reason why they are sometimes allowed to sink into unimportance. But a concordat based on an oversight can be of little use. As for the other basis, if people would not like to build on an oversight of the importance of the central affirmations of all religions, they would like still less to build on the deliberate

repudiation of the importance or validity of any affirmation. Hinduism, which invites us to do so, itself drove out Buddhism when it refused to accept its viewpoint. In practice Hinduism absorbs rather than tolerates. To ask religions for an enduring concordat between themselves that would ignore the importance of their respective affirmations is to ask too much of them.

From the time of Kraemer's second big book it has become customary to speak of the task of evangelism as basically that of producing an encounter between God and man. But God is always meeting with man in many different ways and in many different places. What is the task of the Christian evangelist? It is to make man meet with God in the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the evangelist brings about this encounter, then indeed he is presenting the gospel; that is, he is presenting the good news that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself: he is preaching the word. That word is a proclamation and is at the heart of the Christian Faith. It constitutes "The What" of the Christian Faith.

A proclamation is also an affirmation; but is more than an affirmation. An affirmation may be general; an affirmation about ultimate Reality may be to the effect that it is personal, and an affirmation about God may be about His being and nature. A proclamation is definite and pointed. An affirmation need not bear upon the immediate situation and therefore need not have any urgency; whereas urgency is of the essence of a proclamation. The Christian proclamation is that God has come in Christ and has saved man; it is news of an event, an event of cosmic significance, but with a bearing upon the immediate human situation. It declares how the Almighty, King, Creator of the ends of the earth has come down in a human being; how that human being has died for us and risen in glory; and how by saying "yes" to this event man is saved. From many angles it is quite incredible, but if it is true, all general affirmations about the Ultimate Reality dwindle into insignificance, if not irrelevance. It will mean that upon mankind's "questions, its dreams and hopes and intimations, its pitiful and

fruitless efforts to win peace and purity and home", there now shines "a light that never was on land or sea". If such an event has taken place, mankind's age-long quest has ceased to be a quest, and the "low, sad music of humanity" may well turn into a paean of triumph.

The event which the Church proclaims is not the fact that there was a human being at a certain place and time, that he did certain things and that certain things happened to him; but the fact that God was in that human being, and through the things he did and which happened to him, God was saving men.

It is the divine, cosmic significance of these that constitute the event which the Church proclaims. It is this significance which constitutes "The What" of the Christian Faith. If that significance is denied the Church has nothing to proclaim. If we accept that significance, we accept that the event has taken place; and if it has, then we accept that the Christian gospel must be proclaimed, no matter how many great religions there are in the world. A realisation of the presence of other great religions actually does a service to the Church, in that it makes her examine what it is she wants to preach. It draws attention to "The What" of the Christian Faith.

That the existence of other religions does not bear fundamentally on the legitimacy or Christian evangelism may also be seen from another angle. If those who discover the fact of other religions claim that it unsettles their previous thinking, what about those whose thinking has always had to assume that fact? Neither my own father, nor my mother's father discovered non-Christian Faiths. They were born in them. These faiths do not come upon our horizon as a sudden and unexpected phenomenon; they are the environment into which we are born. A Professor from a Western country once told me that while he could intellectually defend the divinity of our Lord, he found it difficult to believe it in his heart. "On the other hand", I said, "even if we cannot find intellectual arguments for it, we find it easy to believe this in our hearts, because

without believing it we cannot be Christians at all." The presence of non-Christian Faiths serves only to sharpen the focus of "The What" of the Christian Faith in places where men live all their lives in the midst of them.

If there is no doubt about "The What" of the Christian Faith, there is not merely a legitimacy about Christian evangelism but an urgency. The daughter of Karl Marx once confessed to a friend that she had never been brought up in any religions and had never been religious. "But", said she, "the other day I came across a beautiful little prayer which I very much wish could be true." "And what is that prayer?", she was asked. Slowly the daughter of Karl Marx began repeating in German: "Our Father which art in heaven..." etc. That God whose conceivability itself raises questions about His very existence should not merely exist, but could be called "Our Father" is a profoundly consoling thought; but that God should have come down in a human being, who "has borne all our griefs and carried our iniquities" and has saved man for ever, transcends all human aspirations and all human imagination and endows all life with a new aspect. "If I believe that Jesus Christ really died for me, I would not write or speak about anything else," said Lord Morley the atheist.

The commission to evangelise was given not in a world without any religion, but where there were many; where the Buddha had taught 550 years previously and where Plato had taught 400 years previously; where the major Upanishads had all been long written and where the Bhagavad Gita had been written well over a hundred years earlier. It must be preached not in spite of the fact that the Alvars, the Acharias and the Maratha saints have sung movingly, but because of the fact that they have. Such a world is worth saving.

The How

The task of the evangelist is to proclaim the Christian message to men of other Faiths. In view of the task given, it is

therefore curious that the suggestion should be made that we should ignore these faiths to which these men belong. Those who make this suggestion usually take their stand on the saying of the late C. F. Andrews, who spent most of his life in India, to the effect that he did not preach to Hindus but to men. How many Hindus know their Hinduism, it is asked; so why not forget the fact that they are heirs to 3,000 years of Hinduism and just treat them as men, apart from all religious and philosophical predispositions and presuppositions?

With deference to the memory of a great and good man, it may be said that he was not coining a *bon-mot* but committing a *faux pas*, and a wide one at that. People do not have to read systematic treatises to imbibe their ideas. John Whale quotes a very appropriate parody:

Jesus loves me, this I know;

For my mother told me so.

Men get their beliefs in a thousand different ways. Besides, while many Hindus may not read Sankara and Ramanuja, many read the Bhagavad Gita and know the Puranic stories. Many Buddhists may not read the Pitakas, but they know the Jataka stories and often listen to the chanting of the Pirith at various ceremonies. These people, therefore, have lived in the midst of Hindu or Buddhist beliefs and worship and in the general environment created by these religions. To think that all this has not influenced their beliefs and presuppositions is scarcely realistic. They mould their will and shape their personality. To think that we can detach a man from his beliefs and presuppositions is to think that we can detach him from his own personality.

Neither is it realistic to minimise the part played by classical writers and systems on people's beliefs. No doubt in every context every man fashions his own brand of religion. Classical writings are always studied only by a few; and perhaps were meant only for a few. But their main teachings seep down into

the religious and intellectual heritage of races and communities. They may get modified and adapted in many different ways, but they have a habit of persistence and a gift of essential endurance. Classical systems in practice manage to live on, not in the books which are not read, but in the people who usually do not read them.

It may of course happen that persons living in a Hindu context may be persons of no-Faith. But a no-Faith is usually the reverse of a Faith and is influenced by that Faith. Non-Faith in the Hindu context is usually Hindu non-Faith. A Hindu gives up his Faith and falls back on astrology (which is the epistemology of Karma) to guide his life. When Gautama Buddha rejected the Faith of Hinduism, it was its reverse, its non-faith, that he adopted. Buddhism (Primitive Buddhism) is unintelligible without Hinduism.

An eminent writer has recently told us that God is "previous" to us in the person to whom we preach. We cannot by any means imagine that God's care for people is less than ours; but we have seen that it is impossible to detach a man from his ideas and beliefs and treat him as altogether separate. If the "previousness of God" means that in spite of all a man's preconceptions and imaginations, God still wants to save him, it is true beyond a shadow of doubt. But if the "previousness of God" means that these preconceptions and imaginations are the "clouds of glory" that God has trailed in His wake, it is scarcely acceptable.

The task of the Christian evangelist is referred to in the New Testament by the word *kerussien*, which means "to proclaim" or announce. But a proclamation on certain subjects and in certain contexts cannot be an instantaneous act: it has to involve a process. We see that the proclamation of the New Testament evangelists themselves did involve this process. They had to do what is meant by the word used, I believe, in most languages to translate *kerussien*: they had to preach; and preaching involves convincing.

Nowadays we are asked to enter into a Dialogue. Perhaps preaching sounds too dogmatic, self-confident and intolerant. But the aim and method of a Dialogue are the same as those of preaching. Preaching may look like a monologue, but essentially it is a Dialogue. The listeners may not answer back, but if they are to be convinced their unspoken objections must be inferred and answered.

A Dialogue is very different from a Conversation; The classical examples of Dialogues are to be found in the writings of Plato; those of Conversation in Boswell's "Life of Johnson". There is no set purpose in Conversation, and there are no set subjects. Johnson may hold the centre of the stage, may hold strong opinions on particular subjects and may want to put them across. But the Conversation does not take place so that Johnson may put his opinions across. It starts incidentally from one subject and flits unpredictably to quite a variety of subjects, on which nobody may have definite opinions. In fact, we are told that Johnson often uttered various introductory phrases so that he might in the meanwhile decide which side of the question he should take. But in Plato, through page, after page by means of questions and answers, Socrates is building up his argument.

Dialogues even on the same subject vary according to persons and according to the times. Those living in a later age can make use of a greater knowledge than those of an earlier age. Therefore, in the Dialogue now involved in presenting the gospel, the knowledge of other Faiths opened up in recent years will be of great help. In fact, the Christian evangelists who helped in opening them up did so because they believed that such knowledge would be helpful. The basic pattern of a Dialogue remains the same; but at every stage a knowledge of the other person's background is of great help.

In a Dialogue one starts with an agreement. In his speeches to the Jews, St. Paul starts with God's covenant

with Israel and His promise of a Messiah; in his speech to the Athenians he starts with the common religious quest of man. When Paulinus in ancient Britain preached before King Edwin and his chiefs, he evidently started with the common human concern about future life. Our knowledge of the religious context of the other party in the Dialogue will teach us where exactly the agreement should be based; but it always has to be a quest common to both Parties.

But to stop with that initial agreement is to eliminate dialogue and live in the illusion that there are no disagreements, Disagreements do exist; and hence the need for Dialogue. Disagreements must be faced, and the greater the knowledge of other Faiths, the greater the knowledge of what these Disagreements really are. Our Disagreement with the position of Islam differs from our Disagreement with a Hindu Advaitin; and our Disagreement with an Advaitin from that with a Hindu Theist. We may find that our agreements with a Hindu Theist or a Muslim will be the basis of our Disagreement with the Buddhist.

But to stop with Disagreements is to lose Faith in the possibility of Evangelism. The step from the stage of Disagreement to that of ultimate agreement is the most important step in a Dialogue and the most important act in Evangelism; it is to convince the man with views so different from ours that God's offer is being made to him also. Since all men belong to God, and the commission to evangelise is to evangelise all men, that step must be taken. But the step from Disagreements to an ultimate Agreement must in each case arise out of the particular Disagreements we have faced in that case, and therefore cannot be the same in all cases. Sometimes it is an argument that takes the Evangelist to the final stage; sometimes it is his character and sincerity; sometimes it is an unexpected event or opportunity. But if the evangelist is himself convinced about the truth and the urgency of his message, he will find God working with him lifting him to the ultimate stage; for it is He who finally bringeth men unto Himself.

WHITSUN

*"When he the Spirit of Truth comes,
He will guide you into all truth..."* — John 16 : 13

ANY event considered worth celebrating from year to year must be an event that is not merely past, but is also to a large extent still present. For instance, many events happened in English history; not all of them are celebrated today. The victory at Trafalgar on October 21st, 1805 is still remembered, because it saved England; she could have lost Waterloo, she could not have afforded to lose Trafalgar.

The second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles records how the Holy Ghost fell upon a certain number of people who had gathered together in Jerusalem, many hundreds of years ago. It was an event in a small provincial Town in the Roman Empire at a certain time. It, however, would not have been celebrated through all these years, if the event had significance only for those people at that place and time.

Whitsun is celebrated because, behind the event that happened in Jerusalem, are the words "And I will give you another Counsellor, to be with you". It is because the Christian Church believes that the effects of the event that took place in Jerusalem still operate that it celebrates the event itself.

Christians are not a sinless people; at no time were they a sinless people. From the letters that St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church it is obvious that members of the Christian churches even in Apostolic times were not a sinless people. Yet Christians presume to preach to others and say they have the truth which others must hear. Dr. Radhakrishnan once said to some Christians "You are a common people who think you are an uncommon people". Dr. Radhakrishnan was quite right from his point of view. We are a very common people, We presume to preach to others, not because we have come to know the truth either through our sinlessness or intellectual ability, but

because the Truth was delivered to us; and because it was promised to us that the Spirit of Truth would be in our midst guiding us.

Often the Church has committed grave mistakes, has been cruel, has been wordly and indifferent and fallen into inexcusable stupor. It has done this, because it consists of ordinary men and women. But it also as often repented and aroused itself and borne heroic witness to its message. It has done this, because the Spirit of Truth has been with it guiding it into truth. The Holy Spirit guides us into the truth and gives strength and courage to bear our witness.

So at this season we rejoice not merely because we have been called, not merely because we have a gospel, not merely because we are members of a body, which has been called the body of the Son of God, but because through the years, day by day, God's Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost has been with us, and is with us guiding inspiring and strengthening us.

Ceylon Churchman — Aug. 1966

**“WATCH YE, STAND FAST IN THE FAITH,
QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE STRONG.”—1 Cor. 16: 13**

(Sermon preached in Jaffna at the Thanksgiving Service on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the appointment of Venerable J. A. R. Navaratnam as Archdeacon of Jaffna August 1966.)

QUITE a few of you here tonight, I believe, were also present when 25 years ago, in this very church, our dear friend and brother J. A. R. Navaratnam was installed in the office of Archdeacon of Jaffna by Bishop Cecil Douglas Horsley. “Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself” says Scripture. But if it is wrong to boast when a man is putting on his armour, it is very meet and right that, when he has worn it for 25 years and proved himself worthy of it, his friends and those in whose midst he has worked should come together to give thanks to God, for all that he has done, all that he has been and all that he has meant to them during these years.

The customary word used in the New Testament for a “servant” is the word *doulos*, which means a slave; because at that time servants were usually slaves. When the Roman Empire was enlarging her boundaries with an irresistible sureness, slaves were cheap in the markets of all the big cities; and a slave, once bought, was a slave for life. It was, therefore, convenient for most people to have such servants. But there is another Greek word used in the New Testament, also translated by the English word servant, viz. *diakonos*. The position of a *diakonos* was, however, very different from that of a *doulos*. A *doulos* had no status in society; he had no legal rights: he was just a chattel owned by somebody, like other items of property. A *diakonos*, on the other hand, was a servant only in relation to his master. A man otherwise honourable could be a *diakonos* in regard to his master; but his master he was bound to obey, obey even to his disadvantage. The service performed by a *diakonos* was called *diakonia*.

The term *diakonos* in the singular or plural is often used in the New Testament for the servant or servants of a noble-man, king or of God Himself. Thus in the 'parable' of the wedding feast, the king tells his *diakonoi* to punish the guest without a wedding garment. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, asks, "What then is Apollos? and what is Paul, *diakonoi* through whom ye believed." Our Lord Himself has used the verbal form of *diakonos* about the nature of His own mission: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

The early Church got hold of the word *diakonos* and applied it to one who belonged to a special class of its officers. We are told in the 6th Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles how the Apostles, finding the task of attending to the needs of the poor a nuisance, set apart seven men for that special purpose. From that time onwards the term has attached itself to those whose special responsibility it has been to be in charge of the charitable and temporal duties and services of the Church.

It is, however, obvious that from the first no hard and fast distinction was drawn in the Church between the duties of any one class of officers and another. The first martyr of the Church was Stephen, a deacon; and his speech is the longest recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Philip, another deacon, is recorded as having been on a missionary tour in Samaria; and he it was who expounded the Scriptures to the Ethiopian eunuch and baptised him. 300 years later, Athanasius, whose views finally prevailed at the Council of Nicaea, attended that Council as a deacon; and, as far as we can see, he seems to have been pre-occupied with anything but the temporal needs of the see of Alexandria.

And the Apostles, on the other hand, seem to have realised that they had been rather hasty in thinking that they could wash their hands of temporal matters. For, in the Letter to the Galatians, we read how the Council of Jerusalem commissioned Paul to collect money for the poor when he was on his missionary journey; and Paul was very faithful to the commission. Even

when he came back to Jerusalem from his third and last missionary journey, he came with money for the poor Christians of Jerusalem.

When the Apostles passed away from the scene, those who took their place claimed that they were *episcopoi*, overseers of the various ministries of the Church. That is, while the task of preaching or announcing the *Kerugma* was of overriding importance and provided the only justification for the existence of the Church, it was realised that there were also other things the Church had to do. The "The Shepherd of Hermas" written round A. D. 160 tells us that supervision of the *diakonia* was a special care of the Bishop; and the "Constitutions of the Holy Apostles," written any time between 200 to 500 A. D., reveals the interesting fact that one of the duties of a Bishop at that time was to arrange marriages, a duty to which modern Bishops, I regret to say, do not pay much attention.

However, though the Bishops had supervision over the *diakonia*, as of the other ministries of the Church, the deacons were in special charge of it; and on the Scriptural pattern their number was limited to seven in each area. One of them presided over the others and came to be called the Archdeacon. From very early times it seems to have been the practice for the Bishop to make the Archdeacon his chief assistant in the government of the Church. The practice of the Archdeacon being called upon to do this does not seem to have been merely a matter of custom, but a matter of right; for the Archdeacon seems also to have had the right of succession to the Bishop's Chair. And the Archdeacon was only in Deacon's Orders. No doubt on this point a change came over the matter as time went on. But in the Church of England, it was only in 1662 that it was made compulsory for an Archdeacon to be a priest.

The practice of a person in charge of temporal affairs having an ex-officio right to be the chief assistant to the Bishop might seem strange to us. We might perhaps imagine that a Bishop thought it wise to make a person in Deacon's Orders his assistant,

as a person in priestly orders might become too presumptuous and might want to consider himself already a Bishop. But the real reason for the practice was to emphasise the true nature of the Church.

The true marks of the Church were considered to be the *kerugma* (the message), the *koinonia* (the fellowship) and the *diakonia*. Sometimes, the *diakonia* as a necessary mark of the Church has been forgotten and ignored, sometimes deliberately repudiated. In the early centuries there were many heretical sects which, because of the hangover from their Greek heritage, taught that while the spirit was holy, matter was inherently evil. Even now there are many who think that the Church has nothing to do with the world and should leave it alone. Archbishop Temple has replied to such people in the well-known words that Christianity is the most materialistic of all religions; and modern ecumenical theology emphasises this by pointing out that the Incarnation itself was a secular event. The practice of the Archdeacon becoming the chief assistant to the Bishop is a continuous protest and safeguard against the tendency to think that the Church must leave the world alone.

The functions of an Archdeacon have always been difficult of definition. Once it was found that the only definition that could satisfy the British House of Commons was that he performed Archdeaconal functions. However, it would appear that his functions have always included disciplinary supervision of the clergy and care of the temporal property of the Church. They have often included the right to examine candidates for ordination, induct priests to new parishes and church wardens to their office. Because the functions of an Archdeacon have varied from See to See and from time to time, it was thought enough in ancient times to call the Archdeacon the *oculus episcopi*, the eye of the Bishop.

That is, whatever be the particular duties assigned to an Archdeacon in a Diocese, his general duty and immemorial duty, has been to be the Bishop's watchman. "Watch ye" says St. Paul, "Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." It

is his duty to be constantly on the watch. It is his duty to see whether parishes are filled, whether clergy are rightly discharging their duty, whether unscrupulous persons are not eating into the property of the Church. The Bishop administers the Diocese; but the Archdeacons must see that there is a Diocese to administer. If Archdeacons are not continuously on the watch the Diocese will go to pieces. A watchman of the Church must himself be strong in the faith; otherwise, he cannot know and he will not care if the faith of the church grows weak and dim. He must be strong and without fear or favour; otherwise he will not care if things go wrong, habits become lax and the Church is ceasing to be the Church.

From time to time we can imagine the voice of the Bishop coming over, saying "Watchman, how goes it?" Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher said, perhaps half humorously, but half seriously, "If we say we are not doing too badly, we are sunk." For an Archbishop these words are sound. It is the duty of Archbishops to be always comparing the immediate with the ultimate, to be always dissatisfied with the immediate and be always wanting an approximation to the ideal. It is necessary for the Church that its highest authorities on earth should always be viewing things *sub specie aeternitatis* and should always feel that the Church is not living up to what is expected of it by its Lord. This necessary dissatisfaction of an Archbishop is expected to be constant.

Though an Archdeacon himself should not lose sight of the ultimate and the ideal, his special duty is with the immediate: to see that the affairs in his Archdeaconry are getting on satisfactorily. The dissatisfaction of an Archdeacon must be capable of immediate cure. It is a good sign if an Archbishop is despondent about the Church; it is a very bad sign if an Archdeacon is despondent about the affairs of his Archdeaconry. The affairs about which an Archbishop feels despondent cannot be set right immediately or easily. The affairs about which an Archdeacon feels despondent can and ought to be set right immediately. The Archdeacon is a pragmatic officer, setting things right here and

now. Archdeacons must see to it that the Diocese is holding together, that duties are being discharged faithfully from day to day. If not, they are responsible to the Bishop to see that this happens. They are the Bishop's unwearied watchmen. It is only if Archdeacons are unwearied in their Archdeaconries that there will be a Church for Archbishops to contemplate in regard to its ultimate aims and ideals.

In the first Chapter of the book of Revelation, St. John the Divine tells us how, as an exile living in the lonely island of Patmos, he saw a vision. In that vision he saw seven candlesticks and in the midst of those candlesticks there was one clothed like unto the Son of Man. The Son of Man is the Lord of the Church; but the Lord also requires servants to tend the candles and keep them burning. And we creatures of a day, from Archbishops to Laymen, are called upon to serve Him in various capacities. Before us there were others; and after us still others; but each in his time and generation is called upon to be faithful to the end.

This evening we thank God that our brother Navaratnam has during the last 25 years been faithful to the duty to which he was called; and we pray that God may enable him to continue faithful for many more years and be a fit instrument of His purpose.

ON UNITARIANISM

(This was written to a Hindu friend of mine, who had probably written asking why Christians could not give up their special belief in Jesus Christ and enter into perfect religious fellowship with Hindus.)

Dear Dr. Subramaniam,

Thank you for your recent letter.

UNITARIANISM is an easy doctrine to hold. In the first place, the ordinary man will say "Here was a man born of a woman at a definite time and place, who went through the same kind of life that others do. How can he be called God?" Also many Bible verses can be quoted to prove that He went through life as all others do, that He ate, drank and slept.

Why then did the Christian Church come to hold and teach the difficult doctrine that though Jesus was a man, He was also God? Because from the time of His resurrection the disciples came to the conclusion that the Jesus whom they had known as man was also God indeed:

1. The Word was with God and the Word was God—
John 1: 1.
2. Who being in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped at but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. etc. — Phil. 2: 6 & 7 —
American Standard Revised.
3. In II Cor. 13: 14 St. Paul puts God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost on the same level (The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost etc.)
4. In Gal. 6: 18, St. Paul thinks it enough to say the "Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you", as if that includes all that was said in II Cor. 13: 14.

Though the Disciples came to believe it only after the Resurrection, they could have done so only if the words of Jesus Himself had led them to feel that His relationship to God was of such a nature as to warrant such a conclusion.

1. I and my Father are one — John 10 : 30.
2. Philip saith unto him, "Lord show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus saith unto him, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me?" (Jn. 14 : 19).

Actually, the difficulty for the early converts was not to doubt the real divinity of Jesus but to doubt His real humanity. They were inclined to think that He was merely God in human form and not really man (as in the case of Hindu avatars). That is why many Biblical writers are concerned to stress the reality of His manhood.

1. The Word became flesh — John 1 : 14.
2. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels etc. I Tim. 3 : 16.
3. For many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. — II John : 7.

The Church knows the difficulty of believing that Jesus was both truly God and also true man ; but it has always believed that there is no alternative to believing in such a doctrine, in spite of its difficulty. We cannot expect to size up God with our ideas and thoughts. He is far above them and we therefore cannot reject a doctrine of the Godhead, simply because it is difficult. It is because He is difficult to know and understand that the Word was manifested in the flesh ; and Jesus could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."—John 14 : 9. And Thomas who had been with Jesus long, when he finally realised who Jesus was, could say "My Lord and my God"—(John 20 : 20).

If, however, you hold that Jesus was certainly more than man but less than God, you will be setting up Jesus as a minor god and breaking the scriptural command which says, "The Lord thy God is one God" (Deut. 5 : 4) and thou shalt have

none other Gods before me" (Deut. 5 : 7). To set up Jesus as a minor god, therefore, will not do. God is one.

That is why Jesus said: "I am in the Father and the Father is in me." (John 14: 11). It is the one God whom we worship, who came down in His Son Jesus. It is His Spirit which works in us as the Holy Spirit. This is the meaning of our saying that Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God; and yet God is one. This is what is called the doctrine of the Trinity. It is not an easy doctrine; but God is God and we are men and we cannot expect that we should understand the manner of His existence; nor is it necessary that we should understand. What is necessary is for us to know that He loves us and has saved us.

As for the human soul, you quote a verse from the Psalms, which reflects the old Jewish belief that the soul dies when the body dies. But Christian belief is not in all respects the same as Jewish belief, there is a difference between the old Testament and New Testament. On the point you have raised how do you explain the following verses:

1. He that believeth in me; though he were dead, yet shall he live. (John 11 : 25)
2. In my Father's house are many mansions.....I go to prepare a place for you. (John 14 : 2 & 3)
3. Wherefore seeking we are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses etc. (Heb. 12 : 1)
4. He that overcometh to him will I give to sit with me..... even as I also overcame and am sat down with my Father on His throne. (Rev. 3 : 22)

It is said that Elijah was taken up into heaven. What happened to him? He could not have gone to heaven with a dead soul?

From the above you will see that the position which the Christian Church has always taken up is quite Biblical and is a continuation of the position taken up by the early Apostles. I hope therefore, most earnestly that you will not think that the church is misguided.

Sermon before the Synod of the Church of South India, 4th Jan. 1970

(The Church of South India is now composed of 21 Dioceses. In 1970 they must have been less, each under its own Bishop and Diocesan Council. The Synod is its sovereign body and meets once in two years and is presided over by the Moderator, who during his term of office is the Chief Bishop. Probably, I was given the chance of preaching at this meeting because it was my last year of office.)

“Thus saith the Lord” Amos 1 : 1

A common question asked in the world is “What is your authority?”. In all spheres and at all levels whenever anybody makes a request or gives an order for anything new, important or unusual to be done, unless he has an obvious right to do so, the question he has to answer is on whose authority he is making the request or giving the order. Sometimes the question is plainly asked; sometimes he himself anticipates it by answering it before it is asked; but the question is always there in such situations; and whether it is asked or not and must be answered if anything is to happen.

Always the authority cited must be one whose right in that context is beyond dispute. In a factory the word of a Foreman may be enough; for searching a house, the signature of a Magistrate may be enough; but if a man is to be arrested and deprived of his liberty as a citizen, in most parts of the British Commonwealth the Police say, “In the name of the Queen”. In every country when a new law is announced which the whole nation is expected to obey, it is announced in the name of the head of the State. The nature of the authority must correspond to the nature of the demand made.

Religion has to do with man's ultimate destiny. For that reason he has always been fundamentally concerned with it; and, therefore, man has always had a religion. We are told that it is

impossible to find a race or nation in the world that has not had a religion. Individuals, races and nations do sometimes change their religion for sufficient reason; but generally speaking the religion which they have adopted or are practising is one to which they are adjusted. They have found it suitable. Usually they do not allow their religion to make very heavy demands on them; what they expect from their religion is that it should help them when they stand in need of help. We are told that when Alexander the Great was besieging the city of Tyre, the people there tied up the statue of Hercules with chains to prevent that god from deserting to the enemy (Alexander, however, seemed to have managed things without any help from Hercules). In general, in spite of occasional disappointments they have found their religion useful; they are satisfied with it, are adjusted to it and are at home in it. This is why religion has been a universal phenomenon.

Religion has not merely been a universal phenomenon, it has also by and large had a strong hold on people. The Graeco-Roman world into which St. Paul and his companions went abounded with religion; in fact, it has been said that there were more gods worshipped in Athens than there were men to worship. Here in India an overwhelming mass of the people inherit the Hindu tradition, which has come down through 3000 years. That tradition has been associated with systems of worship, sanctified in the eyes of those who practise them by the sanction of the ages and associated with systems of thought which still command the admiration of the world. In Ceylon, Thailand and Burma the greatest part of the people walk by the teachings of Gautama Buddha, who is held even by many who do not agree with him, to be one of the greatest figures of all time. In recent years Buddhism has been asserting itself with great vigour. Throughout the Middle East and many other lands Islam commands unquestioning obedience.

It is being said that now there is a revolt on the part of many in the West against all religion. The presuppositions and standards of all religion whatsoever, we are told, are being thrown

to the winds. But this attitude itself is the result of an implicit religion; denial of faith is itself a faith.

Into a world with its multitude of religious faiths and traditions even then what right had Christianity to go out in the first century? What right has it to preach its message at the present time, when people usually cling to their old faiths or have discarded them in favour of the new religion of no-faith? In the early centuries the acceptance of the Christian Faith usually meant death. In many parts of the world it still means much danger; even in centuries which profess religious neutrality, it usually carries with it heavy disadvantages. Often it involves a good deal of inconvenience and invites ridicule. Always, even where such dangers and difficulties do not exist at the public level, in private life the Christian faith demands a total surrender which people are seldom ready to make easily or willingly.

When the cost of giving up the old faith or the new no-faith and acceptance something different is so great, the world has got the right to ask us for our authority. They may say, "You are asking us to give up our usual beliefs, beliefs which our forefathers have held through the centuries. You are asking us to give up the familiar world in which we live and in which we are at home. You are asking us to give up practices we are used to and surrender ourselves totally to the new demands made on us". Or they may say "You are asking us to give up the belief that all beliefs are a fraud and that all ethics and practices based on them are a cruel imposition on human liberty". Everyone who has a faith to cling to or a faith he has discarded may well ask us when we preach our message, "On what authority do you do this?"

Various authorities have been cited. Old-time evangelists, when speaking to non-Christians, often used to cite their own moral superiority and say, "We are better than you". This claim became somewhat ridiculous after the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi. Some missionaries in India in the old days used to imagine that they were spreading civilisation; by which they

meant Western civilisation, which was the only civilisation they acknowledged. Apart from the merit or demerit of displacing one civilisation by another, the stock of Western civilisation does not stand very high in the world market just now. Nor does it look as if Western civilisation itself wants Christianity at all. Fifty years ago Dr. J. N. Farquhar and his School recommended Christianity to Hindus on the basis that it possessed better values than those found in Hinduism. But to recommend Christianity on the basis of values would require that where they are recommended the values should be acknowledged on both sides.

Some five or six years ago a Company was being floated to make the American city of Las Vegas a second Sodom. We may, therefore, have to deal with a context where our values have dissolved into nothingness. Can we say that the Christian pre-suppositions are more reasonable than those of other religions? In that case, we may well be asked by what criterion we judge the reasonableness or otherwise of our presuppositions.

What then is our authority? To kings and peoples of old who asked the question, the prophets had only one answer, "Thus saith the Lord". What right had Amos from the small Southern kingdom of Judah to denounce Damascus, the capital of Syria, Gaza and Ashdod the chief cities of the Philistines and Tyre and Edom and Ammon? When Amaziah, the High Priest of the Northern kingdom said to him, "Why don't you go and prophesy in your own Kingdom?", the answer of Amos was simple, "The Lord said to me, "Go prophesy to my people of Israel".

So today if we are asked on what authority we proclaim the Christian message here in India or elsewhere, our answer cannot be anything but the answer of Amos, the answer of all prophets and Apostles. Any Church or Denomination or Missionary Society which builds on any other warrant is building on shifting sand. About 25 years ago, an one time Chairman of the India-Committee of a Missionary Society told me that he had given up his connexion with that Society because he had realised that its

case for Missions was bogus. It had built its case on the need to civilise India and he had come to think it simply was not genuine. That authority had given way under him now, and he was honest enough to realise that he could not stand on it any longer.

We can carry on only in the conviction that ultimately against the message that we proclaim are written the words, "Thus saith the Lord". No lesser authority can warrant our intervention in the world; not lesser authority can make our intervention worth-while. No lesser authority carries with it the hope of comfort and strength and freedom. No claim we make for ourselves, our values, or any human achievement or any human wisdom is good enough to justify our claim to proclaim our message, where people are well satisfied with their own religion, their own values or achievements. No lesser authority will do than, "Thus saith the Lord".

And no higher authority is needed; for there can be none higher. If we are speaking about ultimate things and must justify our claim to do so, there can be no answer more ultimate than, "Thus saith the Lord".

We who have been entrusted with the commission to preach the Christian message may belong to different backgrounds, with different kinds of training and differing experiences and varying degrees of knowledge or ignorance and may all have various kinds of failings; and each of us may proclaim it in a different way. But at bottom there is a givenness about what we say far greater than what the world can give, the same givenness that was at the bottom of what the prophets and the Apostles said. We interpret and illustrate, draw comparisons and contrasts; we make mistakes; we may use the categories of an earlier generation and be accused of being outmoded at the present time; we may use the categories of the present time and be accused of being out-moded by future generations. This will happen when man interprets the message of God. There are no thought-forms that hold good for all time. But what we try to express in these thought-forms does hold good for all time.

If we say that it is God who speaks through us we may be asked why we think so. In recent times somebody has put the point amusingly by saying that it is odd that God should choose the Jews. In the 2nd century Celsus expressed scorn at the idea of Christians gathered like ants round their little hills and holes imagining that the great God of the Universe had revealed His plans exclusively to them. That is, when we present our warrant, we may be asked what guarantee there is that it is not faked. Everybody speaking at the level of the ultimate may claim that he is speaking the word for God. Considering the high issue at stake and the audacity of our own claim, the demand to prove the genuineness of that claim is more than just.

To that demand we reply that our warrant is vouched for by Jesus Christ. Beyond his testimony we cannot go and do not care to go. St. John represents Him as saying, "I and the Father are one"; and in more than one place He is recorded as saying "He that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me". That is sufficient testimony for us.

Therefore, knowing only too well our own failings and our ignorance about many things in heaven and on earth, we can still say, wherever we might be proclaiming our message, "Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord has spoken".

A SERMONETTE

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgement.....but He that judgeth me is the Lord"—1 Cor. 4 : 3 & 4.

THERE is a good deal of complaint now a days that Christianity in the past has been concerned too much with the other world and neglecting this. The vogue now in religious circles is to try and make up for what is looked upon as past neglect. The emphasis in religious books, magazines and sermons now upon all sorts of things that should be done in the world amounts to an obsession.

It is, therefore, imagined that nothing else matters and that it is of no consequence whether there is anything else to be concerned about. Even religious people think that they are doing their duty by advising people to be entirely this-worldly.

There are, of course, many different ways of being this-worldly, as everyone knows. There was the unjust judge in the Parable who feared not God nor regarded man. He was entirely this-worldly. There are certainly better ways of being this-worldly. But even if you choose the best way of being this-worldly is man fulfilling his purpose if he forgets God, forgets that he is a child of God and put here by Him.

Both the great Old Testament figures and of the New Testament figures were people who lived very much in this world. Abraham and David and Paul were very much in the world. David, with all his faults was very much of a king and Paul must have made a lot of tents. But they were men who knew that whatever they did their ultimate judge was God. Though they lived in this world, they lived in the presence of God.

That is why, Paul having given his opinion in certain matters, says after all it is what God thinks of him that matters. Let the world be emphasised as much as possible; but a world that that thinks it is not under the eye of God is not the world that the Bible wants.

O Sing Unto the Lord a New Song

— Psalm 98 : 1

II

THROUGHOUT the Psalms we often find similar words. The Psalmists seem very frequently to have just wanted to praise God. They usually think of the reasons later: God's power, His mercies, His goodness to Israel, His righteousness and His everlastingness. But the desire just to praise Him often comes first.

Looking at the world, people may find many reasons to grumble and find fault. There is sorrow and evil in good measure. Because of them it has often been asked whether God could be all powerful; and since it is assumed that if God exists He must be infinitely powerful and infinitely good, some have said that there can be no God; that He just does not exist.

Sorrow and evil must have existed as much in the days of the Psalmists as in our day. In fact, few people in history have suffered more than those from whom the Psalms come to us. Israel was a small nation, surrounded by big nations, who were constantly marching across its land making mince-meat of its people. References to such events are to be found all over the Psalms.

Yet the desire to praise the Lord is often welling up to the lips of the Psalmists. Why? Because they were not willing to take for granted all the beauty, the greatness, the goodness and the glory they found around them and in them: the sun and the moon and the stars, their status over the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, their existence as a nation (in spite of hardships), the opportunity to worship God and life itself. They were not looking upon these as due to themselves and looking upon the sorrows and injustices in the world as something for which God had to give an account to themselves. They were always filled with a sense of wonder.

The Psalmists were willing to start from the bottom. They were not taking anything for granted. What is man? What has he done to deserve anything? All the evil that could be seen among men as men, all the evil in nature and all the cruelty that they experienced as a nation could not wipe out in their eyes, the miracle of being alive in this world and experiencing the possibilities of life. As Studdert Kennedy, the famous First World War Chaplain, said in one of his poems: Yes, there is a lot of cruelty, evil and injustice in the world; but what about the sun-set?

Because of this attitude the heart of the Psalmists was always filled with joy and wonder and gratitude to God. They always wanted to give thanks to Him. The earth may change and the mountains may be moved into the sea; yet the Lord God is worthy of thanks for all that we are, for what we see and know and can do.

CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS to Christians is the most joyous of days in the years; and the Christmas season has also become the most joyous of seasons. So infectious is this joyousness, that many in the modern world who do not accept what Christmas stands for still celebrate it with the utmost gaiety. Atheists in the West buy presents for their children, set up the Christmas tree and burn the Yule log; and in our own country we find Buddhists and others burning Christmas lanterns and firing crackers.

It is good for all people occasionally to indulge in a little innocent gaiety. But we must realise that the purpose in observing Christmas is not to cater to people's need for occasional gaiety. In fact, for nearly three centuries Christians were a hunted and persecuted sect who could not afford the luxury of a festival season. Nor were Christians certain about the exact day on which the Lord was born. It was only when the Church began to think out its theology that it felt that some day had to be observed to mark the event.

And so important is that event in the eyes of Christians that its observance has become marked by the joyousness and gaiety now associated with it. Christmas, Good Friday and Easter are three greatest days in the Christian calendar; but both Good Friday and Easter have behind them the assumption that makes Christmas so great and important an event. The assumption behind Christmas is that the "Word became flesh".

What actually happened in the little town of Bethlehem in an outlying province of the Roman Empire was that a child was born that day in the world. The event that Christians celebrate is that the "Word was made flesh". To them it is a cosmic event, unrepeatable and without parallel in the history of man and in the history of God's relationship to man.

The world has had many teachers; their teachings are often a great heritage. There have been philosophers; their thoughts

have often done much good. There have been poets, whose songs have been an inspiration to many. But their births were not cosmic events; they did not impinge upon man's ultimate destiny. They marked no era in God's relationship to His creation.

The significance of the birth of Jesus Christ, in the eyes of Christians, is that into this world of sin and sorrow, of pain and regrets, yet of hopes and longings, with its struggling men and women against whom stands the mocking figure of death—into this world “the day-spring from on high” has come; that in the event that took place in Bethlehem that night, God Almighty has visited the earth. Unless we see in the occurrence at Bethlehem this event, Christmas need not have any significance to anybody. But this is the significance that the Christian Church has seen in it.

And it is this significance that makes Christmas such a joyous day to us. So we wish our readers, as well as the world.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Questions before The Church of God today

*(From the Chief Guest's Address at the Colombo Diocesan
Council 1969)*

A Chief guest can say anything he likes and get away with it. He is not repudiated, is not criticised at least on the floor, and is not subjected to questions. It is not a privilege one enjoys very often; and therefore one is justified in making full use of it while it lasts.

I want to consider certain alternatives between which the Christian Church is constantly asked to choose. They are not the kind of questions on which you are called upon to vote in Church Assemblies; they do not come up for a vote, not because they are unimportant but because they are too important to be voted upon. It may be said that it is the stand-point one adopts on these issues that determine one's stand-point upon questions that do come before Church Assemblies.

The first is a question requiring a good deal of rashness on the part of anyone who desires to put it before an Anglican audience; but once the surprise at my rashness is got over, it will be recognised as a question that cannot be left alone. Should the Christian Church be Catholic or Protestant? I remember many years ago, I think it was during the inter-regnum between Bishop Carpenter-Garnier and Bishop Horsley, the Commissary in charge of this Diocese at the time, in his charge to the Diocesan Council saying, "The Church is always Catholic; it is sometimes Protestant." Knowing the good man very well, I believe he would have preferred to say that the Church should always be Catholic and never Protestant; but certain obvious facts stood in his way.

The word "Catholic," as is well known, comes from a Greek word meaning "universal". The Vincentian Canon lays down the qualification for Catholicity as believing what was believed everywhere, always and by everybody. In the early centuries the term

was claimed by the main Church to distinguish itself from the large number of heretical sects that used to spring up from time to time and claim to be teaching the Christian truth. After the Reformation the term has been claimed by the Roman Church as having exclusive reference to itself; what is not itself the Roman Church calls "Protestant".

The word "Protestant" comes from the Latin word "pro-testor", the basic word being allied to the English word, "testimony". The word simply meant "I assert" or "affirm". At the Diet of Speyers during the Reformation the word was applied to those who protested against the decisions of the Catholic majority. After that and for a long time it had reference to those who in the Western Church did not owe allegiance to the Pope and was accepted by them as having that reference. It will be seen that while one term was deliberately appropriated by one group, the other term attached itself to the other group accidentally. However, the term "Protestant" has not come to be resented by some who at one time would have thought that they could not be called by any other name.

If the reference of the terms is to be determined by popular usage, no purpose is served by our discussion, because the matter is not in our hands. Whatever we might say, those who wish will continue to call one ecclesiastical bloc "Catholic" and the rest "Protestant". But the terms also imply certain types of outlook, because they are associated with either one of these blocs. The Catholic outlook regards Christian truth as having been delivered to the saints once and for all, and is concerned with jealously safeguarding it and looking with suspicion upon all new departures. The Protestant outlook is regarded as a determination to subject every belief and practice to scrutiny in the light of God's will for his people at the present time, to discard and revise what cannot be defended and to admit the validity of new insights.

In this issue which side should the Church take? I do not want to guess how the House will divide here. But there are many who will unhesitatingly say that the Church should at all

times and in all places be Catholic. On the other hand, quite a few of us are from time to time flooded with pamphlets, containing liberal quotations from Latimer and Ridley, saying that the Church should always be Protestant and nothing else. Not given very much to the habit of reading these pamphlets, I am not sure of their argument; but I have a suspicion that all that they say is that all those who are not under the Pope should not be under him. Disagreement is hardly possible. But the question as to what the outlook of the Church should be remains. Should it be Catholic or Protestant?

The second issue is whether the Church should be other-worldly or this-worldly in its attitude. Religion is generally associated with other-worldliness; and even in Christianity the tendency has been strongly present. "I am a creature of a day passing through life, like an arrow through the air. I am a spirit coming from God and returning to God. I want to know one thing, the way to Heaven", said John Wesley in the 18th Century. Most Methodists today would repudiate such an attitude. (We can, therefore, say that most Methodists now are not in this respect Weslevans). However, many earnest Christians throughout the world will hold fervently, if not vehemently, that Christianity should be concerned only with the other world and that what goes on in this world is none of its business. Karl Marx agrees completely and says that the whole purpose of religion is to keep people pre-occupied with the talk about the other world, while the Capitalists eat up their substance.

On the other hand, there has been in modern times a tremendous revulsion against this attitude; and many who call themselves Christian theologians hold with conviction not so much that Christianity should be concerned with this world as that it is all that Christianity can be concerned with. The most talked of theologian of the present time, Rudolf Bultmann, has even made the dictum of the noted atheist, Ludwig Feurbach his own. According to Feurbach, all theology is simply anthropology; that is, theology cannot talk about God but only about man. Feurbach said so, because he did not believe that there is a God; Bultmann says so not because he thinks there is no God, but because he

thinks that God is so transcendent that we cannot know anything about Him, and that it a sin even to talk about Him. Many theologians, with far less scholarship than Bultmann but far more nerve, find this stand point very convenient; because their own belief in God is very shaky, and it suits them exceedingly that Christianity should stick to this world and does not talk about the other world.

The third issue is whether the Church should be concerned with the individual or Society. The individual is a more obvious entity than Society; individuals compose Society; they compose the Church, make its decisions and guide its policy. Society may seem a metaphysical concept. Is there such a thing as Society apart from the individuals who compose it, it may be asked. Anyway, there is a general tendency to think that Religion is concerned only with the individual. The great philosopher, A. N. Whitehead, defined religion as that which a man does with his solitariness. Governments, particularly in Communist countries, are often willing to allow the Church perfect freedom of worship, which is looked upon as its proper function but do not want it to extend its interests to the world outside. On the other hand, it is related that Lord Melbourne, one of the early Prime Ministers of Queen Victoria, was scandalised when a clergyman had preached on private morals. His view of the Church's duty was that it should continue to give its endorsement to the policies and principles of the Whig party, as it had mostly done in the 18th century. Should the Church be concerned with the individual, his needs, both heavenly and earthly, his morals and his problems or should it take Lord Melbourne's side that it and say should be concerned only with the problems and welfare of Society?

The last issue to which I would like to refer is whether the Church should take account of questions that rise at particular times and in particular situations. Social concern is general; one may have social concern in general and yet keep aloof from questions that come to a head because of particular circumstances. Should the Church intervene in these questions? Martin Luther thought it should not, being strongly of opinion that the ruler of

a State should be allowed freedom to rule without interference from the Church. Stanley Baldwin took up the same attitude when William Temple tried to get the Church to intervene in the General Strike of 1926 and asked him, how he would like the Cabinet to revise the 39 articles. Most people in Germany adopted the attitude of Martin Luther during the Third Reich. Hitler found this attitude as helpful as that of a sect, headed by Reich - Bishop Muller, the chief purpose of which was to support him. John Calvin in this issue took up the opposite attitude. Should the Church take account of questions rising in particular situations or should it not?

I hope it will be realised that though I have put these questions before you, it is not I who ask them; they are questions asked by the world. I have merely brought them to your notice, as any body could have done. But I cannot claim the same source for the answers as for the questions. The answers can be set aside but not the questions. Fortunately, the issues are not coming up before you for a vote.

Should the Church be Catholic or Protestant? My friend, the late David Chellappa, formerly Bishop in Madras, once said, "Some say that St. Augustine was the father of Catholicism and others say that he was the father of Protestantism. I have gone into the matter carefully and have come to the conclusion that he belonged to the C.S.I." The C.S.I. consists of those who at one time belonged both to the Anglican tradition as well as to other traditions. But, believe me, the past history of a person is no guide to the views held by him now. Does the presence of both traditions in any particular Church at a particular time look a flimsy basis on which to build any general thesis? I can find no better basis for my thesis than the fact that a close scrutiny of the struggle at the Reformation will reveal that the Catholics and Protestants were then each fighting to uphold the point of view of the other side. The Catholics were fighting tooth and nail for maintaining the validity of new insights and the right of making new departures and the Protestants were fighting for the truth once and for all delivered to the Saints, from which Popes and

Councils had no right to depart. Martin Luther would have been surprised if anybody had considered him anything other than a sound Catholic. It is my sincere belief that the Christian Church should be Catholic and Protestant, that the Church should uphold that which was given once and for all and should respect tradition and continuity, but that it should also be always willing to examine anew all its attitudes in the light of new insights about the will of an ever-living God.

Should the Church be other-worldly or this-worldly? The Bible is about a God who is from everlasting to everlasting, who was God before the mountains were brought forth or earth received her frame. It is round Him that the Bible is written; it is what this God has done that constitutes the Christian gospel. A gospel from which the dimension of transcendence is absent is not a truncated version of the Christian Gospel, but a substitute for it.

On the other hand, as is now-a-days constantly emphasised in ecumenical circles the Incarnation is a secular event; and the "Green hill on which the Prince of Glory died" is in the city of Jerusalem, which is a bone of contention between various warring nations at the present time. It is this world which God so loved as to give for it His only begotten Son. To leave out this world from the Christian Gospel would be to talk about some other God than the one about whom the Bible speaks. "Christianity is the most materialistic of all religions", said Archbishop Wm. Temple. The Christian Church should, therefore, be other-worldly; but it should also be this-worldly.

Should the Church be concerned with the individual or with Society? That the Church should be concerned with the individual need not be stressed. Man was made in the image of God; and though he fell from his original state, he is still the child of God. "O God, Thou art my God," says the Psalmist. "When you go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who in heaven who heareth in secret will reward you", says our Lord. The individual cannot be ignored, and Christianity cannot be accused at any time of having done so.

On the other hand, there is such a thing as Society. Particular societies have each their own history, their customs, their ethical standards, their interests and aspirations. Individuals, good or bad, often have no option but to fit into these Societies and abide by their standards. Through the centuries millions of good Christians lived without qualms in Societies that looked upon slavery as normal. They generally shared in the belief that what was done by the group or society in which they lived was not one's business, and had to be taken for granted.

But it cannot be denied that the emphasis of both Old Testament and New Testament is overwhelmingly on the group: its beliefs, attitudes and behaviour. The Old Testament is largely concerned with what God did for Israel and what He expected it to do; and in the New Testament what St. Paul wants to make clear is that since old Israel had disobeyed God and rejected His Son, God has chosen a new Israel to take its place. Whitehead's definition is Biblically indefensible. In the Epistle to the Romans St. Paul even goes beyond human society and speaks of the whole creation waiting for redemption. It would, therefore, look as if the idea that Christianity is exclusively concerned with the individual is a late and illegitimate intruder into the Church. Social concern seems to have been present in the Church, to a greater or less degree, till the 17th Century. If the 19th Century emphasised the individual to the point of ignoring Society, it was also in the 19th Century that the Church rediscovered its duty towards Society, under the leadership of men like Charles Kingsley, F. D. Maurice and others, chiefly from the Anglican Church. Now the World Council of Churches has by precept and example made it clear that social concern is an inescapable duty of the Church. Therefore, while the Church's duty to the individual is undeniable, its duty to Society is equally undeniable.

The fact that the Church should be concerned with Society in general and Society as a whole need not necessarily mean that it should get involved in the particular questions that keep irrupting in society from time to time. Within one Society there are diverse and conflicting political, economic and other interests. These

conflicting interests produce these questions. It is often difficult to say where the right is ; a struggle may look like a football or cricket match in which either side seems to have an equal right to win, and the Church itself may be divided as to which side is right. Even when it can be of one mind as to where the right lies, its alignment with one side may estrange the other and impair its qualification to be an agent of God. The Church cannot, of course, resort to the device, common in democracies, of plumping straight away for the stronger and more numerical side; but to take the weaker side is to ask for trouble. The case for the Church to stand aside from all these struggles is, therefore, exceedingly strong.

But can the Church really stand aside? These struggles are what largely fill newspapers. There may be a good deal of self-interest, ambition and base motive involved but to a great extent they embody differing ideals about achieving human welfare ; and much depends on how they are decided. Is the Church to look on at all this with folded arms age after age? Has the Church no concern in all this? Will not continued neutrality lead us into indifference? Karl Barth called such an attitude on the part of the Church as that of not desiring to soil your shirt cuffs by allowing them to be razed by the mudguard of the world, Wm. Temple once said that it was the duty of Lambeth to remind Westminster of its duty to God. That Westminster might not appreciate such a reminder is a different matter ; and sometimes the duty may go further, may involve inconvenience, risk and even danger. When everything in Germany went down before Hitler, Einstein was awed by the spectacle of the Confessional Church alone standing squarely in his path. The occasion for the Church to intervene may not always be clear ; when it is clear its duty is inescapable.

It might be said that I have not answered any of the questions I raised, that I have stated the alternatives and refused to choose between them. I have refused to do so, because not one of them could be chosen to the exclusion of the other. Do I say that there is no difference between the one and the other of the various

alternatives? I do not. Do I say that differences do not matter? I do not; on the other hand, thought proceeds by definition and delimitation, by comparison and contrast. Do I deny that each of the alternatives stated is antithetical to the other? I do not. Do I say that, nevertheless, they should manage to co-exist? I do not. Do I say that they should be held in tension, like two horses pulling in different directions yet harnessed to the same carriage and managed by the driver's whip. I do not. What then do I say? I say that these antitheses belong to each other. How can alternatives mutually antithetical belong to each other? Am I doing violence to logic? No, logic breaks down by itself. We are looking upon the bride of Christ and trying to assess her nature and duties; and our definitions and delimitations collapse and antitheses merge. The Church is Catholic and Protestant; it is other-wordly and this-wordly; it is concerned with the individual and Society; it is above the clamour of politics, yet it has a duty to intervene.

BISHOP'S CHARGE

(A summary of the Charge the Rt. Rev. Dr. S. Kulandru delivered at the annual sessions of the Jaffna Diocesan Council of the Church of South India. This was the last occasion when he presided over the Council sessions as Bishop, since he was due to retire from his office in September of that year.)

GROWTH of Communism, the terrific catastrophe caused by the use of the atom bomb, the landing on the moon by American astronauts and the diversion of Mahaweli into the Dry Zone may strike some as marking particular eras. But to us the winning of freedom by Asian nations from the shackles of foreign power would seem to be of very great and significant importance. It was also a freedom from the accustomed dominion of the White Man over several aspects of life.

When I became a minister in 1931, there was the Jaffna Council of the South India United Church. Then its members were mostly ministers and Vernacular teachers, not those from bigger institutions. Power rested with the American Ceylon Mission. The Church Council had very little of it. And the Mission did not regard the Council as one of great importance. In 1947 when the Church of South India came into being it was termed one of the greatest wonders of the world, since the Reformation for the first time the Churches under Bishops and those without them came together. And we became a part of this new, United Church, which was becoming widely known and respected throughout the world. This gave us a sense of self-respect, a feeling of belonging to the World Church.

Results of this Happening

The following may be cited as results on our becoming the present Diocese:

1. The disappearance of the system of diarchy-out of the Mission and the Church Council—prevailing earlier for a long time.

2. A compact, closely knit instrument of Church government.
3. A better educated ministry.
4. A greater respect for Ministers.
5. A greater concern for Evangelism.
6. An Improved Religious Education for all, including adults. Formerly there was only a Work Among the Young Committee, concerned chiefly with the religious education and training of children. But now there is a Religious Education Board directing its efforts for the interests of all stages of life.
7. A greater respect and care for Confirmation. Now regular classes are held in all our churches for candidates for Confirmation.
8. An increasing use of Carnatic Music in our churches for worship, and also meaningful efforts for developing it and training people to use it.
9. Increased giving for Church work.
10. More persons have followed higher studies and training in foreign countries.
11. More direct contact with the American Board.

Achievements

These are some of the achievements that lie to our credit:

1. The creating of a Central Treasury, from which all Workers of the Church are paid.
2. The formation of a separate church belonging to the Diocese in Colombo in 1949.
3. The raising of Rs. 5,000/- towards Madurai Famine Relief Fund in 1950.
4. Delft becomes a Church in 1950.
5. The introduction of Choral Liturgy in 1957.
6. A good-will Mission sent to Malaya and Singapore in 1957.

7. Raising a fund for those who suffered in the Racial Riots of 1958.
8. The publishing of the Diocesan Handbook in 1959.
9. The celebration of Jubilees by four Churches: Uduppiddy, Chavakachcheri, Manipay, and Pandaterruppu.
10. The Revision of Hymn Books, first in 1950 and then in 1960. This involved a greater research into the lyrics by our people during 150 years.
11. The celebration of the Ter-Jubilee of the American Mission in 1966.
12. The launching of the Ter-Jubilee Fund.

Difficulties

I had some difficulties in the discharge of my duties. One of these was to reconcile congregational democracy and Bishop's rule. Another was to be a Bishop in one's own country and amidst one's own people. But these difficulties were overcome by me with the help of our people.

I had, in addition, the difficulty of setting a tradition as your first Bishop. There was the need for the initiating of several measures by the Bishop. He was responsible for it. It was also his responsibility to see that various Committees and Boards followed a co-ordinated policy. For the efficient discharge of such responsibilities there had to be great confidence of the people in the Bishop; I was privileged to enjoy this; hence the efficient discharge of responsibilities. It is my conviction that my hands have been clean of the charge of doing things for benefit of those nearest to me, or to suit any of my own interests.

Reasons for joy

I have had several reasons for joy at the manner in which the Diocese has conducted its affairs. These are the chief of these reasons: first, the sense of responsibility shown by the Diocese; second, its sense of independence; and, third, its ability, though a small Diocese with limited resources, to deal with all questions, like continuing the publication of the Morning Star.

For the Future

I should like to appeal to you to continue in the future with your conception of independence, your concern for Evangelism, your concern for national customs, culture and life ; your concern for the development of Carnatic Music, and your anxiety for taking part in various social and national activities.

I should like to utter a warning against the following : the giving up of the two private, non-fee-levying institutions, Jaffna College and Uduvil Girls' College to the Government, neglecting the Choral Liturgy and giving up your contact with the Church of South India altogether, though Union in Ceylon is in sight.

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Silver Jubilee of the Synod of the Church Jan. 1972

(The Church of South India had been inaugurated in 1947 and 1972 was the 25th anniversary of that event. Since I was, with one exception, the only surviving Bishop living locally out of these who came into office in 1947, I was asked to preach the Jubilee sermon, when the Synod met on the 11th of January 1972.)

THE Church of South India was inaugurated in September, 1947; in September this year it would complete the 25th year if its existence. But since as Synod we meet only at this time of the year, it has been deemed right that we should make use of the occasion to take note of the anniversary, though arrangements will, I believe, be made for a more formal celebration at the appropriate time later in the year.

25 years is a long period of time in the life of an individual; and is considered a long enough period even in the history of institutions. Hence Silver Weddings in the life of married individuals and Silver Jubilees in the history of institutions are common events. But what is 25 years in the history of the Church, a history that spans 20 centuries, the perspective of which trails back to the time of our Lord Himself and which comes down, with one era succeeding another till the present! A record of what happened during these eras forms the greater part of all recorded history. Against the background of such a panorama, it might well be asked, "What is 25 years?" Have we therefore a right to celebrate this Anniversary?

We have every right. When the C. S. I. was inaugurated, it was called by some "the greatest event since the Reformation". It was far more; it was one of the greatest events ever in the history of the Christian Church. There had been earlier mergers of ecclesiastical denominations of like-traditions, particularly in this century; but these had been matters of convenience. There had been no strong reasons for these denominations to have

broken away from each other ; and there were no strong reasons to prevent them from coming together again. They had broken away for the sake of convenience and had come together for convenience. In September 1947 branches of Church which had kept apart as a matter of conscience had come together as a matter of conscience. The fundamental significance of the event of 1947 lay in the fact that, for the first time since the days of the Apostles, the Church was able to put into effect deliberately, as a matter of conscience and as an act of inescapable religious obligation, a long lost and almost forgotten insight into something that belongs to its very essence.

We who live after the Reformation are in the habit of thinking that the Church split for the first time in the 16th century. But those who have studied Church History in Theological Seminaries know of an earlier split - that between the Western Church and the Eastern Church - which had taken place in the 11th century. Some will know of the split occasioned by the Arian controversy in the 4th century; but that controversy after all come to a head in the time of a Christian Emperor when the Church could afford the luxury of breaking up into sects, since there was a mighty ruler to safeguard the whole framework. But the tendency towards sectarianism had been there all along, and had been exceedingly strong even when the Church was under severe persecution. Gibbon tells us how the pagan Emperors themselves were often greatly puzzled as to who were the real Church. As we know, the term "Catholic" came into use within the largest section to mark itself off as the true Church in the midst of a host of warring sects that arose from time to time.

That is, it seems to have been believed from early times that a difference always called for a division. In some cases the difference was very strong and therefore the division was considered a matter of conscience and principle, which could by no means be avoided. In other cases the differences were slight and therefore the division was a matter of convenience, an easy way to avoid interference from those who disagreed. There must have

been some who regretted the whole situation ; but even they felt that nothing could be done about it. Thus Lord Balfour, a British statesman, a little more than 40 years ago, while admitting that the Universal Church was one, said, "I have to face the fact that Christendom is, and must remain, ecclesiastically divided". It is thus obvious that, generally speaking, divisions in the Church were looked upon as natural to its existence.

A movement for co-operation had sprung up in the 19th century; it was, however, among voluntary Christian organisations; but the Churches themselves continued to remain wrapped up in their separateness, and only too conscious of their differences. As the century progressed, the movement had gathered momentum; it had begun to draw into it many of the leading figures of the Churches. It was heading towards a new discovery, towards the conclusion that the Church was one, and that schism, that is, its divided state, had to go; the discovery was to create a new era. But even after the era had dawned schism remained; having been an honoured guest so long it refused to quit. That there were mergers here and there between splintered groups of the same Church does not prove anything. The paradox that continued to vex the ecumenical era was that though by and large the various branches of the Church had come to recognise in principle that the Church should be one, they felt they could not be one, exactly because they were divided on principle.

The event that took place in 1947 was an indication that the Church of Christ not merely should be one, but could be one; not merely in name but in fact. When the event did take place it was greeted with amazement and almost unbelief. A Dutch Professor some years later, asked me how it had been possible, and answered the question himself by saying "I know; you have no Church History"; because the Church History we have studied is a record of an unending series of dissensions and divisions. In his opinion we had not conquered Church History, we had had no Church History to conquer.

What the Professor did not know was that though we had not been up against European Church History, we had been up

against the back ground of our own Church History. And those who can look back to the years before Union may well wonder how the Church of South India did come into being at all. We can remember how in the General Assembly meetings of the South India United Church the discussion of the Church Union Scheme had always been marked by uproarious scenes; but what had made the issue doubtful in the S. I. U. C. till the last Assembly meeting in September 1946 was the attitude of some of the Councils that made up the denomination. Three of the eight Councils that constituted the S. I. U. C. had kept strenuously standing out; one did not come in at all till some years after Union; one just managed to come in at the last minute by reversing its decision made earlier in the year; and the third, after it had voted, was not sure whether it had voted for or against. It had laid down a 75% majority as the condition required for taking it into Union, and had failed to fulfil that condition at successive meetings. At the last meeting there had been a 74½% majority; and no one was sure whether the requirement had been satisfied. Because the Court of appeal was the Executive Committee of the S. I. U. C. it was able to apply the normal rule of vulgar fraction and decide that $\frac{3}{4}$ should be reckoned as one. In Anglican circles in England there had always been misgivings about the Scheme almost from the start; when one problem was solved another was sure to be raised. But the last word on the Scheme lay with the Provincial Council here which met in January 1947; it had to pass it by a majority in each of the three Houses of the Laity, the Clergy and the Bishops respectively. Here it remained a matter of touch and go, till the very last. The scheme finally managed to creep through the House of Bishops by a majority of one. It will be seen, therefore, that we were up against our own Church History, initially taken over from the West, but developed with our own resources and stamped with our own genius. We may see that in our own struggle, defeat and victory were often close to each other; and so they are in all momentous struggles. This does not detract from the decisiveness of the outcome, nor from its surpassing importance.

But what we are celebrating is not merely the fact that the Church of South India was inaugurated in 1947; we are not here merely to recall a memory. At the end of the French Revolution, a French aristocrat was asked what heroic deed he had done during the Revolution and he replied, "I survived it". We were not merely born 25 years ago, we have lived for 25 years. Behind the wonder roused by the inauguration of the C. S. I. 25 years ago, lay the question whether a Church so born could also live. The traditions that had come together in such dramatic circumstances seemed too dissimilar to guarantee a continued or coherent existence. So the wonder aroused by the birth of the C. S. I. was tinged with a certain doubt. Therefore, what we are celebrating today is not merely that the C. S. I. was born 25 years ago but that, by the mercy of God, it has lived as a Church for 25 years.

Nobody who has attended our Synod meetings can say that we have always thought alike in all matters; we have differed strongly. Nor has the expression of our differences usually been unduly mild. It might never have approached the uproariousness of the Assembly meetings of the old S. I. U. C. — that would have been difficult — but no one can deny that the expression of our differences has been pretty robust.

But they were differences within the same Church, differences of those who could afford to differ; they were differences of those who were agreed about more things than those about which they differed. They were differences of those filled with the same zeal, guided by the same aims and always passionately anxious to preserve the unity which had been achieved. There is no doubt that we have belied the doubts, the suspicions and the fears entertained before Union.

If 25 years ago there was wonder that we were able to come into being at all as a Church, now there may be a wonder that we have continued as a Church for 25 years. Usually there is nothing noteworthy about mere survival; but in this case, in view of our antecedents, there certainly is. So we may rightly thank

God not merely for the wonder of 25 years ago, but for the wonder of today, that the C. S. I. has been able to complete 25 years of existence.

If however, all that we can thank God for is that the C. S. I. was born 25 years ago and has survived till now, it would be something concerned only with ourselves. But have we made a difference to others, made a contribution to the well-being of the Church? We certainly did not create the Ecumenical era. It had dawned well before the C. S. I. came into being. In fact, the C. S. I. itself may be said to be a creation and product of the Ecumenical era. But we have made a contribution to it, the magnitude of which no one can deny.

The chief characteristic of the Ecumenical era has been that Christians to a large extent have come to recognise schism, that is, the divided state of the Church, as a violation of the inmost nature of the Church. The chief achievement of that era so far is looked upon as the organisation of the World Council of Churches. The Provisional Committee for setting it up had been formed as early as 1938, nine years before the C. S. I. came into being. But the Constitution of the W. C. C. itself is based on the recognition that the Church is divided. Its aim — and it is a great aim — is to call together the branches of the divided Church for common planning and thinking. And to guard against the suspicion of entertaining ulterior motives, it is repeatedly compelled to give an assurance that it has no intention of acting as a United Church. That is, however much the W. C. C. might deplore divisions in the Church, it has had to stand helpless before their stern and deep-rooted reality.

What is it that the C. S. I. has done to the situation that merits our thankfulness to God? It has shown the world that we no longer need stand helpless before the presence of schism, lamenting and beating our breast. It has shown that what theologically had no ground to exist need not exist as a fact. The great compliment paid to a citizen by the Roman Senate in ancient times to one of its commanders was that, when the Roman cause

seemed hopeless in the face of the Carthaginian invasion, "he did not despair of the republic". Because he did not despair of the Roman cause, the citizens of Rome came to feel that they need not despair. What the birth and existence of the C. S. I. have taught the Ecumenical world is that it need no longer despair in the face of schism. It has, therefore, brought a new hope, a new confidence and a profound change of outlook into the whole Christian world.

The change brought about by the new outlook means that any event similar to what was looked upon as a wonder in 1947 will no longer be looked upon as a wonder, that what caused amazement as a strange novelty then would now be seen as, a reversion to a natural state of things; and that the Unity of the Church will not hereafter be viewed merely as the realised vision of a few leaders, but as the normal characteristic of the Church, as it should be in the world. Here in India, a little more than a year ago, two major Reunions have been consummated; and efforts at Reunion have been set afoot in many parts of the world. It is significant that whereas the South Indian Church Union Scheme was passed in the Anglican Provincial Council in January 1947, by a majority of 8 in the House of Clergy and by a majority of only one in the House of Bishops, two years ago the Ceylon Church Union Scheme was passed unanimously in that body by all the three Houses except for one dissentient vote in the House of Clergy.

But the most startling sign of this outlook is the effect it has had in the Roman Catholic Church. To those who know the history of that Church the result would have looked unbelievable, if it had not actually taken place. It might be suggested that the change was due to the relentless pressure of internal causes; but it would be idle to deny the pressure on that Church of the new atmosphere that had begun to prevail all around it and equally idle to deny the part played in the prevalence of that atmosphere by the birth and continued existence of the C. S. I.

It may perhaps be said that the C. S. I. hardly exerted itself in this whole matter; but we are not here to boast about

what we have done; we are witnesses to what has happened, whether we expected it or not; whether we ourselves did anything about it or not; we are, in fact, witnesses to what God has done through us.

So we are met together here to thank God not merely because the C. S. I. was able to come into being at all, not merely because it has managed to conclude its 25th year of existence but also because we have made the whole Church realise that what it had begun to discover as belonging to its essence could belong also to its existence; could belong again to it now as it was meant to belong to it always.

We do well, therefore, to be thankful for the past; for those who are not thankful for the past are not worthy of a future. Equally it must be said that those who are not concerned with the future are not worthy of their past. Our text itself while it looks back to the past and renders thanks to God, for it looks forward also to the future, when it says, for His mercy endureth for ever". It is a sheer neglect of responsibility not to be concerned with the future. But what shape should our concern take? Governments make 5 year plans and 3 year plans, and very rightly; these are blue-prints, elaborate and detailed, taking care of every contingency that might occur. Such plans covering a limited field of activity and a limited period of time are useful as guides, even if they are not always realised in practice.

But a blue print for an indefinite future is a piece of self-deception. To attempt and make elaborate plans for our entire future, to lay down before-hand what we are going to do in each circumstance in the future, would imply that we already know what these circumstances are going to be; but History is proverbially unpredictable. The Apostles could not have planned for the age of Constantine; and the Nicene Fathers could not have planned for the chaos that prevailed after the fall of the Roman structure; and the Middle Ages could not have planned for the post-Reformation era. Times change; generations come

and go and new situations and problems are constantly springing up. To meet these, in so far as the Church is composed of human beings, there must be many things about the Church which must keep changing ; many of its settled habits, opinions, reactions and inherited modes of thinking must change. But the Church is also the body of Christ, of which He is the Head ; and He is the same yesterday, today and for ever. Therefore, there are things about the Church which do not change ; its basic faith does not change, its message does not change, and its basic nature does not change. If they do, the Church ceases to be the Church of Christ. These do not come within the scope of our re-thinking and planning ; but our attitude and intention towards them certainly do. And what we can do about the future of the C. S. I. is to decide its attitude towards these.

Faithfulness to Jesus Christ is what constitutes any group of persons into a part of the Church of Christ. Belief in His gospel is the essence of that Church, witness to that gospel forms the basic purpose of the Church. Detailed plans for our entire future will be foolish self-deception, because we do not know what the future is going to be ; a determination to be loyal to what the Church stands for, whatever that future might be, is an act by which alone we can be true to ourselves and our calling.

However, while the Christian gospel remains the same always, methods of presenting the Christian gospel will have to vary from country to country and from age to age, according to the background of the people confronted. The learned theologians who engage in what are called "Dialogues" must be given a lot of lee-way to vary their style or method of presentation. A style or method found useful among people with an animistic background cannot be of much use when dealing with people from the background of Islam or Buddhism or sophisticated Hinduism. It is not for us to lay down hard and fast rules in the matter for all time and conditions. The use of Islamic, Buddhist or Hindu concepts and categories is not merely allowable but necessary in such situations, if we want to be relevant.

Nevertheless, we must see to it that whatever be the style of presentation, it is the Christian gospel we present. Care must be taken to see that the style of presentation has not altered the subject presented. Howsoever we may want to make the presentation suit the hearer, howsoever we may want to make our position clear and intelligible to others, there will always be an element of strangeness about the Christian gospel, an element that seems unacceptable to man. If everybody has to be already agreed about what is going to be said, there is no need to say it. If the Christian Church is merely to preach the Vedanta to the Vedantin. and Buddhism to the Buddhist, they do not need us. And what is more, we do not need ourselves; there will be no need for the Christian Church. We would have abolished ourselves.

It may also strike us that if we adopt the Vedanta as our basis in one place, Theravada Buddhism in another place, Mahayana Buddhism in still another place and Islam in a fourth, then we shall not know what we stand for and what we are expected to do. We would make ourselves not merely unnecessary but meaningless and, therefore, entirely deserve our abolition.

As for those "progressive" young people within the Christian Church itself — not perhaps so common here as in Western countries — who find the basic Christian concepts entirely outmoded and out of date, but profess to be excited and fascinated by the generally more ancient and often times absolutely fantastic notions in non-Christian religions, I can only reserve not my perplexity but sheer unbelief about the genuineness of their attitude.

But witness to the Christian gospel has to take place not merely in the sphere of religious argument but in other spheres as well; for the Church confronts man not merely in his religious setting but in his setting in the world of every-day life. In this setting he faces issues not merely as an individual but necessarily a member of diverse groups; he is a member of,

the class of employers or employees; he belongs to a certain race; and he is born into a nation. These settings are rife with issues; and it is in their midst that people lead most of their lives. At one time we were taught that the Church had nothing to do with those issues which a man faces as a member of any group but only with those which he faces as an individual. We now know that such teaching is wrong. A man taken out of the setting in which he lives is an unreal man, an imaginary man. I do not think we serve any purpose by preaching to him. Neither can we, in our pre-occupation with the individual, real or imaginary, set aside the words of Scripture which say, "God loves the world", the world with all its human relationships. In our concern for man we cannot leave mankind alone.

In this matter also, we cannot lay down detailed rules or plans for all time and all circumstances. That we should always be loyal to our Lord and His commission is sufficient guide for the future. The kingdoms of the world are the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. Whatsoever is done to make this a reality, whosoever is doing it, is entitled to our sympathy and deserves our support, whatsoever be his religious faith. The Church may, therefore, have to join in espousing causes or in carrying on crusades. In doing so, it may have to align itself from time to time with one party or another; but the Church cannot tie itself to any one party for all time. Any party may count on the support of the Church when it does what is right; but no party must be able to count on the support of the Church in all that it does; for political parties often have their own axes to grind, their own interests to pursue, their own grudges, personal and political, to pay off. A permanent alliance with any political party is bound to put the Church into very dubious positions. The Church of Christ should ever hold itself free to espouse the right, as God gives it to see the right.

So we may face the future, not knowing what it may bring forth, but humbly determined to be true to the Lord who has called us, to be true to the gospel He has entrusted to us and be true to the task of witnessing to it in all areas of life in the world,

but knowing all the time that, while we hold Temporary Residence Permits here, our citizenship is in heaven, that we belong to a city that is not of this world, "the Jerusalem that is above and is free and is the mother of us all."

Therefore let us, looking back at the past with awe and humility, say with the Psalmist, "O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD", and looking forward to the future with hope, say with him, "FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER". And long after we are gone, when what we now look upon as the future would have become the past, let our children's children and those who come after them also looking back on what has gone before and what lies ahead say, 'O give thanks unto the Lord for His mercy endureth for ever'. For in words that came to be written long after our text but which express both sides of it, "HE REMAINETH FAITHFUL".

The 150th Anniversary of Jaffna College

(The year 1973 marked the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Batticotta Seminary and the 100th year of the founding of Jaffna College. This sermon was preached on 10th February 1973 at the service held to celebrate the occasion.)

We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, What work thou didst in their days, in the days of old.

Ps. 44 : 1

O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years.

— Hab. 3 : 2

THE Psalmist was living many centuries after the great events to which he was looking back. The redemption of Israel from slavery, their forty years march through the desert, associated with many escapes from perils of various kinds, the conquest of many difficulties on the way ; and once they had reached their destination, the subjugation of one enemy after another ; and after their settlement, the heroic deeds of such mighty men as Gideon and Samson against the surrounding tribes, which were constantly plaguing them, belonged almost to the beginnings of Israel as a race. They had been recited by father to son and handed down through generations. The memory of them remained fresh ; but the events themselves lay far back in the past, almost on the horizons of known history.

We here, who have met together, are at an advantage in looking back to the events we commemorate this day. A hundred and fifty years is, after all, a short period of time in the history of the world. Some present here may recall the incident of an old man, 106 years of age, being carried into the gathering when the American Ceylon Mission celebrated its centenary in 1916. He had been 6 years of age, when the American Missionaries had arrived in 1816. His son was well-known to many of us ; his grand-son is still among us. The Seminary was closed in 1855 ; I remember as a small boy seeing some of its latter-day graduates.

The Institution was restarted under the name of Jaffna College in 1872; and one of the first batch of graduates sent out by Jaffna College was the Pastor of my home-church, when I was a boy. To 50 years out of the 150 years I can myself bear personal testimony, since I joined this institution as a student just 50 years ago; and I was not a small boy then either. There are quite a few here whose own experience in the matter is longer and ampler than mine.

Our contact, therefore, with the history we commemorate is much closer and more intimate than that of the Psalmist with the history he was recalling. To the Psalmist all his knowledge came either from oral tradition or from records compiled long after the events themselves. Our information scarcely goes back beyond our grand-fathers, or at most, our great-grand-fathers. We have with us the records of the thoughts, the plans and the deeds, in their own writings of those who were participants in the events we commemorate. We have copious, accurate and detailed information of all that happened as a result of their activities. We live close to the history we celebrate; we are, in fact, latter-day contemporaries of that history.

Though a period of 150 years looks insignificant, it is significant enough that any Institution that has had the task of handling successive batches of students year in, year out, trying to do to them all that is implied in the word "educate", should be able to complete 150 years of accomplishment. And this length of time takes on a still greater significance when considered against the background of the history of our particular country; for during the last 350 years this land of Jaffna has changed hands four times: from the Tamil kings to the Portuguese, from the Portuguese to the Dutch, from the Dutch to the British and from the British to the nationals. In view of this, the significance of an existence of 150 years far exceeds the proportion suggested by mere numerical length.

But age in itself is not worthy of commemoration. Mere survival is not always worthy of notice or comment, for it may

have been due merely to chance; sometimes it may be worthy only of adverse notice, for it might have been due to the adoption of time-serving and discreditable expedients. Anyway, we know that many things have survived which need not have survived and many things which should not have survived. We are here not to commemorate the fact that this institution has existed for a 150 years but to commemorate what, in the mercy of God, it has done during that period. We are celebrating not age but achievement; we are celebrating the mighty works of God of which this Institution was the instrument. In the case of the Psalmist, the mighty works he was thinking of seemed so far away, as against the difficulties of his time that, inspite of his faith, their distance seems to produce a kind of despondency. We, on the other hand, as against the difficulties of our own time, are so near the mighty works of God we are thinking of to day, that our faith can defy despondency.

It is not merely that we behold strange and wondrous things in the story of the last 150 years, the very beginning of the story is itself a strange and wondrous thing. The Portuguese, during their brief tenure of power, and the Dutch, during their much longer tenure, had tagged on a school to each of their churches; and since there were 32 churches in the Peninsula, there were also 32 schools; but these were poor and beggarly things, not imparting anything beyond the very rudiments of learning. The American Missionaries far outstripped them in their desire for literacy; for in 1823 alone they had 60 Primary Schools scattered through the Peninsula and were soon to plaster the whole area under their influence not merely with Primary Schools but also with Anglo—Vernacular Schools. But if their enthusiasm in the matter was greater than that of their predecessors, they were still following in their footsteps. They were doing nothing new in this respect.

The new thing that they did was in another respect; and it was a strange and wondrous thing. Within seven years of their coming here they had thought of establishing an Institution of University status- To conceive the idea at that time was not

merely audacious, it was to conceive what seemed impossible. It is always easy enough to conceive ideas. Audacious conceptions seldom materialise and the impossible ones never; but they can always be conceived. The ancient Indian controversialists use the term "sky flower" to denote the concept of an impossibility. When we consider the utter novelty at that time of the scheme put forward by the Missionaries, the absence of all public opinion on the subject (or on any subject, for public opinion was yet to evolve in our land), when we consider the ambitiousness of the curriculum, the intention to place two thirds of the stress on English, and the fact that only 20 out of the 2500 students in their 60 schools had even an elementary knowledge of English, the dearth of teachers to handle the task before them and the utter lack of any encouragement from any source whatsoever, it would almost seem as if the Missionaries had wanted a "sky flower" to materialise. But the sky flower, in this case, did materialise; it was nothing short of the miraculous that it did.

If the coming into being of the Seminary was little short of the miraculous, the effects it produced during its brief span of existence were themselves nothing less. It is well known that the Seminary created a tremendous intellectual upsurge the like of which has not been seen in this country before or since. It may be analysed as due to a cross-fertilisation of cultures. The upsurge was many-sided and included among its important products the evolution of Tamil prose as it is written today. The upsurge begun with the Seminary did not end with it. It created an impulse that still goes on working and has been the driving force behind all our intellectual life since then.

All this may be known, and to a large extent even acknowledged. But what may not be well known and may not easily be acknowledged is that the history proper of Jaffna, in a very important sense, may be said to have really begun with the Seminary. What has come down to us about our own kings is so wrapped in myth and legend and so dependent on the interests and prejudices of the poetic chroniclers who have sung their story, that it has always been a matter of dispute as to how

much of it can be accepted as sober history. The history of Jaffna during Portuguese and Dutch eras is simply a record of the administrative acts of the various Commandants of the Portuguese Government and the Dutch East India Company. Sometimes in some context the names of some of our own people are also recorded; but their figures are vague and elusive, which flicker and fade all too soon. The kings disappear from the scene leaving no trace, the Commandants come and go; and a blank anonymity wraps our own people, as with a shroud.

The people of Jaffna begin to emerge on the scene only with the coming of the Seminary. They are no longer vague figures; many of them begin to stand out clearly; we know their names and deeds; there is a continuity between them and us. And while what those in power do is still important, it is not merely what they do that counts. In fact, the acts of Government themselves can be understood only by reference to the people. Many great figures stand out in the story of the 19th century; but they stand out from others who by themselves are sufficiently real. The people of the country hold the stage and they are the controlling factor of the country's history.

It cannot, by any means, be said that all the great figures of Jaffna were educated at the Seminary; and it must also be borne in mind that the Seminary itself lasted for only 32 years. But what can be said is that it is the impetus created by the Seminary that released the forces that have been at work since then. And while Jaffna is not Ceylon, we may conclude that the phenomenon of what was happening in Jaffna was not without its effect elsewhere.

When the Seminary was closed in 1855, an effort at make-do continued to be made, till the sheer momentum it had initiated caused the appearance of Jaffna College. The conditions that prevailed when Jaffna College came to birth in 1872 were considerably different from those which had prevailed in 1823. By 1872, we were one among many Institutions; and though we were still free to choose our own curriculum external targets set

up by authoritative bodies had come into view. But since the basic need which they had seen earlier remained unchanged, the Missionaries thought it wise to stick to the old curriculum. There is the same unswerving addiction to Astronomy and Geology; and as befits a Missionary Institution, there is the same stress on Moral and Intellectual Philosophy. Of languages only Hebrew seems to have been dropped; Greek is still retained. The Institution was jealous to guard its status as a University and, as a University should, provided a wide range of studies. But while any other University would have allowed a choice of subjects, the Missionaries both of 1823 and 1872 did not, I think, allow any. They believed that a man could not be considered truly educated, unless he knew all the subjects to which they had taken a fancy.

But the possibility of acquiring definite academic degrees held out by the Indian Universities was exercising a fascination over young people, especially because some of our own men had gone across the Palk Strait and earned the right to add two letters of the alphabet to their names. So in 1891 suppressing their enthusiasm for Astronomy and Geology, the Missionaries affiliated the Institution to the University of Calcutta; the affiliation was switched to Madras later, by order of the Indian Government, and lasted till 1907. During this period we did an invaluable service to the country. Demand for education was becoming wide-spread, schools were springing up everywhere, and the Cambridge Examinations had become the definite goal of Secondary education. But Secondary education could not provide teachers for Secondary education. Therefore, it was those who obtained degrees during this period who filled the role of teachers in Secondary Schools. In 1905 Sir Henry Blake, then Governor of Ceylon, presiding at our Prize Giving, wondered at the phenomenon of an Institution in Ceylon in which all classes were post Entrance and which did not depend on any Government aid.

The period of affiliation to Madras ended in 1909, but only after we had made a valiant effort to get all the Protestant Missions in Jaffna to combine to run a Union College that would

meet the requirements of the Madras University. When we found we had to be a Secondary School, we tried to be a good Secondary School. Many of our present Old Boys passed through this Institution when it was in that state and know it only as such. But since they were not so by choice, we were, as conditions began increasingly to permit, trying to be something more, without ceasing to be what we were, till once again we attained to the ambition entertained by the founders in 1823; but with a difference. That is, we became that unusual phenomenon of an Institution that was at the same time both a Secondary School and a College. But so well had we prepared ourselves for the double task of carrying on both types of education, that during the Bunker era the Institution blossomed forth with such rare beauty as to gladden the hearts not merely of those interested in this Institution but all those interested in education as such. This era will always remain one of the brightest and most attractive spots in our whole history.

And now looking back on the last 150 years, the achievements of this Institution, the events that took place in that period, the many personalities that meet our eye, and the part played by our Institution in the development of this country and doing so with a greater knowledge and more intimate contact than the Psalmist had with the events to which he was looking back and with the consciousness of ourselves being part of the process initiated 150 years ago, we can say not merely, "We have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us", we can say in all humility "We know, we have seen with our eyes and still see what Thou hast done" and can re-echo his words:

We will give thanks unto Thy name for evermore.

Through the years this Institution has always adjusted itself to the needs and demands of the time. It may be said that in 1823 the Missionaries set up a Collegiate Institution when there seemed to be no need or demand for it; but what happened was that the need was there, but that others did not see it; the Missionaries simply saw things more clearly than they. The conditions in 1872 were different from those that had prevailed in 1823 and left many

people guessing as to what should be done ; but the Missionaries saw that the basic need still remained the same and, therefore, stuck to the old curriculum. When some 20 years later, affiliation to one of the Indian Universities became inevitable the adjustments were readily made. Later when we had to be content with the status of a Secondary School we changed over, not perhaps very happily, but still, I hope, with good grace. When, however it became possible once again to reach out towards the status of a College, we spared no pains to do so.

The process of adjustment, therefore, may be seen as continuous ; but it never caused a strain, nor imposed any heart-searching or any burden on the conscience, because these adjustments were purely educational. From 1823 to 1960 is a sizeable period ; and many things had happened to the world between the one date and the other. Therefore, can it be said that the mental outlook of a large section of the world had more or less remained the same and the intellectual climate had also remained the same? If it be pointed out that, as time went on, an increasing stress has begun to be placed on the study of Science, it must be replied that the Missionaries had not much adjusted themselves to it, as anticipated it; for even in the twenties of the last century we find them ordering apparatus for Natural Philosophy (the term used then for Science in those days). Adjustments, therefore, though not always easy, could still be made, because they were, after all, technical adjustments.

It is now no longer possible to say that the old intellectual or mental climate remain the same. C. S. Lewis has observed that a greater distance separates the world of today from the world of Walter Scott and Charlotte and Emily Bronte, who lived in the last century, than that which separated them from the world of Seneca, who lived in the first century A. D. Though 17 hundred years lie between Walter Scott and Seneca, they had more in common between them than the world of Walter Scott and ours, and could take more things for granted. We live in a different world; the old mental and intellectual climate which

had prevailed so long has gone, the old values are no longer taken for granted and the old outlook in many spheres and many respects has disappeared.

The revolution that has taken place all over the world has struck our own land with an impact that has thrown our time-honoured patterns into disarray and bewildered those accustomed to them. It may look therefore, as if we have been thrown into a vortex, that all is chaos and confusion, tending nowhere. But a closer look will reveal that a clear purpose has been brought to bear on this seeming vortex and pressures are working relentlessly to drive us to a definite goal: the goal where all men shall think as the State wants them to think and do what the State wants them to do, that there shall be no dissent and no independence of thought. The temptation to be driven by this pressure is great. "The easiest way to conquer a temptation is to yield to it," said a twisted genius of the last century. This seemingly profound statement is nothing more than the announcement that to lose is as good as to win. To lose is certainly easier than to win; but it is by no means the same; nor is it what we are called upon to do.

The Missionaries, who founded the Seminary, putting out their Prospectus in 1823, said that they were standing under higher sanctions and had to be faithful to a trust higher than any that the world could impose. In the new situation in which we are, we may have to branch out into new fields and engage ourselves in many and diverse activities to which we have not been accustomed. "New occasions teach new duties". Many things have to be done and many changes made in view of the new situation; but there are some things which cannot be done and some things which cannot be changed. We cannot consent to a change or barter away our ideals. They are what made the Missionaries undertake what must have seemed at that time an utterly uncalled for adventure. And those are the ideals which have been back of this Institution through all its vicissitudes. These cannot be bartered away.

Writing to the Ephesians, St. Paul speaks about attaining to the fullness of the measure of the stature of Him that God has set before man. The Missionaries of 1823 considered that their education contributed to the attainment of this fulness. Men who are moulded merely to turn out the work assigned to them by the State and are not capable of anything else are not on their way to attain to fulness; they cannot be whole men but only vulgar fractions.

Times have changed and the situation has changed more than anyone could have imagined; the pressures are insistent and relentless; but God is the same. And knowing that His hands have not been shortened nor His ears grown dull, we pray to the God to whom Habakkuk prayed saying,

Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years.

If He could inspire the Missionaries of 1823 to undertake in their time what seemed an impossible task, He can also inspire us in our time with courage and resolve to be faithful to that ideal.

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OCTOBER 9th 1976

(This is not a sermon but one of the religious messages which the writer occasionally contributed to the "Morning Star.")

In thee do I put my trust — Pms. 141 : 8

ANY person who can say this believes that he is not alone in the universe. Of course, there are millions of others also living; most of them, however are not interested in him, though some certainly may be. And there are powers and principalities, agencies and institutions; and of these while many may not care for him, some may. Men and agencies interested in him may help him somewhat, perhaps a good deal.

But there are occasions and situations where such help is of no avail. Cardinal Wolsey, the famous Prime Minister of Henry VIII, was sorry when faced with the last crisis in his life that he had put too much trust in the king and not enough in God. In that instance the very person whom he had trusted had turned against him. This does not always happen; but there are many occasions when such help may be of little use.

It was when such a situation arose that a man said "Therefore we will not fear though the earth do change, and though the mountains be moved in the heart of the seas; Though the waters thereof roar etc."

Thomas Carlyle used to tell of a miner who was left alone with another, when his mine had collapsed and the rescue team had pulled out the others and there was room enough only for one more in the last "lift" that had come down; but two were left. "You go," said one miner to the other. "I have made my peace with God." It was not that he expected a miraculous rescue after the lift had gone. His trust in God was enough "though the mountains be moved in the heart of the seas." No other trust can take its place; and that trust is enough.

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MEN

M E N

The Late Rev. R. C. P. Welch

(1883 — 1942)

(The late Rev. R. C. P. Welch was a prominent figure in the old Jaffna Council or the S. I. U. C; in the twenties he became an important figure and in the thirties a dominant figure. His chief contribution to our Church life was to transform the old ramshackle collection of Congregational churches into an effective administrative body. This contribution was realised only when we became an episcopal body, five years after his death.)

R. C. P. WELCH, the grandson of Rev. M. Welch who was then Pastor of the Alaveddy Church in the last century and the son of E. N. Welch a teacher at the Uduvil Girls' School was born on 4th December 1883. After an education at Mann's English School, Uduvil, and the English School at Manipay, he joined Jaffna College during the early years of this century. The same downright honesty and utter fearlessness that characterised him in later life earned for him at College the respect of fellow students. Among other things, he greatly distinguished himself in the football field and was a noted fullback in his day.

From the F. A. Class he joined the Theological Class, then a regular Department at College. In July 1910 when a United Theological College was organised at Bangalore, Mr. Welch proceeded there. Of his two companions one went back into teaching and the other died before the organisation of the College. His course at Bangalore was completed in 1913 and he returned to Jaffna.

After serving for short periods at Usan and Annaicoddai, at the Annual meeting of the Council in January of 1914, he was posted to Alaveddy. He served at Alaveddy for seven years with great acceptance. The congregation gradually getting reconciled to a raw young man after successive terms

of many hoary veterans, began to enjoy the new state of things. In 1919 he married Margaret daughter of Mr. E. S. Nathaniel of Uduvil.

In 1921 he was transferred to Tellipalai to succeed Rev. C. D. Veluppillai and was ordained on 22nd July of the year at the Semi - Annual Meeting of the Council. The event was noteworthy as being the last big occasion at which Rev. S. Eliatamby then President of the Council was present and took part. The mantle of Elijah surely fell upon the shoulders of young Elisha. In no aspect of his life did Mr. Welch take greater pride than in the assumption that he had stepped into the tradition of Pastor Eliatamby.

The other stations at which he served are as follows; Chavakachcheri 1925—1928; Navaly 1928—1931; Manipay 1931—1935; Uduvil 1935—1939; Vaddukodai 1939—1941.

At the Semi-Annual Meeting of 1922 great interest centered in the succession to the Secretaryship of the Council rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Allen Abraham. The choice which surprised some fell upon a comparatively inexperienced young man, R. C. P. Welch. Since that day 20 years ago his position in the Council and his influence over the Christian community of the American Mission grew and strengthened with the years, till he became an institution and an atmosphere, without whom the Jaffna Council of the South India United Church and transaction of business in it seemed inconceivable. He was scarcely out of office except during the necessary sabbatical years.

He continued to be Secretary till the beginning of 1929. In 1930 and for part of 1931 he was Vice-President. In July of 1931 when Rev. J. K. Sinnatamby passed away, the inevitable choice fell on Rev. R. C. P. Welch. He continued to be President till the beginning of 1936, when his sabbatical year began. In 1937 he came back and was President for three more years. In 1939 he was unanimously appointed to the newly created post of Executive Officer. He began however

to feel himself handicapped by growing ill-health from shouldering the double burden of Executive Officer and President, and in 1940 gracefully vacated the latter position in favour of a younger man. The end that came suddenly on the morning of 31st January this year caused universal grief among Christians of all denominations who gathered in large numbers to do homage to his memory. The chief cause of such an unexpected event was no doubt due to prolonged over work and a steady refusal to consult his own convenience.

Any democratic form of government exposes all who have a hand in it to severe public scrutiny. A democratic form of Church government is a test of still greater severity, in as much as those who take part in it are judged by the higher standards of the spiritual realm. Concessions made in the political sphere find no place in judging Church leadership under democratic conditions. Under such circumstances to have exercised an undiminished hold on the confidence of individuals, committees, conferences and congregations over such a long period is a remarkable achievement. Everyone who has known Pastor Welch will testify that as far as he was concerned it was not merely natural, but that nothing else was possible.

The secret of Mr. Welch's tremendous grip on the Christian community of the S. I. U. C. was due to an integrity of purpose and character that could never be challenged. Other gifts he had in plenty. Till ill health began to weigh him down, we can all remember how his balanced judgment and dispassionate wisdom could have been made the basis of any decision. His knowledge, while not being of the scholastic type, covered a surprisingly wide range. He had a gift of eloquence that never suffered by varying sizes of his audience. But after all the power of his spoken word itself was based on other qualities. It was the power of one who cared little how he was judged by man. When the history of the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C. comes to be written he will be accounted, under God, as one of its greatest builders. During its brief history the Council has been served by many men of outstanding gifts. We however wonder

whether it has ever been served with more fervent and single hearted devotion. His attitude towards the Council was not one of loyalty to an institution. It was a deep personal love, in the words of the Bible "passing the love of woman".

The greatest contribution however he made to the Council was that for 20 years he gave it a moral prestige, which after all is the life-breath of any democratic form of Church government. It was a prestige coming from the stern unbending integrity of a life lived "for ever in the great Taskmaster's eye". Such a life is the great contribution that is made by the Puritan tradition to the life of the Church Universal.

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NOTARY S. KANDIAPILLAI

WHEN Notary S. Kandiapillai passed away at midnight on Thursday, the 1st instant, one of the most dynamic personalities of our generation passed into eternity. He was about sixty-four years of age when he died. Practically the only high official position he may be said to have held in the Protestant Christian community was the Head Mastership of the Tellipallai Training School in the early years of the century. This was a rare honour, considering the fact that he was appointed to succeed Pastor Veerakatty, when he was in his early twenties. In 1911, he was elected to a *Panchayat* that was to settle all disputes arising among Christians. It is doubtful if the *Panchayat* ever functioned; but it was certainly a unique tribute to a young man of 30 at a time when the Church was extremely rich in leadership. He was in the Devolution Committee of nine that signed the 1927 Report. He has been off and on the Executive. He was not however a member of as many Committees and Boards as one might have expected, partly because he was handicapped by an inadequate knowledge of English; but chiefly because most people found the task of managing him in a committee a little too irksome for their patience. With occasional breaks he was, however, a member of the Council of the S.I.U.C. for many years. He was practising Notary for nearly 26 years.

It was, therefore, not through any distinctive official achievement, individual or corporate, that he has stamped himself upon his time, as through the strength of a unique personality. It was the man himself and not anything that he did that is memorable about him. The man himself was *sui generis*. Often the centre of controversy, what nobody ever thought of questioning about him was his supreme courage. In a country where diplomacy is deemed a great gift, he scorned utterly to be diplomatic. Mr. Dale Carnegie has written a book on "How to win Friends". The making of friends is turned into an art. Notary Kandiahpillai had many friends, but these friends were made by the sheer

goodness of his heart, not certainly through any conscious or deliberate effort in that direction. Vote-catching of any sort in any department was entirely beneath his contempt. It hardly ever occurred to him that he had to agree with any one else. He was one of the few persons one knew who could get up in any assembly totally unembarrassed by the fact that everybody in it was against him. Often he would make impassioned speeches about what seemed trivial points to others, at other times he would launch into an attack upon some axiomatic practice. This latter habit of tilting at windmills, while quite diverting as long as it lasted had another side to it. It was often remarked in the Council meetings that business was despatched speedily, because the Notary had not been present. His failure to toe the line, his challenge of accepted practices or his making an issue out of a minor point seemed to many sheer perversity. It was, however, simply his love of truth, as he saw it, and a determination to be faithful to it. When a young politician went and told Mr. Asquith that he could not agree with Mr. John Burns and, therefore, wanted to resign from the Government, Mr. Asquith said to him "Go and make your peace with Burns. Burns is not a human being. He is a force of Nature". This is how Mr. Kandiapillai often appeared, almost like a volcanic eruption. There seemed to be no use arguing with him. What he wanted to say he would say.

Notary Kandiapillai was a fine Tamil scholar. He kept on studying. Most books on his shelves were quite new, a somewhat rare phenomenon in a Tamil Scholar's Library. He was a poet of no mean order. Not being versed in music he seldom tried his hands at lyrical compositions. New tunes swept over the country without touching him; but his command of the classical Tamil metres both light and heavy was extraordinary. His religious poems are many, some of them being of an extremely high order of merit. One of his poems published in the secular press some years ago was, copied by the local Catholic Tamil Paper. It is certainly necessary that his religious poems should be collected and published. He was himself on the verge of doing it.

It is, however, not as a scholar or a poet that he will be remembered. For sheer brilliance of wit he will go down as one of the best intellects produced by the country. Many of his aphorisms became current coin and kept in circulation for a long time. If the ancient Tamil poets came back to earth they would have found a person who would have fitted easily into their company and made a mark among them by his impromptu compositions, his wit and scholarship. If Dr. Johnson had understood Tamil or the Notary known more English, they are just the sort of persons who would have vastly enjoyed each other's company, turning out epigrams on everything and everybody far into the midnight. With the same linguistic adjustment he would have found himself in good company with Mr. G. K. Chesterton, turning every sentence upside down and yet making it convey sound commonsense.

Notary Kandiapillai was a man of deep loyalties. He was greatly attached to his family, very devoted to his friends, intensely interested in the Church and above all dedicated to his Lord and Saviour. Those who found him critical of the Church or the ministry might perhaps have got the impression that his criticism was dictated by animus. It was simply the criticism of one who found that his own standards and ideals had not been attained. As a person immersed in Tamil Literature, the foreignness of many of our practices grated on him. Tamil hymns set to English music bored him exceedingly. The conduct of a number of our meetings in English made him remark bitterly that his children would go to heaven because they knew English, but that he and his wife would go to Hell because they did not. He was passionately anxious that the religion of his Master should become a thing of the soil. Our whole system seemed to him unadjusted to local conditions and atmosphere. He was therefore deeply hurt that people failed to understand him. He was extremely grateful for any word or act of understanding and sympathy. His poems leave no doubt about the depth and sincerity of his religious convictions.

Warm-hearted, generous to a fault, unswervingly loyal to truth, as he saw it, and possessed of the vision of an entirely indigenous Church, he will ever remain dear to those who knew him well.

Mr. I. P. Thurairatnam Goes on a Trip

(This article was written in 1948 when he left for studies in the Columbia University. In those days our men going to the United States was almost a sensational event. Mr. Thurairatnam was Principal of Union College from the middle of the thirties to beginning of the sixties.)

AS Mr. Thurairatnam leaves our shores for America, it is but fitting that the occasion should be marked by some tribute from those among us who know him and have come to place reliance on him. That Mr. Thurairatnam is an extremely intelligent man, no one can deny. His mind has no cobwebs. There is no haziness or woolliness in it. His ideas on men and matters are quite definite. He has a mathematical, almost relentless mind. When presented with a large mass of facts and figures, he quite soon makes up his mind what the whole thing was about, and how much of the facts and figures are "mere eye-wash." But there are many intelligent people who need not command our admiration.

Nor is the fact that Mr. Thurairatnam has made a sacrifice in being a teacher, of commanding importance. A teacher does not obtain the income that others do. Many of Mr. Thurairatnam's companions at school or college are holding high and lucrative appointments. Great as is the sacrifice of a teacher, particularly in denominational schools, it is not to every such teacher that we take off our hats.

The reason why his friends have come to value him highly is his reliability. He is not quick to undertake tasks, but when he has accepted a task, one may be sure that it is entirely in safe hands. Genius has been defined as the capacity to take infinite pains. Mr. Thurairatnam has this capacity to an extreme degree. No evidence will be left unexamined when he begins his work; nor any figure allowed to slip by without unfolding its significance. No toil, physical or mental, will be considered too hard to achieve a solution. The whole quality may be considered an intellectual quest for clarity, but in the last analysis it is moral. It is faithfulness, the desire to keep troth.

A quality like this may have to give the impression of hardness. Clarity of purpose and faithfulness in achieving it will involve definiteness of attitude and action. Compromise and accommodation do not come easily. If "truth is a cube and not a sphere" curves are not easily admitted. It is however possible to maintain a rigorous clarity of purpose and make allowance for human weaknesses or for differences of opinion. For it is just possible that others may also be possessed of clarity in their own way.

With Mr. Thurairatnam's pre-eminent gifts, we are quite sure that he has a bright future for him during his sojourn. It is our earnest trust that his studies will enable him to render even greater service than before, when he comes back among us.

Morning Star 25th June 1952

J. V. CHELLAPPAN

(AN APPRECIATION)

IT is difficult to find words of tribute, more appropriate to Mr. J. V. Chellappah, who passed away last week, than these taken from the parable of the talents: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant". Mr. Chellappah's life was a life of quite selfless service. He never wanted anything else of life than that he should be allowed to do his work as his conscience demanded. This he did with a tireless devotion, unconcerned about popular approval or disapproval. Such a life is one of God's choicest gifts to a community.

If an old-time missionary were to come back now, perhaps the thing that would surprise him most was that our people were managing their finances without a hitch. With all the manifold talents they possess it cannot be said that they ever used to believe seriously that a strict stewardship of money was a virtue in itself. It is this kind of attitude that was responsible for the fact that out of a large number of highly intelligent students interviewed for engineering studies abroad, two or three years ago, not more than one or two had ever handled a chisel. This habit of mind is traceable to a large extent to the age-long acosmic strain of the Eastern mind, which has considered the essence of virtue to consist in rising above the world. Keeping cash-books and ledgers with any degree of accuracy might lie within the province of petty clerks and hirelings, but was supposed to be below the level of superior minds. It is somewhat significant that in the Jaffna Council of the S.I.U.C. till about 25 years ago, though the Presidents were mostly nationals and the Secretaries always so, the Treasurers were always American. It came to be looked upon as accepted and natural that the handling of large sums of money by nationals could not be flawless. Not that there were not absolutely honest and efficient Treasurers before Mr. Chellappah. But after him our management of finances has never come under suspicion. Care, conscientiousness and a sense of responsibility amounting

to meticulousness have become the routine. It may I think, be no longer claimed that strict stewardship of money is a Western virtue. If this is true as far as we are concerned, we owe it to Mr. Chellappah. Perhaps what Mr. Chellappah did was a very small thing. After all, the essence of accounting is to enter the income on one side and the expenses on the other side and, if you have responsibility over and above this, to keep whatever money is left safe. To do this may not need much brilliance or learning. But it is only if this is done, that the world can get on. It was Mr. Chellappah's great contribution that he did this so regularly, systematically and precisely that to depart from the practice would now be scarcely worthwhile.

Mr. Chellappah was also our General Manager for a number of years. There have been many good Managers before and after him. Mr. Chellappah's achievement in this sphere was to reduce the burden that had to be borne by the Manager in his individual capacity and make the machine of management bear it. He told the present writer once about the time of his retirement from the position of Manager that the thing had been so organised that his clerk could do most of the work.

Mr. Chellappah served the Christian community in many other capacities as well. He was for long a member of the Executive Committee of the Council; he served on many sub-committees. He was Church Secretary and Sunday School teacher. In all these walks he showed the same self-effacing, conscientiousness. For a long time all his Church duties were carried in addition to his work at school. He was able to do this by working long hours and spending himself unstintingly.

Mr. Chellappah never was very much of a public figure. But those who know him will feel that a truly good and great man—great though his achievements are not of the sort as to be called historic—has gone from our midst. It is not idle to believe that as the crossing took place the voice that makes the final assessment might have been heard saying, "Thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will set thee over many things. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord".

The Anniversary of R. C. P. Welch

IT is ten years since on a Saturday morning R. C. P. Welch suddenly passed away from our midst. Much has happened in our Church life during these ten years. Certainly in many respects we are the same. That is why we are marking the anniversary. But in other respects, we have been changed almost beyond recognition, though I do not think we have progressed in any direction that he would not have approved of. In fact in many matters, the last ten years have merely witnessed the consummation of his heart's desire.

Mr. Welch held important office in the Council for nearly 20 years. But it was during the last ten years before his death that he dominated the scene. The problems of one era are not often the problems of another. Between the twenties and thirties when he held office and loomed so large, and the present time, many may not see much resemblance. Those days to many may look a different age; and we are looking back not merely from a time of different problems but from a time of different attitudes. We are looking back as members of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India on the Jaffna Council of the South India United Church. Does he still loom large? Will those who study the history of our community in the future, have the same opinion about his contribution as those who lived in his own time?

In my opinion R. C. P. Welch was one of the greatest figures that the Jaffna Christian Community has thrown up in its whole history. I do not think anyone who takes the trouble to examine the history of the Christian Church in Jaffna at any time, will have a different opinion. We accepted the episcopal system and the present method of doing things without serious misgivings, largely because R. C. P. Welch had lived and worked. Not merely in 1910 or 1920, but even much later, the idea of letting a central body play so large a part in Church affairs, and entrusting so much of responsibility into the hands of any one person would have provoked much protest and dissension. During

the period when he was President and later Executive Officer, he so transformed the mental atmosphere of our Church life that since when it has always been different from what it had been before.

What exactly was Mr. Welch's distinctive contribution to our Church life? Chiefly, I think it was two fold. In the first place, he taught our churches to think of themselves as one. Bishop Gore has said that Christians everywhere may be divided into those with a small-church consciousness and those with a big-Church consciousness. Mr. Welch certainly belonged to the latter category. In January 1942 he looked upon all churches of the Council as one. Since his time it has come to be an accepted principle that the general interest of all churches was paramount and that individual churches should not fight die-hard battles about their particular needs and interests. In the second place, he taught and induced confidence in the central agency that had the responsibilities of our Church life. If he had been unable to do the second, nor could he have been successful in the first. It was easy to ask people to think centrally, but it was another thing that they should come to realise that those at the centre, who had responsibility for guiding the Council and carrying out its decisions, would not betray the trust reposed in them. But so transparent and consistent was his honesty that, after a while people came to realise that if Welch made a statement it could be taken at its face value; and if he associated himself with a policy or an effort, then they could count on its being the best that should be done in the circumstances. To churches brought up in the Congregational tradition and nurtured by American Missionaries who came from a background of checks and counter checks on all authority this was a very big thing to do.

It is a great legacy that he left behind. We are living on it. We shall always be thankful to God for his gift to us in the life of his devoted servant R. C. P. Welch. The Church marches forward. But Mr. Welch's contribution will I trust always be with us. He ennobled our outlook. That is something we should keep.

Morning Star 12th November 1952

T. H. CROSSETTE

(1869 — 1952)

THAMBIAH HENRY CROSSETTE was the eldest son of Robert Crossette the first Worker at Chankanai under the American Mission. When Henry Crossette was born on 25th October 1869 his father was in charge of the Pungudutivu church. He was christened Henry Howland in honour of the well known missionary W. W. Howland. He was educated chiefly at Jaffna College where he distinguished himself greatly. When he was twenty years of age, like a number of other men from the same institution, he went as a missionary to India. During the last century the Indian Mission fields did not have enough men to take charge of their churches and schools, and so depended heavily on the Batticotta Seminary and later Jaffna College. Seminary graduates seem to have gone chiefly to South India into the field of the Madura Mission. Jaffna College graduates went chiefly to the North. While teaching in India, Mr. Crossette passed the B. A. examination of the Calcutta University and two years later the M. A. examination of the Allahabad University.

In 1904 A. G. Fraser had come out to Trinity College, Kandy, and had started recruiting that brilliant galaxy of teachers who made his regime famous. Mr. Crossette was one of the first who was recruited. He taught at Trinity for five years and while there visited England and studied educational methods. It was from Trinity that he came to St. John's College, Jaffna, in 1909 to take the place of the Rev. C. C. Handy who had just then died. Realising Mr. Crossette's abilities Mr. Jacob Thompson, who was Principal, soon let him have a free hand. He acted for Mr. Thompson when the latter went on furlough in 1910 and was soon made Vice-Principal, a post which was created at Jaffna College only in 1923 and at Central College even later. Mr. Crossette's subjects were English and History, both of which he taught with great success. In recognition of his scholarship the Royal Historical Society of England made him a Fellow. He left St. John's at the end of 1916 to become Principal of Manipal Hindu College, but came back in his old capacity in 1921 at the invitation of Mr. Peto in 1921.

Unlike some of his contemporaries Mr. Crossette did not play a substantial part in the public life of the country, though he did not hold himself aloof from it altogether. He was at one time Secretary of the Jaffna Christian Union. When in 1926 the Donoughmore Commission came, he presided over the meeting convened to protest against the demand for separate representation for Christians in the Legislative Council for Christians. He was probably a member of various Reform Societies in those days. But on the whole it was to his school that he gave himself with a rare devotion.

He was always richly rewarded by the state to which he raised every institution in which he worked. While he was strict, he was also quite just and was, therefore, always held in high respect by his students. Even after retirement he had to work for about two years to allow Mr. Peto to go on furlough.

He was very fond of his family and at home his hobby was gardening. When his teaching career at school was over he retired to his home at Chundikuli and spent a tranquil life, happy in the realisation that he could devote himself to these interests. One of the chief joys of his life was to watch the success of his children. His tranquility was unfortunately disturbed by two major calamities. About 13 years ago he lost his eye sight completely, and nine years ago he lost his wife. His wife had played an important part in his life and her passing caused a gap which could not be filled. In recent year she was busy collecting a fund to perpetuate her memory at the Orphanage at Maruthanamadam. He would also often play the teacher to any youngsters he could get hold of. The wireless also helped him to relieve his loneliness. He passed away unexpectedly in October of this year about a week before his 83rd birthday; but had the satisfaction of having his two sons with him when he passed away. His elder son Mr. R. R. Crossette Thambiah is a Commissioner of Assizes in Colombo and his younger son Dr. R. W. Crossette Thambiah who held a high appointment in the Medical Department in Ceylon is now Medical Advisor to the Government of Siam. A Service of Thanksgiving for his life was held at Chundikuli on 14th inst. The Rev. J. T. Arulanantham and Bishop Kulandran delivered addresses.

Capt. S. THAMBIAH

(AN APPRECIATION)

(Capt. Thambiah was specialist in Dermatology and used to lecture in the Madras University on the subject. He was called "Captain" because while serving in World War I in the Medical Corps of the Army he held that rank. He came of a family in Karainagar.)

A great friend of Jaffna has passed away recently with the death of Capt. S. Thambiah in Madras. Though born in Jaffna of Jaffna parents, most of his life was spent in India which he had made his home. He was therefore able to view our land from a little distance and befriend its inhabitants more than if he had lived here always. I first met Capt. Thambiah only about ten years ago. But I had heard much of him earlier as a staunch friend of the Jaffna people. When I saw him he invited me and my wife for a meal to his house in Poonamalle High Road. "When shall we come?" I asked. "Come anytime" he said, "I keep a running table". I found it was literally true. It was Christmas time; people were coming in and going out, either taking part in the end of lunch or the beginning of tea and so through the day. No clear or hard and fast line seemed to be drawn between the various meals.

Anybody from Jaffna who wanted treatment from a Specialist in Madras went straight up to his house, though he was merely a name to most people here. Malayan residents went straight from Malaya to Madras. A person had merely to present himself as from Jaffna and he would get a letter from Dr. Thambiah to say that he was his personal patient and asking his friend the expert concerned that bearer be treated as a special case. And a letter from so eminent a physician commanded a great weight. Though he never hesitated to perform this type of service, I think latterly he was getting a little uneasy that the influx of so many people into India in search of expert Medical advice might be a serious reflection upon the medical facilities available in Ceylon.

Dr. Thambiah was a man of great courage. It sometimes happens that men of great physical courage show a signal want of courage in other departments of life. Dr. Thambiah was extremely popular. But it never came to him as a result of any quest for it. Some years ago on a Sunday evening he was getting ready to attend service (he usually worshipped at the Methodist Church, at Egmore) when the Private Secretary of Lord Erskine, then Governor of Madras, rang up to say that the Governor wanted Capt. Thambiah immediately for professional consultations. "Please tell his Excellency", said Dr. Thambiah, "that I am getting ready to go to church and shall call on him as soon as the service is over". Lord Erskine was highly pleased at the attitude taken up. If Capt. Thambiah was loved and respected, it was for just this kind of thing.

Capt. Thambiah was a great Anglo-phile. It may have been the relic of a time when Indian Christian Community always took sides with the British as against the overwhelming masses of non-Christians round them. But far more than this, it was a genuine regard he had conceived for the high standards of conduct in many departments of life he had noted in England as against the prevarication and nepotism he had seen elsewhere.

When I attempted to see Dr. Thambiah in Madras last December, I was told he was too ill to see visitors. It was a source of genuine regret that I could not see him during his last illness. Capt. Thambiah leaves behind a fragrant memory of devoted service and fearlessness. Many mourn his passing.

Muhandiram A. B. Kumarakulasinghe as I knew Him

I knew the late Mr. Kumarakulasinghe in two capacities, viz: as a member of the old Mission and one of its local Boards, and secondly as a Tamil scholar. Mr. Kumarakulasinghe had for a long time been working in other parts of the Island and came to Jaffna, I believe, in the early thirties; and some years later was made a member of the Tellippalai Board. It was from these days that most of us were drawn into contact with him. He retired from Government Service in 1936. It may, therefore, be said that the knowledge of the present generation in Jaffna about him is confined to the last seventeen years of his life when he was past his prime in respect of physical vigour. But nevertheless, those who knew him at any period whatever were soon furnished by him with detailed accounts of his earlier days amply illustrated with anecdotes and numerous quotations either from those of his own composition or those of others.

In the first capacity in which I knew him I found him clear-headed, consistent and courageous. Often in committees and conferences it is usual to find many people who do not know their own views on most questions. It is usual to find people who are anxious either to adjust their view into conformity with someone else's views or deliberately setting out to make their views contrary to someone else's. It is also perhaps possible to find those who are chiefly guided by selfish motives and with no other consistent policy in their minds. Mr. Kumarakulasinghe arrived at his conclusions dispassionately and was always sure about what his opinion was. He was also a man who was willing to go as far as it was necessary to go to make his views effective. He was never influenced by the risk of incurring anyone's displeasure. To gain his support in any matter was a valuable thing in any meeting.

He ceased to be connected with any administrative body some years ago. But he never ceased to be a lover of the Tamil

language. When he was in Government service he published two books, one entitled "A Handbook of the Tamil Language" and the other entitled, "A Handbook of Tamil Grammer". The first was meant for Civil Servants and the other was meant for High School students. He was in his element in these books. His chief qualification as a Tamil scholar was that he was a clear headed person with a good knowledge of English who had taken to the study of Tamil. He could, therefore, bring a comparative knowledge of the two languages to an explanation of any point involved. The books, therefore, are lucidly written and provide a safe channel by which a student of English can come to a knowledge of Tamil.

Mr. Kumarakulasinghe was not merely a Tamil scholar, but was one who wanted to bring his knowledge of the language to the service of the Christian cause. From time to time he published poems of a high quality in the *Morning Star*. Besides these he put out two little volumes of poems entitled "Jebamalai" and "Potpatha Thuthiam". They contain exceedingly beautiful verses. Eight of his compositions have been admitted into our Hymn Book. Both his father and his brother had written Tamil verses. Two of his father's lyrics are in our Hymn Book. Ability in the direction therefore, was deep-seated.

However, it seems to me that Mr. Kumarakulasinghe's chief claim to the gratitude of the Christian Church in Jaffna will be based in the future not so much on his poems as on his sustained campaign that Tamil as a vehicle of expression used by the Christian Church should be of the highest quality. In season and out of season through the years he would urge this on everyone who came into any contact with him. The naive disregard by Christian writers of the ordinary rules of Tamil grammar and prosody was a source of positive torture to him. Partly out of sympathy with his views and partly to reduce the violence of his campaign in private conversations he was made a member of the Committee responsible for the Lyrics section of the present Hymn Book. Mr. Kumarakulasinghe's exposure of obvious mistakes in many accepted songs commanded increasing attention and respect.

One of his chief bug-bears was the nonchalance with which Christian lyricists passed from the singular to the honorific plural in addressing God, and their innocent attitude towards the rule that subject and predicate ought to agree in number. After his three years of work in the Committee there has come about a realisation that bad grammar can never redound to the glory of God and therefore that Christian literature ought to aim at the highest standards.

In whatever capacity one knew Mr. Kumarakulasinghe he always gave the impression of a courageous, kind and sincere man. I am glad of the privilege of having known him and enjoyed his friendship for many years.

Memorial Tribute to a Departed Veteran (Mr. T. Buell)

(It is remarkable how though Mr. T. Buell spent nearly sixty years of his life in Bombay, after his return to Jaffna in the early thirties he made himself prominent in the Christian Community by the part he played in its life)

Born : 30th August, 1864

Died : 10th April, 1954

“ONE crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name”, says the old dictum. In point longevity many things in nature do much better than man. “All flesh is as grass — the grass withereth, the flower fadeth” said St. Peter looking at the all too brief duration of human life. What a man is and what he does is what man holds up in the face of nature as his justification. Some however live long and seem to compete with nature: with trees and rivers and mountains. That is their record. Some distinguish themselves among their fellow beings by what they are and what they do. That is their record. It is not given to many to establish distinguished records in both these respects.

Mr. Thambu Buell would have been ninety years of age next August. Whoever died, he seemed to live on. At the time of the Manipay Hospital Centenary we often suggested humourously that he might live to see the second centenary of the institution. We were not saying it to just an old man who had lived longer than others; but to a man grown old in service and a man held in respect for what he was.

Mr. Buell spent the greater part of his life in India. He went to India in 1886. He came back to Jaffna in the thirties. In India he rehabilitated two big schools and became one of the leading figures in the Indian Christian Community. In his own Mission he attained an honoured place. When the Marati

Mission celebrated its centenary more than forty years ago he was made Treasurer of the centenary fund. On his retirement from service in Bombay he was made an honorary life-member of the Mission; and he sometimes went all the way from Jaffna to attend its meetings. Among Indian Christians generally his position was equally high. On more than one occasion he was President of the Indian Christian Association and was one of its representatives before the Montagu - Chelmsford Reforms Commission in 1917. Round Bombay, his name was magic. People were willing to do anything for one whose service had become so much a part of the history of the Province of Bombay.

Mr. Buell was past 70 years of age when he retired and came back. The American Board voted him a pension; and he could have leaned back to sip life in easy instalments, watch the careers of his sons, and fill his days with all the little things that those long in exile from home resolve to do on their return home. But though he bought a hackery, built a house and cultivated a garden, nothing was further from his intention than bask in the sun-set of his own life. Though many of us had come to know him somewhat earlier on his periodical visits from India it was after his retirement that we came into anything like close contact with him. His loins were girded, his hands steady, his mind fresh and keen. He might have been beginning his career and not closing it.

He became a Director of Jaffna College and soon became Chairman of the Board of Directors. He also became Chairman of the American Ceylon Mission. He became a delegate to the Church Council. He undertook to put the *Morning Star* on its feet at that time. His long contact with the College, his intimate knowledge of how the Marati Mission conducted its affairs and generally his acquaintance with the wider field of Indian Christianity, but above all his sincere interest in the College and the Mission we found to be very valuable assets. The account of the Centenary celebrations of the Marati Mission which took place about 1913 refers to an impassioned speech by Mr. Buell on the occasion. The habit of becoming impassioned about any

cause he took up remained with him through life. Mr. Buell worked for Devolution in Bombay and he was one of these persons whose presence in Jaffna made Devolution almost inescapable.

Solid as his contribution was to the various spheres of Christian activity in Jaffna the honour to which he is entitled depends rather on what he was. I once asked a friend of mine how Mr. Buell came to be held so high in the esteem of American Missionaries so early and be entrusted with responsibilities not usually entrusted to our people at that time and he told me it was due to his financial integrity. This is almost a commonplace quality now. Mr. Buell established his reputation in the matter more than fifty years ago when that quality was not very common place.

Outsiders usually credited Mr. Buell with much astuteness. What struck me through years of very close contact with him was his courage. As a person brought up in the old school he might have been expected to be willing to trim his sails according to the occasion and be all things unto all men. I often found him instead a last-ditch crusader.

Contrary also to expectations Mr. Buell was a person genuinely interested in other people. Whenever anybody did anything which he thought was entitled to credit, Mr. Buell hardly ever failed to compliment him by word of mouth or letter. Hardly two weeks before his death, probably from his sick bed he wrote to a retired Minister who was ill just then to tell him how greatly he had appreciated his ministry. All the people with whom he had to associate in Jaffna were greatly his juniors ; but there is no doubt that they positively liked him because of his interest in them.

The back-sliding of many graduates of the Batticotta Seminary had become a disgraceful episode in the history of Christianity in Jaffna. The example set by those who went to India have been particularly uninspiring. The record of those who went from Jaffna Colloge from its earliest days has been much

brighter. Many went as helpers in the Missions established in North India. They did good and faithful service in their time and their names are a mere memory now, but the record of this faith which burned without a flicker and was an illumination to so many through these decades is surely unique.

The beauty of Mr. Buell's home life is probably well known. He married for love more than 60 years ago, when to do it for that reason was very unusual. The years made no difference. The Queen of England had arrived in Colombo on the day that Mr. Buell died. Somebody told him about it. "There is my Queen" said Mr. Buell pointing to his wife herself in bed in feeble health. It is said that his wife quite unaware of this, when told about the Queen's visit a little later pointed in the direction of her husband's bed and said, "There is my King".

I am not sure if living to be ninety is always a deliberate achievement. In Mr. Buell's case I cannot help feeling that it was very nearly that. He had a habit of being faithful. His loyalties gave him a hold on life. He could not die because of them. It was not so much a physical achievement as a moral achievement. He was faithful to the end and has left behind a record of a quiet, steady, sincere life of unwavering loyalties.

Morning Star — June 25, 1954

Tribute to Canon Somasundram

(Written at the official retirement of Canon Somasundram from the Ministry at the age of 75, and his retirement after 22 years of continued service as Vicar of St. James' church, Nallur.)

THE retirement of the Rev. Canon S. Somasundram from active service in his seventy fifth year highlights one of the truly great lives in our country during this century. Canon Somasundram has not merely become a legend in his own lifetime but had become a legend forty years ago. His manner of speech has been imitated and anecdotes related about him for more years than one cares to remember. The fact that there were various aspects about him which lent themselves both to imitation and to anecdote does not detract at all from the magnitude of his personality. His slow and deliberate enunciation of every word, and his habit of introducing accents into the sphere of Tamil speech, where they are unknown, naturally lent themselves to imitation. His simplicity of life, his powers of physical endurance and his severely disciplined life have provided many stories through the years. But these were the effect rather than the cause of the powerful impression produced by his personality.

Canon Somasundram was born in 1877 in a village near Illavalai and comes of the highest stratum of Jaffna society. He was educated at Jaffna College where his escapades as a young man established an unenviable notoriety in those days. He underwent a spectacular conversion and turned his back on all that he had been. About the turn of the century he went to Calcutta for graduate studies. After teaching for a year in India he came back to Jaffna, and started teaching at Kankasanturai. In 1903 Rev. J. Thompson took him on at St. John's. In 1909 he was ordained to the Diaconate and in 1911 to the priesthood. He continued to teach Mathematics at St. John's where in later years he was appointed Dean. In 1918 he was

made the C.M.S. Missionary for the Vayuniya District and served in that capacity till 1930. After that he taught for a while at Kotte till he accepted the call to St. James Church, Nallur, in 1932. Bishop Horsley made him an Honorary Canon in 1939. He has been Vicar of that church continuously since then, and his repeated requests to be allowed to retire were not entertained. The church has now bowed to the inevitable and has reconciled itself to the idea of a new Vicar. As a Minister his deep piety and obvious sincerity have earned him the affection and loyalty of his congregations. His preaching was always marked by an extreme clarity. His work was always characterised by an extreme concentration of attention and almost an obliviousness to interests outside his focus.

What has made Canon Somasundram stand out from his fellowmen through the years? It was his habit of seeing a moral issue in every situation in life. This accounted for his unwillingness to compromise over anything at any time. Very often the situations may have been concerned with trivial matters. But to one of Mr. Somasundram's attitude of mind no situation is ever trivial. This attitude of mind in religious terminology is called Calvinistic. It characterised one of the most notable groups of men in the history of the Church. A small band of these men migrated to America in the seventeenth century and the descendants of that band were Mr. Somasundram's teachers at Jaffna College nearly sixty years ago. It is their stamp he received. As a reaction to his earlier life, this stamp was made indelible. An unbending Calvinist in the Ecclesia Anglicana was a noteworthy phenomenon. The rigidity of this Calvinism impressed itself on successive congregations and successive generations of students. In a land of so much elasticity this stone, hewn from the true Genevan Rock, has been a refreshing contrast.

According to modern standards 75 is a fairly early age. Long may Mr. Somasundram live and give a chance for another generation to know him as our own has done.

The Life and Work of Dr. John R. Mott

1865 — 1964

(Few men have ever had a greater influence on the world Church, during the period between 1890 and 1950, than John R. Mott. "Ecumenicity, the great new fact of our times", as Archbishop William Temple called it, is largely the product of his efforts.)

THE death of Dr. John R. Mott in his winter home in Florida a few days ago brings to an end one of the truly epic careers not merely of this age but of all time. It was epic not merely because of its length, nor because of the stage on which it was lived out, nor even because of the volume of work produced, but chiefly because of its lasting effect upon history. As John R. Mott entered the portals of heaven there is hardly a name of importance in the history of the Christian Church during the last fifty years whose bearer could not be conceived of as rising to welcome him.

John R. Mott was born on 25th May, 1865 and was converted when studying at Cornell University during a campaign carried on by a team of undergraduates from Cambridge University in 1886. He soon allied himself with D. L. Moody who was then carrying on a series of conferences among college students from all parts of America. D. L. Moody was responsible for founding the Student Volunteer Movement, now termed the Student Christian Movement, the main purpose of which was to enlist candidates for foreign Missionary work. The next few years of Mott's life were spent in travelling all over the world putting fresh life into Christian work among students. On one such trip he visited Jaffna College in December, 1895 and wrote of the College Y. M. C. A. that it had few equals anywhere in the world. Mott's dynamic personality and burning faith transformed the world of student life in a few years.

"From seeking to help youth his horizon widened to men and women of all ages throughout the non-Christian world", says his biographer, Basil Matthews. This new outlook is embodied

in such books as "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation" (1900) and "The Decisive Hour of Christian Missions" (1910). He became the central figure of the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh in 1910, which was the starting point of the era of Missionary co-operation. He became Chairman of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference and spent the next few years travelling about the world firing the Christian missionary enterprise everywhere with the hope of evangelising the world in one generation. The result of this campaign would have produced startling changes had not the first World War interfered. During his travels, Mott established National Christian Councils everywhere to co-ordinate the thinking of missionary societies on the field. The Continuation Committee became the International Missionary Council and served to co-ordinate Missionary thinking at the base. The best part of Mott's life was given to service of the International Missionary Council. It was a rare privilege to see him in Madras chairing the third of the great World Missionary Conferences.

Mott's travels, his many books and his bringing together Christian leaders from all lands inevitably led to the beginning of the movement that culminated in the World Council of Churches. It must have been a source of great satisfaction to him then in his 83rd year to preside at the opening session of the World Council at Amsterdam in 1948.

By 1938, Mott had published 11 books. He must have travelled round the world almost a hundred times. Nor did he ever think that he had finished his work. He was highly amused when the present writer asked him about ten years ago whether he was still doing anything. His life was tireless. During the first World War, he was sent by the American Government to unsettled countries like Russia and Mexico. In recent years he received the Nobel Prize for Peace.

John R. Mott will live in history as the chief architect of the present era in Church history during which Christians all over the world have realised that though the Church is divided it is still one and that therefore the divisions that exist should be removed.

Mr. K. S. SARAVANAMUTTU

(Written in 1957 for the Drieberg College Magazine Chavakachcheri when Mr. K. S. Saravanamuttu who had built up the Institution, retired after many years of service. Mr. Saravanamuttu died in 1983.)

TO be a teacher is always quite pleasant and comparatively easy. It nearly requires that you impart to others what you yourself know. Provided the teacher knows his subject he can get along as well as he likes. Perhaps even when he does not know his subject, the chances of detection are not always strong. There is no interference whatever from outside and little criticism from within. If the teacher can elicit the interest of students, so much the better. They will like him and follow his lessons. If on the other hand, he sends his students to sleep, they will not be in a position to criticise, and will be hardly disposed to carp at one who affords them the opportunity of snatching a little rest during school hours.

To be a Principal, on the other hand, is different. The Principal must see that every boy on the campus is well-behaved; must arbitrate in disputes between students, must satisfy the demands of the parents of all students, must keep peace among the teachers and not merely elicit their good-will but at the same time see to it that they teach. He must obey the contradictory circulars of the Education Department and satisfy government that whatever be the changes of mind there be on its own part, he has already anticipated them and has carried out its wishes, before it knew its own mind. Finally he must convince the management that whatever the circumstances were, he was always right. Anybody, therefore, willing to be a Principal has my great admiration. But anybody who has satisfactorily conducted himself as a Principal of a big school for twenty five years must be looked upon with incredulous astonishment.

Mr. Saravanamuttu went as teacher of Drieberg College in 1930. It was in the nature of things that when the Principalship

fell vacant he should have been invited to fill the post. Though the school celebrated its 75th anniversary only a few years ago, and though there has been English education at Chavakachcheri for an even longer period, in common with all schools in Thenmaradchy, Driberg College owes more than we can adequately acknowledge at any time, to the late Rev. J. K. Sinnatamby. It was, therefore, quite fit that when Mr. Spaulding Abraham died in 1930 that Mr. Sinnatamby's son-in-law should have been appointed to the place. But if Mr. Saravanamuttu was appointed to the post because of his relationship to Mr. Sinnatamby, he made a success of the job entirely on his own merit.

The last 25 or 30 years have seen many upheavals in many spheres, in the field of education. We have seen a great wave of anti-Christian feeling rise and ebb. We have seen education ceasing to be the monopoly of a privileged few and becoming the right of all. On the otherhand, we have seen the idea that it was the duty of Government to safeguard the rights of all give place to the idea that it was the duty of government to further the rights of the majority. We have seen a tremendous emphasis on English succeeded by a tremendous emphasis on swabasha. We have also seen the custom of interpreting the term swabasha as any national language give place to the movement to make it mean Sinhalese only. Through all these changing tendencies and flux of events one who was in charge of a school as Principal had to make his school preserve an even keel.

What was the secret of Mr. Saravanamuttu's success as a Principal? In the first place, Mr. Saravanamuttu never lost the common touch. Anybody coming to see him never received the impression of talking to an Olympian, who could not understand their point of view and was far removed from the way that he himself looked at things. An Olympian Principal might have had a chance in an older era, when education was a matter between teacher and students. In the modern era when education is coming to be looked upon as one of the many aspects of community life, in which the community performs a

certain function, talent for what is called "Public relations", or in other words the ability to manage the public, especially the parents, is an indispensable requirement on the part of a Principal.

Another quality which has contributed a great deal to Mr. Saravanamuttu's success is the manner in which he channels his temper. It is untrue to say that Mr. Saravanamuttu never loses his temper. But his behaviour when he loses his temper is unusual. He merely keeps silent. Anger flourishes face to face with anger. It can get on reasonably well against argument. In front of silence it collapses. The need, however, for Mr. Saravanamuttu to keep such silence occurs, I believe, very rarely for the occasions on which he loses his temper are few. Generally, therefore, it may be said that at the end of an interview, Mr. Saravanamuttu is where he was at the beginning.

The third quality that contributed towards his success was his single-minded devotion to his work. Mr. Saravanamuttu's private and public life were both merged in his work. He came to school early and left, if not late at night, hardly ever before dusk. He seemed to live more for the school than for himself. In the presence of such devotion it is few people who could have remained obstinately non-co-operative. His devotion to the school was very much like the devotion of the late R. C. P. Welch to the Church Council, "passing the love of woman".

These qualities have not merely made Mr. Saravanamuttu a successful Principal but a respected man in the community. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Diocese, and in conferences and councils of the diocese he has honoured place. The age of 60 is now looked upon as the beginning of the second chapter in one's life. May this chapter be long and may it be as full of good and useful works as the first chapter.

Morning Star 22, June 1960

A. M. K. CUMARASWAMY

(Mr. Cumaraswamy served in various capacities in various parts of the Island. All of which are referred to below. His last position was that of Director of the Institute for the study of Religion and Society. He was loved and appreciated wherever he worked.)

TO those who have had the privilege of knowing him, a smile has faded and a light has gone out of life with the passing of A. M. K. Cumaraswamy. The sun will come up again, schools will reopen, prize-givings will be held, people will go hither and thither, and the usual round of the country's activities will get into swing once more; but they know that life will not be the same again.

When I joined St. John's in 1913, A. M. K. was a legend there. He had left two or three years earlier, having performed what was at the time more or less the inconceivable feat of having obtained First Class Honours in the Senior Cambridge Examination with distinctions in almost the entire range of subjects like English, Latin, Mathematics, Physics, etc. He had gone to Royal College, which along with a few other institutions of similar standing performed the task at that time of coaching the star-pupils of the Island for the scholarships offered by the Ceylon Government on the basis of the London Intermediate Examinations.

After passing his B. Sc., he seems to have caught the eye of the Rev. A. G. Fraser, who always had an idea that all the best teachers in the Island should teach at Trinity. For this purpose Mr. Fraser roved here and abroad in his campaign of recruitment. Among Jaffna people Mr. T. H. Crosette, Mr. William John, Mr. A. M. Nathaniel and Mr. Nevins Selvadurai had all taught at Trinity, during the earlier years of the Fraser epoch. I wonder if a better batch of Europeans ever taught in a Ceylon school than those who served under Fraser. They included Kenneth Saunders, Norman Campbell, W. S. Senior, Bishop

Sinker and Kenneth MacPherson. Probably Cumaraswamy's time at Trinity was the one he enjoyed most, though it would not be untrue to say that there was scarcely any time which he did not enjoy. So much did he put himself into the school, that twenty-five years later, when he went into a class at Trinity, as an Inspector, he could call every single boy by his surname on the basis of facial resemblance to the earlier generation he had taught. In only one case did he trip and the boy said "Sir, that was my mother's maiden surname".

From Trinity he was extracted by Bishop Carpenter - Garnier to be Secretary of the Diocese of Colombo. He liked to be in the midst of ecclesiastical matters and liked the task of "personal relations". He got on exceedingly well with the Bishop himself. The Bishop appreciated Cumaraswamy's ability to remain human in the midst of routine, his lightness of wit and his habit of regarding conventional problems in an unconventional light. Once a church committee had written asking if the produce in the Vicarage compound belonged to the Vicar or the church. Cumaraswamy minuted his opinion clearly but in light metrical form. The Bishop expressed his appreciation of the opinion in verses of his own. The partnership between the two at that time was an unbroken success. On one occasion at a big public meeting at which the Governor, Sir Herbert Stanley, was himself present, the Bishop who was to take the chair was somewhat late. Cumaraswamy deliberately took a chair and, in the sight of everybody, put it under the clock and pulled back the minute hand by ten minutes. The Bishop arrived ten minutes or so late looked at the clock and beamed. "You are well worthy of being a secretary" confided the Governor to Cumaraswamy.

Cumaraswamy's subsequent career as Vice-Principal of St. John's, Inspector of Schools and as Registrar of the University and his appointments after that at Wesley and at Jaffna College are well known. Perhaps it is not equally known that during the War he served as Secretary under Sir Geoffrey Layton of a body called "The War Council". The purpose of that body was not the direction of grand strategy but the allotment of petrol. In view of the fact that the government had a

Petrol Commissioner and the military would have done its own appointment, the functions of this body are somewhat difficult to understand. But Cumaraswamy must have got enough petrol and seems to have got on quite well with the fiery seaman, with whom nobody else seems to have got on well.

I do not know when I first saw Cumaraswamy. I have a faint recollection that he delivered a short speech at a small gathering in front of Mr. Peto's bungalow sometime in 1921 or 1923 and quoted from Thomas Gray. My first distinct recollection about him was when he delivered a speech at Brodie House, Colombo, after his return from his European travels, I believe, early in 1925. It is a tribute to his powers as a speaker that after the lapse of 35 years one can still quote most of the speech. He spoke again at a meeting of the Jaffna Students' Congress during the Easter vacation of 1925. Probably there will be others besides me, present on the occasion, who would be able to recall quite a few bits of the speech.

In a sense it might be said that Cumaraswamy never found the work that nature had meant him to do. He was often an administrator, but administration was not his forte. He did tolerably well as an administrator, partly because he could do anything tolerably well and partly because he could "handle" people quite well. He was essentially a teacher in his intellectual make-up. That is, he had an extreme clarity of mind and extreme clarity of exposition. He saw everything in well-defined outlines and could make others see it with equal definiteness. He had a facility of expression which few could equal; and was also usually able to reinforce his point with apt illustrations or anecdotes. One of the qualities about his speeches, which many may have noticed, was their reproductibility, even after long lapses of time. In case of most others one remembers a telling phrase, a powerful argument or the general sense. It is an index of the sparkling quality of Cumaraswamy's speeches that he could be repeated without any serious omission of anything important for a long time after. Every phrase would be happily turned out and in its exact place. One argument would follow

another in close-knit procession, supported by reminiscences or quotation to back it up, and the whole thing would be always a finished piece of art. No argument was left hanging in the air and no anecdote or reminiscence was an intruder. There was no attempt at rhetoric, no attempt to play to the gallery, no attempt to pass over the counter any unproved assumptions.

During most of his life as a teacher Cumaraswamy taught either Physics or Mathematics. He taught these well because he could teach almost anything well; but his real bent lay outside his sphere of Science or Mathematics. His ability for language amounted to genius. A highly self-opinionated Englishman at Royal College decided years ago that a student not knowing Greek had no business to sit for the Intermediate in Arts even though he had obtained distinction in Latin. An English prejudice in those days was considered wiser than the enlightenment of the rest of the world. If Cumaraswamy's linguistic abilities amounted to genius, his literary abilities were no less high. He could turn out verse or prose in English or Tamil with deftness and facility which amazed everyone who knew him. As Associate Editor of the *Morning Star*, when called upon at short notice for a leading article by the Editor, he would have one ready by the time the Editor returned after one period of class-teaching. Twice after coming to Jaffna in recent years he obtained prizes for composing original Tamil Lyrics at the Jaffna Diocesan Festival. He did not send entries oftener as he had no desire to keep out others. The present writer once had him turn the English translation of a German poem into classical Tamil metre for one of his Tamil books. This time also I was hoping to get him to do the reverse by cracking some extremely tough Tamil poetic nuts into lucid English verse. I now regret extremely that I did not write to him earlier.

His proper place would have been on the teaching staff of a great university. Unfortunately the facilities at the disposal of those seeking higher learning forty-five years ago only permitted him to get a pass degree which, though a wonder then, came to have in a realm of knowledge whose

horizons are constantly widening only a somewhat antiquarian value later. It is in a great university where ideas have a premium, where the "enchancements of the Middle Ages" co-exist or struggle with more modern "isms," theories and hypotheses that he would have been most at home. And what a contribution he would have made to "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" at high table and the Senior Common Room! In a university lecture room lecturing on any of the Humanities, his love for ideas and his felicity of expression would have been exercised at the highest level and shone to greatest advantage.

In an article in the *Manchester Guardian* a writer recently quoted a quip of the late Sardar Patel on the present Prime Minister of India. Patel is said to have declared "Jawaharlal is badly needed to solve the crises he himself has created." A. M. K. never solved a crisis. A crisis - melted away in his presence. Some twenty-five years ago a writer in the *Morning Star* commented on A. M. K.'s participation in some controversy of the time, by saying that A. M. K. was more fitted for tea-party than to give a judgements on a controversial question. Many years ago I asked him about a bitter long-drawn out case in the Colombo courts. "Two of the most charming people I know," said A. M. K. He did not see how they could fall out. Bitterness did not exist in his presence. Some people evade crises or circumvent them. A. M. K. did neither. He walked into a crisis, but the crisis ceased to exist in his presence. It may not, of course mean that the crisis had ceased to exist in itself. It may be said that he did not see it. To a certain extent this is true. But it is good that there should be people who should bring into any situation, however crucial, their own kindness and charm so that though the issues remain the same the atmosphere has changed. With men like A. M. K. going to and fro in the world with their kindness never running dry, their wit and anecdote never failing, perhaps fewer crises would develop.

In theology A. M. K. remained through life a convinced and unshakable Anglo-Catholic. He might mix with others and

participate in their worship but he himself never modified his allegiance. His tolerance and courtesy often gave a mistaken impression. Mr. Francis Kingsbury, whom he loved, and whose classes on theology he used to attend, believed that he had converted him to Unitarianism; but finally discovered that all his labours had been wasted and confessed to a friend "He is the most disappointing man I have met." To have attended classes on Unitarianism and come out, perhaps, a more convinced Anglo-Catholic was a tribute both to his courtesy as well as to the depth of his religious conviction.

A. M. K. had great versatility and many and varied attainments. There was hardly anything to which he turned his hand at which he did not excel; "nothing that he touched he did not adorn". He could be humourous; he could be serious and be both quite sincerely and whole-heartedly. Yet it was the man behind these abilities who made an impression on all who knew him. "He could mix with kings and not lose the common touch," always remaining the same. He found everybody and everything charming, because of his own charm. He was greatly beloved, because of his own love. It is not often in a generation that there appears one at whose passing we say "We shall not see the like of him again". Yet truly A. M. K. was such a man. There are many great men; but there was only one "Cum". It is good for us to have lived in his time. It is good for our country that such a rare soul walked about our highways and byways. He was surely a man for whose life we have a right to thank God.

DEAN INGE

(1860 — 1954)

(Though Dean Inge died in 1954, this article was written only in 1960; and was occasioned by the appearance of his "Life" by Canon Fox. In his time the Dean was reckoned one of the greatest scholars of Europe.)

W. R. INGE, known to most people as Dean Inge, died in 1954 at the age of 94. This, therefore, is the centennial year of his birth. Everyone who knew his writings and the important place he occupied in the life and thought of his time always had a right to expect a biography of him, but more particularly during this year. Canon Adam Fox of Westminster has performed this task for us. During his own life time the Dean had often given his reminiscences, and various details of his life; and when the two volumes of his Diary were published some time before his death, he said that he had given the public all the facts about himself that it would be interested in; and strongly deprecated any possible attempt to write his life. We are glad that Canon Fox has not considered himself bound by the Dean's wish in the matter.

However, we must confess ourselves disappointed with the book for two reasons. In the first place, it is too short, running into only 270 pages. The public would have been happy to read a book twice as long about a figure, that so irritated and yet fascinated it for two generations. And a figure who armed with such intellectual authority continued to produce, for such a length of time, such a shattering effect upon the complacencies and truisms of Western civilisation, could easily have produced material for a longer biography.

In the second place, not merely is the book a little too monolithic, but more or less it is concerned with only one aspect of the monolith, the Dean's authorship. The subject of a biography always gains rather than loses, by being set in the context of the life and movements of his time. A biography too

obsessed with its own subject to pay heed to what was all the time going on round it, to a large extent makes the subject itself somewhat unintelligible. To have concentrated attention on the Dean's authorship was basically right; for the Dean was a prolific author. He published 35 books, and 25 pamphlets and contributed to another 25 works. Two other books of his were published after his death. But he was also a public figure and filled many important offices: was a master at Eton, a lecturer at Oxford, a parish priest, a Professor of Theology at Cambridge and the Dean of St. Paul's for 23 years. He was a member of many learned Societies; and for many years was a regular contributor to newspapers. In all these capacities he was constantly seeing many important people and was himself an important part of the life of the British (a word he hated) nation. One would have liked to know more of his relationship to the various leading ecclesiastical, political and literary figures of his time and his opinions about them. He was 21, when Carlyle died; 32 when Tennyson died; and 38 when Gladstone died. We know that he liked some of the great men of his period and did not like others. We would have liked to know more about the matter.

The reason why Canon Fox does not deal much with this aspect is because it is dealt with in the Dean's own diary. For instance, the Dean records how G. K. Chesterton had said that he joined the Roman Catholic Church, to be in a different Church from that of the Dean. We would have liked such things to be in a biography. A biography ought to be a self-contained unit. The Canon has no right to expect his readers to be acquainted with the Dean's Diary and to fill up the gaps from it.

Nevertheless, we are glad to have a life of Déan Inge and it must be acknowledged that, within the limits he has set himself, Canon Fox produces a very readable book. And certainly no book about the Dean could be uninteresting, even if the author wanted it; but the author does not desire it and writes engagingly.

Dean Inge's life covered a prodigious span, but the first thing to be noted about him was that he was perhaps absolutely the most learned man of his time, (except that he did not know Mathematics). The remarks that the students of Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol, used to make about him that what he did not know was not knowledge, might be made, even with greater appropriateness about Inge. At Cambridge there was hardly a prize he failed to carry away; but that was only the beginning. At Hertford College, Oxford, he turned his attention to metaphysics; and thereafter made all knowledge his province.

In philosophy he was a Platonic Idealist, who made Plotinus, the neo-Platonist, his chief teacher. He had a great contempt for the new philosophies of Pragmatism, Logical Positivism and Existentialism. He was not sure (like perhaps many other) that he understood Whitehead. Like most of those trained in the older British universities, he took his stand by the *philosophia perennis* and viewed other systems with suspicion and treated them almost as illegitimate.

In religion he was neither an Anglo-Catholic nor an Evangelical; and in his Diary had an offensive name for the former. He was for many years the President of the Modern Churchmen's Union, which counted among its members some of the finest minds in the Anglican Church, including for some time William Temple; but was very distressed when its younger members launched into left-wing politics. He thought they were not interested in Theology. He held that the Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals did not between themselves complete the schools in the Anglican Church and that there had always been a third element, the Platonic tradition. He held that the tradition represented by the Cambridge Platonists of the 17th century represented a tradition always present in the Church; and claimed St. Paul as a fellow Platonist. But since in ecclesiastical politics and preferments the Platonic school was not usually counted, he sided with the Liberal Evangelicals.

Both those who thought him orthodox and those who thought him unorthodox were always doomed to disappointment. He

was a mystic by conviction and practice ; and mysticism, while it may hold to the essentials of the Faith, does not always treat its external expressions as of great value ; and so chafes at dogmatic rigidity, organisational forms and settled modes of worship. Thus, though he faithfully attended the eight hours of worship on Sundays at St. Paul's and the various week day services, he could not help confessing to himself being bored by long musical services and was not sure that God liked being serenaded.

Nevertheless, he was a faithful Anglican, because that Church was broad enough to accommodate various types of people. His description of the Anglican Church is a piece of exquisite characterisation and typical of his writing. He says that—

It is a characteristically insular institution, which evades all classification.....It was the product of a political compromise, which was so framed as to include Catholics who would renounce the Pope, and Puritans who were not anarchists in principle. It is officially Protestant, and dislikes the name. It has framed tests of Catholicity, which separate it from the non-episcopalian Churches and which are scornfully rejected by all Catholics. It has been in a word, the Church of the honestest and most illogical nation on the face of the earth.

What is it that made this learned mystic one of the most well known figures of his time ? The office of the Dean of St. Paul's has always been considered the place of eminent divines. Great scholars had occupied it like Colet, Mansel and Church. But none of them was as much a public figure as W. R. Inge. What was the reason ? The reason was that the most learned man of his time, for nearly forty years, set himself up as a judge of men, events, popular ideologies and movements of the time. It was his "Outspoken Essays" that first brought him into contact with the larger public. He followed it up with similar books like "Lay Thoughts of a Dean," "Assessments and Anticipations," "More Lay Thoughts of a Dean," "Our Present

Discontents," "A Pacifist in Trouble", "The Fall of Idols", "Talks in a Free Country", and "The End of an Age." Concurrently with these, he was contributing not merely to learned periodicals but weekly articles to various newspapers, particularly "The Evening Standard." Here was an eminent Churchman and learned man speaking about matters which Churchmen and learned people had usually ignored, and often saying what Churchmen and learned people would not have said; always refreshing and always unexpected. He was a Churchman speaking against dogma; an advocate of Birth Control and Eugenics when respectable people shunned the subjects; one who was not a Pacifist but who was against the last two Wars; whose bugbear was Socialism, but who was hard on the Tories. He was a member of the Upper Middle classes, but was also a strong critic of the upper ranks. A. G. Gardiner records how probably the Bishop of London would often lie awake at nights fearing what the Dean would be saying in the next morning's paper. Early in life Inge had coveted high office in the Church. But it is obvious that he could never have been appointed Bishop.

In his nineties commenting on something Bernard Shaw had said about himself, he said all through the years both he and Shaw had remained what they had been from the very beginning. "Mr. Shaw", he said "is a Victorian Marxist; and I am a Victorian individualist." That is why he never fitted into any category. He said he had "the cross-bench" mind, which did not approve itself to Archbishop Davidson. It was the cross-bench mind, which saw where both sides were wrong which made him a delight to his readers and a source of anxiety to his official colleagues and superiors. But, as one of his defenders said, "We do not want a regiment of Dean Inges, any more than we want to live on tonics. But it is a great asset to any Nation to possess at least one man who says exactly what he believes concerning things in general."

Right through the last forty years of his life public interest in him never flagged. Everything he said or wrote was news; and never did anyone during the last one hundred and fifty years,

say anything more stimulating, when he put pen to paper. The Dean himself was quite surprised by his popularity. Learned as he was, what endeared him even to those who disagreed with him were his complete honesty, his courage and his perfect humility.

Dean Inge said many profoundly true and wise things; yet looking at his life from here, we must admit that he fails to attain to world-status. This is so because he is a little too English. His sympathies and outlook were those of an Englishman. It might be said that William Temple belongs to the world; and that Dean Inge belongs to England. Yet this shy, reserved Englishman, isolated even in his own generation, will continue to fascinate many more generations, as he fascinated his own.

MINNIE HARRISON

MINNIE HASTINGS HARRISON came of a distinguished New England family. Some sixteen years ago she took the present writer to a grave-yard in the neighbourhood of Boston and showed him the tombs of her seventeenth century ancestors. Her grandmother, as is well known, was a sister of one of the Presidents of the United States.

It was, however, a family with a long missionary tradition. Her grandfather the Rev. Eurotas Hastings came out to Jaffna in 1847 and died here in 1890. Her father Richard Hastings served in Jaffna from 1879 to 1904. She herself was born here.

For her education Minnie Hastings went to perhaps the greatest College for women in the United States, Wellesly; and returned to Jaffna in 1911. The Mission put her and Miss Bookwalter, who had come a little earlier, at Manipay, to make themselves proficient in Tamil. The writer remembers how some young people aged 14 and 15 constituted themselves into the Manipay Y. M. C. A. and called on the two Missionaries for a subscription, to buy a cricket bat. They wanted altogether Rs. 15/- for the purpose and much to their surprise the missionaries obliged with Rs. 10/-.

In 1913 Miss Bookwalter was made Principal at Uduvil and Miss Hastings, Associate Principal. It is said that when she went to Uduvil Miss Susan Howland, the retiring Principal, made every girl take off her nose-stud (which in Tamil is called *Minnie*), because to wear it would be "an insult to the girl who is coming".

Minnie Hastings must have presented a study in contrast to her colleague, Lulu Bookwalter. Together they must have supplemented each other; Lulu Bookwalter, efficient, purposeful; practical with an eye to detail and Minnie Hastings vivacious, cultured and concerned with ideas. Her experience helped her later to write the story of Uduvil, when the school celebrated its centenary.

In 1919 Max Hunter Harrison came to Jaffna College and the frequent presence at Uduvil soon after of the little Metz car (a highly dilapidated vehicle belonging to the College) suggested that something was in the offing; and in August 1922 the marriage of Max Hunter Harrison and Minnie Hastings was solemnized at the Uduvil Church by the Rev. John Bicknell.

The present writer was a student of Dr. Harrison at Jaffna College soon after. Dr. Harrison was a profound scholar who went into the most abstract branches of study and made all knowledge his province. He found his wife intellectually very stimulating; but evidently knew when to branch off alone. We once went to borrow a book from him and found inside it his programme of studies for the Easter Vacation of 1923 or 1924. It included the reading of Milton, Keats and Shelley "with Minnie" and "Medicine, not with Minnie!". She started a high-powered Literary Society for the Peninsula, at which Dr Isaac Thambiah once read a paper on Swinburne. How long the Society went on one does not know.

In 1930 the Harrisons went on to the United Theological College at Bangalore, which offered a better scope for Dr. Harrison's talents and of which he became Principal in 1936. Mrs. Harrison, I believe, taught English to the first year students.

To know the Head of a College and his wife is part of the education a student receives in that institution; and Mrs. Harrison was well fitted for her part in the matter. Students coming from the remotest corners of India knew that they had come into an institution of higher learning. Besides looking after the College itself, the Principal has to be host to numberless visiting scholars and ecclesiastics from all over the world. In the home of the Harrisons, they knew they were in an intellectual environment, as good as any similar one in the world.

At Bangalore, Mrs. Harrison took the Jaffna students into her special protection; and they were made to feel that they had not come far from Jaffna. Members of the College Council who went once a year from Jaffna were always the guests of the Harrisons. They then knew that Mrs. Harrison had really never

severed her connexion with Jaffna. If any one mentioned that he had been present at her wedding, it would create a special bond with her. During her stay in Bangalore, she visited Jaffna more than once. The two occasions that may be remembered are when she came for the opening of the Pandateruppu School, I believe, at the end of 1939; and second time, when she came for the 125th Anniversary of the Founding of the Uduvil Girls' School.

What Minnie Harrison was specially proud about was her husband. She was never tired of hearing Rockwell Harman Potter's account of how her College-mates waited to see what kind of a husband she had married and were astonished to see "Max Hunter Harrison, the handsomest man ever sent out by the American Board." She was proud about his linguistic attainments, his profound scholarship, and the respect in which he was held.

Though having quite a few years to complete before reaching his age of retirement, Dr. Harrison retired at the end of 1953 to give place to an Indian Principal; and gladly served under him for more than four years. The Harrisons left India in 1958.

In their home in Maryland the Harrisons preserved their connexion with Jaffna. Many here would have received the chatty printed letters they sent out each year, over their common signatures, but of course written by Minnie. Only a short time ago she twice took the trouble to motor long distances to get a legal draft to transfer a Mission land, which many years ago had been made over to her father, as Mission Treasurer. Though she was in failing health for some years past her mind ever remained bright and active.

Memories of Minnie Harrison range over many years. But all who knew her would remember her as a gracious, cultured lady always helpful, always taking a personal interest in those who went to her. With her passing a chapter of Missionary history, ranging over a continuous period of more than one hundred years, comes to an end.

The Rev. H. R. HOISINGTON

(This is an article of appreciation of a Missionary who worked here in the last century and was occasioned by the discovery of some books he had written.)

THE Rev. H. R. HOISINGTON was Principal of the Batticotta Seminary from 1836 to 1849. During three of these years (1841—1844) he was on extended furlough owing to a break-down caused by overwork. After his second term he resigned, as his health would not permit him to continue. Miss Helen I. Root, author of "A Century in Ceylon", calls him a person of "unusual scholarly tastes and gifts", whose learning commanded respect among people everywhere. Mr. J. V. Chelliah, author of "A Century of English Education", says that "in spite of his weak frame, he possessed a powerful intellect and an inspiring personality". The same author records that under Dr. Hoisington "the-Seminary reached its zenith in scholarship, power and influence."

The curriculum of the Seminary seems to have been very comprehensive in its range. Dr. Hoisington is said to have laid "increasing emphasis on scientific knowledge". His text book on Hindu Astronomy was, we are told, prescribed for the M. A. Examination in Mathematics by the Calcutta University. It was during his regime that Sir Emerson Tennent visited the Seminary and paid it his historic tribute.

Mr. Chelliah refers in his book to Dr. Hoisington's three treatises on Saiva Siddhanta. They were probably published separately, as each has a separate introduction; but they were also published in a single volume, with common introduction written from Williamstown, Mass. It was brought out in 1854 at New Haven, by B. L. Hamlen, Printer to Yale College. A copy is now in the Jaffna College Library.

The book is absolutely a pioneer effort in English. The Sanskrit language and Upanishadic philosophy had begun to be

popularised in Europe by the end of the 18th century, through the efforts of Sir William Jones; and the Boden Professorship in Sanskrit established at Oxford early in the 19th century. German scholars also had begun to be equally busy in the matter about the same time.

Very little attention, however, had been given in the West to Tamil Studies. A German scholar also published something about Saiva Siddhanta in the same year as Dr. Hoisington. But Tamil studies were opened up to the West only after the work of Dr. G. U. Pope at the turn of this century.

Dr. Hoisington's book probably created little impression in the U. S. A. and must have been looked upon as a piece of curiosity. The book consists of a translation and commentary on *Siva Gnana Bodham*, *Tatva Kadalai* and *Siva Pirakasam*. *Siva Gnana Bodham* is a set of very cryptic formulas, which form the basic text of Saiva Siddhanta. The second book sets forth the principles of Saiva Siddhanta epistemology. *Siva Pirakasam* is a sixteenth century treatise, not so authoritative as the *Bodham*, but one of the 14 Siddhanta Sastras, and written by an author who has contributed eight treatises to the 14.

I went through Dr. Hoisington's translation and commentary on the *Bodham* some years ago. Of late I have been going through his *Siva Pirakasam* a little more carefully. The author records the many difficulties he had to face: the peculiarities of Tamil poetic diction; the variety of technical terms and the fact that no "Hindu Guru or Sastri, capable of giving instruction in the case could by any means be induced to impart his teaching to any foreigner or to any native connected with a foreigner."

In view of the difficulties he had to face, the grasp, profundity and exhaustiveness of Dr. Hoisington's treatment are amazing. The important Hindu authors were writing for those who already knew the subject; and therefore a word or line might often assert or refute something, not otherwise referred to in the text, and therefore quite unintelligible to one without a background in the subject. I, therefore, used to be amazed by

the unanimity with which commentators manage to say the same things on the same text. The secret of their unanimity is that they usually follow certain standard, early commentators. In case of the Siddhanta Sastras, Siddhiyar is itself a commentary on Bodham and Siddhiyar has been commented on by six early commentators, who lived between the 16th and early 19th centuries. I believe most modern commentators follow them.

I was going through Dr. Hoisington's commentary on Sivapiragasam alongside with that of the Saiva Siddhanta Samajam of Tinnaveli. The resemblance between the two is exceedingly great. No doubt the author of the latter was following other writers, who in turn were following the classical commentators. In Dr. Hoisington's time, however, none of the modern commentaries was available; and I seriously doubt if he had access to the classical commentators, since they are not very much available even now. They certainly could not have been in print then. This means that he arrived at his conclusions by a study of the Sastras themselves. He records that, to understand the Hindu books, he had to rely solely on his "repeated examination of the several texts, and on a somewhat extensive comparison of these texts with other standard works, a labor in which many an hour of hard study has been employed". In the circumstances, the amount of his research as well as his insight leave me astonished.

Only in one respect does Dr. Hoisington differ from a modern writer in English on the subject. For transliterating the Sanskrit terms employed in Tamil, he goes by the Tamil sounds and not by the original Sanskrit spelling. For instance, the Veda is Vetham; Karma is Kanmam; Bodha is Potham; Atman is Atumam; Laba is Lapam; Darshan is Terisanam. But the spelling of a word in another language than its own is a matter of fashion and taste; and the present convention did not exist then.

Everything considered, Dr. Hoisington's work must be considered a work of surpassing merit.

Morning Star 2nd March 1962

Kalai Pulavar K. Navaratnam

(K. Navaratnam was a teacher of Stenography at Jaffna Central College from the latter part of 1920 till his official retirement some 40 years later. His salary was a bare pittance; after retirement he was employed by D. T. Niles in a higher capacity and on a better salary. Yet he became a great scholar and on a mere pittance built up a massive library on Indology, which after his death was bought by this Institute and now remains in its possession. The title "Kalaipulavar" was conferred on him by the public as a token of respect. He died early in 1962.)

THE death of Kalai Pulavar K. Navaratnam on Friday last deprives Jaffna of one of its best scholars. Indology was his field and he devoted himself to it through more than forty years with unremitting patience, zeal and selflessness. Indology itself is as vast and many sided as India; and it is idle to pretend that he was either an authority on all its branches or even had competence in regard to every one of them; but there were some branches he knew quite thoroughly.

He was quite conversant with Indian art, architecture and history, but it was on the classical schools of Hindu Religion and Hindu Philosophy that he had specialised. He was, of course, aware that a man who knew only one subject did not know even that; and therefore had a working knowledge all round his subject. He had a respectable knowledge of Western Philosophy and most other Religions, which enabled him to make his judgements with sufficient sureness.

However, it was in his own field that his knowledge was both extensive and accurate. The extent of it was really amazing. The writer once went to him for information about Vira Saivism—a branch of Saivism that prevails in the Karnatika and among a small sect in Jaffna—and to his astonishment the Kalai Pulavar produced a small booklet that he himself had written on the

subject. Some months ago I had been asked to review a bulky commentary on Siva Gnana Siddhiyar and its Six Commentaries and went to him to find out something of the Six Commentaries. He forthwith produced one of the few extant copies of the writings of the Six Commentators, available either here or in India. But his scholarship was not merely wide it was sure. He could always lay his finger on the chapter and verse of any quotation that you might take to him. I had once tried to trace a passage, which J. S. Nallasampillai had quoted from Max Muller's "Six Systems"; I had searched the "Six Systems", high and low without avail. When I went to the Kalai Pulavar, without the least hesitation, he said "It is in the Preface"; and it was.

In the eyes of Western Indologists a knowledge of Sanskrit is the basic qualification for competence in the subject. The Kalai Pulavar's knowledge of Sanskrit was not profound; but Western Indologists have only a vague knowledge of non-Aryan Indology. The Kalai Pulavar, however, made good use of the knowledge of Sanskrit he had; and except for Mr. S. Natesan of Ramanathan College, there have been few in Jaffna during the last thirty years who have had the range and sure knowledge of both Northern and Southern Schools of Hinduism as he had.

As a scholar, Mr. Navaratnam was not merely a writer but one who constantly worked for the promotion of scholarship. His book on the Influence of South Indian Architecture on Ceylon is well-known. So are his little books on the Vedanta and Saiva Siddhanta. Besides these he had, I believe, written some little pamphlets and many articles. A bigger book of his, on which he was working for some months past, is in the press. But he was also busy getting other people to write and getting their writings published. When the big Congress of South Indian literary men held its meetings in Jaffna some ten years ago, he was the chief organiser.

Not possessed of the preliminary academic qualifications that most scholars possess or -the advantage conferred by a big income or connexion with a great seat of learning - he made up

for such deficiencies by a steadiness in the pursuit of knowledge that hardly has a parallel in our Peninsula. He almost reminded one of the lonely scholars in the Middle Ages, who at a time, when facilities for the pursuit of knowledge were few and such pursuit was actually despised, went steadily on with their self imposed task, burning the midnight oil, expecting neither pecuniary reward nor popular applause. Such selfless, patient and resolute devotion to scholarship has a nobility about it that will always command admiration.

There are *slokas* both in Sanskrit and Tamil which say that, while the prestige of Kings and nobles is limited to their own domain, that of Scholars is unlimited. If therefore it be imagined that the scholar had a certain undisputed claim to popular esteem, the Kalai Pulavar was the last person who asserted that claim. He was one of the humblest and least pretentious of individuals one could ever meet.

There is no doubt that Jaffna has lost one of the men of whom she could be justly proud.

THE METROPOLITAN ELECT

(It is one of the ironies in the history of the Colombo Diocese that two persons rejected by it at its episcopal elections later came into world prominence: R. W. Stopford became Bishop of London and Lakdasa de Mel became Metropolitan of India, Burma and Ceylon. This article was written when Lakdasa was appointed Metropolitan in 1962. There is another written in this series at his death in 1977.)

BISHOP LAKDASA DE MEL is an old friend of Jaffna Christians; and we, therefore, have a right to rejoice at his elevation to the position of Metropolitan of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. He was consecrated Bishop of Kurunegala in 1945; and now becomes the second Bishop to go from Ceylon to take charge of Calcutta, the first having been Bishop Reginald Stephen Copleston, the famous authority on Thera Vada Buddhism, who was Bishop of Colombo from about 1875 to the turn of the century.

A Metropolitan, usually, resides in the civil metropolis or capital of a country; and whereas a Bishop exercises jurisdiction over a diocese, he exercises jurisdiction over what is called an ecclesiastical Province and which consists of several dioceses. The term "Metropolitan" was first used in the 4th canon of the council of Nicaea (325 A. D.); and the office is one which confers real jurisdiction, whereas the term "Archbishop", now often extended to a Metropolitan, is more honorific than canonical.

As is well known, Calcutta was the old capital of India and the Metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of India was naturally stationed in Calcutta. The first Bishop of Calcutta was T. F. Middleton, who was appointed in 1814. Among others whom Bishop Lakdasa will succeed were the saintly Reginald Heber and Dr. Welldon, who had earlier been Winston Churchill's Headmaster at Harrow. One of the most well known Metropolitans in recent times was Dr. Foss Westcott, who retired about

fifteen years ago and was the son of the famous Bishop Westcott of Durham. The Province at present consists of 15 dioceses ; but there are 18 Bishops, three of them being Assistant Bishops.

A Bishop should first be a clergyman, before he becomes a Bishop ; and it is expected of every clergyman, that he should have a sense of calling and be a man of piety and sufficient education, of blameless life and sound doctrine. It may, therefore, be taken for granted that a Bishop will have all the qualifications of a clergyman ; but unless he has them to a greater degree, he will not be considered for a Bishopric. These, however, cannot in themselves make him a good and effective Bishop.

In an article about a Bishop who was relinquishing his duties in India some years ago, it was suggested that a good Bishop should have three qualifications, in addition to those which any Bishop will have : (1) he should have a sense of the continuity of the Church ; (2) he should be concerned about doctrine ; and (3) he should like people. These qualifications are not sufficiently definite and are often difficult of detection, before a Bishop has been in action for some time. They can never become the basis on which a Bishop is selected ; but nobody will deny that possessing them will make a person a good Bishop, if not a great Bishop.

There are some Christians who behave as if the Church sprang up yesterday ; to whom the Church is in its first generation, who do not realise that the Church has existed for twenty centuries, has faced many of the problems we are facing now and made its decisions and judgements on them ; and has developed certain attitudes and ways of doing things. To them the past does not exist ; they want to treat every problem *ab initio*. They may make good (though not well-informed) preachers ; but cannot make good Bishops. This does not mean that we should be always bound by precedent, be tied by the past, and do nothing which was not done before. There used to be a gentleman some years ago, who was against the Ceylon Church Union Scheme, because it deviated from the Prayer Book

of 1662. When this was pointed out to the Bishop of Chichester, he said that the Church of England itself had moved away from the prayer Book of 1662. God is an ever—creative God, speaking to each generation; and, therefore, each generation must be willing to move away from the position of the past, whenever necessary; but it must be realised that God spoke in the past also. A regard for historic continuity in the Church is simply a recognition of the continued presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The principle of historic continuity, however, does not mean that the Holy Spirit has been acting only in one branch of the Christian Church. Bishop Lakdasa has a keen sense and real understanding of the principle of historic continuity and has, therefore, often been able to correct those who thought that it operated only in the Anglican Church or even the Western Church. He is aware that heritage of the Church is not merely long but wide; and that it is one in which the practice of one Church corrects the practice of another Church. He realises that history of the Church is not static but dynamic, that while some practices are time-bound others enshrine values of enduring significance.

As to the second qualification, the point is that it is not enough for a Bishop to be a man of sound doctrine; he must also feel that sound doctrine really matters. It is not enough for him to believe in the Nicene Creed; he should feel that the Nicene Creed is really important. Gibbon, the historian of the Roman Empire, said about the Aryan controversy in the 4th century that Christendom was split in twain over a diphthong. There are many who think that theological questions are so much logic-chopping, so much hair-splitting. To them what matters is a person's life. All the doctrinal controversies that have raged in the Church were a mere waste of time. Whatever else may or may not be said about the matter, I am certain that a person of such an attitude should never be a Bishop. Archbishop Fisher was, therefore, perfectly right in his rebuke to Dr. Barnes, when he said that, if he believed as Dr. Barnes did he would resign his Bishopric immediately. In regard to the words *homoou-sion* and *homoiousion*, round which the Aryan controversy raged, disputing whether our Lord was of the same substance as

God or of a similar substance, Gibbon himself has said "As it frequently happens the sounds and characters which approach nearest to each other accidentally represent the most opposite ideas." There is no doubt that Bishop Lakdasa is always concerned with doctrine.

It may be thought that it is unnecessary to insist on the third qualification, because it is so obvious; but somebody has said that God not merely loves people but positively likes them. Love has come to mean many things. It may be possible to love people in an impersonal way or with a universal benevolence or general philanthropy; but that will not do. A good Bishop must care for people. It is difficult to meet Bishop Lakdasa for five minutes and go away without feeling that you are a friend of his. There must be a multitude of persons who think that he is their special and particular friend. He is in fact everybody's friend.

As Metropolitan, Bishop Lakdasa has to preside over many important Councils, Conferences and Synods and administer an ecclesiastical Province. He has many qualities which will stand him in good stead in discharging his duties. He has great culture. At the Lambeth Conference of 1958, among so many polished scholars of distinction, it was said he had the best English accent. He has great mental alertness, which sees a point instantly; if it is against him, he will be always ready with the quip courteous. He has patience, which holds out, when everybody else's is exhausted. He is a person very difficult to quarrel with. His keen sense of humour and a virtually inexhaustible fund of anecdotes will enable him to intervene in debates and introduce a new atmosphere.

It will be a great advantage to the Province of Calcutta that in the seat where once sat a succession of high and mighty foreign Prelates, each in his time the second citizen in the Indian Empire, there will now be as staunch an upholder of the Faith as they, but one who withal will be a very likeable individual and will crack a joke with you in five minutes; and convinces you before you leave that in the new Metropolitan, you have a special and particular friend.

Morning Star — 22nd November 1963

S. V. ALAGARATNAM

AN APPRECIATION

(1900—1963)

THE passing of Mr. S. V. Alagaratnam on the 2nd of November removes from our midst one of the most lovable personalities that the Christian community has seen for many years. The late Mr. Alagaratnam was born on 17th March, 1900, and was the son of Mr. K. Vaithilingam of Pandatheruppu, a formidable figure in his time, and the nephew of a far better and more widely known figure in his generation, Mr. J. K. Chamugam of Jaffna Central College.

After his High School education, Mr. Alagaratnam joined the staff of Jaffna Central College as a Junior Teacher; and some years later went for training to the Government Training College, Colombo. He taught for some time in various parts of the Island, but came back to Jaffna and started teaching under the American Ceylon Mission a little more than thirty years ago. He taught successively at Pandatheruppu, Kaainagar and Manipay. In the latter of these two schools he was Head Master. He retired in 1960.

Throughout this period his connexion with the Church was very close. He was usually a Delegate from his church, first to the Jaffna Council of the South India United Church and later to the Diocesan Council. He was also usually on the Executive Committee and held many important positions. He was for a long time Convenor of the Committee for the Work Among the young and later of the Music Committee. In both these capacities he did much to create and improve a taste for South Indian music among our people. The high standard of music in the Choral Liturgical Service of the Jaffna Diocese which he usually conducted in person, was due entirely to him.

He was twice Treasurer of the Council, once in 1943 and again in 1955. For five years from 1949 he was Secretary of

the Diocesan Council. For some years past he was Business Administrator at Green Hospital, Manipal, and had a share in managing the A. C. M. Press. When any work was entrusted to him, it could be safely assumed that it would be done well. Every detail received the most meticulous care.

Though once Mr. Alagaratnam was immersed in any piece of work, he might have given the impression that it was all that mattered to him, that he was lost in his work and that he was most himself when he became a cog in a wheel, such an impression would have been far from the truth. Behind the work was always the man, a man who looked upon his work as a sacred obligation, who had deliberately eschewed the luxury of doing the things he liked in favour of learning to like the things he had to do. He was a man of great firmness of mind, a high sense of honour and unquestionable integrity, playing the part he felt God had called him to do.

Such character is usually associated with a certain hardness of temper. It might even perhaps be associated with a certain harshness of manner. This taken along with the fact circumstances had not treated Mr. Alagaratnam very kindly might have led one to expect a certain sourness of outlook and an embittered attitude to life. But these circumstances only mellowed his spirit and sweetened his temper; and through all his later years he retained an enviable calmness and serenity of mind.

Sweetness of disposition may often mean an artificial affability, deliberately adopted as a method of doing business. In Mr. Alagaratnam's case this was far from the truth. His sweetness of disposition was the natural expression of his nature and was inspired by a genuine good-will to people. He bore no grudge nor harboured any animosity. But though animosity found no room in his nature, it did not by any means imply a flabby tolerance of everything and everybody, no matter what happened, as long as he himself did nothing wrong. He had no use for humbugs and mischief-mongers, who, under the guise of respectability, dealt in half-truths and set off evil currents

while appearing to be actively engaged in doing a good turn. He considered such persons vile and would have no dealings with them.

And so he went through life, endeavouring to walk in the pathways of the Lord, as God gave him to see those pathways, steadfast in faith but humble in spirit, trying unflinchingly to do what he considered to be the right, but always doing it as kindly and generously as he could, commanding respect even, when he did not secure agreement.

At his funeral it was natural that I should have chosen the words of the 15th Psalm as setting forth the impression he created in people's minds:

Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle?
Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?
He that walketh uprightly and worketh
righteousness and speaketh the truth in his heart...
in whose eyes a vile person is condemned.

There was a large crowd present at the funeral. He was buried not merely with sorrow, but with reverence.

As one who had the privilege of knowing Mr. Alagaratnam for forty-three years, and whose friendship was one of the treasured things of my life, I would like to pay my tribute to this humble servant of God, who while he did not let anything come between him and what he considered right yet managed to maintain, as only he could, an unwavering loyalty to his friends and was always the most lovable of persons.

The Great Christian Singer of Tamil Nad

VEDANAYAGA SASTRIAR

(1774 — 1864)

CHRISTIAN churches all over South India shall this week be commemorating the first centenary of the death of Vedanayaga Sastriar, the great Christian poet of the Tamil country; and it is right that they should do so. It is fortunate for the Christian Church in India that, though it is not very old, it could produce a singer who could take his place among the greatest of the religious poets in the history of Tamil literature. The Christian Church in the West is very old, but the number of Western hymns we sing now that go back to very early centuries is small; and for long the chants in the Christian Church were the chanted prayers; and songs were metrical versions of the Psalms. That within its brief history the Christian Church in India could produce a poet whose songs could immediately find their way into Church worship was an act of divine mercy. 74 of the 400 lyrics in the latest edition of the C. S. I book of "Christian Lyrics" are by Vedanayaga Sastriar; 36 in the latest edition of our own Hymn Book are by him.

Vedanayaga Sastriar was born on 7th September, 1774 in Tinnaiveli. He was discovered by Christian Fredrick Schwartz and taken to Tanjore in 1785. It remained his home till he died a hoary and venerable man on January, 24th 1864; and the influence of Schwartz remained always a permanent factor in his life. A somewhat self-willed person he came into collision not merely with the missionaries but with others as well; but from 1829 the protection of Serfogee, the last of Maratha rulers of Tanjore, assured him of sufficient financial competence and independence.

The Sastriar visited Jaffna in 1811, and was welcomed by his friend and fellow-student of Sastriar, Christian David, then residing at Chundikuli; and it was at Chundikuli that he himself resided during his stay. A somewhat unpleasant experience there, when all his clothes got stolen, is responsible for one of the most poignant songs in our hymnology:

நெஞ்சே நீ கலங்காதே,
சீயோன் மலையின் இரட்சகனை மறவாதே.

It is not easy to justify every act in Vedanayaga Sastriar's life. Self-willed and self-opinionated, like some other great religious figures in history, he tended too often and too confidently to equate his own will with that of the Almighty, even when he was clearly in the wrong. Nevertheless, his life gives the impression of one who moved with God, like the prophets of old; and many incidents in it can only be explained on the basis of direct divine intervention, as for instance a favourable wind beginning to blow, when he had waited for many days to sail for Jaffna, just as he finished asking God for it in an impromptu stanza.

So confident was the Sastriar that either he was on the side of God or God was on his side, that he always showed a superb courage, then not always associated with the small and financially and socially insecure Christian community. Because he feared God and walked with Him it could truly be said of him that "he feared the face of no man."

As a poet, it is inevitable that there should be a comparison between him and the other great Christian poet of Tamil Nad: H. A. Krishnapillai, well known because of his epic "Rakshania Yathrikam", based on the Pilgrim's Progress. No less an authority than the late R. P. Sethupillai has said that Krishnapillai is not a whit inferior to Kamban, the author of the Tamil "Ramayana". Krishnapillai was a poet of outstanding merit, and above all a great Christian. His command of all the metres of Tamil prosody is well nigh perfect. He can rise to great heights and his poetry breathes a spirit of devotion

that is always moving. The "Rakshania Manoharam" of Krishnapillai is a work of supreme merit; but to read Vedanayaga Sastriar's "Jebamalai" is to enter another world. To read his first song of Creation is to be almost present at the act of Creation. Krishnapillai is devout and moving; Vedanayagam is sublime.

The Christians of the Tamil country have every reason to thank God for having given them a poet of the calibre of Vedanayaga Sastriar.

The Late Mr. K. P. Muthiah

THE judgements of crowds are often wrong; but when they are right, they can be very right. The attendance at a funeral is often due to the fact that the deceased belongs to a large clan, and has many relatives; or it is a homage to his official position. K. P. Muthiah came from a remote and unpopulous village. He did not walk in the high places of the earth nor sit in the seats of the mighty. Yet the crowds that thronged his funeral last Wednesday can only be described as stunning. People kept coming from all classes and strata ever since they heard of his death. At the funeral itself the crowds were milling. The attendance was a tribute to his greatness. Any one who thinks that he was not one of the great figures of our time has a very wrong set of values.

As one who knew Mr. Muthiah when he was a student and who can claim to have had something to do with his coming into the Christian fold, I may say that even then we knew we were dealing with someone who was out of the ordinary. When we wanted badly to detain him at Chavakachcheri and he decided to come over to Chundikuli, I either said at his Farewell or wanted to say "We don't like it; but if Muthiah wants to do it, he is right". So long ago I felt that here was a man who, if he made a decision after due thought, could do so only with the right intention and the best motive.

Greatness does not depend upon achievements, but on attitudes. And attitudes are "relations which express themselves". Unexpressed attitudes are not attitudes at all. The greatness of a man ultimately depends on the greatness of his soul (which the Romans called *magna anima*;) and greatness of soul always expresses itself. In fact, it is largely the quality of not hoarding itself. It does not express itself in set channels nor issue in great achievements; but people know that there is a great soul expressing itself. And no one can deny this claim to the late K. P. Muthiah.

He was a good Tamil scholar, but bore that scholarship very lightly; and always put it at the disposal of others, often cycling over to people's houses to teach, without receiving a fee. He had a talent for writing and wrote prolifically. He was a poet of considerable merit and always put that gift at the disposal of the Church. Many of the songs sung on special occasions by Mr. and Mrs. Anandanayagam were of his composition. No less than 14 songs in the compilation of the Jaffna Diocese come from his pen. He was a good speaker and was constantly on the platform.

Attainments and gifts are the possession of particular individuals but time is the common possession of all. In the use of his time he was unstinted. On the morning of Thursday of last week a Taxi Driver at the Jaffna Station said to one of his fares. "We have also lost a Nehru". Amidst all his other activities he must have helped him and many others of his sort.

A great soul may spend itself for others, but it does not because it wants the good opinion of others but because it is right to do so, according to its sense of values. When Muthiah's children went through his papers after his death, I understand, they found a number of medals which had been presented to him, including one from the Queen; and yet no one knew, that he had them. He had not done anything so that others might have a good opinion of him.

Truly a good and great man has passed from our midst the country and the Christian Church are the poorer for his passing.

Morning Star — 3rd July 1964

S. J. GUNASEGARAM

(1901—1964)

(Gunasegaram had an Hons degree in Philosophy from the London University; but he decided that he could serve the Tamil community best by taking to local history and persued his aim with relentless passion.)

(This is a sermon preached at St. John's Church on 28th June 1964)

IN a certain sense, every man is a historian ; that is, he is fond of listening to, and telling stories. School boys in particular are fond of stories that came from the past. But this realm which school boys are fond of is a realm in which fact mingles with fiction, literature with history, where the creations of Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott rub shoulders with Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon Bonaparte, and where the events of the Trojan War and the Maha Bharata have the same status as the events of the Second World War.

This, of course, is not real history. A real historian must sort fact from fiction, and set figures and events in correct sequence. If he is to be a good historian, he must do much more. In the welter of events he must distinguish between causes and effects, detect trends and movements binding event to event, must note their growth and decline; and he must take into account the various figures that stand out in the midst of these events and movements and assess their significance to the general picture.

Some historians are fortunate, in that they deal with contemporary events. The Greek historian Thucydides did this long ago. Many have done it in this century. Even those not dealing with contemporary events are often fortunate in that they have ample data to go upon. Where the historical sense is strong, as in Western countries, there is usually sufficient data available.

Those, however, who have to deal with the remote past of countries, where the historical sense is weak, face an entirely different task. There would hardly be any data available; they must, therefore, find their data. Their task resembles more of that of a scientist than that of a historian. Even the task of a scientist is, in fact, comparatively easier; he can get what he wants into his laboratory, perform experiments, create his data and by the process of trial and error arrive at his conclusions. A historian deals with things which happened long ago and which cannot be reproduced for the purpose of an experiment; and he has got to deal with people who lived long ago, and who will not come back to earth.

He has to find his clues in stray references in literary works, in coins picked up by accident, in inscriptions on stones buried in jungles. He has got to chase these clues across the gap of centuries and on their strength recreate the past and find corroborating evidence to justify his conclusions. If in such circumstances archaeology can come to his rescue he is saved. But where the science of archaeology is new, and where its application is deliberately directed by ulterior motives the task of a historian is not so much difficult as forbidding.

Yet it was exactly in this situation that Gunasegaram worked, in this situation that he turned out his prolific output. Week after week he put forward his theories against some of the most learned in the land. Going through the back numbers of the "Morning Star" during the last two days I realised anew the absolutely incessant unremitting nature of his work. For these labours he was rewarded with many eager readers, not merely here in Ceylon but across the waters in South India and Malaya. I found that particularly in Malaya his writings were invested with a certain oracular quality. It was, therefore painful for me, before I left Singapore early in January this year, to have to break the news of his untimely passing to his many admirers in the bordering Peninsula.

Gunasegaram did his Honours Course and obtained his Master's Degree in Philosophy; he taught English and Latin at

school. When he was in the Inspectorate, he picked up some Tamil, his knowledge of which he was anxious to display rather frequently. He did not have the background of academic discipline in history, acquired by one who had done the subject in a University. To start with, his knowledge of general history was that purveyed now for many years by Messrs. Warner and Marten, and supplemented in our time by Arthur D. Innes and Micklejohn. His knowledge of Ceylon History was that provided for many years by Mr. L. E. Blaze's "Story of Lanka". This knowledge he had acquired as a school-boy must have been filled in through the years by stray bits of information from here and there. He lacked the facilities and resources that would have been enjoyed by a University professor.

Nevertheless, for a number of years before his death he was recognised as a historian, whose conclusions had to be reckoned with. Sometimes it seemed that he pressed his conclusions a little too far, to lengths where even his warmest supporters, except perhaps those in Malaya, would have been willing to follow him. But whatever he said was backed by such tremendous erudition and argued with such cogency and brilliance, that it was listened to, if not always with agreement certainly always with respect.

Why did Jeyam Gunasegaram become a historian? He became one because he was a Knight errant, such as we read of in the Tales of King Arthur, in "Ivanhoe" and "Talisman" of Sir Walter Scott, or in Conan Doyle's "White Company". These Knight errants of old went about Europe determined to defend the right and put down wrong, to establish justice and wipe out injustice and iniquity. At a time when a king's writ did not always run through his country, in many countries there must have been a good deal of iniquity flourishing among the high and low; and these Knights took it on themselves to deal with it wherever found. They would have taken a vow to that effect before they were admitted to the order of chivalry. They were men of valour who went about always armed, firm in their stirrups, with lances ready to come into action anytime, always expecting a bully at the turn of the road, and ready

always to stake their lives in what they had undertaken. This self-imposed task never ended, except when life itself ended; or when they became too old to sit in the saddle or hold the lance.

They were not dedicated to any particular cause, to putting down this or that evil-minded baron. They were out to uphold the cause of justice and righteousness in general. If they found a particular cause needing their services, they threw themselves into it with all their might. If they found none at hand, they went in search of one; and thus perhaps acquired a taste, or a reputation for a taste, for fighting as such.

Gunasegaram found the Tamil race in Ceylon subjected to systematic injustice, deliberately trampled on in a thoroughly legal and constitutional manner and, therefore, more helpless than a victim trampled on in an illegal or unconstitutional manner, reduced to speechless impotence, losing its spirit and its belief in itself and losing its grip on life. "Here", thought Gunasegaram, "is the cause into which I must throw myself."

He decided that the best way in which he could make the Tamils of Ceylon believe in their future was to make them believe in their past. Let others fight on other fronts. This was his chosen sector. I used to make constant fun at his pre-occupation in these turbulent times with things that happened more than a couple of thousand years ago. Finding no results from oral advice given so frequently, I betook myself to writing a highly sarcastic article in the "Morning Star", to which paper he himself was a constant contributor; and said that, as a historian of the kind he was, his work must be very lonely. His reply must have thrilled the heart of every Tamil who read it. It Thrilled mine.

Gunasegaram, therefore, became a historian because of necessity. No doubt he became interested in history and the eras he investigated, and he became interested in the Tamil cause; but he did not start with these interests. He started with a passion for justice. If the situation had demanded that he should have become a mathematician or an astronomer, he would

have become one. But he decided that in the circumstances his duty lay in that of rehabilitating the past history of the race.

It might be said that is not the attitude for a true historian to take. It might be asked whether a person with such an attitude would not want to uphold his side, right or wrong. Such a question is ill conceived and self-contradictory. A person who deliberately sets out to establish and uphold what is right cannot at the same time want deliberately to uphold what is wrong.

To tell the truth, when the truth is obvious or when there is no opposition, is easy. But sometimes truth has got to be rescued from prejudice and perversion. Such prejudice and perversion may be frenzied and temporary or it may be age-long and well backed by self-interested scholarship or popular and political authority. The task of rescuing truth in such circumstances cannot be undertaken, much less carried out, unless inspired by an unwearied passion for justice.

“Thrice is he armed, who hath his quarrel just” it has been said. The cause is sufficient justification for the fray; but the warrior who goes into it must make sure that he is not going to do more harm than good to the cause by inviting ignominy and ridicule, the sure fate of those who go into the fray unskilled in the art of war and ill-equipped and ill-prepared for the battle.

So Gunasegaram set himself deliberately to prepare himself for the task. In the end so great was his proficiency in his subject, so sure his grasp of authorities on each point, so effortless the ease with which he could bring the weight of profound research to bear on any issue at stake, that the most learned in the land could feel that here was a foeman worthy of their steel. Some of them may perhaps have written off a good deal of what he said as sheer polemics, more ingenious than sound; and I think they would have been right, because in the heat of battle a warrior would often venture too far; but if history is to be history in this land, they will also realise that it has to make room for many of his conclusions.

A passion for justice and skill in the art of war are not enough for a Knight. He should be a man of valour. It is the men of valour who were asked to be the vanguard when Israel went into enemy territory. I have known Jeyam Gunasegaram for more than fifty years; and I have known him always as a person of superb courage. In the early days this quality used to be worked off into acts of physical exuberance to the great discomfort and annoyance of his fellow-students; and this quality, though fortunately not the same method of expression, was carried by him through life. And well might the words of William Wadsworth, the poet, have been applied to him,

“So was it when life began

And so it is now that I am a man.”

If his methods of expressing his courage did not cause discomfort to his friends in later life, it sometimes caused grave anxiety to members of his family, as when during the 5 or 6 years of his stay in Mount Lavinia he insisted every morning on swimming three miles out into the Indian Ocean. Six years ago it almost brought about his end at the hands of a raging mob. It is well known how somebody else was mistaken for him and beaten up and burnt to death. During the whole aftermath of the civil disturbance he cherished the belief that it was the mob that was afraid of him. It did not strike anyone that he could be afraid of that mob or anyone else.

This was the spirit he brought into every task he undertook. All through his life he never flinched before danger nor paid heed to the consequence of his actions. This was the spirit in which he could undertake his role in historical polemics, the spirit in which he could non-chalantly set out to prove that everyone else was wrong, that the authorities quoted against him were wrong, that all the learning embattled against him and often backed by political authority was defective, and that he alone was right. During the last few years his battles with scholars who knew that they had the support of popular majority opinion were a superb sight to see. The fact that the fight was usually single handed did not worry him at all. He was indeed a man of valour.

Into the cause of rehabilitating the past of the Tamil race he threw all that he had, his great mental powers, his immense learning and his dauntless spirit; but what drove him into it was, not the merit of this particular cause, but his passion that there should be justice.

In view of the obvious evidence of injustice, iniquity and unrighteousness that have prevailed in the world since the beginning of time, what is the ultimate justification of those who also almost from the beginning of time have thrown their lives into the quest for justice? Usually they have met with determined resistance and have often met with violent death. They have often been written off as failures and their lives considered waste.

But says Thomas Carlyle "In this God's world, with its wild whirling eddies and mad foam-oceans, where men and nations perish as without a law, and judgement for an unjust thing is sternly delayed think there is therefore no justice? It is what the fool hath said in his heart. I tell that again there is nothing else but justice."

Why does Carlyle think so? Because it is God's world. The Psalmist addressing God says "Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thy hand, high Thy right hand. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne". Justice, therefore, dwells with God; it is from Him it comes. It is an ultimate verity and those who have thrown themselves into the struggle for justice have not failed by those standards which alone count in the end; non have their lives gone waste.

Morning Star — 31st July 1964

J. C. AMARASINGHAM

(1890 — 1964)

SO many-sided was the life and career of Mr. J. C. Amarasingham, that he should properly be the subject of a book and not an article. He was for nearly thirty years a teacher, first at Jaffna College and later at the Christian Training College for Teachers. He was not just the Principal of the Training College; he built it up, found the money, put up the buildings, made it a high grade institution, and then moved it from one site to another. He was a social reformer, who sought the levelling up of classes and castes and the uplift of village life. He was a nationalist and later an active politician. And finally he was a great leader in Church life.

There are some who shift from one interest to another, according as their tastes and convictions, shift and who usually forget the old in favour of the new. Mr. Amarasingham, however, held all these interests together all the time. His activities in each field bore new aspects as the years went by and as situations changed; but none of his diverse interests flagged; and one never clashed with another. All were always held with the same unwavering zeal.

In this he resembled few people in our own country. Even in Western countries this kind of many-sidedness has come into vogue only in comparatively recent times, and even now is not perhaps common. The man who first laid it down as a theological principle that such many-sidedness should not be exceptional but normal in Christian life was Archbishop William Temple. On the American scene the man who with equal passion has demanded this for many years now is Reinhold Niebhur. Both have proclaimed with unwearying insistence that a Christian should be interested in the whole field of life, not in spite of the fact that he is a Christian but because he is Christian; that

it is obligatory for a Christian that he should regard the earth and its fullness, the world and its people, as God's, Both have taught this by precept and example.

Amarasingham belonged to the first batch of students who went to the Bangalore Theological College when it was set up in 1910. He later switched on to an Arts course and graduated from the Madras University. When he left Madras he joined Jaffna College as a teacher. 1918 he went to the Government Training College for a year and came back to continue at Jaffna College,

In the early twenties he belonged to a small band of young men who had all kinds of visions for their country, the world and the Church. He was the most senior of them. The others were Messrs. J. W. A. Kadirgamar and Mr. S. Handy Perinbanayagam. He was one of the first to accept the implications of the Gandhian Movement and introduce them into Jaffna. He never looked back after that. He was one of the first to discard his Western costume, a very bold thing for an educated man in those days. Unlike many who took over only the political implications of the Gandhian Movement, mere all accepted, he accepted all of them at once. He created considerable stir at that time by his activities against the practices involved in the caste system.

After some years he decided that the place where all his ideals could be practised in their fullness was the Church; and in 1926 on the advice of the Rev. John Bicknell, instead of going as others do to a Theological College, he went for some months to Shantineketan and Gandhi's Ashram at Sabarmathi; and in May 1926 became Assistant Pastor at the Uduvil Church.

His one year as Assistant Pastor was not very fortunate. If the world had its deeply ingrained prejudices and practices, he found that the Church also had its own. He found that he and those who thought like him had to fight an unequal fight against heavy odds; and so gave it up and went back to Jaffna College.

In 1929 he was appointed Principal of the Christian College set up at Tellippalai which after the effort to run it at Kopay had failed. The Mission, very soon after asked him to quit Tellippalai. When he went to Chavakachcheri, he had to start from scratch; but somehow managed to do it. In 1945 he shifted the school to Nallur and remained there till he retired in 1950.

During all these years he was active in other fields as well. He twice contested seats in the Legislature. He hardly realised the handicap of a Christian in seeking office. The fact that on both occasions he was turned down is not judgement on his own abilities but a reflection of the prejudices of our people and an example of the way in which election agents can make every wind fill their sails.

In certain other fields where competition was not so intense he was more fortunate. He was very active in the Co-operative Movement and after 1950 for some years was in charge of the Society for training officers in Co-operative work. He was also an important figure in the movement to bring the added amenities to the Islands.

For the Church he had very definite ambitions; that it should take account of the national movement and should indigenise its life, that it should take account of the advance in secular knowledge and modernise its theology, that the Church Council should centralise its administration, that the Mission should devolve its administration into the hands of the nationals and that the Church should become a more effective instrument of God's will in the world and not be merely concerned with itself.

For many years he had ample opportunities to put into effect his aspirations. He was for three years (1930—1933) Secretary of the Church Council and was usually on the Executive Committee. He was usually a member of the Mission and Secretary for four years (1942—1944; 1945—1947). He witnessed most of the changes he wished for coming in one by one. In the Theological sphere most of them had come in by

the thirties. In the administrative sphere changes followed soon after. He himself had much to do with centralisation and devolution.

He was clear-headed and a convincing preacher; and because he was always ready with his ideas he could preach at a moment's notice, when necessary. As an interpreter of visiting speakers who spoke in English, Jaffna probably has not seen his equal. He was much sought after as a speaker at social functions in the Christian community. At weddings he could be humorous and at funerals he could with awe-inspiring precision assess a person's career *sub specie aeternitatis*. Though a reformer, who was looking into the future, much of the past clung to him. He was devoted to the old time Congregationalism of the American Missionaries and, therefore, found the trends which came into being after establishment of the Diocese against his own tastes and was, hence inclined to be somewhat critical and unsympathetic to them. This perhaps is not rare in the case of reformers, as may be seen in the example of Lord Shaftesbury in the last century. Most reformers want only their reforms and nobody else's.

Viewed as a whole, there have been few people in Jaffna whose life has shown greater consistency of outlook, greater courage and clear headedness in the pursuit of ideals, or a greater refusal to be defeated by circumstances. There are many people who live and die in the world, but there are only few because of whom things change and are different. Sometimes they change for the better, sometimes for the worse; they change for the better because of great qualities dedicated to great causes. In Mr. J. C. Amarasingham the Church in Jaffna had such a man.

BISHOP D. CHELLAPPA

BISHOP D. CHELLAPPA passed away at noon on Tuesday, the 25th inst. That the news had not been unexpected for some time past does not make it any the less sad. To most Christians in Jaffna nobody in India was closer than Bishop Chellappa; and the present writer had for many years past no closer or dearer friend.

When Bishop Chellappa became a recognised figure in the Church of South India, it became known that he was descended from a Jaffna man, who had gone over to the Madura Mission in the last century; and when Chelleppa himself came down here, Jaffna Christians made him their own. Every time our people went into Madras, if they did not dump themselves in his house, they usually called on him. As for me, except once when he had his first attack of coronary thrombosis, whenever I went to Madras—and that was quite frequently—for the last eighteen years, I have made his home mine. In Synod meetings, when discussions have been heated and elections have been tense, Bishop Chellappa and the Jaffna delegation have seldom been on opposite sides.

David Chellappa was descended on his father's side from John Breckenridge Nagamuttu, who went from the Seminary here to the Madura Mission. Nagamuttu married a close relative of Vedanayaga Sastriyar. Nagamuttu's daughter was David's grandmother. David's father was a District Judge. His mother seems to have belonged to a large clan, since quite a few Indian Christians, like Dr. J. C. David, Dr. J. M. Aseervatham, formerly of Vellore, and Mrs. S. Devapragasam etc., were his first cousins.

David Chellappa was born in 1905; he had his theological training in St. Augustine's Canterbury and his academic education at Durham University. He was ordained Deacon in 1932

and priest in 1933. In Madras he was for many years headmaster of St. Paul's High School, Vepery. He was appointed Bishop in Madras in 1955. At his consecration at St. George's Cathedral in January of the year he did me the honour of asking me to preach the sermon.

David Chellappa was the first Indian to become Bishop of Madras. The Bishops of Madras had in British times been the second citizen of the Presidency. The position required that their successor should in no way appear inferior to any of them. David Chellappa was equal to the demand; and always retained the respect of everyone who came into contact with him.

The people of the Diocese expected him to get the same things done for them, as when a British Bishop held sway in a British setting; but they made demands on him which they would not have made of a British Bishop. Also a British Bishop was aloof from, and above, all party intrigues and personal squabbles that went on in the Diocese and probably ignorant of them. An Indian Bishop would be only too well aware of them. Yet if he were to be a true Bishop, he had to be above them and make his decisions impartially. In my sermon at his consecration I said "I have wondered whether any human being was meant to be a Bishop"; I should have added "especially among his own people". Yet David Chellappa's administration was above blame and his outlook always high-minded.

In Synod he was considered a clear-headed thinker, a lucid, forceful and utterly fearless speaker. In an assembly drawn from various races and language areas there can hardly be unanimity on any question. There will always be clashes of opinion and differences of outlook. But he was looked upon as one of our best and most brilliant Bishops and, whether he commanded agreement or not, he always commanded respect.

There is no question but that the administration of such a man would have been a source of great fruitfulness to his own Diocese; and that he would have easily risen very soon to the highest position in the Church. But illness began to dog

him right from the outset. Four years after his consecration he sustained a severe attack of coronary thrombosis from which he virtually never recovered. It left him seriously debilitated; and from time to time he had other, though lesser, attacks. But he put up a most magnificent fight against his illness. A devoted wife would "cook him up" for public occasions; and he would appear at Synod meetings with a pillow and a thermos flask, escorted by Mrs. Chellappa, but determined to play his part in the highest body of the Church.

A tendency to think alike on most questions drew me to David Chellappa very early: and looking back I can hardly recall differing from him on any serious question. The memory of his friendship will be one of the most cherished possessions of my life.

His fight with illness had lasted five years and had been strenuous. His eldest daughter had got married two years ago and two other daughters got married on Monday, the 24th inst. He could not have seen the weddings, as he would have been in bed; but he must consciously or subconsciously have decided that the fight need not go on longer. This kind of an event is a biological fact and well attested by psychologists.

In other circumstances than those now prevailing in Ceylon I would have attended the weddings and would certainly have conducted the funeral. But I am just now in the process of getting my papers sent back to me from Colombo ready to be sent up again with more papers for a trip to India in September.

Bishop Chellappa's passing is a loss to the whole of the Church of South India. It will be difficult to fill a see like that of Madras quite easily; and it will be difficult to find a person of such refinement, readiness of mind, sense of fairness and high-mindedness as David Chellappa. The entire Indian Church is the poorer by his passing.

Morning Star 17, December 1965

HENDRIK KRAEMER

1888 — 1965

(Dr. H. Kraemer was one of the most learned and stimulating thinkers of our time in the sphere of Comparative Religions. His special field was Islam; but he was very learned in other religions as well. He knew nine languages. He tried but did not succeed in mastering Tamil during the War. There is an article on one of Kraemer's books in this series.)

DR. HENDRIK KRAEMER, whose death has recently been announced, has been the most towering figure in the field of Comparative Religions for more than a generation. One who is considered knowledgeable in Comparative Religions must know one or two non-Christian Religions thoroughly and must have a fair knowledge of other world-religions. He must also know some of the original languages in which the Scriptures of these religions were written. One who aspires to be an authority in the field must have these qualifications to a high degree. Kraemer was a world - authority on Islam and knew Hinduism exceedingly well. He also had a good knowledge of all the world religions. He knew nine languages.

There are however, many Professors in the Universities of the world with a similar record. Anybody wants a knowledge of world religions could go to them. But many Professors of Comparative Religions either hold their knowledge of each religion in a separate compartment; that is, they are authorities in each of the religions concerned, but do not compare them, or when they do compare and contrast them, they usually equate them. The first type is necessary and useful, though they may not be great figures; the second type is definitely a thorn on the side of the Christian Church.

The distinction of Kraemer was that though he was a great scholar in non-Christian religions, he belonged to neither of

the above types. Unlike the first type, he compared religions ; unlike the second type, he did not equate them. The first type has no philosophy of religions ; the second type has a philosophy which makes the Church redundant. It was his philosophy of religions that distinguished him from the other two types. His philosophy of religions was really a theology of missions and enabled him to be a tower of strength to the Christian Church. What made Kraemer particularly valuable for the Church for more than twenty-five years was that he not merely had a philosophy which infused new life into the Church, not merely could he write books expanding it, but he could argue it orally in four languages with anybody on any platform anywhere.

Hendrik Kraemer was born in Holland in 1888 and got his Ph. D. at Leyden University in Eastern Languages, Religions and Ethnology in 1918. He was for ten years a missionary in Indonesia and later became Professor in the History of Religions in the University of Leyden in his own country.

He burst into the lime-light of the world at the International Missionary Conference held at Tambaram with his book entitled, "The Christian Message in a non-Christian World". We give below the words in which, in an article in the "International Review of Mission" of April 1957, Bishop Kulandran describes the context in which the book came out and the impact it made on the world.

"The book was written for an International meeting on missions. The meeting was taking place in a land with teeming populations which owed allegiance to other faiths than the Christian. A book called 'Re-thinking of Missions', written some years previously, was considered by many to have knocked the bottom out of the missionary enterprise, as conducted till then. The eyes of non-Christian scholars were on the meeting and its central theme. Non-Christian religions were themselves looming in the forefront. In one of the most magnificent performances in the history of theological polemics, Dr Kraemer grappled with early issue raised in the encounter of Christianity

with non-Christian religions and completely turned the tables on his opponents with a style of terrific power, a wealth of learning and an almost breathless vehemence."

Though there were many people who disagreed with Kraemer then, and though there has been a reaction to what is considered the extremely rigid attitude taken by him, the book created an era. Dr. William Temple's words in the foreword to the book have certainly remained true. Said he, "It is likely to remain for many years to come the classical treatment of its theme—perhaps the central theme for Christian thought in this world of multiform bewilderment. It will bring new confidence to many who are perplexed and supply principles of missionary policy for our generation."

During the War Dr. Kraemer was in a Concentration Camp. When it was over, he was made Director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey conducted by the World Council of Churches. His second book, "Religion and the Christian Faith" was the fruit of his work in the Institute. But a man like him could not be confined to an institution; and he was constantly called out on various errands. His two visits to Ceylon will be recalled by our readers. During the Indonesian negotiations for Independence, Kraemer was sent out by the Dutch Government to negotiate on its behalf. Even after leaving Bossey he continued to write books and was constantly in demand for lectures all over the world.

Dr. Kraemer's life was a magnificent performance. His talents, attainments and industry were great; but he devoted all of them with a single-minded purpose towards the promotion of the Christian religion. The difficulties the Christian Church is up against have always been great; and they are exceedingly great now. But as long as it can draw upon the resources of scholars like Dr. Kraemer, it can continue to face its difficulties; and, as long as the Church is faithful to its calling, men like Kraemer will not be lacking.

ARUMUGA NAVALAR

(1822 — 1879)

IF NAVALAR had been alive today, he would have been surprised at a Christian Bishop writing favourably about him; because the greater part of his life (1848—1879) was spent in a breathless and unceasing campaign to revive and promote Saivite Hinduism; and during that campaign he was engaged in frequent and violent controversy with Christian Missionaries, in which neither side minced words. Perhaps he did not know that in spite of the fact that they were at odds with him in public controversies, among themselves they had the highest respect for his attainments, his sincerity of purpose and his stainless character.

Though the latter part of Navalar's life was spent in promoting Hinduism, oddly enough a good part of his earlier life was spent in helping to promote Christianity. In 1838, at the age of 16, he became a teacher at the Wesleyan School (later Jaffna Central College) in Jaffna, where his extraordinary talents soon came to the notice of Peter Percival, the Principal. It so happened that Percival had just then been asked to take on responsibility for a new version of the Tamil Bible that the Jaffna Missionaries had undertaken.

The Tamil version of the Bible that was most commonly in use at the time was the work of John Philip Fabricius, a German Missionary in South India in the latter part of the 18th century. This translation while very faithful to the original Hebrew and Greek was by many, particularly in Jaffna, considered deficient in idiom. There had, therefore, been a strong demand for a more idiomatic version. This was undertaken by another German Missionary, C. T. E. Rhenius. This version which was confined to the New Testament, while far more idiomatic was considered too periphrastic. Fabricius therefore, still held his ground; but there were now two versions, instead of one, for people to be dissatisfied with.

This was the situation in which the Jaffna Missionaries came forward to produce a new version, in which they hoped to combine the faithfulness to the original that characterised the version of Fabricius with the refinement of idiom that characterised the work of Rhenius. Though a committee met regularly and supervised the preparation of the new version, the responsibility rested chiefly on Percival and Navalar was his assistant. The style is obviously Navalar's; and it is natural that it should be so, since Percival would have been chiefly engaged in interpreting the original texts, leaving the wording and style to the man, who knew most about such matters.

The Percival version was completed in 1848 and came out in 1850; but while it pleased Tamil scholars everywhere, it made the average Indian Christian gasp. The version of Fabricius had held the ground so long and that it had created the diction which Christians had come normally to use. They found that it differed from the diction used by non-Christian Tamils; but they came to believe that it was the diction that Christians should always use. So that the difference between them and the Hindus could be clearly seen. The Percival version, therefore, fell dead in the market. So rare is it to find a copy of it now in South India, that the Secretary of the Bible Society in Madras did not know that he had a copy of it on his shelves, till the present writer pointed it out to him on a recent visit. In the history of the Bible translation it has come to be called "The Tentative Version".

Though rejected by the Christian public, the Percival version had a good deal of influence on the subsequent version (called the Bower or Union version), which is the one now commonly in use among Tamil Christians. So much is this the case, that when the Bower version was coming out in parts, the Jaffna Missionaries wrote that it was difficult to say how much of it was Percival and how much Bower. To say that all the virtues in the Bower version are due to Percival and all the defects due to Fabricius would be to leave Bower's work altogether out of account; but it will be correct to say that the influence of the Percival version on the Bower was considerable.

Navalar's connection with Bible Translation was only incidental in his life. He was only 26 years of age when the Tentative version was completed. He lived for 31 years after that and was incessantly busy; but his activities were in different fields and it is in them that we must find the clue to the place he holds in the history of the Tamil race.

He looked upon his life-mission as that of reviving and promoting Saivism. Whatever else he did, he did it in his attempt to carry out his life's mission. Dr. G. U. Popehas said that Mannika Vasagar, the poet, revived Saivism in the 9th century A. D. after it had been going through a period of decline. There is not enough evidence to sustain the role of Mannika Vasakar as a revivalist of Saivism; but the role that Arumuga Navalar played in the revival of the Siddhanta school of Hinduism in the 19th century is beyond dispute.

It may be said that he did for the Siddhanta School what Swami Vivekananda did in regard to Hinduism in a wider field and larger context. But while the revival produced by Vivekananda was largely an intellectual revival, what Navalar produced was largely a religious revival; and whereas Vivekananda's campaign lasted for less than ten years, Navalar's lasted for 31 years.

However, though Navalar's role as a revivalist of Saivism cannot by any means be under-rated, it must be admitted that there are many schools in Hinduism; and there have been many revivalists. It cannot, therefore, be said that his achievement in this respect entitles him to a unique place in history. When his career is assessed after the lapse of many years it has, I think, to be admitted that his chief significance lies in a field that he would have considered quite secondary, viz; the literary field.

In his own time Navalar's fame rested chiefly on his immense learning, which was looked upon as without a parallel for many centuries. He knew English and Sanskrit, but as far as Tamil was concerned he seems to have read pretty much all that existed in writing at that time, in whatever form. But fame based

merely on learning is always transcended. Many Tamil works had not got into print in Navalar's time; now everything is in print and the works he obtained with the greatest difficulty are easily available, in print to everyone; so that it is possible for others now or in the future to be as well-read as he was in his time.

Wherein then does Navalar's claim to enduring fame lie? Thomas Carlyle has called Dr. Johnson the first English Man-of-letters.

There had been of course many great poets in Tamil long before Navalar. There had been a certain amount of prose; but it had been confined largely to commentaries on poetical works. Verse continued to be the ordinary means of written communication. Everybody who had anything to say had to say it in verse; everybody who wrote had to be a poet. Miron Winslow in his monumental Dictionary said in 1862 that many people who could write very good verse could hardly write a single sentence of correct Tamil prose.

Though dictionaries and grammars had been written in verse in Tamil, the scope of poetry is always limited. Not every subject lends itself to poetic treatment. There are many subjects which poetry necessarily leaves out of its purview as uncongenial or below its dignity. Poetry also enjoys too much "licence" and cannot treat all subjects satisfactorily, even if it wanted to.

With the free use of prose as the normal medium of expression, the intellectual life of a race takes the first step on the road to continuous progress. Prose, unlike verse, is capable of indefinite application. It also tends to greater exactness and accuracy. The clash of thought, the advance of science, the many facets of a changing world and the kaleidoscope of its social and political movements can all now find expression and come to be known by all and known without being hampered by poetic exaggeration or poetic vagueness.

It was Navalar's outstanding achievement that he saw this and deliberately switched to prose. Navalar could write better

verse than most others; but he saw that if people were to be kept in touch with the movements of thought in the world, it was prose that could do it. Tamil prose had been used among Christians for a variety of purposes before him; but the Christian community was small and it never had anyone of the same literary stature as Navalar. It required a person like Navalar to turn the Tamil race from its own rigorous and age long tradition.

Therefore, nothing can detract from Navalar's monumental service that he conferred on Tamil prose his own immense prestige and handed it over for common use. Style may change; but the medium remains. After him books on all kinds of subjects could be written in Tamil; Tamil magazines could spring up and later Tamil newspapers. With Navalar the Tamil race had come into the flowing stream of the world's intellectual life. For this he is entitled to our abiding gratitude.

Morning Star 3rd March 1967

Justice Sri Skanda Rajah Retires

WHEN MR. P. SRI SKANDA RAJAH ascended the Supreme Court Bench about five years ago, those who knew him, his conscientiousness, his unshakable fairness, his firmness and his courage, entertained high hopes about his prospective performance as a Judge. Now that he is retiring, no one can say that he has let them down.

Justice is essentially a matter of restoring a lost equilibrium between parties. But the task confronting a Judge in doing it under the existing laws and statutes of a country is very difficult. It may often seem that real justice cannot be done, because of an existing statute. A Judge is bound to apply the statute; but the test of a Judge's stature is the extent to which he can reconcile his duty to essential justice and his duty to the laws of the land.

But what is the purpose of laws and statutes? They were made to ensure that essential justice would always be done. They are couched in terms of formulae, definitions and principles so that they can be applied uniformly, always and everywhere. They are not meant to express whims and arbitrary prejudices. What a Judge must consider is the spirit behind each statute; otherwise, instead of a Judge we can have an I. B. M. Computer in each Court to decide who is right or who is guilty. The task of a Judge is to interpret the law that justice is done.

In the old days there were no lawyers; clients pleaded their own cases. Now lawyers speak on behalf of their clients. It is, therefore, sometimes imagined that the task of a Judge is that of an umpire, who judges which side has produced the best arguments. In that case, the Judge decides who is the better lawyer and not who has the better case; and the side which has hired the more expensive lawyer will always win. The duty of a Judge is to decide not who has made out a better case, but who has the better case.

That Justice Sri Skanda Rajah has during his tenure on the Bench unfailingly discharged his obligation to administer justice no one will deny. He has interpreted the laws according to the best intentions of the legislators; and the Privy Council has usually agreed with his interpretations. Nor has he looked upon his function as that of being an arbiter between lawyers. In a well-known judgement he has said, quoting eminent authority, that a Judge is not a mere umpire, but must administer justice; the lawyers help in the administration.

When the Greeks sculptured Justice as a blind goddess, they certainly did not mean that Justice should be mechanical and that Judges should simply apply the letter of the law irrespective of the intrinsic merits of particular cases. Then what did they mean? They meant that justice should be done irrespective of who is the stronger party. But, while this will be acknowledged in all countries, most countries make an exception. What is to be done when the State is one of the parties? Even in England, the Queen is the fount of justice; the judges are her officers. Is it not the duty of an officer to take sides with his master or mistress? This is exactly what the Nazi Judges believed under Hitler.

In England the subject got reluctant concessions from the Crown under the Magna Charta and the Habeas Corpus Act. But the instance of Judge Jeffereys under James 11 showed how justice could be voided when the King himself was a party. It was only the Act passed under William 111 making the tenure of Judges lifelong that ensured the independence of the Judiciary.

While in England the absolute independence of the Judiciary may be a fact, it need not necessarily be so in every country following the Anglo-Saxon legal system. In many of the newly refranchised countries, where governments are unstable, traditions are not firm, and the allurements of government favour are strong, Judges are under strong temptation. The influence of the State constantly threatens to penetrate the Courts; and the State does not mean only the government. Often there are

politicians who are as good as the government. Nothing in Justice Sri Skanda Rajah's career has been more to his credit than his utter indifference to the favour or disfavour of governments and politicians.

Even those who have disagreed with particular judgements of Justice Sri Skanda Rajah and even those who lost their cases under him must agree that in him the country had a Judge who embodied the highest traditions of the Judiciary, an embodiment of acuteness, fairness and courage. To say that he was an ornament to the Tamil community is far below the mark. To say that he was an ornament to the Bench says what should be said on an occasion like this.

We trust that Mr. Sri Skanda Rajah's services will be made available to the country in the various capacities open to retired Judges.

CANON S. S. SOMASUNDARAM

(1877 — 1967)

(The Canon when he died in 1967 had been before the public eye for 60 years; during which period he commanded an awe and respect almost without parallel in the life of the Jaffna Churches.)

THE life OF CANON SOMASUNDARAM that began in October, 1877 came to an end in May, 1967. By far the greater part of it was spent in the midst of the Jaffna Christian community. He became a legend as soon as he came into it and remained a legend to the end. But it was the same legend; the assessment people made of him round 1910 was the same as that made in 1960. The stories they told of him latterly may not have been the same as told earlier but they were of the same kind.

It was as if Canon Somasundaram had arrived into the midst of the Christian community almost ready-made. He was there to be taken account of, whether they liked it or not. He never adjusted himself to the times; and almost seemed not to take notice of the changing scenes and situations of the life round him during the last 60 years. It was as if, though living in our times, he did not belong to it.

It sometimes happens that a person is gripped by a great idea or principle or embodies a great attitude; and when that happens, that person is lifted out of his time and place and belongs to the world and to all time. This explains the phenomenon of Canon Somasundaram, which puzzled three generations of people in Jaffna. And this is why, though there have been many distinguished personalities in the 150 years of the history of Protestant Christianity in Jaffna, he may well be considered the greatest of them all.

Canon Somasundaram's greatness did not derive from the level at which he moved, or in any outstanding achievement on

his part. Through most of his life he was either a parish priest or a school master. For 10 years he was a Missionary in the Vanni District; which simply meant that he was doing the same thing in a slightly different way. Nor did he use the influence of the Church to further any great cause or movement in his time. What is considered right and necessary by all Christian leaders now would have seemed entirely outside his scope to a person of his training.

Nor can it be said that Canon Somasundaram's claims to greatness lay in any special attainment. All his life he was appreciated as a good preacher and was in demand at big meetings. He was a clear and deliberate speaker; but other preachers have produced far greater effect on congregations. He was considered a good Tamil scholar. His Tamil scholarship was good enough for a Christian; but even among Christians there have been greater Tamil scholars. His theology was learnt at a small seminary more than 60 years ago and hardly came up to modern standards. He wrote hardly anything, though I remember a little pamphlet on his conversion written by him and issued by the Madras C. L. S., priced at two cents, circulating 50 years ago. As a teacher, he was looked upon as a good mathematician in those days; but his knowledge of the subject would be considered elementary now.

If Canon Somasundaram's greatness did not lie in his achievements or his attainments, one must look for its ground elsewhere. It lay in the man himself, in what he was apart from anything else, and not in what he did.

A Ceylon Cabinet Minister speaking last year at the 150th Anniversary of the American Ceylon Mission said that the greatest contribution made by the Missionaries to our country was in their introduction of a certain rigidity into our ethics. Canon Somasundaram was a student at Jaffna College at the turn of the century. The American Missionaries there at the time were the spiritual inheritors of the Pilgrim Fathers. It was the first time that he was confronting Christianity; and the type of Christianity that he confronted had a tremendous impact on him and permanently shaped his mental outlook.

The type of Christianity bequeathed by the Pilgrim Fathers was well capable of producing such an impact and of creating a lasting influence on people. It is the type of Christianity associated with such well-known figures as John Knox, Oliver Cromwell and John Milton. In the history of the Church it has been known as "Calvinism." Calvinism arose in Europe in the 16th century and still has a deep hold in some European countries. It had great influence in Britain in the 17th century and led the Pilgrim Fathers to migrate to America, where it had a strong vogue till the end of the 19th century.

Calvinism is an emphasis on the sovereignty of God. Doctrinally, it led Calvin to teach what is known as Double Predestination, i. e., the view that God destines some people to salvation and others to damnation before they are born. Ethically Calvinism means an unswerving obedience to the commands of God. Religiously, it means a consciousness of standing at all times before God.

Double-Predestination is an abstruse theological doctrine ; its belief cannot be enforced ; it may often not be held ; it has often been repudiated even in Calvinistic circles. But its ethical and religious attitudes have been the distinguishing marks of Calvinism. In all issues it recognises the absolute distinction between right and wrong, the good and the bad. That distinction for it is impassable and unbridgeable. It acknowledges no difference between big issues and small issues ; it makes no exceptions ; it makes no allowances ; and in its judgements it makes no concession either to the high or the low. The right is always right and the wrong is always wrong ; for we are all standing "in the great task master's eye."

This kind of attitude produces a stern, unbending mind impervious alike to fear or favour, almost insensible to differences and changes in the conditions and situations of human life, a mind before which others stand puzzled in almost helpless amazement. People recognise that they are in the presence of something with which no accommodation is possible. J. A. Froude, the great historian, himself hardly, I think, a Christian,

has paid a tribute of sincere admiration to Calvinism. When all else has failed, he says, and patriotism and human courage have broken down; and a tender imaginative piety has dreamt itself into forgetfulness that there is a difference between truth and falsehood, Calvinism "has borne an ever inflexible front to illusion and mendacity and has preferred to be ground to powder like flint than bend before violence or melt under enervating temptation".

Some have considered Calvinism to be just baptised Stoicism and others find in it a strong resemblance to a good deal of modern moralism. There can be no greater mistake. To Stoicism right and wrong had an autonomous validity, before which the gods themselves bowed. To a good deal of modern moralism the validity of moral values is something before which man should bow, because, there is no one else before whom to do it. In neither does anyone validate moral values. To Calvinism right is right because God commands it and a thing is wrong because God forbids it.

Our own country is rich in its religious heritage, our people are rich in many virtues, like kindness and hospitality. They, however, balk at absolute ethical distinctions. This tendency is in our heritage and deeply ingrained in our minds.

It was because nothing ever effaced for him the absolute distinction between right and wrong in any matter however small that Canon Somasundaram remained a phenomenon in our land. It was a phenomenon our people hardly understood, but which they recognised as embodying something very great. They made jokes about him and gleefully repeated stories about him; some of them, perhaps, mythical but some of them, of course, quite true. But they were not stories which discredited him or at any time breathed the slightest scandal about him; they all illustrated just one point, viz; his habit of carrying his attitude to what they considered were absurd, if not inhuman, lengths.

Aristotle defined virtue as the mean between two extremes; and Gibbon speaks of the last temptation of noble minds as

that of having an intemperate zeal for righteousness. The Greeks were inclined to speak of life from outside; and Gibbon's view itself is Greek. When a person becomes possessed of a great quality, his greatness consists in his willingness to go to any length with it. The truthfulness of Harichandra became legendary, because he was not concerned with the circumstances or consequences.

I myself did not approve of the lengths to which Canon Somasundaram sometimes carried his attitudes; but he was not answerable to me. He considered himself answerable only to God; what anybody else thought of him or his actions did not matter to him in the least. If he had made accommodations according to times and persons, he would not have been what he was. We were not dealing with just a good man, who was guided by ordinary rules of human conduct or obeyed the ordinary dictates of human prudence. We were dealing with one who considered himself responsible to the highest of all tribunals and to none else. The men of Israel might just as well have tried to tell Elijah what he should do.

People might not have always appreciated or even understood the kind of attitude typified by Canon Somasundaram in many fields and departments of life; but they could not easily repudiate its awesome moral basis. But in the field of school-mastering their discontent was entitled to greater justification; for the tendency to see in the trivial problems of school-life tremendous moral issues would look like tyrannical inflexibility. But Canon Somasundaram did not recognise the barriers between one department of life and another; and therefore would not change, when he went from one into another. It was the price paid by the type of greatness he possessed.

It would not be correct to say that any time he was greatly loved (except perhaps in his own family circle). Perhaps, as he was going on into his late eighties, and age was investing him with an aspect of benignity, and he was coming to be looked upon as a historic figure from another era, people might have thought that they could afford to call him "beloved".

But always the response he evoked was not love ; it was not even respect ; it was awe. I first saw him 54 years ago ; my attitude when I saw him last was hardly different. It had grown kindlier with time but had deepened by the realisation that here was one who over a period of 70 years had never swerved a little from what he considered his obligation to God.

If the significance of Canon Somasundaram lay in the fact that he embodied an attitude or principle rather than many particular qualifications he possessed or any special achievement on his part, what reason have we to make it the ground of greatness ? The reason is that qualifications and achievements belong to the changing human scene ; the austere moral grandeur that characterised Canon Somasundaram was in reference to an order that does not pass away. He was therefore a right to be considered not merely the greatest figure in our history during this century, but perhaps the greatest during the last 150 years.

For a life as his we have every reason to be deeply thankful to God.

KARL BARTH

TO find a parallel to the influence in the field of Christian Theology of Karl Barth, whose death has recently been reported, one must go back to other fields and other centuries. His influence on Christian Theology may be compared to that of Newton in the field of Mathematics in 17th and 18th centuries, that of Hegel in Philosophy, Darwin in Biology and Karl Marx in Economics in the 19th century. In the 20th century, it is to be wondered whether in any field anybody had anything like a similar influence.

The strange thing about the influence of Barth is that he wrote but little for the average man. His "Word of God and Word of Man" and his "Outlines of Dogmatics" are some of his concessions to the average reader. He wrote some other books also for the common man; and during the War wrote two small books to cheer up the Confessional Church in Germany. But the work through which his ideas made their impact on the theological world was a series of thirteen volumes entitled "Church Dogmatics" in very closely printed text, most of them running into far more than a thousand pages. He was a theologian's theologian. It is through the theologians who read his "Dogmatics" that he influenced the Church.

Barth was born in 1886 and having been a Pastor for eleven years, taught successively at Munster, Göttingen and Bonn. The rise of Nazism was a great challenge to the Church in Germany. Everything all round was succumbing; and it looked as if the Church also would. If it did not, a good deal of the credit goes to Karl Barth; for it was he who drew up the declaration of the Synod of Barmen in 1934. He was soon driven out of Germany and went to a chair in Basel in Switzerland which he occupied till his retirement in his seventies.

His first book a commentary on the "Epistle to the Romans" published soon after the I World War took the

theological world by storm. It was like a bombshell. It represented a defiance of the liberalism which had been in vogue for many decades. He started writing his "Dogmatics" in 1932 and every volume was an event in the theological world.

Though in England Barth commanded but little following, in Scotland, Europe and the rest of the world his influence kept growing, through the decades. Finally under the inducement of Dr. John Baillie, the British Theologians were also willing to show their appreciation. At a gathering of the leading theological writers of Britain met at Lambeth, on his 70th birthday Archbishop Fisher presented him with a Festschrift.

Barth's message was the significance of Jesus Christ against the background of the sovereignty of God. All the historic doctrines of the Church receive a tremendous emphasis. He makes no concession to or accommodation with the scientific spirit and has no use for those who want to tone down the Christian message to suit the spirit of the age.

For forty years Barth dominated the theological scene. There were some who disagreed with him and protested against his emphases. Dr. Selby earlier and Charles Raven later embodied this protest but every body had to take account of him.

In the sixties there has been a great reaction against Barth. And the chief figure in this reaction is Bultmann, who is actually two years older than Barth. Quite a number of other schools have also sprung of late, some influenced by Bultmann and others not. All these schools do not quarrel with Barth, they leave him alone and go their own way. But it is hard to believe that Bultmann's influence will be permanent.

The service that Barth has performed to Christian Theology can scarcely be exaggerated. He does not argue with the non-believer but with the believer. If you are a believer, he says, you must take seriously "the strange new world" of the Bible, which is also found in Luther and Calvin. You cannot be a half-hearted believer.

Barth was out of Europe only once, when he went to the U. S. A. in 1962. There he amazed Ex-President Eisenhower by his knowledge of the history of the American Civil War. Barth acquired his knowledge of English only in later life; and he read not English theologians but English Detective stories. Though he appeared rather formidable in his books, he was very humane in private life and his students found him most a jolly person.

THE REV. S. K. BUNKER

(1904—1968)

(The Rev. S. K. Bunker had been Principal of Jaffna College from 1937 to 1947 and President from 1947 to 1966, when he retired to take up a position in U. S. A., and died in 1968. This was a sermon preached at the Vaddukoddai Cathedral Church on 27th September 1968.)

There came unto Him a woman having an alabaster cruse of exceeding precious ointment and she poured it on His head as He sat at meat. *Mat. 26 : 7.*

THE incident to which this verse refers is recorded in all the four gospels. This makes two points clear. The first is that its authentication is beyond doubt. There are of course differences in detail between the accounts; one, for instance, gives the name of the woman concerned, while others do not; another gives the name of the ointment, while others do not. Two give the price and two do not. But it is a generally agreed principle in evidence that such differences do not contradict but actually confirm the authenticity of an incident. It may also be said that the differences we notice supplement one another and serve to give us a complete picture.

The other point that is clear from the fact that the incident is found in all the four gospels is that all the four evangelists have found it worthwhile to record it. It is not after all a major incident; it is not an account of one of the "mighty works" done by our Lord. Why then did the evangelists want to record it at all?

The ointment had cost 300 denarii; and each denarius was worth about ten English pence, according to the present rate of exchange. It was a lot of money in those days. The whole bottle had been poured out, just spilt; and for what? Matthew and Mark tells us of the shock felt by the disciples at the act, that seemed to have no purpose. St. John's Gospel, written

much later, confines the protest to Judas; but it is much more natural to suppose that the shock was general; and even if Judas had voiced the protest, it does not mean that the others felt differently. While the attitude of the disciples was very emphatic on one side, the attitude of Jesus was equally emphatic on the other side. According to the English Revised Version Jesus said, "She hath wrought a good deed on me". The Revised Standard Version translates the words more appropriately. "She has done a beautiful thing to me." Why the evangelists have thought it necessary to record the incident is to show this difference in the attitudes; the strong disapproval of the disciples on the one hand, and the strong approval if not the deep appreciation of Jesus, on the other.

The disciples had seen a lot of costly ointment being poured out. They had seen the action, they had missed the event. They had not seen the meaning of the action. They had seen the woman pouring out the ointment but they had not realised what she was really attempting to do. She was pouring out her very soul in gratitude; she was trying to pay back a debt that could never be repaid.

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life my all,

sang Isaac Watts. 300 denarii was lot of money; but what was it compared to what was at stake? The true test of sacrifice is that when you are giving, you must feel that you are giving but little or nothing at all; for you are giving of yourself.

There is another woman of whom St. Mark tells us. As Jesus sat opposite the Treasury one day, people were coming by to put their money into the great collection boxes of the Temple; and He says one woman was putting in two mites, equivalent to half an English penny now. Nobody commented on it, because nobody thought it worth a comment; but Jesus goes out of

his way to draw everybody's attention to it. Truly, said He, she has put in more money than anybody else. "Others have given of their superfluity; but she has given all that she had, even all her living". The difference between 300 denarii and half a penny is great; but the event was the same. Both were trying to express their unstinted dedication; they were giving their very selves.

T. B. Macaulay was a noted orator in the House of Commons in the early thirties of the last century and had already earned a great name as an Essayist. He was asked by the British Government to go to India as a member of the Supreme Council. He spent four years there and did much for the country. The principles he espoused became the principles of administration of British India; the Educational reforms he introduced have lasted till now; the Penal Code he drew up is the basis of criminal law in many countries. After he returned to Britain he rose to high positions and was raised to the peerage. But his nephew, Sir George Otto Traveilyn, records that once his uncle was asked how he had liked the years he had spent in India and Macaulay replied, "It was a period of exile." He had given much to India; but he had not given himself; and perhaps had seen no reason for doing so.

Many years ago, when I was a student, I heard of a Roman Catholic priest who had got a first in the Classics at the Sorbonne who was stationed at the fishing village of Colombogam. I later inquired as to where he was and was told that he had gone on transfer to the island of Delft, where I think he spent the rest of his life. Recently a mission in a slum area in London was being disbanded, because of the lack of results; and we are told that most members of that team of seven were Double and Triple Honours men of Oxford or Cambridge; and many of them had been "Blues" of their respective Universities. More than twenty years ago, I had the opportunity of staying fairly frequently at the Home for Retired Missionaries in Auberndale,

a suburb of Boston. Mrs. Bicknell, who was then in her seventies, was I believe, the youngest of those staying there. Some were in their nineties. They had worked in the far corners of the world. They had given all that they had, their lives. Yet none seemed to be gnawed by regrets that he or she had lived in exile. Those who are not concerned with the cause, count the cost; those who are concerned do not.

The Christian Missionary enterprise has gone on now for a long time. Missionary stations, Catholic and Protestant, dot continents and oceans. The investment of human personnel in the Missionary enterprise is tremendous. The labour and energy involved in keeping up the enterprise must be enormous. And the question may well be asked whether the nett result has justified the investment?

How many people in the world have become Christian, as a result of the Missionary enterprise? What impact has it had upon the people among whom it has gone on? Granted that some have become Christians, granted that the Missionary Movement has often produced intellectual, social and cultural revolutions and granted that the Missionary Movement can point to many institutions it has put up, it may be asked what in the long perspective of the history of these nations that impact will finally amount to. It may be asked whether what has been done could not have been done without people being wrenched from their homes, coming into strange lands and spending their lives in strange surroundings, often facing so much frustration and heart break. It may be asked whether the human cost involved has not been far too great, If these questions can be asked even when results are obvious and undeniable, much more can they be asked, when results are scanty and unconvincing; when so many remain utterly unaffected by Missionary work and the only results of it often are scattered little groups of Christians with their little thatched-roofed churches, little village schools here and there and primitive dispensaries in remote corners.

From a certain angle, that is, the angle from which all human history is seen and judged, these questions may look

legitimate. What we see as the process of human history consists of tangible achievements, such as we can see and are common to soldiers and leaders of political and other great movements.

But what we look upon as the process of history is not all that there is to history. What we look upon as history may not take account of the greatest things in life. There is a legend that has come down to us from the days of early Rome telling us of an incident, which even if it had happened cannot be rationally put into books, as history. It is said that once a yawning chasm appeared in the Forum and kept ever widening; and an oracle pronounced that it would close if the most precious thing in Rome was cast into it. Men and women threw all their precious jewels into it; but still it remained and kept becoming wider, till one day Marcus Curtius, a patrician from one of the great families of Rome, came riding on his charger to the brink of the chasm. "The most precious thing in Rome, O Citizens", he said, "is self-sacrifice"; and with that horse and rider plunged into the abyss and the abyss closed once and for all. Whether the story is true or false, the people of Rome believed that it was because of things like this that Rome rose to greatness.

Men are setting up systems, building up nations and kingdoms. But there is another process going on, which our history does not see and does not record; someone else is also building. God is building; and He has been at it long; He is building His Kingdom. He is building it out of the dedicated lives of His servants; He is building it out of our successes and failures. And His Kingdom is full of the fragrance of lives poured out without stint, regardless of cost and regardless of results.

We are met here today in the presence of one such life, poured out without stint in the service of the Master. Two days before his 64th birthday was due, the earthly life of Sydney Kittridge Bunker came to an end. The cruse of ointment has been opened and the content poured out in full. We are here in the presence of that event.

By what is called the "melancholy privilege of time", there are many of us here in Jaffna who remember Sydney Bunker coming into our midst thirty one years ago. I remember the O. B. A. dinner held soon after to welcome him. I well remember some of the things said on the occasion. I remember how being new to the country he was constantly harassed during the months that followed by those who wanted him to make speeches.

I also remember during his early years as Principal of Jaffna College the efforts he made to adjust himself to a task which non-plussed him a good deal. He had come expecting to be the head of a College and found he had to be a head master of a High School, a task for which he felt he was not cut out. When after a good deal of hesitation and misgivings on the part of the Board of Directors, a Collegiate Department was finally set up, how relieved he felt! There after, he was content to look after the affairs of the Collegiate Department, casting an occasional and benevolent eye on the existence of the Secondary School.

Missionary history in Jaffna is a little more than 150 years old; but wherever Missionaries have been, it is now common to divide the history of Christian work into two eras. The first was the colonial era. The Missionaries of that era might have been saintly and unassuming men; but they could not escape the reflected colour of that era. The qualities expected of Missionaries in that era, the powers they had, and the prestige associated with them were different from those in this era. Missionaries in those days laid down the law and it was carried out. The qualities expected of Missionaries now are different; but the amount of work expected is the same, if not more; and that work must be done without the power and status once available to them.

Sydney Bunker was a Missionary of the second era, who had come before the first era had ended. He found himself strangely out of place as long as that era lasted. And it may be said that it was largely because of him that the transfer of

authority from the Missionaries to nationals, which had posed so many problems earlier and which therefore had to be shelved, was later carried out without a hitch and almost imperceptibly.

As head of the College, what was his chief characteristic? Heads of great institutions of learning have usually been great scholars, or great administrators. What was Sydney Bunker's characteristic? A scholar is a man before whose learning men stand in awe, Sydney Bunker was a man of culture. Culture is associated with learning but cannot be equated with it. It is as much of learning as has seeped into a person, influenced and changed him. Learning is a characteristic of the mind; culture is characteristic of the whole personality. Learning may be lop-sided; culture is characterised by a balanced sense of values. A cultured man is at home among the great minds of the past and the problems they face and is also quite at home among the people around him and the problems they face. His mind has been made wider by the thoughts and ideas of the great minds of the ages. But he himself has been made nobler, gentler and more humane and dwells easily in the present.

The reaction that Sydney Bunker evoked was not awe or respect or deference; it was affection. One could differ from him almost violently and tell him so to his face in a Committee or Conference and yet soon after sit down and talk to him, as if nothing had happened; and indeed from his point of view nothing had happened. There had been only a difference of opinion; and differences of opinion were part of life as it is meant to be lived in the world. It was difficult to know him, without coming to like him, like him very much indeed.

Sydney Bunker had great predecessors here in office as heads of this College. Some of them had stamped themselves on the life of the College. Sydney Bunker was as a gentle light, whose rays cast a glow upon the campus. All were glad when it was there; and we are thankful to God that it continued to

shine in our midst for so long. We are thankful to God that a life characterised by such nobility of temper, such gentleness, sensitiveness, such humanity and such deep culture should have been lived among us for nearly thirty years.

The disciples of Jesus were indignant that the woman had not counted the cost of a fragrance that they thought would last only for an hour or two. But it was exactly because she did not count the cost that the fragrance has lasted till now. Its cost was not three hundred denarii, but her whole life. We stand today in the presence of a similar event, a life of rich qualities poured out in unstinted dedication in the service of the Master. Let us thank God that it was in our midst this was done.

P. SRI SKANDA RAJAH

(AT HIS DEATH)

ALL through his life most people found it difficult to understand the late P. Sri Skanda Rajah and he perhaps found it difficult to understand them; and it is no wonder, because his attitude to life was different from that of most people. Many people look upon life as something to be enjoyed; he, on the other hand, looked upon life as a period during which you are called to do certain things.

This does not mean that he was humourless, unattractive or difficult to deal with. He was proud of his jokes, prepossessing by nature and simple in his ways. When young, he distinguished himself in many branches of sports. In fact, the present writer often used to say to him that it was doubtful whether he would be best remembered as one of the best full-backs Jaffna has produced or as a great Judge. At the University College, he was Captain of Soccer; he played good Cricket and reached all-Ceylon standard in Tennis. But he did not play for enjoyment but as if it was something that should be done at that time of life.

For six years or so he practised as an Advocate chiefly at the Pt. Pedro Bar and was doing well; but he used to fall ill constantly. Finally Dr. W. J. Jameson advised him to get out of legal practice, "You are identifying yourself too much with your clients", he said. If he practised Law, that is what might have been expected of him.

He was in the Judiciary altogether for a little more than twenty eight years, as Magistrate, District Judge and finally as a Judge of the Supreme Court. It cannot be said that he would not have done well in other professions, if he had chosen any of them. He could have done well in any profession. He could have risen high even at the Bar if he had stuck to it long enough and become a little case-hardened. And almost any profession could have been the better for the kind of qualities he brought to bear on it.

However, it would have seemed to any person who knew Sri Skanda Rajah that he was almost made for the position of a Judge and that the position of a Judge was made for him. During the thirty years or so he was Judge, he was not free from criticism; and, particularly, when he was on the Supreme court Bench, criticisms were frequent. This was as it should be. It is impossible to be a Judge and expect to escape criticism.

But what is important about any criticism is the reason behind it. Before a Judge there are always two contending parties and the Judge will have to come down in favour of one party; and the other side will, therefore have criticisms to make about it.

Sir Henry Dickens the son of Charles Dickens sentenced a man to prison. The man retorted saying "You are not a patch on your future." That does not mean that Sir Henry was wrong. And a Judge has not merely to pronounce judgements, but has often to pass strictures on witnesses or the Police or Prison authorities. A Supreme Court judge sitting in Appeal would have often to comment on a judgement in the Lower Courts. To be criticised for doing these things is not a reflection on a judge, but an acknowledgement that he is a judge. One criticism about Sri Skanda Rajah, however, used to be made with recurring frequency, which had a certain degree of plausibility; and that was that he was too severe. That he was severe cannot be gainsaid; but whether it can be made a just basis of criticism in a country which has one of highest crime records in the world is another question. It was his firm opinion that undue leniency in the Courts was one of the chief causes for the growth of crime. He told me of a case where a man had died as a result of being stabbed sixteen times; and the offender had been sentenced to six months imprisonment in the Lower Courts. In the context of Ceylon he felt that severity was a judge's duty.

Sri Skanda Rajah was not a great jurist. He wrote on treatises on Law. He did not pursue the study of the Law as

a science in itself. And I am not sure how he would have done as a lecturer in Law, though, of course, he would have done anything with competence, if he had applied himself to it. Only he did not feel that he was called upon to be an expert in matters outside his sphere of duty. He never shone as a judicial wit. Though his *obiter dicta* were widely publicised, particularly, when he was Chief Magistrate in Colombo; but they were relished more for their relevance rather than wit; nor did he cultivate those judicial graces which make one popular in the Bar.

Nevertheless, I think, it came to be generally recognised that he was one of the greatest judges who had sat on the Bench in Ceylon. Even those who disagreed with him or resented either his judgement or his strictures could not help respecting him. He had a very keen intellect and a profound legal acumen. But the reason why he was so widely respected in life and why here after he will be ranked high in the history of the Bench is because of the fundamental attitude he brought to bear on his work was more than intellectual or legal; it was moral.

This attitude expressed itself particularly in certain definite ways. In the first place, seldom has any one any where shown greater dedication to his work. During his career on the Bench, he lived for nothing else and had no other interest. If one went to him in the evening all his conversation would be about the cases he had handled. Many would say that his comparatively early death was due to the loss of his pre-occupation on retirement. In the second place, he was totally indifferent to what others would say of him. He was quite willing to set aside the evidence of the highest person and accept the evidence of the lowest, if he found it more reliable. It never struck him to be concerned at all what the government in power might think of him. He also tended to be more strict with the members of the Bar than was necessary. This could have been easily corrected, but he looked upon the matter as irrelevant.

Sri Skanda Rajah's general attitude to the work of a judge also shaped his concept of justice. But what appears to be

justice to a judge it may not accord with, what may be considered justice by one who is not a judge. One who is not a judge is not bound by the law of the land; but the judge is. And the law means a large number of formulae which may not cover every case; particular cases always differ from one another, and also the judgements may betray contradictions between the stand-points of different judges. Nevertheless, the intention of the law is to ensure justice. A judge must therefore, take into account all legal enactments bearing on the point and previous judgements in similar cases and yet interpret the sense of the law so that in the case in hand justice is ensured. During the hearing he must see the issues clearly through the haze of words, arguments and citations produced by either side and decide what justice requires of him to do. So highly developed had the instinct to do this become in him, that always his judgements which had been set aside in appeal in Ceylon were restored in the Privy Council.

The task of ensuring justice was to Sri Skanda Rajah a relentless and inescapable obligation. Justice in essence is a relationship that should exist but which has ceased to exist, when matters came to a head in a law suit. To restore that relationship was to him a compelling, all-absorbing mission. Plato wrote a big book to spell out the meaning of justice; Sri Skanda Rajah tried to spell it out in life for thirty years. Carlyle complains that Plato's hero was quite at ease about his task. Sri Skanda Rajah was scarcely at ease about his task. The task possessed him.

During his days on the Supreme Court Bench it is no exaggeration to say that people and governments were awed by the phenomenon of this strange and austere man sitting there, coldly and almost impersonally turning neither to the right nor to the left, giving his judgements and making his comments, utterly undeterred by fear and heedless of favour. But of one thing nobody had any doubt and that was in Justice Sri Skanda Rajah's courts, justice would be done. And every body is glad that for six years he was a member of the highest tribunal in the land.

C. N. ANNADURAI

THERE have been great political figures in India during this century: Surendra Nath Banerjee, C. R. Das, B. G. Tilak, Lala Lajapet Rai, Motilal Nehru and finally Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. All of them did great service and their passing was deeply mourned. But it is to be wondered whether the death of any one of them, or of any one else, has caused more genuine personal grief to so many millions of people as that of C. N. Annadurai, Chief Minister of Tamil Nad, who died on Monday.

To a certain extent, the fact may be explained by the reason that all the others had lived their lives and had their careers behind them. Annadurai was almost at the beginning of his political career; he had been Chief Minister only for about two years and was at the height of his powers and his popularity.

It has, of course, to be admitted that, while the others were all-India figures, Annadurai belonged definitely to Tamil Nad; therefore, a grief which in their case was so extensive would have naturally lacked the intensity of a grief confined to a definite area or a definite race. But it is not the mere depth or intensity that makes the difference, but the quality. The grief over Annadurai's death is a personal grief, different from that evoked by the passing of any other political figure.

The reason for the phenomenon is that Annadurai was a man of the people in a sense that few other great figures have been. The Mahatma almost belonged to another world; the reaction he evoked was humble veneration. Jawaharlal Nehru was regarded with admiration and awe, if not fear. Annadurai was one of the crowd embodying their intuitions, hopes and aspirations. He was a person of absolute honesty and dedication; therefore, people had trusted him entirely; and he had responded to that trust by a total identification

with them. He would go on for hours on end without sleep or food (or even a shave) because there were public engagements to be kept and people wanted to see or hear him. If people stood in the sun, he would refuse to have an umbrella over his head. So genuine was his identification with the people that they saw themselves in him and took him to their heart.

Because his identification with the people of Tamil Nad was so complete, he refused to favour one section as against another. He was supposed to be a Socialist; but his Socialism was not of the doctrinaire kind of Western Socialism which believes that all problems are solved by nationalising all Industries. He came into politics with a reputation for anti-Brahminism and Mylapore, and therefore, did not appeal to some. But finding his attitude change from the earlier anti-Brahmin policy of the Congress governments, Mylapore, gave him its full support.

What was the hope and aspiration of Tamil Nad which he embodied? It was that the Tamil race should have its rightful place in the federation that makes up India. India is certainly a geographical entity; but what made it a single political entity was the unified administration which the British had imposed on it and the long fight that the Mahatma had put up against that administration. In their administration the British had been inclined to favour the Muslims; and those who opposed the British were largely the leaders drawn from Bengal, the United Provinces and the Maharashtra.

When a new India came into being with Independence, the Northern leaders who dominated the Congress were not slow in making it felt that the new India meant North India. The actions of successive Congress Ministries were not lost on the South; and when an attempt to impose Hindi on the South came, the South felt that its worst fears were confirmed. Annadurai had been busy with a cultural movement to cleanse Tamil Nad of its superstitions and inhuman customs and to

make everybody proud of his cultural and linguistic heritage. The action of the Central Government regarding Hindi made Annadurai a politician.

Annadurai had found a cause and the people of Tamil Nad a leader, who meant what he said and who would strive for it to the end without barter, compromise or fear; and they gave their hearts to him. To him, therefore, it was the whole of Tamil Nad that mattered and not any section. He could evoke the whole-hearted support of the whole of Tamil Nad.

Being a play-wright and a promoter of films, he was an actor not above a certain amount of showmanship; and with the spoken word, it is said that he was a magician. But his showmanship and oratory were not used to promote either his own interests or those of any particular class. He used them to promote the cause which everybody had at heart.

If Annadurai is to be compared with any historical figure, it is with Abraham Lincoln. To him, as to Lincoln, government should be of the people, by the people, for the people. Annadurai did not believe in a separate class of experts called politicians. Politics in his opinion was the business of everybody. But since the people believed that only dedicated, honest and intelligent persons should be entrusted with the task of government, they entrusted it to him and gave him their whole-hearted support; and it cannot be said that he ever let them down.

MISS A. H. PARAMASAMY

(Miss Paramasamy had been Principal of Uduvil Girl's College from 1941. She was to retire in 1970. This was a tribute to her in the Uduvil Magazine during the first part of the year of 1969.)

SINCE Uduvil was founded in 1824 it has had five Principals. The name of everyone of them is entitled to high honour. Mrs. Miron Winslow, Eliza Agnew, Susan Howland and Book-walter were great Principals in their time. It is, however, doubtful if the task of a Principal became easier or more difficult as time went on. If the very earliest Principals faced the task of coaxing unwilling parents and students into accepting the need for education, later Principals had the task of fulfilling increasing requirements imposed on them from one quarter or another. Perhaps, it might be said that the task of being a Principal has always been difficult; only, the type of difficulties has differed.

In one respect, the position of a Principal in the old days was very unlike that of latter days. In the old days the Principal of a school was her own mistress; she laid down the law; and what she wanted was carried out. As time went by, this liberty which she originally enjoyed got more and more circumscribed. But till the end of the Assisted-Schools era, the Principal did have sufficient scope wherein her will prevailed.

When Government took over most of the schools in Ceylon the task of a Principal in such schools ceased to be what it had been at any time before. Such a school has largely to be run like a Government office; a Principal would be a senior officer and the others junior officers. But if the Principal's liberty was taken away, so was her responsibility. One school is expected to be like any other in the Island. A Principal, may, if she wants, make a determined effort to make her school outstanding and play a special role in the country; but she is not expected to; and the chances are that she would get transferred far out before she has made much headway with her

plan. The school is expected to be sunk in a colourless world of rigid all-Island anonymity; and the Principal is expected to take her place in it.

There are, however, still some schools which have not been taken over by Government. The position of the Principal of any such school in Ceylon combines most of the difficulties of the old time Principals with far greater difficulties than they ever faced, but without the freedom of action they enjoyed, along with a responsibility which neither they nor any Principal anywhere in the world now or ever has had—that of finding money to run the school without the usual sources of income that any school of any sort has always had. The difficulties of a Principal of a Non Fee-levying School in modern times are that she has to work under a bewildering variety of Government regulations, which have kept growing with the course of years; she has to face heavy competition from free Government schools; and she has to deal with a public awake to its rights, a staff aware of its privileges, and students, who know that they do not belong exclusively to the school but are members of a larger public. Without the freedom and the advantages of old-time Principals and with more difficulties to face she has to justify the continuance of her school as a Private Non-fee-levying school.

To be able to do this without being the subject of too many complaints, a Principal must evoke the right response from each one of the groups; she must command the respect of the public and the confidence of the Old Girls; it is only then that without the usual sources of income she can carry on her work. This respect and confidence will be forthcoming only if the public and the Old Girls feel that the work being done in the school is so unquestionably distinctive that they should give it their backing; but neither the public nor the Old Girls would gain this conviction, unless the Principal has behind her the whole-hearted loyalty of the Staff and the spontaneous affection of the students.

The task of any Principal of a non-fee-levying school now-a-days is, therefore, difficult enough. But the task of the Principal of Uduvil does not stop here. Uduvil has for nearly a 150 years played a notable role in the history of Jaffna; and she has to prove not merely that Uduvil can still continue to play that role in these difficult days, when everything is against Private schools, but that it is still necessary for the good of the community that that role should continue to be played.

That Miss Paramasamy has more than done this will be admitted by all who know anything of the school. How did she do it? She has only done it by not trying to do it, but by simply being herself. A person in such a position should of course necessarily have to be a person of high academic attainments; and she was that; but the task required that she should be affable, tolerant, patient and sweet tempered. But above all it required that she should have such faith in the cause she had taken up, that she was willing to give herself to it completely, that she would make sacrifices without knowing they were sacrifices, take risks without knowing they were risks and be courageous without knowing that any courage was involved. It is because these qualities have characterised Miss Paramasamy's attitude in these difficult days that every one of the groups concerned has responded to her so readily. There have been great and successful Principals in the past; but Miss Paramasamy has made a conspicuous success of her job in circumstances which no other Principal before her had to face.

I well remember the meeting of the old American Ceylon Mission early in 1941 when her name was proposed for the vacancy caused by Miss Bookwalter's retirement. It came up almost casually; the item had not even been put on the agenda; and few of us knew much of the candidate. Her father, the late Mr. Hudson Paramasamy, of Jaffna College had of course been well known at an earlier time. But the only thing that was known of her was that quite a few years previously she saved a girl from drowning and had been awarded a medal for it. The

“Daily News” in those days had published the picture of her receiving the medal. But of course those who proposed her name certainly knew more about her.

Most of us came to know her better during the War years, when she was a member of the Executive Committee of the old Council of the S. I. U. C. We used to look forward to the occasions when the meetings would be at Uduvil, because in those days of food shortage her sumptuous teas were a welcome change. It was only much later that we learned how much sacrifice had gone into providing us with these luxuries at such a time.

Over the years, since then, most of us have had ample opportunities of coming into close contact with her. She has been an important member of most Committees and Boards; and all have come to value her selfless dedication, her calmness and courage; so that by common consent she has now come to occupy a unique place among us.

In looking back upon her work at Uduvil one may say that it was an exceptional piece of work in exceptionally difficult circumstances done by an exceptional woman. On behalf of myself and the Diocese I wish to pay our tribute to her.

ARUMUGA NAVALAR AND THE CHRISTIANS

(1822 — 1879)

ARUMUGA NAVALAR has an important place in the history of Hinduism in Jaffna; he also has a place in the history of Christianity in Jaffna. It may be curious, but nevertheless true that it was because of his connexion with the Christian effort in Jaffna that he rose to a high place in Hinduism.

K. Arumugam joined Jaffna Central College, then under the Methodist Church, as a teacher at the age of 16 in 1838. The Principal of the School at the time was Peter Percival (later Professor of Oriental Studies in the newly founded University of Madras).

It so happened that at that time there was a great controversy in South India as to which of two Tamil versions of the Bible should become the standard version. The earlier version was that of பெப்பிரசியஸ் (Fabricius), which had come out in the eighties of the previous century. It was a very accurate translation but its language and style were very uncouth. The Bible Society had, therefore, commissioned C. T. இரெணியஸ் (Rhenius), a German Missionary who was a great Tamil scholar to revise it. His translation which appeared in 1833 was elegant in style, but was not considered sufficiently accurate. A bitter controversy raged round these versions. Each version had its champions; but competent people realised that neither could become the standard version.

In these circumstances, the Jaffna Missionaries undertook to produce a version that would combine the virtues of both the Indian versions while avoiding their faults. With the approval of Madras they set about doing it and appointed a Committee to be in charge of the project. The Committee made Peter Percival chief translator and started work in 1840; and

Percival thought he could do no better than appoint K. Arumugam, for whose talents and knowledge he had the highest respect, for his chief assistant. This meant that while translating Percival would read the original Hebrew and Greek passages and after consulting the translations into other languages would give their sense; and it was Navalar's task to put it into Tamil in his own words. The Committee would later go over the draft and see whether the translation was accurate; but it will be seen that Navalar's contribution to the work was considerable.

The Jaffna version was finished in 1848 and was submitted to the Madras Bible Society; and a Joint Committee of Madras and Jaffna sat on it for some months to brush it up. Arumugam went with Percival to Madras to answer questions and give explanations. When the Jaffna version was submitted to competent Hindu Scholars there, like மழவை மகாலிங்க ஐயர் (Maluvai Mahalinga Iyer) and they were astonished by the classic perfection of its style.

The Jaffna version was published in 1850 but fell flat on the market. Indian Christians, at the instigation of Missionaries, refused to buy copies. The reason given for their unwillingness to buy the book was that the version was heavily loaded with Sanskrit derivatives.

There is no doubt that Navalar's style, more particularly in his earlier years, was heavily loaded with Sanskrit derivatives. But one point all critics of Navalar's style should remember is that Navalar was the first competent Tamil Scholar to use prose as his medium. Till his time nobody, without the risk of losing his reputation would write Tamil prose. The only persons who had written Tamil prose till then were the Christian Missionaries; and they had no reputation to lose as Tamil scholars. Tamil prose style when Navalar started writing had no fixed standards. In fact, an important distinction between Poetry and Prose in Tamil was that in Poetry foreign words were to be avoided, as far as possible, whereas in Prose they could be admitted. It was for that reason that வீரமாமுனிவர் when he wrote his

Grammar on Poetry called it “செந்தமிழ்” and when he wrote his Grammar on Prose called it “கொடுந்தமிழ்”. Navalar, therefore, had to set up his own standards. One does not break a rule when there is no rule to be broken. From a literary point of view Navalar, therefore, had committed no fault. In fact, I think the Jaffna Committee, which had some good scholars on it, thoroughly approved of the style of its version. The Jaffna Committee had its eyes on the educated classes it was accustomed to meet.

The Missionaries in India, on the other hand, were accustomed to a different class of people to whom literary Tamil was unknown. They rejected the Jaffna version not because it was loaded with Sanskrit derivatives, but because the style was unfamiliar to them and unlike the colloquial style to which they were used. Through the centuries many Sanskrit words have crept into Tamil; but when using them, one might choose smaller rather than bigger words. Particularly, when translating sacred book one must use the simplest words possible. This was not done by the Jaffna version.

The Indian Christians of today are very different from their ancestors. They would not quarrel with Navalar for using a literary style; they would quarrel with him because they would consider that his style was not sufficiently literary. What modern Indian Christians (like many other South Indians) consider a literary style, is the style set in fashion by the late C. N. Annadurai.

In view of his connexion with the Percival version, therefore, it may be claimed that Navalar has a place in the history of Christianity in Jaffna. India is a larger place and the number of Christians there is much larger than that of Christians in Jaffna. Therefore, translations of the Bible into Tamil, as into other Indian languages, are naturally done in India. In 1756 a version of the New Testament (the second part of the Bible) had been put out under the Dutch here in Ceylon; but it is not in the main line of translations and is unknown in India. The version of 1850 though rejected is known as a great effort at trans-

lation; and the Christians of Jaffna have always been proud to have been associated with it. Therefore Navalar has a place in the history of Christianity in Jaffna.

After the completion of the Bible Translation work, Navalar left Central College and devoted himself entirely to furthering the cause of Hinduism. And it is beyond the slightest doubt that he was able to do what he did, because of the connexion he had had with the Missionaries. He found that Hinduism had not been concerned with spreading a knowledge of its tenets, within itself whereas the Christians were all the time concerned with spreading a knowledge of their religion among others. He decided that this attitude on the part of Hinduism should be changed. He found that the priests of Hinduism confined their work to the temples and there was nobody in Hinduism doing what the Missionaries were doing, giving all their time for furthering the cause of their religion. The Christians had a Printing Press; they were issuing cheap literature for everyone to read; they wrote to the Press and they held meetings. All these things he decided should be done in Hinduism; and since there was no one else interested in the matter, he decided that he would do it himself. And for purposes of propaganda he realised that his style had to become easier and simpler than it had been. His association with the Missionaries was also valuable in another respect. Percival had introduced him to South India and he was able to make valuable contacts with the Hindu scholars there. He was, therefore, able later from time to time to go to South India and make it his temporary home for various periods. It will thus be seen that it was because he had been in intimate contact with Missionaries, he was able to do so much for Hinduism.

Almost thirty years elapsed between the time Navalar gave up his connexion with the Missionaries and his death in 1879. All through this period he was engaged in a ceaseless campaign to revive Saivism in Jaffna and South India. Many publications of a highly vitriolic nature were exchanged between the champions of Christianity and Navalar. On the whole it must be said Arumuga Navalar was the greatest opponent that the Missionaries encountered in these areas in the 19th century. But it must also be said that, inspite of all these bitter controversies, the Missionaries had the highest respect for Navalar as a man.

BISHOP MARK CARPENTER - GARNIER

(Bishop Carpenter - Garnier, Bishop of Colombo from 1924 to 1938, will be noted in the history of the Church in Ceylon for having introduced Anglo-Catholicism into Ceylon. Formerly there had been High Churchmanship, not Anglo-Catholicism. Anglo-Catholicism arose in England from the Tractarian movement led by Pusey, Keble and Newman about the middle of the last century. After the time of Carpenter-Garnier Anglo-Catholicism has not been virulent in Ceylon.)

NEWS has been received of the death of Bishop Mark Carpenter - Garnier in England at the age of 88. Carpenter - Garnier was Bishop of Colombo from 1924 to 1938 succeeding Bishop E. A. Coplestone. The election of a Bishop of Colombo has always been a difficult matter. When Reginald Coplestone left in 1902, the Diocese could not elect a successor and left the matter in the hands of Reginald Coplestone, who appointed his brother. Bishop Carpenter - Garnier's election did not prove difficult. The other candidate was the Rev. A. G. Fraser, then Principal of Trinity College, Kandy. Fraser lost because he had written a pamphlet during 1915 Riots; and not knowing its contents, people imagined it was anti-Sinhalese.

Before he came to Ceylon Carpenter - Garnier had been Librarian at Pusey House, Oxford, which had always preserved the tradition and the ideals of the Tractarian movement in its strictest form. The history of the Colombo Diocese refers to the spirit which characterised him was one that was "as rare as it was beautiful" and says people felt "its influence and traced it to the right source, to a calm and sure sense of the presence of God." He represented the qualities of Anglo Catholicism at its highest and best form and left on all who came into contact with him the impression of a quiet, gentle, saintly person rigid and uncompromising in his "saintliness".

It may be mentioned that the Anglo-Catholicism which now characterises many of the Anglican parishes in Ceylon and

the Anglican Church in Ceylon in general and the resultant gulf between the Anglican Church and other Protestant Churches is largely due to the influence of Bishop Carpenter - Garnier. In earlier days the Evangelical tradition had been looked upon as a legitimate tradition in the Anglican Church. To Bishop Carpenter - Garnier the whole thing was unintelligible and foreign ; and therefore to a large extent the Evangelical tradition tended, with some notable exceptions, to wither during and after his episcopate. The C. M. S., an Anglican Evangelical Missionary Society, which had worked in Ceylon from 1818, began withdrawing itself from 1927 and completed the process in 1941.

Bishop Carpenter - Garnier introduced the custom of regular Retreats for the Clergy. He organised Parochial Missions and called in Missions of Help to deepen spiritual life in the Diocese. It was also during his time that the movement for drawing up a Ceylon Liturgy took shape.

Bishop Carpenter - Garnier retired at the age of 58 and went back to England. He got over his long prejudice against marriage of the clergy sufficiently to get married himself and lived quietly, without, however, ever giving up his interest in the affairs of the Church of Ceylon.

H. SUMITRA

WITH the passing of Bishop Sumitra the Indian Christian Church loses one who, both by the length as well as the quality of his service, deserves to be ranked among the greatest of its leaders in recent years. For more than forty years till his retirement from the Moderatorship of the Church of South India in 1962 he was a familiar figure to everyone who had anything to do with the Christian world of India.

Hospet Sumitra was born in 1888 and was first educated at Bellary and then at Central College, Bangalore, from which he obtained his B. A. degree. He belonged to the original batch of students who entered the United Theological College, Bangalore, when it was started 60 years ago. It may be interesting to our readers to know that among his fellow students were the late Rev. R. C. P. Welch and the late Mr. J. C. Amarasingham of Jaffna. He was ordained in 1917 and was a district Minister for 13 years. He became Professor of Church History at the United Theological College at Bangalore in 1934.

Since Sumitra belonged to the area of the London Missionary Society he came into S. I. U. C. from the early days. As a leading figure of the Kanarese Church Council, he became an important person in the affairs of the General Assembly of the old S. I. U. C. and played a considerable part in the Union Negotiations which resulted in the Church of South India. He was Secretary of the S. I. U. C. for five years and was once its Moderator.

With the inauguration of the C. S. I. Sumitra came into a much wider world. He was consecrated Bishop on the day of its inauguration, in September, 1947 and was first appointed to the Diocese of Cuddappah. When the Diocese of Anantapur and Kurnool collapsed and an amalgamation of Dioceses was found necessary, he was appointed to the new Bishopric of Rayalseema. When the era for nationals dawned, he was

elected Moderator to succeed Bishop A. M. Hollis in 1954 and might be said to have stepped on to the international Christian stage.

The Moderator of the Church of South India is elected once in two years and is head of that Church for the ensuing biennium. The office of the Moderator in the C. S. I. corresponds to that of an Archbishop but carries far more administrative duties than those of an Archbishop. The main difference, however, is that an Archbishop holds office for life, whereas the Moderator holds office only for two years. But there is greater honour involved in being Moderator, because one is elected by the suffrage of one's fellow Christians and not because of the pleasure of the authorities. The honour becomes all the greater when one is elected to that office over and over again. Sumitra was elected to the Moderatorship four times between 1954 and 1962.

Bishop Sumitra had certain outstanding qualities which showed themselves to the best advantage when he was Moderator. In fact, it can be said that his tenure of office was the best period in the history of the C. S. I. so far. He had an acute intelligence. People were often misled by his unassuming and unostentatious ways; but when they saw him in action would quickly change their opinion. He could always see issues clearly through the heat of controversies and the haze of words. He also had a keen sense of humour which often dissolved tensions and caused them to explode in laughter. He had a temper which refused to be ruffled by any situation; and he had a high sense of his calling.

It was a pleasure to be in Synod meeting during the days of Bishop Sumitra's Moderatorship. The Secretary and Treasurer were also outstanding men. The Secretary was Mr. Rajaiiah D. Paul, a former Civil Servant, and the Treasurer was Mr. A. Gunamony, a former Income Tax Commissioner of the State of Travancore. Both were extremely competent men and had all facts and figures on their fingers' ends and were ready

for any situation. Above all, there was the Moderator himself, quiet, smiling, occasionally interjecting a humorous remark but having the proceedings well in hand.

Bishop Sumitra has passed away at a ripe age. There cannot, therefore, be any surprise or grief. But the Church in India will always remain grateful to God for the work of this humble, unassuming Christian, who was called to fill great places in the Church and filled them with humility and dedication but always with an ability that left no room for complaint.

Morning Star 21st, August 1970

REFLECTIONS ON A LONG FRIENDSHIP

D. T. NILES

(1908 — 1970)

THIS article is in many respects the saddest thing I have ever had to write. I have said much about D. T. Niles, through both the spoken word and the written; but I never expected that it would become my lot to have to write about him on the occasion of his passing. One cannot but be reminded of the words of Edmund Burke: Those who came after us are gone before us.

I first knew D. T. Niles fifty years ago, when he was a student and I was a junior teacher. He used to say later that he had been my student. I remember the Rev. S. Selvaretnam and Mr. A. E. Tamber as my students, but not Niles; but he used to say that he was in the same class. I came to know him more closely when he came to the University College in 1925. Though he was a Fresher doing Science and I was a Senior doing Arts, we were both at the Union Hostel under Mr. C. Suntheralingam. In later years he used to say that Mr. Suntheralingam was responsible for his coming into the Ministry. For his Theology he went to Bangalore and I to Serampore and we hardly saw each other for some years.

About 1933 or 1934 he had come out of Bangalore and, while preparing for his B. A. Hons. in Philosophy, was also District Evangelist of the Methodist Mission. He, the Rev. S. Selvaretnam and I very often managed to be in one another's company at that time. In 1935, I believe, he attended a Conference in Bulgaria and attracted the attention of Dr. Visser t'Hooft, who thereafter took him under his wing. In 1936 what was almost an accident enabled us to bring off one of those *coups d'etat*, which he knew only too well how to bring off, by

which a younger group took charge of the Jaffna Christian Union and was able to put more life into it for some years than it had known for a long time. The newly appointed Committee of the Christian Union undertook a Forward Movement in Evangelism. It was run by Ministers from the three Missions. Niles represented his own Mission on the team and was on it, as long as the movement lasted. In 1937 he chaired the S. C. M. Triennial Conference in Rangoon. In the meantime I had myself been put on the Evangelistic team and soon after given special responsibility for Evangelism by my own Denomination. And since he continued to be the District Evangelist for his own, we had to go about together a good deal.

In 1938 Niles was 30 years of age and had published a small book called "Sir, We would see Jesus", to which the great John R. Mott had himself written the Foreword; but otherwise he was quite unknown to the world. Therefore, great was the astonishment of everyone to find him scheduled as one of the chief speakers at the International Missionary Conference held at Tambaram in December of that year. The Conference was attended by most of the leading figures of the Christian world of the time. Dr. S. Yesudasan of Tirupattur was speaking to me and trying to find the secret of Niles' phenomenal rise to prominence. Having listened to me he concluded by saying "O, he is a genius, is he?"

Early in 1939 Niles was made a member of a team that Dr. Mott was sending out chiefly, I think, to the Universities of Europe and America. He took ill just before setting out but was soon able to join his colleagues. He must have done yeoman service to the cause during the tour. Once at a meeting in an American College, when he was speaking, a crowd of young men kept chanting in chorus, "We want logic". "All right", replied Niles, "what logic do you want—the Syllogistic logic of Aristotle, the Existential logic of Bradley or the Symbolistic logic of Bosauquet?" There were no further interruptions. He could always silence supercilious opposition quite curtly. Either when he was on this trip or on a later one, an American

Professor of Theology insisted that he would not accept anything as Christianity except the Sermon on the Mount. "What Gospel will you accept as a basis of discussion?" asked Niles. "The Gospel of St. Mark" he replied. "The Sermon on the Mount is not found in St. Mark", was Niles' reply; and that concluded the discussion.

After the tour Niles and his wife settled down in Geneva, where, I think, he was on the Staff of the World Student Christian Federation. The II World War was soon engulfing Europe and about May 1940 they caught the last plane that was coming out East; before Italy itself declared war and closed the Continent to non-Axis powers.

In 1941 Niles was made Secretary of the National Christian Council of Ceylon, then called simply the "Christian Council". Before the 1942 Annual Meeting he had produced one of those pamphlets he was fond of producing, everything about which was dramatic, on the Church during War Time. The Britishers present all but tore him to pieces and asked him who was paying for it; he said he was. At that meeting I was elected Chairman and at the first meeting of the Executive Committee we were able to pass a vote of thanks to him for his invaluable pamphlet and voted its cost from the Council funds.

After the bomb scare of 1942, though Niles remained Secretary of the Christian Council, he resided in Jaffna. And as Executive Officer of my Denomination I used to go about holding local conventions at which Niles was a constant speaker. And he went about holding Theological Conferences, in which I took some part.

Through the forties and till late into the late fifties there was no need for us to consult each other on any point; it could be taken for granted that we would think alike on all subjects and that, wherever we were, either of us could be depended upon to give the same answer to any question that the other would. I used to say that people had a suspicion that

there were not two of us but only one. This was curious because our minds worked differently, though we always arrived at the same conclusions.

In 1948 the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches took place at Amsterdam. From that time on till he died, particularly during the last 15 years or so, he was almost at the centre of the stage in the Ecumenical Movement. He became a familiar figure throughout the Christian world and his name almost a household word. The greatest leaders in the Christian world in speeches and writings quoted him as almost the last word for settling any argument. The number of books he tossed off during the period, the learned lectures he delivered, the courses he delivered in Seminaries throughout Europe and America and the number of international Christian Conferences he attended was nothing but phenomenal.

His books were translated into many languages; but I myself think he made a greater impact as a preacher. People would come away awed after listening to a sermon he had preached. He spoke to men as if he was standing in the presence of the Almighty. Once, a man from Mannar who was at the Civil Hospital, Jaffna, had wanted me to tell him where he could go for a service on the following Sunday. I told him to go to St. Peter's; and he did. Niles seems to have bowled him over completely; when asked later he could not describe the preacher, he could not say what the sermon had been about, he could only express the effect of the sermon in ejaculations. People might dissect Niles' sermons afterwards, and try to find their secret, the secret was partly in the Word, partly in the speaker but more particularly it was in the relationship of the speaker to the Word. Added up the effect was usually overwhelming.

I think, when he was not in the pulpit, the element in which he was most at home was at a Conference. He never attended a Conference, however important, but ran it. He once quoted the definition of a Conference he had heard, as a meeting, in which people who had decided that they could do nothing

severally had come together to decide that they could do nothing jointly. At some meeting or other I said that this required amendment. I said they came together to decide that they should do what Dr. Niles told them to do. He was a supreme diplomat and knew what argument to use and when ; but largely it was his dogmatism which convinced people. They felt, that a person so sure of himself could not be wrong. So he came to be looked upon as an oracle.

During the late fifties and the early sixties differences between us on questions of policy became so many and acute, that I used to say we differed on almost everything except on the Nicene Creed. When both of us were concerned with administrative questions, it was difficult that our views should always coincide. But when I called at his house, we hardly ever seemed to differ on anything. I would be usually saying "Yes" to what he was saying and he would usually say "yes" to what I was saying. We were not steering between thorny questions nor agreeing to disagree, we would really agree. He used to explain it by saying that we were always really agreed on all matters, only we were putting things differently. It could also be explained by saying that we were agreed on aims but differed on details. But it was a kind of agreement that was possible only with Niles. Even such ambiguous situations, I am glad, became a thing of the past.

Nobody can come to know closely everybody he knows by sight. However, there are some people whose heart goes out to any and everybody. This, I think, is a physical trait and not a moral quality. This attitude Niles did not have. But all those whom Niles got to know closely always enjoyed a special status with him. Everything they wrote would be "topping" every speech they made or sermon they preached would be one of the best he had ever heard. However, nobody known or unknown could make an enemy out of him; he could never harbour a grudge or get embittered. It was not so much that he did seem to recognise any wrong done to him; it almost seemed a way in

which somebody could bring himself to his notice. I used to say that the best way to get a favour out of Niles was to do him a wrong.

It was perhaps appropriate that he should be buried far from home. We in Jaffna think he belonged to us, the Ceylon Methodists think he belonged to them; and so do all Christians in Ceylon; but so do Christians everywhere in the world. He was a familiar figure everywhere. He belonged to the world.

While Niles did not belong to any particular place but the whole world, he also knew that his citizenship, in the words of St. Paul, was in heaven. In a letter which I received here a day before he died, he wrote, "When St. Paul says of God, "In Him we live and move and have our being", he is saying that whatever is an experience of life is always an experience of Him...I must talk about this matter with you when I come to Ceylon". Very frequently in speaking to me he would express his strong disapproval of the custom springing up in Jaffna of visiting graveyards, laying flowers on graves, etc. "It is a cult of the dead", he would say, "the dead are not here". For him the barrier at death had ceased to be of moment. The crossing over would have been but light; for he would still live and move in Him in whom he had always lived and moved.

So I pay him my tribute now that he is dead, as I have often done when he was alive.

[This article might have been longer; but I started weeping and had to conclude.]

J. S. AMARASINGHAM

(1895 — 1970)

(Dr. Amarasingham was the youngest of a family of brothers most of whom contributed highly to public welfare. Dr. A. E. Duraisamy of Malaya and Mr. J. C. Amarasingham here are instances. He was essentially an administrator rather than a Medical practitioner and won over people by his kindness.)

I first saw J. S. Amarasingham, when he was keeping wickets for Jaffna College in a Cricket match in 1914. He made his appearance at St. John's for a term in 1916 and then migrated to Central College. In the historic Football match between St. John's and Central in 1916, he played Centre Forward for the latter.

I saw a good deal of him when he came back from his medical studies in Britain in 1926. To be able to talk to a person who had actually been in Britain for sometime was to us then a source of great revelation. He was J. M. O. in Jaffna round 1943 and came back as S. H. S. in the mid fifties, when some friends negotiated his coming to us.

J. S. Amarasingham joined us in 1957 and was with us for 10 years. Though he had a natural and hereditary instinct as a clinician, he was usually content to leave clinical matters in the hands of more highly qualified people. But he often took a hand when he was needed, and his advice was valued even by the best clinicians. I had such confidence in his professional judgements, that I made him my personal physician and hardly ever consulted others when he was among us; and if I did consult them, it was only on his advice. I valued his medical advice, largely because his attitude was not that of a Doctor to a patient, but that of one man dealing with another.

At Manipay he largely confined himself to administration. He did not revel in figures and, therefore, tended to leave

financial matters in the hands of those whom he trusted. Neither did he relish paper work very much and was a despair to those who wanted everything to be on record, ready and available to be called for at any time. But at one thing he was supremely good as an administrator, and that was in dealing with persons. People with whom he had a good deal to do rarely had the heart to give him any trouble. If there was any crisis, he would not treat it as a crisis. To him there were a few people with grievances; and with a few words to the one side and the other he was usually able to send everybody away feeling that they should not give him any further trouble.

To the present writer, however, he was far more than a Doctor or the Superintendent of an institution. There were few other persons than he to whom I could go, when I had some difficulty, with the sure hope of coming away with greater assurance and confidence. The value of his companionship on such occasion did not lie in any advice of profound wisdom that he gave. It lay rather in his belittling the difficulty itself and in the confidence I received of his steadfast support. When one came away from talking to him, the crisis would be totally dissipated in one's own mind.

It is easy enough to have a virtuous disposition along many lines, if you live apart from the world, having little to do with the affairs of men, their needs real or imaginary, and live outside their conflicting interests. In such a case, your disposition is never put to the test. But to have been in the thick of things, to have been in charge of large institutions, to have dealt with hundreds of people and been under the constant necessity of making judgements on rival claims, and yet never have your disposition seriously questioned is a much more difficult thing. Yet, though he had much to do with the affairs of men and could have pleaded many excuses for not being able to put his principles into practice, however he did not do this. But few will question the basic honesty, the understanding of other people's point of view, the tolerance, the sympathy and the large-heartedness in his dealings that characterised J. S. Amarasingham.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

(1892—1971)

(For some decades, along with the Swiss theologian Karl Barth, and C. H. Dodd the British Theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr wielded an immense influence over the Christian world. He published 20 books. The list of his articles to learned periodicals runs into 19 doubled columned pages. From 1930 till his retirement he was a Professor at Union Seminary, New York; but his activities covered a wide range. He was politician, a Professor, a preacher, who had to be looked three years in advance. He also edited some political and theological magazines. His chief book, "The Nature and Destiny of Man" (in two volumes) embodying his Gifford lectures, delivered in 1939 is the book by which he will be best remembered.)

WHEN a friend of mine told me last week that Reinhold Neibuhr had died, I refused to believe it; but now that the "Morning Star" confirms the news, there is nothing else that can be done about it than accept it as a fact. Not merely I, but most of those who had known him in his prime, would have been reluctant to believe that he could ever cease to be; because to those who had known him then he seemed the very embodiment of the principle of life, characterised by its assertiveness against environment, a certain inexhaustibility and a certain invincibility. But the principle of life as we know it embodied on earth exists against the background of mortality. So Rheinhold Niebuhr also had to go the way of all flesh.

To say that Niebuhr was a live-wire would be a ridiculous understatement. He seemed a very dynamo of life. Mr. I. P. Thurairatnam, who was his student, has often said, that when going up to his room he always took in two stairs at a time. A Professor at Oxford or Cambridge would be satisfied with one lecture or perhaps two a week and a Seminar. Neibuhr took two and often three lectures a day and a Seminar. He was also incessantly writing either books or magazine articles; he

was himself editing a magazine. He was Chairman of the Democratic Party in some district in New York. Besides all this, he was constantly speaking at Conferences and other big occasions; and each effort carried on sometimes an hour and half without any notes was a physical performance that would have exhausted a Rugby player. I was told, more than 20 years ago, that as a Preacher every Sunday of his was booked up for three years in advance.

While Neibuhr was a Professor, he did not allow his professorship to bury his personality. He swept through life like a whirlwind; even his courtship was characteristic. It began with an English girl pestering him with too many questions during one of his morning lectures and ended that evening with his engagement to her. His interests and activities were wide-spread. He moved on easy terms of familiarity with his students, who overwhelmed with gratitude, idolised him and called him "Reiny" behind his back.

Born in 1892 Niebuhr was educated at Webster Grove Seminary, Missouri, and Yale. In the twenties he held a church in Detroit and in 1930 was appointed Professor of "Social Ethics" at Union Seminary, New York. By 1939 he had become such a recognised figure in the world of Theology and Philosophy as to be called upon to deliver the Gifford Lectures in Britain, soon after published under the title of "The Nature and Destiny of Man". From then, on till his retirement he was a towering figure in the world of Christian scholars.

When Reinhold Niebuhr came to the fore, what was called the "Social Gospel" had been holding the field in America for more than 30 years. Started with the best of intentions, it had reduced Christianity in America to the mere art of doing good and drained it of all theological and religious content. In New York, across the street in Columbia University, John Dewey had been holding forth for about the same period of time, saying that neither Christianity nor any other religion had anything to say. So dispirited had theological students in those

days begun to feel, that one student at Union Seminary round 1926 had attempted to commit suicide because he felt he had nothing to say to the world.

The impact of Reinhold Niebuhr shattered that era. It was hardly able to withstand the withering scorn he continued to pour forth against it day after day. It was a common sight 25 years ago to see his lectures crowded not merely with the students of the Seminary but with learned Professors from various parts of the world. His lectures and speeches were a continuous flow of deep learning, penetrative analysis, lightening insight and a cascade of epigrams and wit (most of the latter quite unpremeditated). Every lecture was an invigorating experience.

The comparison of Niebuhr with Karl Barth is inevitable. Together with C. H. Dodd, the English New Testament scholar, they created an epoch in Christian theology. Both had the same basic convictions about the great Christian verities; both hardly ceased during their active life to drive them home with passion and relentless vigour. Both made orthodoxy respectable; with Niebuhr "the Old Time religion" became popular once again in America, while the word "Barthianism" has become synonymous the world over with a rigid orthodoxy. But Barth was a Professor of "Dogmatics"; Niebuhr was a Professor of "Social Ethics"; the one seemed to be usually expounding doctrine and the other seemed to be concerned with the application of Christianity to the questions of the day. Barth was a creation of the old world of the European culture; Niebuhr was the creation of an entirely modern world with its seething, social, economic and political questions. Both seemed to be saying different things; but both were saying the same things on two different planes or in two different contexts, though Barth was often pronouncing on modern problems and Niebuhr was often propounding doctrine—in fact, there was hardly anything that Niebuhr left alone. It was natural that Barth's influence should have been felt most profoundly in Europe and Niebuhr's in America. As men, Barth remained very much of a Professor

through life, learned, affable, kind and gracious. There was nothing of the Professor about Niebuhr. He was just a man; but what a man. His personality hit you with elemental force the moment you saw him. There was much in common and much that was different between both; but together they created not merely an epoch but one of the greatest epochs in the history of the Christian theology.

As in all fields of knowledge, and perhaps to a greater extent, the scene in the field of theological opinion keeps changing: one era succeeds another, the outlook changes, tastes become different, new figures arise and new issues begin to engage attention. The sixties were the era of Tillich and Bultmann; but even that era has gone and has been succeeded by an age of pamphleteers (pushed on by enterprising Press Managers). The heritage of great figures and eras however, remains. Augustine, Luther, Calvin and Kierkegaard belong to past eras; but modern theology has to reckon with them. Rienhold Niebuhr's era has gone but its heritage remains.

THE RT. REV. HAROLD DE SOYZA

(1908—1971)

(Harold, was a member of the well known Soyza family, a grand son of Charles de Soyza a well known 19th century philanthropist and the son of Sir Wilfred de Soyza. He was educated at Royal College, Colombo and Oxford. Before becoming Bishop of Colombo in 1964, he was Archdeacon of Colombo.)

WHEN BISHOP HAROLD died early in May last year, it is not so much that a personality passed from our midst but that we passed out of a presence; for Bishop Harold had become a presence, almost an atmosphere. There have been many eminent persons the secret of whose greatness can be easily understood from a schedule of their achievements. Bishop Harold's greatness lay in himself; it could not be detached from him nor considered as arising from definite achievements which could be ticketed and labelled. For this reason, it can scarcely be understood by those who did not know him.

The present meaning of the words "holiness" and "saintliness" is derivative and not original. In Biblical times the words meant "set apart", especially for God. It is natural that the words should in course of time have acquired the meaning they now have. What is meant by saying that Bishop Harold had become a presence and an atmosphere is that whoever saw him was immediately struck with the obvious saintliness or holiness that clung to him and made themselves inescapably felt.

There have been many not merely in the history of the Christian Church but in the history of other religions as well who have felt that saintliness or holiness and this world do not go well together; for preserving their holiness, therefore, they have thought it necessary to withdraw from this world, so that

they might live pure and unspotted lives in close and intimate contact with God. They did not know and usually did not care about what was going on in the world around them. They had, of course, to live in this world; but as far as they were concerned, it might just as well not have existed.

There have been those, on the other hand, who have chosen to belong to this world. Some may have denied the other world altogether, but most have accepted it as a fact but left it alone. They have felt that life is too short to be divided between two worlds and like Abu Ben Adam in Leign Hunt's poem have thought that if you loved your fellow men, there is nothing more that need be expected of you.

To live a life pure and unspotted and yet be genuinely involved in the affairs of this world with all its sin and strife seems obviously difficult. But Harold de Soyza decided that it could be done; and so lived as to leave no room for doubt on the point. A person who does this goes before God stained with the dust of the world's struggles but is none the less acceptable to Him; in fact, he is the more acceptable because of it. He comes into this world of men with the "aroma of the unseen" clinging to him; and people feel refreshed and grateful for having known him.

As Principal of the Divinity School, he would have had to spend most of his time among students expounding subtle points or trying to make controversies and issues of long ago live again. As Archdeacon he would have had to spend a good deal of his time with matters which some people might have thought did not have the slightest relevance to religion. As a Bishop the question is not what came within his scope but what did not; for there is literally no limit to what a Bishop may be called upon to do; and this not in addition to what he has to do as Bishop but simply because he is a Bishop. In conducting the affairs of a Diocese, a Bishop finds that he has not merely to be a preacher, a theologian, a custodian of the doctrine of the Church, a guide and counsellor to his priests and a guardian of discipline but that he has also to be a financial expert, a

lawyer and a politician, who knows his way about each of the fields concerned. If he happens to be in charge of a well-known Diocese, he finds that his duties take him the world over. The better he is in discharging his duties, the more they will increase and the greater will be the area where he will be in demand and the variety of duties will be called upon to undertake.

And the more your duties in the world increase, the greater will be the temptation to soft-pedal your contact with the spiritual world; and it will be hard to blame anyone for succumbing to it. Bishop Harold, however, never succumbed to it. I have stayed with him frequently at Bishop's House. The morning would, I believe, start with the Eucharist in his chapel. After breakfast he would be sunk deep in his work. At noon again there would be prayers in his Chapel (in vestments) that would usually last an hour or 45 minutes. If some important person had come to see him, the time for prayers would be correspondingly postponed but the prayers themselves were never cancelled. The caller not knowing the Bishop's routine, may linger till 2 p. m.; that simply meant prayers would start at 2 p. m. It never occurred to him that in view of "unavoidable circumstances" or "matters of urgent importance", he should cut down on the time spent in prayers.

A person consciously and deliberately living in another world and this brings to the affairs of this world in which he takes part a certain temperament and certain qualities which those entirely preoccupied with the affairs of this world cannot be expected to have. These qualities may be itemised and listed apart from that temperament but they are merely the expression of that temperament.

There was a certain serenity about Bishop Harold which I have seldom seen ruffled. Whether events were such as to cause depression or elation, that serenity never deserted him. It was not the serenity of the Stoic, who believed that he is "captain of his soul and master of his fate" and, therefore, was too proud to bow to events; or be lifted up or down cast by them. It was the serenity of one who drew from other resources besides those in this world.

Patience is perhaps but the other side of serenity; and of this quality Bishop Harold seemed to have an infinite fund. This was to be seen not merely in his conduct towards individuals but in his conduct towards groups. Anybody in charge of putting business through Committees is usually anxious to put through a maximum amount of business in a minimum amount of time. It is not that such a person wants to avoid discussion or is unmindful of the claims of other members of the Committee but that he feels that unless "the agenda is covered" within a reasonable amount of time, it will not be covered at all; and many things will be left hanging in the air. I found that Bishop Harold's Standing Committee meetings which started round 4 p. m. would go on till 9-30 p. m. or even later. How he managed to go on as he did I cannot understand. In my own Executive Committee I used to feel quite impatient after 3½ hours at most; but I found his Committee laughing and talking long past dinner time. Evidently patience is infectious.

There was also an effortless courage about him, which hardly appeared as courage, because it came so naturally to him. About ten years ago when the Tamils were engaged in a Satyagraha movement he had preached a sermon. I believe, he had said something in the course of it favourable to the Tamils. When the matter came to the ears of Government, he was immediately asked for an explanation and for the script of the sermon. He stood his ground; but made no fuss, as if he was playing the martyr. He had said what he thought was right; if anybody took a different view, there was no need for him to change his own opinion. It was all so effortless to him. On a later occasion he had made an announcement which, it seemed to me, would have caused less embarrassment if made later. I asked him about it, but he saw no reason to have postponed it. The possibility of embarrassment was no reason for avoiding the right thing.

It must be expected that a person consciously and deliberately living in another world when he intervened in the affairs of this world will have a certain detachment to them. Some

years ago I was spending a holiday in Bandarawella and received a phone message from him asking me to come down to Colombo immediately. I inquired for the reason and he said, "It is the political situation". "Is it bad?", I asked. "Very bad", he replied. When I arrived in Colombo, he gave me a memorandum to read, which a prominent political personage had come to support. When I explained the other side of the case, he saw the point immediately and left the politician to argue the matter with me.

When I myself had a cause for which I wanted his support, I could not be equally happy about his detachment. Once I thought that an issue was assuming urgent importance and wanted him to go with me and see some prominent people. I was really annoyed when he said he had a dinner appointment. While he was concerned with events, his sense of proportion was different from that of most others. Parties might loom and fade, Governments rise and fall and issues may become crucial if not critical, he was viewing them in a longer perspective than others; he was viewing them *sub specie aeternitatis*.

When Harold de Soyza came into the Ceylon Church Union Negotiating Committee years ago, not many people outside his own Church knew him very well. But his part in its proceedings throws a good deal of light on what he himself was and on the reaction of others to him. Bishop Lakdasa had been in the Committee right from the start; but he was looked upon as one of the chief protagonists of the Church Union Scheme. There was, however, a section of the Anglican Church which had serious misgivings about that Scheme; and when Harold de Soyza came into the Committee it looked upon him as their spokesman; and that is how those who were for the Scheme also regarded him.

In his tribute to Dr. D. T. Niles, Bishop Harold paid up a tribute to various persons to whom we owe the fact that progress in Negotiations over the Scheme had reached the present stage. While much is due to all of them, Bishop Harold's own contribution cannot be overlooked. His chief contribution to the

Scheme was that he cast his weight for it. If he was for it, the Anglican Church could no longer be against it; if he could drop his opposition to the Scheme then, as far as his Church was concerned, it meant that all opposition would be dropped. So great was his standing among his own fellow Churchmen so great their faith in his outlook, that his approval was enough for them.

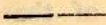
If Bishop Harold's fellow Churchmen approved of the Scheme because of the faith they placed in him, members of other Churches felt they could place their faith in him, because he approved of the Scheme. They had expected that, having come into the Committee, his role would consist in raising objections and placing hurdles in its way. When instead, he became a resolute supporter of the Scheme, they realised that they were dealing with no ordinary person. He was, of course, totally unaware of the impression he was creating; he felt that he was merely doing the right thing in the circumstances; but when others realised that this was what he would always do, heedless of blame and unaware of praise, they accorded him a high place in their counsels. And when the full measure of his stature began to dawn on them he came to be regarded with that reverent affection with which the larger public outside the Committee also came to regard him when it began to know him.

It is said that a Viceroy of India was once greatly puzzled about the way that Reginald Heber, one of the early Bishops of the Anglican Church in India, was regarded. "Why is it" he asked one of his officials, "that the Church makes so much of Heber? What did he do?" To which the official replied "Your Excellency, it is not for what he did, but for what he was". The regard paid to Heber is a tribute to the beauty of holiness, when men chance to find it on earth.

At the Service on the morning of Bishop Harold's funeral at St. Michael's Church Archdeacon Abeyanaike preached an extremely appropriate sermon on the text, "And Enoch walked with God". Enoch walked with men also; but the point is that yet he walked with God always. People revered Bishop

Harold because he walked with God; they loved him because he could still walk among men as one of them. They had chanced to find the beauty of holiness in their midst.

Bishop Harold could walk to and fro between the other world and this easily and naturally, because the other world is also here; "earth is crammed with heaven"; but it is here only to those who realise it. Bishop Harold was one of those who did realise it. A life lived unfailingly in such knowledge becomes a presence; it has the atmosphere of another world in the midst of this world. Therefore, it is that when Bishop Harold died we passed out of a presence, a presence that had become a benediction.



E. M. V. NAGANATHAN

1901—1971

(A MEMOIR)

(Dr. Naganathan was a prominent politician of the Federal Party. That a doctor, without much wealth behind him, should have sacrificed his practice for his politics shows the strength of his convictions. Though a "fire eater" in politics, he was on intimate terms with members of all parties.)

THE present writer was a student in the same class as Dr. E. M. V. Naganathan 58 years ago; the latter then was known as Victor Hensman. The two top students in the class were one J. M. Handy and Victor Hensman; the former in those days was invariably dressed in brown khaki and the latter in green khaki. The two students were always treated with great deference by our teacher, not merely because of their performance in class, but for other reasons as well; St. John's at that time was generally regarded as, more or less, the preserve of the Nallur families; but then there were many boys there from that privileged area. So obviously there were special reasons also operating. St. John's had been made what it was by the Handy family; and our teacher in particular (a Portuguese gentleman) was what he was because of that family. And the Hensman family still enjoyed the long hey-day of their prestige; and, though spread over the whole Peninsula, were looked upon as the premier inhabitants, if not of the Peninsula itself, certainly of Nallur.

Nobody in the class questioned the set-up. The two students certainly deserved their place on academic grounds; and as for the deference paid to them on other grounds, my fellow students did not think it came within their purview to have an opinion on the subject. That deference, however, would have been taken for granted through out the entire school in those days. As for the present writer, he did not concern himself with the matter at all, from either point of view. Very unfortunately it had always

been my habit through my academic life to choose the subjects which I deemed worthy of my attention and leave the rest of the prescribed curriculum alone. So it never occurred to me to challenge the academic position of the two students—not that I could have, if I tried; and as for the deference paid to them on other grounds, having gone to St. John's from a village school, I took it as a matter of course.

In 1914, both disappeared from St. John's largely because their fathers were rich. What they would have done in Cricket, Football or in class, if they had remained is, therefore, a matter of speculation; but it is curious that both of them later entered the Medical profession.

Victor's father retired in the late twenties as Registrar of the Madras University, with a Government decoration. But evidently, he was a man of means even earlier; for having kept the son in Madras for sometime, he was able to send him to a Public School in England and for his Medical studies to one of the best Hospitals in London; and it was in England that Victor changed his surname to Naganathan.

I had met him once in 1923 after leaving St. John's; but when next I heard of him, he was settled in Medical practice in Colombo. Specialists in those days were rare and general practitioners were "the order of the day". And somehow those in particular who were attracted to Dr. Naganathan's surgery were the elite and the fashionable in the city; and these stuck to him long after Specialists had invaded the field, till he finally threw up his practice altogether. After he had taken to politics, he was travelling down to Jaffna with me in the train one day and I asked him what was happening to his practice in Colombo; and he said, "My patients will wait for me; they come to me, not because they cannot get anybody else but because they want me"; but the elite never constitute one's entire clientele, so there need be no doubt that his practice had begun to be affected.

It is rarely that a Doctor throws up his practice and takes to politics as a career; far more rarely does he do so, if his

practice is large and lucrative, Few people realise the sacrifice that Dr. Naganathan made when he entered politics. I once asked an eminent gentleman in the Federal Party why Naganathan had thrown up his practice and had come into politics. He was trying to give me various reasons, with which I was not satisfied at all. Finally he said, "And he is a Hensman". I laughed heartily; but both of us knew that we had hit upon the real answer.

The stories told about the Hensmans of Naganathan's grand father's generation are a legion. They illustrate an impetuosity of temper, an intensity of conviction and an utter disregard of consequences. So it was an inherited disposition which made Naganathan take a step over which anyone else in the same circumstances would have taken a long time to ponder. His inherited disposition would not have permitted such a procedure; he discovered that the plight demanded a crusade; and for him to discover was to act. And so he became a member of the Tamil Congress of that time.

But when the leader of the Congress took a step which seemed irreconcilable with the interests of the Tamils, he knew he had no option but to break away from the Congress. It meant taking a course that seemed to lead nowhere; having joined a party to protest, he had now to join in a protest against that protest. But nobody who knew him would imagine that he had the slightest hesitation. And that is how he came to join that venerated figure, Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayagam, in founding the Federal Party and out of an initially hopeless situation, building it up through a long and arduous process till it became the one Party that could speak for the Tamils.

However, while he displayed the qualities of his ancestors in many respects, he also displayed a quality very unlike his forbears in one important respect. They were all stern men, who would have had no truck with any one who interfered with the "Moral order of the universe", that is: with what they themselves considered right, in any matter however small. Dr. Naganathan,

on the other hand, differed from others with vehemence, sometimes permanently, sometimes occasionally, but to be estranged or even be aloof, from any one for any length of time was not in his nature. Once in the Senate he had a violent quarrel — all his quarrels were violent — with another member; and it looked as if the parties would come to blows. So Sir Oliver Goonatillake came to make peace between them and suggested that they should have drinks in the Senate restaurant at his expense and be reconciled. “The drinks will be at my expense”, said Naganathan. Not merely had he no intention of making enemies but those who wanted to be enemies also had no chance against him.

It is the tradition of English Public life that public differences should never be carried into private life. But neither the differences should never be carried into private life. But neither the differences in public life nor the friendliness in private life in England are of the kind characteristic of Naganathan. If his differences were tempestuous, his friendliness also went beyond the needs demanded by custom or courtesy. Once in certain negotiations he is said to have threatened to slap an eminent political leader but later worked with him with the utmost loyalty and co-operation. On another occasion, he entered the office of a Minister, using highly abusive language and proceeded menacingly towards him, saying that he wanted to throttle him, because he had seen with his own eyes babies in the Jaffna Hospital dying for want of drugs; how far things would have gone, if the Permanent Secretary had not intervened, one does not know. But there is no doubt that he and the Minister were on the best of terms the next day. He never did anything by halves. One minute he was abusing someone and threatening physical violence; the next minute he was embracing him; and in both he was perfectly sincere. Obviously he was willing to give the same latitude to others that they gave him. I remember a Minister in the present Government years ago making very slighting personal remarks about him. Sometime later I heard of the same gentleman approaching his friend “Naga” to bring about a rapprochement between the F. P. and his Party at a time of crisis.

So he went through life, utterly devoted to his principles, unflagging in the intensity of his purpose and expressing this usually with extreme violence; but neither did he resent the same attitude in others. Those who were victims of his abuse or threats did not take him too seriously, as they knew that at tea-time they would be embraced; and those who used violent language or threats against him also knew that, when all was said and done, they also stood a chance of being embraced. His intensity made no enemies; and the intensity of others never made him their enemy.

Even into the world of his friends, where there were no differences to deal with, he carried the same vehemence, because it was so much part of him. Once, some years ago, Mr. F. X. Martin, the present member of Parliament for Jaffna, took him to an eminent Muslim gentleman to ask for his support. Much to Mr. Martyn's astonishment, Naganathan went up to the gentleman and gave such a heavy thump on his back that it seemed he wanted to fell him to earth; then he embraced him. The thump was his way of treating a close friend. The Muslim gentleman might have preferred a different expression of friendship; but he would have had no doubt that this was Naganathan's way of doing it.

The Hensmans of the older generations never had to go on Election campaigns; and it was just as well. A Hensman of the present generation did so, bringing into politics many of his inherited qualities but adding to them a quality of his own, almost irreconcilable with his inherited traits. The combination made him a rare figure in public life, respected for the unswerving intensity of his convictions and liked, if not loved, for his deeply affectionate nature.

MEMORABILIA OF D. T. NILES

I was recently staying at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, for a short time; and it dawned on me that at last I had a chance of making amends for an act of omission over which I had no control at the time; but which had kept gnawing at my heart ever since. I, therefore, asked Dr. Shanti Fenn, the Principal of the College, to guide me around; but it chanced that we got into a game of hide-and-seek and that while I was searching for him, he was searching for me, so that naturally we missed each other. So, I bethought myself of the Rev. Sanjeevi Savarirajan, the General Superintendent of the Hospital, who of course is the best authority in the matter in which I was interested.

The first thing I wanted to see was the bed in which Niles had died. Oddly enough, it was on the same side of the same Ward of the same Section of the same Department in which I was. It was the first bed right behind the Nurses' Duty Room. Like all beds in the hospitals, it was an iron, spring-bed with white-painted side railings; whether these were up or down all depends. When I looked on it, I think, a child was being intravenously fed with saline transfusion. I gazed on this bed. Here in the early hours of a day in July 1970 a man, who could twist anyone round his thumb, who could hold any audience in the hollow of his hand and who had dominated an era, had asked the nurse to turn him on his right and had passed out of the world quietly and unobtrusively. Even the Nurse on duty, perhaps, scarcely noticed what had happened. The final events was so uncharacteristic of a life that had been in the public eye for so many years.

The poignancy of recalling what had happened there on that day was overwhelming and unnerving; and I was glad to be fortified by the presence on my side of my wife and the Rev. Sanjeevi Savarirajan. The bed held me fascinated for a long time. But though it was scarcely ten yards from the room where I was, I never had the courage to go and look at it again.

From the C. M. C. Hospital to the Graveyard was a twenty minutes drive. The greater part of the graveyard is extremely well kept; the unused part is rather unkempt. Because during his illness Niles had stayed with Savarirajan, he was taken to be a member of the clan and buried among the Savarirajans. Here, on a flat concrete structure, were two short pillars upholding a huge block of black granite with the words, "Daniel Thambirajah Niles", carved in big white letters. There had been objection at first to any thing else being inscribed; but permission was obtained to insert a verse from the 122nd Psalm underneath, which says, "I was glad when they said unto me Let us go into the house of the Lord". There are no dates or anything else of the kind given.

Niles always signed his name with his bare initials in front; but the full name had a familiar ring, since I had heard them pronounced in many conferences; there they were in large characters staring at me. Carved on a tombstone their effect on me was shattering, I had always associated the three names with the very principle of life and an almost unconquerable energy. But here they were on a tombstone. Six feet of stone and a granite slab lay over Niles. There was no doubt that Niles had died.

I understand that there is strong objection among certain members of the family to looking upon Niles as dead. But the Bible says that Adam died, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob died; and there is no doubt the Apostles died. The most elementary proposition in any book of "Deductive Logic" starts with the sentence, "All men are mortal". Biographies prove that even outstanding men die and graveyards the world over prove that mortality is the common lot of man. All this, of course, the family knows well.

Niles' life and mine had been intertwined through long years. Though he often went out into the world, he always came back to Ceylon. And we had been in the same Conferences, Boards, Committees and projects ever so many times. We had often been on opposite sides of the same question but not on opposite sides

of each other. Having tried to outwit each other or tried to tear each other to tatters in public we would often dine or lunch together; "we had differed but only in opinion". I think, to a far greater degree than either of us was willing to admit, we had influenced each other. So looking on that stone that day I felt that a good deal of me was also lying there.

The human life of Niles was over on 17th July 1970. But a life it had been! For 30 years it had flashed across the firmament like a meteor; for the first 10 years it was a local phenomenon, for a little more than 20 years it had been a world phenomenon. There had been nothing like it in the Christian world of modern times. How much of glory and how much of success had it seen! How much the light of publicity had played on it! And here was a granite slab reminding me that that career had unmistakably come to an end.

Life on earth does come to an end; but there is also validity in the objection referred to. How much of our life is lived on earth? How much of life is purely human? The Old Testament stresses the Resurrection of the Dead, after all this is over. The New Testament and the Creeds stress "life ever-lasting".

The fact that the human life of Niles had come to an end does not mean that that is all there is to it. He lives in Christian history; he lives in the hearts of his friends; but even this is not all. There is much in saying at the end of a life, "I was glad when they said unto me Let us go unto the House of the Lord". There is a half humorous and half serious poem telling how General William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, was finally carried into heaven old and blind, and he cried to the Cherubim and Seraphim, "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" Mathew Arnold in his poem on the tomb of his father in Rugby Chapel, speaks of how his father's unquenchable energy was possibly still operating in another sphere. The suggestion in both instances is that there cannot be a radical break of fundamental interest when one goes from this sphere into the next.

Nobody who knew Niles would pretend that he was a saint in the modern sense of the term; he himself would have strongly

repudiated the term. He had a whole stock of ecclesiastical tricks in his bag which he could use at will. As for the old saints, some of them had a lot of pretty "rough stuff" in their bags.

Niles was associated with many interests in his life; but how many of them were fundamental to his life? He has been called an 'Evangelist'; but in my opinion the term is inappropriate. He was an author but I do not know how many of his books will survive him. As for the Conferences which he ran, they were too many for any human being to remember. I do not think Niles himself would have remembered all of them. Who then can imagine or inquire what Niles had been doing? He was cast in the role of a Prophet; what he will be doing now is what Elijah, Amos, and Isaiah will be doing. It is in their company that I expect him to be.

In those higher regions some day I hope to say to him "Ave Jrater" and not "atque Vale", for I shall never bid farewell to Niles.

J. C. HANDY

(1896 — 1972)

RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

J. C. HANDY came of a family steeped in Christian service for over a 100 years. His grandfather, T. P. Handy, had become a Catechist in the C. M. S in 1851. He was ordained to the Diaconate in 1866, "priested" in 1870 and served as Pastor at Nallur till he died in 1885. His son, C. C. Handy, having passed the B. A. examination of the Calcutta University, was teaching at Trinity College, Kandy, and became Head Master of St. John's in 1889. He was "priested" in 1893; and while at St. John's he also functioned as curate at Christ Church; he could not function in a higher capacity, as the membership of Christ Church in those days consisted of Europeans and Burghers, who would not have tolerated a "native" Vicar. C. C. Handy died at an early age in 1908. The very house where J. C. Handy was born and bred is called "Guru Vasa". In the atmosphere in which he was born and bred he moved most of his life.

I entered St. John's in 1913. Our teacher's father had served in the Handy household (it was rumoured in a very humble capacity). Our teacher himself had received his education, because of Mr. Handy's interest in his employee's son. This obviously accounted for the constant references in his class to "the late Rev. C. C. Handy" and our being taught to hold in high esteem a person we had never known. There were three Handy brothers studying there at the time J. C., who was some classes above me; Alfred, who was one class above; and George, who was one class below:

My first recollection of J. C. Handy was of his reading a report at some meeting during the first term of 1914. It is rather odd that I can still repeat one sentence from that report. I think he must have sat for his Senior Cambridge in 1914

Thereafter we lost sight of him, for the excellent reason that he had migrated to Trinity College, Kandy, then at its height under A. G. Frazer. The Rev. Jacob Thompson, our Principal, was anxious to do everything possible to further the prospects of members of the Handy family. Probably J. C. Handy passed his Intermediate in Science from Trinity.

When I next ran into him, he had become a teacher of Mathematics at the Training Institute for Surveyors at Diyatalawa. This was round 1920 and 1921. In 1923 I had joined Jaffna College as a student in the Intermediate class and was not aware of his movements; but by 1922 he seems to have drifted back to St. John's; and when the School celebrated its Centenary in 1923 the task of compiling its history having the previous 100 years fell on his shoulders. The Rev. H. Peto, writing the Foreword, says that he and Mr. T. H. Crossette were also on the Committee but that the work was done by Mr. Handy. "The amount of work he has done", says Mr. Peto, "and the time he has spent must be far beyond what anyone could imagine, unless he had undertaken a similar task himself". Handy had scanty material to draw from, as the early records available for the first 80 years were the annual letters of the Missionaries to the Headquarters of the C. M. S. Obviously the Missionaries of the C. M. S. do not seem to have been as anxious to survey their activities in print, as certain other Missionaries working in Jaffna. Soon after the Centenary, Handy seems to have slipped back to Trinity, probably because the atmosphere of the prevailing regime was not congenial to him.

In December 1925, Handy married Susan Thangaratnam, daughter of the Rev. J. M. Sanders (deceased) and Mrs. Sanders. At the Uduvil School she had belonged the "Star Class", so called partly because of the extraordinary intellectual capacity of its members and partly also because the first letter of the given name of each member started with one or another of these four letters. Another member of the class was Mrs. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam. Mrs. Handy came of a stock of stern

unbending Puritans and was in every respect a contrast to the husband with his easy, accommodating ways, but each supplemented the other and their married life which lasted for 35 years was ideally happy. They had to meet with some tragic experiences rather early. One son died early in infancy and another died at the age of 6 or 7 in a motor accident on his way to school. But neither the father nor the mother showed any outward signs of having been "bowled over" by these experiences. A long room named "Balasthan" at the Ashram stands as a memorial to this son.

Soon after marriage Handy left for England to complete his studies but came back to St. John's only round 1930, when his dear friend A. M. K. Cumaraswamy was invited to be the Vice-Principal. During this period Mr. Peto had to go on furlough and Mr. Cumaraswamy functioned as Acting Principal. Cumaraswamy took only a light interest in administration and let Handy do it for him, which of course suited the latter only too well.

By this time I had joined the Ministry and my first appointment was oddly enough to Mrs. Handy's home-church at Atchuvely. Both Mr. and Mrs. Handy (accompanied by Mr. K. Nesiah) came down to attend my first service. What they thought of my sermon I do not know, but I had taken great pains over it, and still remember the text. Ever since those days my relations with Handy remained close till the end. Very early in my ministerial career I met with an old man, who, as a student at the Training School for teachers at Tellippalai, had been asked, along with the other students to compose an impromptu verse of poetry on the death of the Rev. T. P. Handy in 1885. I sent J. C. a copy of the verse composed by this old man. (It was, of course, not acknowledged because of the deep seated Jaffna habit of not acknowledging letters which do not demand a reply).

By the middle of the thirties when Cumaraswamy was suddenly compelled to leave St. John's, J. C. Handy decided (and

quite rightly) that it was a signal for him also to quit. But he soon got a post entirely to his liking as Principal of St. Thomas' College, Matara. There in 1940 I had the pleasure of paying him a visit with my family and staying with him and Mrs. Handy for a month.

Handy must have served at Matara for quite sometime, but retired well before reaching the age-limit and joined the Co-operative Department. In Colombo he took up residence at Green Path Road, Havelock Town, where he lived for a little more than ten years. In the late fifties it practically became my home whenever I was in Colombo. When I had to go to a Conference in Europe in 1958, I left from their home and both husband and wife came to Katunayake to see me off. During the greater part of this period he used to represent St. Paul's Church, Milagiriya, as delegate to the Diocesan Council. Mrs. Handy died in November 1960; two well-furnished rooms (with modern conveniences attached) called "Susan Illam" were added to "Balasthan" in her Memory.

After Mrs. Handy's death Handy came down to live in Jaffna. Though he was about 65 years of age, he practically found his life's work waiting for him. Government had taken over all grant-in-aid schools. If any of them wanted to stay out they were told they would not receive any Government grant nor would they be allowed to levy fees from students. A few schools decided to take the risk; but even in their case the unsympathetic attitude of their Mission Boards did not make the task easier. The C. M. S. to which St. John's belonged had decided that the future Christian Missions lay in Africa and had turned a blind eye to Ceylon (though certainly not to India) for quite some years. Probably after the happenings in Uganda it may have second thoughts about its attitude to Africa. Nevertheless, St. John's decided to stay out of Government hands and face the consequences. It was not a question of throwing a bridge between Income on the one side and Expenditure on the other, but of throwing a bridge from No—Income to Expenditure. It was an impossible task to which St. John's had set itself.

To carry out this impossible task became Handy's mission ; it became a passion and an obsession with him. One of Napoleon's generals promised the Emperor to do immediately all the difficult things he had been ordered to do but could promise to do the impossible things only a little later. Handy did not even seem to require time to attempt the impossible. He plunged into it immediately. Day after day every afternoon he would mount a "bone-shaker", which could only be called a car by courtesy, and go about collecting money. But this he found was not going to be enough ; so he started an Institution called "The Academy", meant for post Secondary School students, so that the income from it could be used to supplement the income of the school. This Institution, started with an ulterior motive, was run so well that it soon acquired considerable prestige and is continuing to do great service, apart from rendering financial help to the school.

Handy was not a generally well known figure. There are probably many rural Christians who scarcely knew anything about him or had even seen him. Those who knew him were those in charge of carrying on the affairs of the Christian Church in Jaffna. This may be a limited circle ; but this circle took him to its heart. In effect, he became the perpetual President of the Jaffna Christian Union (the writer often had the honour of proposing his name). He was put on various Governing Boards and Committees, like the Committee for the management of the School for the Deaf and Blind, the Board of Directors of the Y. M. C. A. etc. If there were more inter-denominational bodies, he would, without any opposition, have been elected a member of every one of them. It was not because they wanted him to do anything particular in any position. It was a tribute they were paying him,

Summing up the qualities of an old friend, whom I have known for well over half a century, what would I consider his chief qualities ?

In the first place, an unruffled temper. I do not think I have ever seen him angry. Smiling had become a habit with him.

He had a keen sense of humour; but he did not keep smiling, because he took a humorous view of life. It was due to a spirit of tolerance, which recognised that others also had their view-points and it would not do to be angry with anyone because of a difference of opinion. So to go through life smiling seemed to him the only sensible way of doing things.

In the second place, he was a very clear-headed person. I have known many brilliant people; such brilliance is a great qualification to have. But a clear-headed person has the advantage of making things as clear to others as they are to him and can take others along with him. I almost venture to think that, if I had studied Mathematics under him, he might have made me understand what the whole thing was about.

In the third place, he was a person of great executive ability, with all the qualities that go with it — quick-thinking, drive, willingness to take pains, perseverance etc. One example of his quick-thinking may be given here. When Principal at Matara, once he had booked Sir Ivor Jennings to deliver the Prize-day address. At the last moment, however, the great man sent a message to say that he was being detained in Colombo on State business and could not come, but a large crowd was going to foregather in the evening, expecting to hear the distinguished visitor. Handy thought fast. The Rev. Basil Jackson had just come from England; neither Sir Ivor's face nor Basil Jackson's face was familiar to the public of Matara, so he sent an S. O. S. to Jackson, who kindly obliged. People seeing an Englishman on the platform felt that they had been well repaid for coming. As (I am sorry to say) not many people pay much heed to what the speaker says in a Prize-day address, the speech made little difference. All went away quite satisfied. The ethics of the procedure may be questioned; but its success tided Handy over a very tricky situation. Fortunately he did not always have to resort to such questionable practices.

A school master does not have much scope for executive gifts, unless he is Principal. So it was only when he was in

charge of things he could fulfill himself. A person with executive gifts naturally likes authority but Handy liked authority not for the status it conferred on him but because of the opportunity it gave him to do things. Sir Winston Churchill, himself discovered after his experience at the Admiralty during the First World War that to be able to do things he should not merely have the ability but the scope, that to do things one must be in a position where one's authority is not easily challenged.

Executive ability manifests itself in various traits, like drive energy, persistence etc. But what is the ultimate secret behind it? The secret is interest. Some do some things well, others do all things well. Those who do all things well are those who are willing to take an interest in any task assigned to them. If you are interested in a thing, you will want to see it through, you will be willing to spend time, take risks and persevere. If the interest rises to the level of dedication, the stage is set for great, heroic or monumental achievements. During the last ten years of his life Handy had risen to this level with the result that his achievements during the period can be described as nothing short of monumental.

So I take leave of a friend to know whom was a rare privilege and to work with whom was a pleasure. He leaves the field of his labours with his work well done and amidst the sincere regrets of all those who have known him.

“CHARLIE” PAUL

(1893 — 1973)

TILL recently Malaya was regarded by our people as an outpost of Jaffna; Jaffna people living there were looked upon as living in an extension of the Peninsula, which somehow was separated from us by a stretch of sea. Therefore, whether one lived in the Peninsula or Malaya mattered little. Relations and contacts were close and many names on one side were familiar to those on the other. Jaffna Christians in Malaya were regarded just as much members of our churches as those who were living here. We considered it to be the chief duty of the more prominent Christians in Malaya as that of keeping our flags flying there and preventing others from forgetting us.

Dr. A. E. Duraisamy and Mr. H. V. Ponniah had been leaders in this for a long time. When the American Ceylon Mission was celebrating its centenary in 1916, they were instrumental in making a large collection on its behalf and sending a considerable deputation here. I do not know when the name of Charlie Paul began to loom large in our relationship with Malaya; but, I believe, by the middle of the thirties he had come to be regarded as our established representative there.

Charlie Blackshear, to give him his full name, was born in May 1895 and was the son of the Rev. and Mrs. Issac Paul; and on the mother's side was the grand-son of the Rev. H. L. Hoisington. Isaac Paul was a convert to Christianity, but the Hoisingtons belonged to an established Christian stock. They also had the distinction of having sent two Government scholars to Cambridge. The Rev. Isaac Paul was very mild and gentle in his ways, while the Rev. H. L. Hoisington was of an opposite disposition and inclined to throw his weight about a little too much (and that weight was something to be reckoned with; his grand-son told me that it was more than 300 lbs.)

As a boy Charlie had accompanied the family to South India, when the father went out there in 1902 as a Worker in

the Thondi Mission. The Mission had been conceived in haste and its centre of work had been badly selected. It was under organization called the "Jaffna Student Foreign Missionary Society"; no overall supervision of its affairs had been thought of. Its financial support was based on promises made by Jaffna College students in 1899; and no account had been taken of the passing of one generation of students from the scene and the coming of others. Though for sometime things seemed to go well, the venture was foredoomed to failure. Mr. (later Rev.) J. K. Sinnatamby, the first Worker, had stepped down after 15 months owing to ill-health. Soon after Isaac Paul went out, the financial base here began to deteriorate; and the son has written a moving account of their life in the midst of hardships and privations. The Mission was finally closed down in 1910 and the Paul family got back to Jaffna. That the Mission should have lasted so long as ten years is a tribute to the unshakable faith and tenacity of Isaac Paul. It is strange to reflect that this flimsy venture was responsible for a most startling result; for it was the inspiration of the almost reckless spirit behind it that made V. S. Azariah to start the Dornakal Mission in India and build it into a mammoth Diocese of 250,000 souls.

The same year that the family moved to Jaffna Charlie left for Singapore, where he remained for the rest of his life, except for a brief period in Jaffna. First as a student and then as a teacher, till he retired, he was throughout his life connected with the Anglo Chinese School, run by the American Methodist Episcopal Mission. That Mission is responsible for most of the Christian work in Malaya and runs schools, usually with the same name, all over the Malay Peninsula, distinguished only by the different place names attached to them. But the Anglo Chinese School, Singapore, and the Methodist Boys' School, Kuala Lumpur, hold the pride of place.

Like all teachers in Secondary Schools, Charlie must have taught a variety of subjects, but Latin was his speciality. As an expert in this subject, in a country that placed a high

premium on British culture, he was in great demand for giving private tuition; and through the years many Chinese millionaires sons tried to derive a knowledge of that language from him. Whether their efforts to study were as strenuous and sustained as his efforts to teach it is not known. But most of the important figures in Singapore for the last forty years must have passed through his hands at school.

Charlie had, in the meantime become the self-appointed (but highly appreciated) representative in the Malay Peninsula of the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C. His enthusiasm in keeping alive in Malaya an interest in the Jaffna churches never flagged. We, however, had never seen him or known him personally.

Our chance of knowing him personally was occasioned by the Japanese occupation of Malaya. Britain, engaged in a life and death struggle with Hitler in Europe, had not expected a sudden onslaught by an enemy in S. E. Asia and was not in the least prepared for the whirl-wind campaign let loose by the Japanese. They swooped on the Peninsula from the North, carrying every thing before them. Singapore was the last British stronghold and was mercilessly bombed; but, once its water-supply was cut off and its connexion with the mainland severed, its days were numbered. People, therefore, realised that they were being left to their own resources; and as many Jaffna people as possible availed themselves of last minute chances of transport and got back to their old homeland. Charlie and his family were among them.

I was then President of the Council and had just succeeded the Rev. R. C. P. Welch as Executive Officer. We fixed up Charlie as Worker-in-Charge at Chankanai and negotiated a place for him at Jaffna College, where he functioned as Scout Master also. He threw himself whole-heartedly into our affairs and as a faithful Church Worker was greatly liked both by his parishioners and by his fellow-Workers. There was a good chance of detaining him permanently here; but as only an Executive Officer, I did not feel strong enough to dispense with the rule that Ordination candidates should have

had a systematic theological training. Things would, of course, have been different a few years later when the Diocese was set up.

When Charlie exactly sailed back to Singapore I do not know; but it was soon after the War. He found his old place in the Anglo Chinese School waiting for him; and with his background as a Church Worker in Jaffna was considered a good enough candidate for ordination as a Deacon by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Charlie never presented himself as a candidate for full ordination as a minister, because he considered himself as the representative of the Jaffna Diocese and its liaison officer in Malaya. He took his duties very seriously in that capacity and was very busy carrying them out.

Our "Good - will Mission" to Malaya in 1957 provided him with a grand opportunity to discharge his function in that respect. There were many who helped to make our visit a success; there was an enthusiastic committee that was organising our programme throughout the Peninsula. But the faith that provided a purpose to the whole thing was undoubtedly Charlie's. I have with me a picture of the members of the Good - will Mission standing along with Charlie, taken on board the "S. S. Carthage" on our arrival at Singapore.

The functions that took place in Singapore — the meetings and the dinners — were the high - lights in our programme. There are many pictures in our Albums showing Charlie speaking or doing something equally prominent at these functions. Since our schedule started with Singapore it set the pace for the whole trip. When soon after our trip we placed one of our Presbyters in Malaya, Charlie felt that his duties as our liaison officer had come to an end. Though our experiment did not last long; he felt that he would not function in his old capacity any longer; but, of course, he continued his friendly relations with us always.

About the end of 1983 I had gone to a Conference in Mexico and was coming round the world, passing through one

country after another (and feeling, I regret to say, somewhat homesick) when finally I reached Singapore. Sitting with folded legs on a bed in Charlies house, dressed in a banyan and sarong, I felt I was home indeed.

In the following year, a book of mine, published in London, came out priced at 40 shillings. I wrote to Charlie asking him to make the book known in Malaya. He went at it with gusto ; he got a firm of book - sellers to order copies and sold so many of them that they gave him a free copy. Whether his salesmanship was actuated by an interest in propagating theological knowledge or by an interest in the author cannot be ascertained ; but Charlie never did anything by halves.

For some years recently he was ailing and latterly was confined to bed. Therefore, it was known that it was a matter of time before the end came. But the end, when it came, cannot but leave in those who knew him a day bang of regret.

In the world in which I have lived and moved his passing leaves a big gap. I have always been accustomed to take account of him as a person of intense loyalties and who could be relied upon to carry through anything that he undertook. Personally I shall miss the deep attachment that he had developed towards me during the course of our acquaintance.

At home and in private life Charlie was a gentle and child like person. This was remarkable, characteristic considering his ponderous, if not gigantic, physical proportions, probably inherited from his grand - father. He was an uncomplicated personality devoid of mental reservations and this transparency of his thought gave a certain confidence to people when they were in his company and made him likeable, if not loved. In speech he was forthright, "sparing no punches". On the platform this made him a forceful speaker and in the pulpit an effective preacher ; because his hearts were never left in any doubt as to what he wanted to say.

There was a certain quality about him that in other spheres might have been a liability indeed a danger, but which among

those he moved and at the level at which he worked, endeared him to others. It was not that they tolerated it, they expected it and liked him the better for it; and that was the utter and almost the vindictive ferocity with which he held every view. There was to him no distinction between big and small. Everything was equally important and about everything he had a view. And every view was a burning conviction that held with the passion of a zealot.

One can, therefore, say with sincerity that in the death of the Rev. C. B. Paul, a very likeable personality, endowed with great mental strength and high moral fervour, has passed from our midst and that we are the poorer for it.

THE GAY TROUBADOUR OF GOD (THE REV. S. S. SELVARETNAM)

(1906—1973)

SELDOM has anyone inspired such genuine and unstinted affection in the hearts of all who knew him, not merely here but in many lands of the world, as the Rev. S. S. Selvaretnam, who passed away on Thursday, last week.

Genuine affection within a small circle is one of the commonest things of life, and something without which life would be unthinkable. Parents have affection for their children and children for their parents; this is biological, that is it depends on blood. In legal documents this is called "natural love and affection", because it is part of nature. Husbands love their wives and vice-versa. This may be romantic or physical and is certainly dependent on participation in many common tasks. Friends love each other, either because their interests coincide or supplement one another. All this, however, is confined to small circles.

Selvaretnam, on the other hand, was loved by everyone who knew him and inspired a genuine attachment, wherever he went. This was due to a combination of two qualities generally supposed to be irreconcilable. In the first place, he was not merely a religious man but a holy man. He not merely lived in extreme poverty but practised the severest austerities. He rose everyday at 2 o'clock in the morning and usually had only one (vegetarian) meal a day (though he had no objection to unlimited cups of tea). He sometimes spent days of entire silence and would often spend a good deal of time in solitary communion with God. He went about in the cloak of *sannyasin* and was usually barefooted. It made no difference to him whether he was in Jaffna or conversing with Queen Wilhelmina of Holland (though on such an occasion he would relax to the point of wearing sandals).

Such holy men are always looked upon with respect, if not awe. People show them deference when they see them; otherwise, they leave them alone, if they do not positively avoid them. Conversation with them is always cut down to a minimum. The attitude to them is always tinged with a lingering fear.

If Selvaretnam's holiness was deep, one had to know him well, before one could be sure. His holiness was something to be deduced — though somewhat easily — from his life and habits. But the quality about him that almost hit anyone in the eye was his irrepressible gaiety. This needed no deduction. He could not have been in any company without this overflowing, almost hilarious joy bringing everybody within its orbit. Even those who did not know that he was a holy man would never have been in any doubt about his jollity.

It was the combination of these two qualities that gave Selvaretnam his irresistible appeal. Here was a holy man who could not merely laugh like other people, but laugh more than they. This combination might have looked peculiar; but it was a natural, indeed a necessary, combination, "Rejoice, I say unto you again, rejoice" says St. Paul. The meaning of the word "gospel" is good-news; and everyone who hears and believes in it is expected to be joyful.

There are professional comedians who practise the art of jollity, as a means of livelihood; here the art is deliberate and laboured. A doctor, prescribing a cure for melancholy in the 18th century, advised his patient to go and see Harlequin on the stage and was staggered to know that his patient was none other than Harlequin himself. There are non-professional humourists who cultivate the art as a means of entertaining their friends; but there is always something artificial about it. Selvaretnam's jollity was the bubbling over of an inner joy.

There were some circles which looked upon Selvaretnam as a great singer. I never belonged to them and I think they entirely missed the point of his frequent canticular outbursts. An old teacher of mine used to ask, "Why do birds sing?" and would

answer the question himself saying, "Because they must". Selvaretnam's singing was simply the expression of a joy that could not find expression in mere prose.

Selvaretnam was the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Subramaniam. Mr. Subramaniam was first a Catechist in the Methodist Mission but later joined the C. M. S. Selvaretnam had his Secondary School education at Jaffna Central College where for a short time I had the privilege of being his teacher 53 years ago. He was for sometime at Jaffna College in 1926 and joined Serampore Theological College in 1927, where from 1928 to 1931 he and I were classmates.

At Serampore he was extremely good in his Greek and was a favourite of the Rev. G. H. C. Angus, who taught us Greek; but whether he ever looked into his Greek Testament after leaving Serampore is doubtful. Both among teachers and students he was known for his gaiety which never seemed to ebb. Any student who showed a tendency to undue seriousness became his sure victim. The chief form that his humour assumed was in getting hold of certain innocent words, putting any meaning he liked into them, introducing them into the most irrelevant contexts and working them to death. Some of these words were: "obese", "corpuscles" and "ponthulus" (the last word probably never had any meaning). He would make any of them mean anything he liked; for instance, in January 1932, he and I and J. W. Samarasinghe were travelling down for our Convocation. The Rev. C. E. Abraham, then Registrar, had asked us to let him know if we were attending; this we had failed to do. On our way, from a South Indian Railway Station, Selvaretnam despatched the following telegram with no sender's name at the bottom: "Corpuscles, ponthulus, above all Shamarashinho". Only one so well acquainted with his ways as Mr. Abraham could have made any sense of the telegram. Throughout his life Selvaretnam had the gift of giving a comic turn to any situation, however unpromising.

Selvaretnam and I entered the ministry of the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C. in May 1931. He was posted to Vaddukoddai

as Assistant to the Rev. E. T. Williams, but was soon shifted to Araly when the Rev. K. E. Thambirajah moved to Tellipallai. Araly at that time was full of a large number of high spirited young people, the Kathiravetpillai family alone contributing no less than four members to the company. The residence of the Araly Worker was first down the lanes and was shifted to its present site in Selvaretnam's time. Wherever it was, the Araly Parsonage in his time was always a scene of the most uproarious hilarity and merriment. About this time, an old gentleman had a habit of dropping in on me frequently and vexing me with highly flimsy and long-winded discourses on the parallels between various religions. I felt a radical remedy was required and told him that Selvaretnam was very fond of him. The old gentleman rose to the bait and left me in peace, thereafter. It would seem that he also had found his peace though that peace must have been very noisy.

Selvaretnam's behaviour in the presence of his sedate elders in the ministry was not such to set their minds at rest nor was it very much better at Council Meetings. Here he would adopt his favourite trick of using particular phrases in irrelevant contexts. At a meeting at Udupidy in 1932, to such an extent did he carry it, that Mr. J. C. Amarasingham, then Secretary, came and pleaded with me to use my influence to make him desist. Generally, in the presence of his elderly colleagues he became ostentatiously hilarious (some of the most sedate he kept teasing to the end of their days). Being constantly driven to despair, they did the only thing they could; they kept postponing his Ordination, which finally came off only in 1936.

It was round 1937 that Selvaretnam felt that the time had come for him to give effect to his dream of setting up an Ashram. The project needed at least a nominal organisational sponsor; and the obvious body for it was the Jaffna Christian Union. For years this institution had been monopolised by a few hoary veterans, who had elected themselves to the various offices, because few cared to challenge their authority. If they had been in charge, they would have made nothing of such an

unheard of thing as a Christian Ashram. But in 1936, fortunately for Selvaretnam, partly by accident and partly by the diplomatic skill of D. T. Niles, all the veterans had been ousted from their places and a younger set installed. The Rev. E. M. Weaver, the new President, though not very young, was sympathetic; I was Secretary and though young was, however, not at all sympathetic, feeling that such a project had no place in Protestantism; nevertheless, I was too close to Selvaretnam to be a real stumbling block. Other members of the Committee, like the Rev. R. C. P. Welch and Mr. W. D. Niles, were solidly in favour and so the project came into effect in August 1939.

There are many who may be able to remember that day nearly 34 years ago. Yesahayam and Sam Alfred, who later became Ashram stalwarts, had not joined up. The Ashram centered in Selvaretnam as it always did through his life. In the historical account of the Ashram which I contributed to its Silver Jubilee Souvenir, I said that the essential of an Ashram were a man and a tree; a man sitting under a tree. In ancient times in India people went to see a Rishi and he would be sitting under a tree. Any man could, of course, sit under a tree; but if it was to be an Ashram, he had to be a holy man. About the fact that the man in this case was holy there never was any doubt. So the Ashram took shape round Selvaretnam.

Those who look at the Ashram now will see a cluster of neat little buildings in the midst of shady trees, a home of peace and serenity. They do not know how the whole thing had to start from scratch. I believe the Methodist Church gave some money for the purchase of the land, which was then a wilderness. For months it was doubtful if any water could be found in it; for a much longer period the task of making any tree grow on it seemed beyond our power. Little by little, however things began to get right, buildings began to come up and trees began to grow. Selvaretnam never asked for money but money came. The history of the growth of the Ashram may be written, but the miracles that lay behind every bit of it were known only to the few who were very close to Selvaretnam.

The Ashram soon assumed a place in the life of the community, because it fulfilled the requirement of an Ashram. Here was a holy man, who not merely sought God or went to Him frequently, but a man who always lived with Him and never got out of His company. If such a man was wont to crack jokes and tell humorous stories, it only brought him more within their orbit. They knew that he could afford to do it and were grateful that he was willing to do it. It endeared him all the more to them.

As time went by, he seemed to become a necessary figure at all important functions. I used to twit him about a celibate like him presuming to give advice to couples at weddings; but, of course, it was not his advice they wanted but his participation. Often through the years I have gone to meetings and found a Devaram by him wangled into the programme. At funerals his singing of his colleague's well-known song became an almost invariable feature. It was as if people had come to feel that something would be lacking in a ceremony, if he did not take part in it.

The chief fault that was found against Selvaretnam in Jaffna was that he went away too frequently from the Ashram. But what was considered a fault in Jaffna was considered a virtue and an act of kindness by those outside Jaffna. They felt grateful that he had refused to be a slave of geography. Just because the Ashram happened to be in Jaffna, people elsewhere felt that it was no reason why a holy man like him should be tied down to that one place. So he was in constant demand in various parts of this Island. In fact, at the time of his death he had made all arrangements to go to South America. There are few Continents to which he had not gone and where he had not been received with feelings of affection.

Looking at Selvaretnam's life one cannot help being reminded of another figure in the history of the Church; and that is; St. Francis of Assisi. There was in them both the same combination of severe austerities with a spontaneous gaiety;

nor is the resemblance accidental, for, I think, Selvaretnam deliberately made St. Francis his model. About 23 years ago, he was travelling by train to the town of Assisi and his fellow passengers intrigued by his colour, his garb and his meagre footwear were whispering among themselves and finally ventured to ask him in sign-language what he was. "I am a Protestant Franciscan", he said, "O! No!" they said, "No Protestant Francis can" — elongating the final "a" in each of the big words.

But St. Francis seems to have been a more austere figure, having none of the reckless abandon of Selvaretnam's gaiety. It may be that we do not have a "close-up view" of St. Francis and are compelled to see him through the eyes of pious chroniclers, but the probability is that their picture is correct. St. Francis was more austere, because he was under the shadow of his Church, conscious of allegiance to Bishops, Cardinals and Popes. Church affiliation sat very loose on Selvaretnam. Francis attended the Lateran Council of 1215; Selvaretnam would have tried to turn the whole thing into a hilarious joke. It was only at the end of his life that he was beginning to realise the need to get into close relation to the Church.

By temperament Selvaretnam was a lonely but gay troubadour of God, wending his way to God merrily but alone, except that he was in the company of God.

BISHOP I. R. H. GNANADASAN

OF all the Bishops of the Church of South India across the Palk Strait Bishop Gnanadasan, whose death was reported last week, was easily the most well-known in Jaffna. Bishop David Chellappa of Madras, because of his genealogical connexion with Jaffna, was heard about a good deal, but was not so well known nor as familiar a figure here as Bishop Gnanadasan. The other Bishops, except for occasional appearances, have largely been mere names here.

I. R. G. Harrison, as he was then called, graduated from Scott College, Nagercoil, and joined the Theological College at Bangalore in 1941. He belonged to one of the most brilliant batches that ever passed through Bangalore as students at any one time. His batch included, among others, David Wilson, presently of the Ceylon Methodist Church; Russel Chandran, presently Principal of the Bangalore Theological College; and Christy Arangaden, now Translation Secretary of the Bible Society of India, A. E. Inbanathan, who has recently been appointed General Secretary of the World Alliance of Bible Societies was their senior by one year. The batch finished its course at Bangalore in 1944, with Harrison enjoying the rather dubious reputation of being always able to pass his exams, easily without much hard work.

At the end of the graduation ceremony, how Harrison almost came to be booked as a Worker under the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C. is one of the most intriguing, but unwritten, stories of South Indian ecclesiastical politics. Owing to some slight displeasure which had arisen, the local Nabob, who controlled the administrative machinery of the area from which he came, had informed him that there would be no work for him when he left Bangalore. There was at that time an acute shortage of Workers in Jaffna and the Chairman of the Jaffna Church Council persuaded Harrison to come over here. The Nabob, finding that, instead of facing unemployment, Harrison was going to be snatched up by the Jaffna Church Council, suddenly discovered that his own area would simply be

unable to get on without Harrison's services and saw to it that he was firmly fixed there. And that is how Harrison got his footing in the Travancore Council of the S. I. U. C.

In the early fifties he went to the University of Chicago for higher studies; and it was probably then that he took on the surname of "Gnanadasan". His oratorical gifts were becoming widely recognised and after his return he was in great demand to speak at all kinds of meetings.

In the meantime, a long and bloody fight had started between the Central Government of India and the inhabitants of the Southern tip of the State of Travancore. This area, populated by people who were Tamils in race and language, had been tagged on by the British, during the latter part of the last century, to the domains of the Maharajah of Travancore; when Independence came the situation was allowed to continue. The inhabitants of the small area, who had been so summarily dealt with by the British, did not want for all time to remain a minority in a Malayalam speaking area and wanted to be taken into the Tamil speaking State of Madras. Pandit Nehru, always very doctrinaire in his beliefs, was determined not to grant the principle of linguistic States and refused to grant the request. When he was finally forced to yield, the new District of Kanyakumari was carved out by the Government of India and the new Diocese of Kanyakumari by the C. S. I.

The appointment of the new Bishop by the Synod sub-committee took place during the latter months of 1959. The Diocesan Council had submitted only two names and it was obvious whom they wanted appointed. It is interesting to recall that Gnanadasan came to learn of his appointment when he was in Jaffna for some meeting. The new Bishop was consecrated in December, 1959. The Diocese of Kanyakumari in point of numbers is one of the major Dioceses of the C. S. I., having more than 100,000 souls, but is geographically quite small, the boundaries on any one side being seldom further than 30 miles of the town of Nagercoil. The Bishop of the Diocese does not, therefore, have to spend as much time on circuit as most other Bishops of the C. S. I. who have vast areas to cover. For this

reason, he becomes something of an easy target for those who have Bible Studies, Retreats, Conventions, Anniversaries and Conferences to be conducted.

It is not, however, everyone who has time on his hands who is invited to conduct such meetings. The fact was that there were few people better fitted to do this kind of a thing than Bishop Gnanadasan. His gifts as a speaker were superlative. He had a perfect command of the brand of Tamil now in vogue, which eschews all Sanskrit derivatives and tries to recapture the language as it was before it came under Aryan influence. Whereas others using the style have to strain themselves painfully to maintain the same standard, he could go on easily, effortlessly and endlessly, almost like the Mississippi river. When he was in Jaffna for the Ter - Jubilee in 1966, he was very ill and spoke for only about five minutes; but they were enough to send Mudlr. Sinnathamby, a competent authority, into raptures. He was also an extremely good speaker in English and spoke impeccably. The writer heard him once conducting a series of Bible Studies at Synod, each study lasting for about an hour; and each was packed with matter; but not a sentence was out of place, nor was there a scrap of paper in his hand.

A person who earns such popularity is liable to pay a heavy price for it, unless his constituency was considerate or he himself is firm in dealing with invitations; in Bishop Gnanadasan's case neither of these happened; the constituency was not in the least considerate and he allowed himself to be persuaded too easily. The result was that constant travel and unceasing engagements told severely on his health and produced a chronic dyspepsia, which to the end of his life he was never able to overcome.

One of the important duties of a Bishop of the C. S. I. is the contribution he has to make at Synod. During the first one or two Synods he was rather quiet, but soon got into his stride and became a person who could by no means be ignored. His participation in every debate was looked forward to; but the stand he would take up could almost always be safely predicted beforehand. It would usually be opposite to the course favoured by the majority or advocated by Synod authorities; so much

so that the latter were always justifiably uneasy whenever he got up. So invariable was this attitude, that it came to be put down as much to habit as to any reasoned conclusion, and greatly detracted from the weight of his contribution.

Bishop Gnanadasan was never given credit for his proper age. Well educated, fluent in speech, alert and keen of intellect he was regarded as a coming young man of the C. S. I. His time was not yet; but when it came, there was no doubt that he would carry out the responsibilities that devolved on him with supreme ease and ability. Things however, took up an unexpected turn at the Synod of 1972. The first nomination ballot for the Moderatorship showed a slight preponderance in Gnanadasan's favour. Bishop Solomon immediately withdrew his candidature and Bishop Gnanadasan was declared elected. The whole event took the Synod by surprise. It was not that Bishop Gnanadasan was not considered adequate for the position, but that the Moderatorship had always been associated with more senior Bishops. Bishop Sumitra had been 75 when he retired from the Moderatorship and Bishop Legg about 67 or 68. Bishop Hollis had actually been much younger than Gnanadasan when he was appointed; but he had succeeded Bishop Azariah as the unquestioned leader of the Anglican section when the C. S. I. came into being and nobody had thought of asking for his age; nor did anybody ask Bishop Gnanadasan for his age; he was presumed to be too young for the post.

Soon after the Synod of 1972, Bishop Gnanadasan was stricken with a cruel disease. Even an operation by the best specialists in London failed to arrest its progress. He was brought back to Nagercoil, where he remained in a state of unconsciousness till he passed away on the 6th of this month.

Bishop Gnanadasan was almost like a meteor that flashed across the sky. His career will be remembered as much for the unbelievable amount of achievement crowded into its short span as for the expectation it held out of a future of almost indefinite length and brilliance in the service of the Church. Who cannot but regret that a career of such promise had been cut short in its very prime?

ARIAM PARAMASAMY

(1902 — 1975)

WHEN ARIAM PARAMASAMY died on 16th March this year, everyone who had known her knew that one of the greatest personalities of our generation had passed away. She had been Principal of a historic school for nearly thirty years and earned a name as an exceedingly good Principal. But everyone also knew that that was not the reason why she was looked upon as great.

The word "great" is applied by historians mostly to soldiers who have also been statesmen of a high order. Thus Alexander the Macedonian, Alfred the Saxon and Fredrick the Prussian are called "great". Historians do this because books on history deal with wars and statesmanship and performance in these spheres are the achievements with which they are concerned. Anyway, the greatness they are thinking of is the greatness of achievement.

In common life, the term "great" is often applied when somebody is extraordinarily proficient in a particular science or art. Thus we speak of a great mathematician, physicist, architect, or artist. The emphasis is on the science or the art; and a person is called great because he or she has attained proficiency in it. It is a greatness of attainment.

A far higher title to greatness is that based on what a person has been, apart from what he or she has achieved or any attainment possessed; for these are often due to accidental circumstances. Alexander was great because Rome had not yet risen and Fredrick was great because in the middle of the 18th century Europe was militarily decadent.

Ariam Paramasamy was a great Principal; but she was a great Principal because she was a great woman. I do not know how much teaching she did after she became Principal, or whether she did any teaching at all. I do not know to what extent she gave herself to tackling the intricacies of school

finance. She must, of course, have supervised them, or she would have neglected her duty; she certainly administered the school, but it would be truer to say that the school administered itself. One thing she was supremely good at and that was in "getting up" an event or function, running it with superb skill, and timing everything to a split second; but this is a minor thing in a Principal's work. In the life of the school everything went on well, as everybody did her part, because that was the least they could do for her.

What then was the intrinsic quality that made her great? It was her interest in people - high and low. It was not an interest in the kaleidoscope of life, the shifts and changes of view and the endless procession of people marching across the scene. Such an interest is that of a spectator in the drama of life, it is a rootless interest. Her's was an interest in people as such, deeply-rooted in an untroubled faith in God. This was God's world and these were God's children. Every one of them was somebody in God's sight and therefore in her's. Everybody had therefore to be made happy.

If a couple had fallen out, if friends had quarrelled, if somebody had lost his job, or if somebody was too poor to afford an education, she felt it her duty to do something about it. Her own interest and convenience did not come into the picture. During the War years, most of us went about hungry; and for the members of the Executive Committee of the Church Council a meeting at Uduvil was a great occasion, because of the "copious refreshments" served. It was only twenty years later that she told me of the amount of self-denial practised to save flour and sugar for the delicacies we had so enthusiastically consumed. We had not known this then nor for a long time after.

Many visitors to Uduvil used to be overwhelmed by her charm and graciousness. I remember Bishop (then Canon) Sinker remarking on it. An impression of charm can be produced by many causes if not artifices; but such a charm is one we can usually see through. Her charm was simply the outward and visible side of her innate goodness - a goodness that cared for

everybody, wanted everybody to be happy, that insisted on helping people whether they liked it, or not, and that never knew the meaning of a grudge. She breezed through life trying to shed on everything and everybody the inner radiance of her own concern.

It is said that when St. John, the Evangelist, lay dying at Ephesus, his disciples asked him whether he wanted to leave a message. "Little children, love one another" he said. Knowing that he had said this often in his Epistles, they asked him if he did not want to say anything more. "That is enough," he said. She did not certainly delude herself with the unscriptural idea that all people were good and loved one another. But for her own part, she had determined that if she could make them do it, she would.

When Charles Lamb died his friend, the poet William Wordsworth said, "Oh, he was good, if ever man was good." Ariam Paramasamy was good; and for sheer innate goodness we shall not see the like of her in our generation.

Morning Star — 12th, November 1976

LAKDASA DE MEL

1902 — 1976

(Lakdasa de Mel, son of Sir Henry de Mel was educated at Royal College, Colombo and Oxford. He was Bishop of Kurunegala from 1945 — till 1962. In 1962 he became Metropolitan of the whole Anglican Church in India, Burma, Ceylon etc., in which capacity he remained till his retirement in 1972. Among friends he was noted for his exuberant humour, which quality often came out when he chaired conferences.)

OF the group of persons who played such a large part in our Church life from about 1940 to 1970 all have gradually left the stage; and two weeks ago it was Lakdasa de Mel's turn.

I had first met Lakdasa de Mel when I was a student at Serampore and he was a young priest, who had just come back from England, and somehow had found his way into the delegation to the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in Calcutta held in 1930. I must have picked up my contact with him again in the late thirties; anyway, both of us were members of the team of five that represented Ceylon at the International Missionary Conference at Tambaram in 1938. Niles attended as an official.

Thereafter, it was common for us to run into each other at S. C. M. Camps, Theological Conferences organised by Niles, N. C. C. meetings, but mostly and above all at meetings of the Ceylon Church Union Committee that took place regularly at the Colombo Y. W. C. A. He was also for a considerable time Chairman of the Board of Directors of Jaffna College.

Somehow, Lakdasa got drawn to some of us pretty closely. It may perhaps not be known that though he lived in South Ceylon most of his close friends were from Jaffna. In my own home he was a fairly frequent visitor and a familiar figure. My children used to look forward to his coming and my youngest son used literally to squeal with the delight at the sight of him.

During his career in active service Lakdasa ran through the whole gamut of possible ecclesiastical offices. He was a parish priest, an Assistant Bishop, a Diocesan Bishop and finally the Metropolitan of all Anglican Diocese in India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, besides being Chairman of various Semi-ecclesiastical organisations. During the latter years he was well known in Church circles throughout the world. In each station he showed high competence; Canon Mac Leod Campbell said he was the most outstanding Bishop in the Lambeth Conference of 1948. More than this, over each station and role all along the line he cast a peculiar charm.

For Lakdasa de Mel was not a mere personality. There was an atmosphere surrounding him and went with him wherever he went. It was an atmosphere of pleasantness and good-will, in which everybody felt at ease and in which everybody was made to feel that there was not anything really wrong with the world. If anybody had felt that there was, he was made to think that things were different now.

At many meetings it is common at some stage for a crisis to develop. In fact, many meetings take place because a crisis has developed. The attitudes of Niles and Lakdasa towards a crisis were different. Niles used to thrive and revel in the atmosphere of a crisis; he almost invited it and let it develop. When it was on us he was at his best, wrecking it and tearing it to pieces. Lakdasa would scarcely allow a crisis to intrude into his presence. He would greet it with an uproarious joke or a pertinently humorous remark so that the crisis almost withdrew in shame.

There was another person in history who also always met an unwelcome situation with a joke or a story — Abraham Lincoln. But between the two there was a great difference. Lincoln was trying to ward off an inner melancholy with his humour; Lakdasa was merely expressing an inner gaiety with his humour. The one was fighting evil in the world and used humour as an instrument; the other believed that there was no evil in the world and that therefore one could be, and had to be humorous.

In religion, Lakdasa de Mel was not an Anglo-Catholic (he told me so himself), though certainly a High Churchman. But those who knew him know of his fondness for ritual. One reason for it was, I think, that he believed in its psychological value; but the more important reason was his desire to maintain tradition. He was occupying a certain office, which involved carrying out certain rites; and if tradition demanded a certain amount of pomp and ceremony in carrying out his duties he would abide by it. But he was too sensible to carry the attitude into the life outside. Once a ceremony was over, there were no airs and no artificial sanctity (or sanctimoniousness); and jokes and stories would get going again.

It may amaze those who were aware of his social and economic background but did not know him too well to be told that in private life he was not merely simple and unassuming but deeply ascetic. It was very much like Mahatma Gandhi's asceticism, deliberately and painstakingly practised, when all the circumstances suggested a different kind of life. Some may have found it incongruous; but it is a kind of asceticism far more difficult to practise than an asceticism in the midst of poverty. It was non-attachment in the midst of things that invited attachment. I met him in October last year, when Land Ceiling Act had taken untold wealth out of the hands of his family. He was totally unaffected. "After all it is to the people it has gone; let it go", he said. There had been no attachment to give up.

He died as gaily as he had lived, with a joke on his lips and the anticipation of a new experience in his heart. Sorrow seems almost unseemly in the circumstances; but to those who have known him life will not be the same again. A great friend, a great Churchman and a radiant soul who thought it was his business to spread happiness, wherever he went, has passed from our midst.

M. THIRUCHELVAM, Q. C.

(1907—1976)

(M. Thiruchelvam, born in Malaya, was educated at St. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia and University College, Colombo. He entered the legal service of Government in 1945 and became the Solicitor General. He retired from Government service and entered politics in 1960. He was in the Senate from 1965 to 1968, during which period he was Minister of Local Administration; otherwise he was practising as a lawyer and was in politics.)

THE LATE MR. THIRUCHELVAM, who passed away two weeks ago, was one of the most illustrious figures in the public life of this country in recent times. He had had a distinguished career in the Legal Department of Government and had risen to the position of Solicitor General - then a very high office - and had been appointed a Queen's Counsel, when in the early sixties he retired from Government Service, to be able to enjoy a freedom he could not have had as an officer under the Crown. His abilities, already well known, were availed of immediately on the un-official side of the Bar, so that at the time he became a Cabinet Minister in 1965 he was making an almost fabulous income. He was also able to take to politics, in which sphere he performed a service to the Tamil cause at a level where it will be difficult to replace him. Nevertheless, because of his intellectual brilliance, cultural standards and the charm of his manners, he enjoyed a status, peculiar for a politician, of being popular not merely with those who agreed with him, but with those who did not.

Thiruchelvam also happened to be a close, intimate and dear friend of mine. In fact, for the last many years, there was hardly an occasion when I visited Colombo, when I did not call on him. Even otherwise, I was usually in touch with him in one way and another. I, therefore, have the melancholy advantage of being able without presumption to analyse his characteristics as a man, and distinguish what exactly made him what he was.

All the qualities that I may mention may be seen to be but various sides of his fundamental and distinguishing characteristic, viz; a burning passion for Justice. It may be said that all over the land there are Judges at various levels, who are paid by Govt. to enforce this very thing. But every judge is circumscribed by two factors. In the first place, he is bound by the laws of the land. Laws are passed by Governments; and Governments may be good or bad. Laws also, therefore may be good or bad; but as long as they are on the statute book, judges are bound by them. Good judges of course, try so to interpret the law involved, that substantive justice may be done; in the end but the fact of circumscription is beyond doubt. Secondly, judges are simply expected to give a verdict on the cases brought before them; they are not expected to go out in search of cases outside the calendar furnished to them.

With Thiruchelvam, however, that the principle of Justice as such should be operating always and everywhere was a driving, consuming urge, justice between man and man, between the State and the citizen, between race and race. "In this God's world with its wild whirling eddies and mad foam oceans... dost thou think that there is no justice? I tell thee, there is nothing but justice" said Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle no more thought than we that what goes on all around us was Justice; his whole point was it was not; still that was not the end. What he meant was spelt out by his disciple, J. A. Froude: "The laws of right and wrong are written on the tablets of eternity". That means, that whatever may happen in the world for the time-being, Justice will triumph in the end.

This is an attitude easy for authors to take up. Thiruchelvam was a public man deeply immersed in the events around him; but this was exactly his attitude. It was a conviction that possessed him and, therefore, no disaster, however apparently final could shake him. No just cause was to him a lost cause; and any suggestion to the contrary would have been met with a torrent of fiery eloquence. After an encounter with such inveterate faith in the innate decency of the order that underlies the working of the Universe, it was difficult for one to go away

without feeling a fresh surge of courage and hope. And it may be confessed that it was this faith which drew the present writer to him.

Because of what he was, he never took up a project without being willing to go all out to see it through. Everything that he took up was a cause which was worth all that he could put into it. And it was this which drove him to unceasing overwork, against the advice of all his friends, and finally brought about his untimely end.

He also believed that if a thing was big enough to need accomplishment, it was big enough to be accomplished without resort to petty means. Anything that needed to be done by a resort to devious ways was not something that needed to be done at all. He therefore, scorned the adoption of tricks, wiles and dubious stratagems. When he was Minister and could have got many favours done, he utterly refused to ask anyone outside his Department for such things, lest it might oblige him, in his turn to do something which he would have been unable conscientiously to do. Great minds have great ends in view; and great ends and petty means go ill together.

It will be seen that there was much of the Calvinist in him, with his faith in the absoluteness of the eternal verities and his belief that they needed no unworthy means to uphold them. And this is why, when he was Chief Guest at the Ter-Jubilee of the American Ceylon Mission, ten years ago, he declared that the greatest contribution that the American missionaries had made to Ceylon was their Calvinistic faith in the ultimacy of moral values. In personal behaviour, however, he was entirele free from the dourness of the Calvinist. His face would by almost perpetually wreathed in smiles, except when he ran into some instance of wrong or justice, when it was not the sternness of a Calvinist that would possess him but the fiery zeal of a Crusader.

Thiruchelvam's passing deprives the country of one of its most distinguished citizens, the Tamil cause of one its ablest and most devoted servants and his friends of a charming and inspiring companion.

S. J. V. CHELVANAYAGAM, Q. C.

(S. J. V. CHELVANAYAGAM (1898—1977) became during his later years the most venerated leader of the Tamils and was almost an oracle. Though an astute lawyer, during later years he devoted himself chiefly to politics. Though crippled by disease during the last years of his life, he maintained an undisputed leadership among the Tamils. His funeral rites on the Jaffna Esplanade constituted a spectacle that will never again be seen in Jaffna. He was a convinced and practising Christian to the end.)

ON Tuesday, the 26th instant at 10 p. m. Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayagam passed away at the Jaffna Hospital a month or so after a major operation had been performed on him. In the intervening weeks every one had been hoping that, though he had never regained consciousness during that time, he would somehow pull through. But a body wasted progressively because of a vicious ailment that had seized him some years ago refused to hold out any longer.

There have been many personalities with outstanding gifts in the Tamil Community, both in this century and the last, who had made their mark in public life and had been ornaments to their race. They had been respected and admired in their lives and are remembered today with gratitude. But it is true to say that hardly anyone has occupied the place in the community that Mr. Chelvanayagam did.

It was not with respect that Mr. Chelvanayagam was regarded but with reverence, amounting to veneration. And this attitude was evoked by one who, though he may have had them, never displayed the qualities expected of a leader in a democracy, and who in recent years was showing his bodily weakness only too obviously.

What were the reasons that prompted this attitude to Mr. Chelvanayagam on the part of the Tamil community? In the

first place, everybody knew of his utter dedication to the Tamil cause; they knew that he sought no popularity and was moved by no desire to promote either his own interests or those of his friends. Mr. Thiruchelvam had been his ward; and when on his retirement from Government Service after a brilliant career the present writer suggested to him that Mr. Thiruchelvam should be put into the Executive Committee of the party, he said, "Thiruchelvam should bide his time". Secondly, it was his resolution. If he had decided that a course was right he would go ahead with it. On one occasion the present writer suggested to him that once the Tamils had got back their own, the Hindu majority might start persecuting the Christian minority". "I know", he said, "but that does not mean I should not do what is right". He never lost heart when he was repeatedly betrayed by those with whom he negotiated for the acceptance of Tamil claims. Thirdly it was his integrity. It is easy to be honest in personal matters, when issues are clear and public pressure is practically absent; but politics is another matter. The issues are involved and complex and the pressures are great and the usual temptation is somehow to wriggle through by saying a word without meaning it and making a promise that cannot be fulfilled. Mr. Chelvanayagam was in the thick of all this for thirty years and kept himself spotlessly clean.

In discussions, others spoke eloquently, but at the end every one turned to him for his decision. He had ceased to be a mere leader and become an oracle. At public meetings, when the leaders came, there was clapping of hands and cheering; when he came they rose to their feet.

He leaves behind two legacies. The first legacy is the unity of the Tamil community which he personally forged. When he first entered public life sectarian cries were loud; when he ended his career, they could hardly be heard. We hope that the unity which he forged with dedication and perseverance will not be dissipated.

The second legacy is a legacy for the whole Island. It is the legacy of an utterly incorruptible life amid the clash of interests and the whirl of complicating pressures in public life.

S. J. V. CHELVANAYAGAM

(A MEMOIR — CONTRIBUTED TO THE
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE MAGAZINE)

I joined St. John's College, Jaffna, in May, 1913, in the Second Form (6th Std.). There were then three brothers of the Chelvanayagam family at the School; himself, his brother just junior to him, one class below me, and his youngest brother well below us, who died when he was still at school. Chelvanayagam was in the Junior Cambridge class, with my brother (Sam A. Sabapathy) two classes above me. His other classmates, whom I remember, were the late Rev. J. T. Arulanantham (then called Thiagarajah) and Archdeacon J. A. R. Navaratnam (then called Richard).

The chief way to attract attention at a school in those days was by being in the Cricket or Football team, and particularly by doing well in some capacity in them. The other way, though not a popular way, was by being Prefect; but mostly Prefects were also members of the one team or other or both. Chelvanayagam did not fulfill either of these conditions and so did not attract undue attention. But we were certainly aware of the three brothers (along with two brothers of the future Mrs. Chelvanayagam). He probably was not concerned with attracting our attention but was spending his time on his studies, which few of us were doing.

I, however, well remember the Senior Cambridge class of 1915. My brother may have become the Football Captain by then, but he certainly was in the team and was also wicket-keeper in Cricket. We had then an imposing array of teachers in the Higher forms; the Rev. Jacob Thompson, Messrs. T. H. Crossette and J. N. Vethavanam, the Rev. S. S. Somasundram and Mr. F. H. V. Gulasegaram. I well remember an event of that year in which Chelvanayagam figured. A "Sham Court", i. e. a dramatic performance of an Assize trial, was staged in which Mr. Chelvanayagam, I think, prosecuted and my brother, defended. The scene of the imaginary murder was laid in Mr. Chelvanayagam's own village of Tellipallai.

Thereafter, our paths, to my belief, hardly crossed each other for many years, though I did see him occasionally. He went to Colombo to continue his studies and did some teaching in various places. I did my studies and teaching in other places. He had been parted for a long time from his father, who was in Malaya. The mother and children had come to Jaffna early, for the education of the latter; and he, therefore, developed a great devotion to him. I was told that he paid him a visit in 1918; the father died in 1919. In later life he was very anxious to collect all the information he could about the father's pre-Malayan days; so I had to dig into our Diocesan records to supply him with the information. Finally, I informed him that there was an old gentleman at Vaddukoddai, who claimed to have been with his father when he died. Mr. Chelvanayagam paid him a visit and spent a long time with him getting all the details. I later learnt that this Hindu gentleman had conducted a Christian funeral for Mr. Chelvanayagam's father, there being no Christian priest at the time in Seramban. Afterwards he recounted for our benefit how he had done this; he had taken the body to the local Church, lit many candles and finding some books there (probably prayer books), read copiously from them and had sung some Christian songs which he had learnt in a Mission School in Jaffna. This is the manner in which Mr. James Valupillai's funeral service was conducted, a manner which probably has no parallel.

After his spell of teaching, Chelvanayagam entered the legal profession. In 1944 at the Fort Railway Station I heard that he had been appointed a K. C., which meant he must have done well in the profession. Much to my surprise, in years later, I discovered that he had a good knowledge of both spoken and written Sinhalese. On my inquiry as to how he had acquired it, he told me that during his legal career he was often pitted against H. V. Perera in Temple cases and, therefore, had found it necessary to study the language (It may be amusing to reflect that many who advocated "Sinhalese Only" twenty five years ago knew less of the language than he did).

When the first State Council under the Soulbury Constitution was to be inaugurated, Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam formed the Tamil Congress to fight for the rights of the Tamils. He had great difficulty in deciding on a candidate for Valikamam North and East. He had to choose between one who had distinguished himself in another field and Chelvanayagam, and consulted a mutual friend who said, "Choose Chelvanayagam, because as time goes on, Chelvanayagam will rise in people's esteem and the other will sink."

To choose a Christian for a campaign, that would be fought hard, was in those days a great risk; because till then there had been no parties and elections had been fought on the basis of genealogy, caste and creed. But in 1947, Mr. Ponnambalam was at the height of his influence and so under his aegis Chelvanayagam was elected. However, he soon broke away, but saw no reason to resign his seat, since he said it was he who had remained loyal to the aims of the party and not the leadership.

But the test came in 1952, when he had to stand on his own. In a distinctively Hindu religious meeting it is customary to open and wind up proceedings with an anti-phonal chorus, the leader chanting the first part and the audience responding with the second part; this is done thrice. This chorus is not done, for instance, in a Co-operative Society meeting. But a candidate fighting for his political future may well resort to it, if he has anything to gain by it; and this is what happened at the Election meetings in that constituency in 1952. Even otherwise, the whole campaign was given the colour of a religious struggle. Mr. Chelvanayagam was defeated; he carried on a protracted legal battle on a technical point, in which also he suffered the same fate.

This defeat was Mr. Chelvanayagam's making. With his devoted lieutenant, A. Amirthalingam, he began to gather, to start with, about 10—12 people, mostly young men, under margosa trees in villa e after village, and address them on the Tamil cause. He was creating a hard core. His political adversary was in the meantime a Minister in Colombo; but the

hard core in Jaffna was increasing in size; the audiences began to grow to 20—30 and to still larger and larger numbers, till most people in each village had become a hard core. When the next election came, Chelvanayagam was ready; and his Party, termed the "Federal Party", captured most of the seats in the Northern Province and quite a number in the East.

During those days I used to meet him in the train going to Colombo; and since the idea of Federalism was new and not sufficiently understood, he used to explain its meaning to all and sundry and expound the possibility of "Deficit" provinces under the system becoming "Credit" provinces.

By now, however, the disease, which was to be his enemy for life, was beginning to get an increasing hold on him. It impaired his hearing and affected the mobility of his limbs. But, it in no way deterred him from launching his now famous "Satyagraha campaign" in 1961. He himself, however, was far from being well. I remember leaving the Jaffna Rest House after lunch one day at 12-30 p. m., and his arriving there at the time for his own meal. I returned at 3-30 p. m., and he was still at it. But the campaign met with a tremendous response both in the North and the East, till things reached such a pass that the Government decided to step in. An "Emergency state" was clamped down on the country and not merely the leaders of the campaign but even possible sympathisers were sent to an Internment Camp at Homagama. There were about 150 of them shut up there; and this included Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan — about whose sympathies with the movement there could hardly have been much ground.

Soon after arrival at the Camp, Mr. Chelvanayagam happened to develop a temperature. Government, unwilling to take any risk insisted on his being taken home, where, of course, he would be under house-arrest. He however, refused to go, leaving his companions in confinement, till finally the Police came and put him into a car and took him to Bambalapitiya. It was extremely difficult to gain admission in the Camp; but I managed to wangle it. Here, I was asked to persuade him to

leave for Britain to get surgical treatment for his disease. The Police arrangements at his house were peculiar; no outsider could get in; but from outside one could communicate with Mrs. Chelvanayagam, but not with Mr. Chelvanayagam. This, of course, was a farce; but both sides kept a straight face over it.

Mr. Chelvanayagam, however, would not desert his post, unless there was a written request from his colleagues. This meant my writing a letter to those in the Camp asking for such a request; and knowing that my letter would have to go through the censor, I composed a suitable communication with a strong literary flavour meant for the censor's eye, my message in the meanwhile being carried by word of mouth through Mrs. M. Thiruchelvam to the husband. The upshot was that I was entrusted with the unexpected responsibility of collecting the necessary funds; but I managed to transfer my responsibility to more suitable hands and within one week a sum of Rs 21,000 had been collected.

When Mr. & Mrs. Chelvanayagam were leaving for Britain, I went and had a prayer meeting for them in their house and presented Mr. Chelvanayagam with a copy of the New Testament of the "New English Bible", which had just then come out. After some weeks, we knew that an operation was coming on; but nobody knew the result when it had taken place. So, I was approached by some friends and asked to send a wire at their expense to a medical student in Edinburgh who was helping him, but whom I myself did not know. The reply came that the operation had been successful; and I had the satisfaction of communicating the news to the Press.

After the operation, when Mr. Chelvanayagam found that he could actually use his hands easily once again, he wrote me a letter, telling me that it was the first he had written with his own hand after many years. My family used to treasure that letter; but I find it missing from among my papers now. I wrote back that I would be at his house, when he got back, to hold a prayer-meeting of thanks-giving. I was at Ratmalana to

meet him when he arrived and the demonstrations of his followers were extremely noisy, with Mr. Alagakone M. P. for Mannar taking the lead. I held the Prayer-Meeting in the house; tears running down Mr. Chelvanayagam's cheeks all the time, while his followers were impatiently waiting to open up the flood-gates of their oratory.

It is a common temptation for a politician in a minority religious community to soft-pedal his own religion and fall into line, at least at certain points, with the religious practices of those of the major community. Mr. Chelvanayagam never succumbed to it. The meetings of the Federal Party were unusually held in the open space outside a Hindu Temple, in fact, the outer court of the temple. It is a venue that is most easily available, and to obtain which no formalities are required. It is a common practice at the end of any meeting in such a place for the Brahmin priests to go round distributing holy ashes to those present, especially to the leaders and for the recipients reverently to rub them on their foreheads. Those who were not Hindus could receive the ashes but not rub them on their foreheads; not Mr. Chelvanayagam, however, when they came to him, he would invariably say, "I am a Christian"; they would leave him alone and respect him all the more for it. As long as he was able, he would regularly attend the monthly Holy Communion Services at our Tamil Church in Colombo. It may cause some surprise to many to know that he was something of a connoisseur of Carnatic Music, and if the singing of any lyric deviated from the set tune he would easily detect it and point it out.

To speak about his "honesty" and "integrity" is to make a singularly inept comment. He lived in a world where no kind of dishonesty enters one's thoughts. Dishonesty consists in the procedure of transferring money from the pocket that belongs to the public to the pocket holding your own money. His transactions consisted of the opposite procedure of constantly transferring his own money into the pocket of the public. This procedure is of course commendable; but his interpretation of honesty could also take bizarre forms. He had once got some

campaign posters printed at a certain Press. The manager thinking it discourteous to send a bill to such a great man refrained from doing so for a long time, thinking that the money would come automatically. When finally the bill was sent, Mr. Chelvanayagam replied saying that he had already submitted the statement of his Election expenses to Government and, therefore, could make no further payment.

Because of the extreme puritanism of his views and his rather rigid interpretation of the implications of honesty, it might be imagined that he would have been politically naive. A Britisher once told me that this was exactly the mistake that Lord Reading, when he came out as Viceroy, made about Mahatma Gandhi ; but when he arrived, I was told "He found Gandhi a tough nut to crack". Chelvanayagam's mind was sharp and incisive, could get behind words and go straight to the heart of a problem. Once a gentleman from the Eastern Province questioned his right, as a Jaffna man, to speak for the Eastern Province. His reply was terse; "The Mudaliyar having entered Parliament on the ticket of the Federal Party has no right now to question my representative capacity", he said. He viewed every situation with a dispassionate eye and brought a cold and acute judgement on every issue at stake. He was, in fact, a supreme politician, both as a strategist and tactician, and taking a long-range view, knowing what to do and when and how to do it — in the interests of the Tamil cause. Because his cause seemed minor in the maelstrom of the struggles that engaged the attention of most people, his political acumen was not generally recognised.

Mr. Chelvanayagam had, of course, no axe of his own to grind, was unconcerned with praise and undeterred by blame. All his purpose was to promote the cause. To this he devoted all his efforts. Once naming two prominent personalities, he said, "They think that the task of a politician is like that of a lawyer; it is like that of an evangelist." An Evangelist is one who has a message, believes in it whole-heartedly, and in season and out of season is bent on promoting it with single-minded devotion. What he meant by his reference to the role

of a lawyer was that the latter spoke to a brief, depended on his ingenuity and merely desired victory on a particular occasion.

How Mr. Chelvanayagam looked upon his task was well-known to his followers. Therefore, we might have expected from them an attitude of admiration, respect and deference. But their attitude to him was not that of admiration or respect, it was an attitude of awe. Here he was discussing the same questions as they, having the same ultimate aims, but bringing to bear on them standards different from theirs and looking upon things from view-points different from theirs. So, they always felt that while he was among them, he was not of them, as if he had strayed from a higher and different sphere into theirs. All Colombo homes would usually be seething with political rumours; of intrigues, manoeuvres, manipulations and corruption in high places; but I found that he was mostly neither aware of them nor interested in them; such things were alien to the world in which he lived. So, while his lieutenant Amirthalingam continued to refer to him as "Chelva", the habit sprang up among his other colleagues of always referring to him in private conversations as "the Great One" and in public meetings as "The Father".

Transactions in the Party also reflected this attitude. When he wanted to advocate a cause, it was put forward without any recourse to rhetoric or any appeal to emotions; points may have had to be clarified, implications drawn out and details worked out; but it was understood that that course would be the programme adopted by the Party. When issues arose and there were arguments on either side, he would listen patiently, sum up and give his opinion; it was looked upon as a verdict. In later years, when points were put to him, a shake or nod of the head settled the matter. Once, when I was on holiday in Bandarawela, the Bishop of Colombo called me by phone and asked me to round up the important members of the Federal Party with a document which a Senator had submitted to him. One member harangued and another "laughed his guts out"; Chelvanayagam read through it carefully and shook his head. I knew the Party had spoken the final word.

After all, Mr. Chelvanayagam had himself been a lawyer, accustomed to speak on the one side or other of many cases. How then did he come to adopt such total devotion to one cause? At the Memorial Service, held in his home-Church at Tellipallai, a week after his funeral, I quoted the words of the Prophet Ezekiel, which God had spoken to him: "Son of man I have set thee a watchman over the house of Israel". So nothing else mattered; it was a God-given task which he could not disown; and to avoid which he could give no excuses; and nothing should deter him from carrying out his duty. I once asked him whether he realised that if the Tamils came into their own, there was a possibility of the Hindus persecuting the Christians. "I know", he said, "but that does not mean that I should not do what I know to be right". The fate of his own small community was not an argument against the Tamils getting their rights. It was as if a man jumping into a river to save somebody and was asked, "What will happen to your wife and children, if you are drowned?" and his replying, "My duty now is to save this drowning person".

Chelvanayagam has sometimes been called "the Gandhi of Ceylon"; but as compared with Chelvanayagam the Mahatma had a much easier task. In the first place, his struggle was a clear-cut one; here was a country, under his leadership, fighting for its freedom against an alien power, the issue was clear and easily intelligible. Chelvanayagam's struggle was an internal and complicated struggle; the issues were ill-defined-how far could he go and where should he stop? Secondly, though the Mahatma had to face 30, 40 thousand British bayonets, he had 300 million people behind him; Chelvanayagam had only a meagre community behind him, whose very right to be in this country has occasionally been questioned. Also, because of the fact that India's case was clear cut, the Mahatma had international opinion heavily, if not overwhelmingly, on his side. Chelvanayagam's case was hardly known to the out-side world and, therefore, he had no such support. It is, therefore, obvious that the Mahatma had every advantage over Chelvanayagam.

Looked at from one point of view, Chelvanayagam's political life was one of unrelieved failure. When first he tried to explain the meaning of Federalism, he was misinterpreted and laughed at. The Press (except for his own weekly paper (which was merely his echo) and all other agencies of mass media were always against him. In Parliament, except for a brief period, his part consisted merely in saying "No" to everything that was brought up; and the record of Parliament, as far as its own part was concerned, consisted in saying a "No" to every proposal or amendment of Mr. Chelvanayagam. The requests he made were turned down and the agreements he tried to reach with those in power, except in one or two matters, always fell through. Yet looked at from another point of view, herein lay his success. In spite of his utter apparent failure, he never gave up. The wind had blown consistently and with almost irresistible force; but the flame had not been quenched; it had hardly flickered.

What then was Mr. Chelvanayagam's achievement? About 450 years before the Christian era, the Carthaginian armies had invaded Italy and defeated the Romans in every battle; but Cincinnatus, the Roman Dictator, would not give up. And the Roman Senate passed a resolution thanking him, because "he had not despaired of the republic". The logic was, "If he did not despair, why should we?" The Tamils of Ceylon, in like manner, looked upon this gaunt and haggard man, stricken by disease, who could hardly walk and could hardly speak above a whisper, who through a life of continued failure and disappointment, yet had not despaired; and they asked themselves, the question, "If he did not despair, why should we?" This then is Chelvanayagam's achievement; that he has taught the Tamils of this country to believe in themselves.

(For a memorial volume on Chelvanayagam written in October 1977)

FR. X. S. THANI NAYAGAM

(1913—1980)

(Fr. Thani Nayagam was a person of legendary linguistic abilities, knowing fifteen languages well and having a working knowledge of another fifteen; but he devoted himself to promoting wider knowledge of Tamil through out the world. He held two Ph.D. degrees, one from Rome in Divinity and the other in Education from London. He was a lecturer in the Ceylon University on Education and was later Professor of Oriental Studies in Malaya.)

I have been asked to write a short appreciation to this volume of tributes dedicated to Father Thani Nayagam. I do so most readily, because Fr. Thani Nayagam was a close friend of mine (and somewhat related to me by a common uncle) and also because he was a person of whom every Tamil could be proud. In his death the Tamil world has lost one who has done it great service and, in the sphere in which he worked a person hard to replace.

I used to see him when he was teaching in Ceylon and also when he was teaching in Malaya, and of course after his retirement quite often. Many times have I told him that for the last 1000 years no one has done more for the Tamil language than he; in doing so I was not uttering words of flattery but words of sober truth.

The essence of Fr. Thani Nayagam's scholarship lay in the fact that he was a philologist and not a mere Tamil scholar. There are thousands of people who know more Tamil than he did. The reason that enabled him to make such signal contribution to Tamil was that he brought his vast philological scholarship to the cause of promoting Tamil.

Fr. Thani Nayagam knew many languages. So when he spoke about Tamil language and literature, people knew that here was a man who knew many of the world's languages but who still

was passionately devoted to Tamil. If a man know only one language and pleaded its cause, people would have put it down to mere fanaticism or said, "Sour grapes; he doesn't know anything else; so pleads for the only language he knows."

Here, on the other hand, was a man who could speak with authority to international gatherings and impress people with his points of view, because they would know that he was a highly cultured man with a wide background, not indulging in wild exaggerations (like saying certain Tamil books were written ten thousand years ago) but one who knew the histories of other languages and their linguistic rules, putting forward the case for a particular language. The word of such a man carried authority with world scholars.

Looking back on Fr. Thani Nayagam's life and work what may be considered his special contributions?

1) He discovered and published some rare Tamil books, unknown before, or known only by name like the two versions of *Thampiran Vanakkam*, *Flos Sanctorum* and the *Portuguese - Tamil Dictionary*.

2) He discovered the remains of Tamil culture in the archaeological remains and cultures of various countries of South East Asia.

3) He founded and, for many years, carried on a Journal of high standard, called *Tamil Culture* to which many scholars from many parts of the world contributed and which dealt with many questions of the relationship of Tamil to the rest of the linguistic world.

4) He also edited a book, called *Tamil Culture and Civilization*, which brought together in classic form the ideas of many international scholars on the place of Tamil in world culture.

5) By his travels and contacts with Tamil scholars in many parts of the world and of various nationalities, he deepened interest in Tamil.

6) He was also responsible for interesting many great Universities whose concern with Indology had been confined to Sanskrit studies, to making them include the study of Dravidology also in their curriculum.

7) He founded the International Tamil Conference, the first meeting of which was held, oddly enough, in Kuala Lumpur, simply because he happened to be Professor there. This and the subsequent conferences have brought together scholars from many parts of the world in their search for answers to various recondite questions which only philologists can raise.

Altogether, Fr. Thani Nayagam's chief contribution to Tamil lies in the fact that he has put Tamil on the world map; otherwise it might have remained a language known and spoken in the extreme South of India and certain areas in the small Island of Ceylon. It is to his credit that he has made known to the world, the antiquity, beauty and copiousness of Tamil. For this every Tamil should be proud of him and remain grateful to him.

(Reproduced from Tamilaaram May 1983)

BISHOP LAKSHMAN

(WRITTEN SOON AFTER HIS DEATH)

I well remember the numbed awe with which the news of the death of D. T. Niles was received in July, 1970. The news of certain other great Churchmen since then has also produced a stir of profound regret and sorrow. Compared with such occasions, the recent passing of Bishop Lakshman presents a striking contrast. The newspapers duly recorded the event; but any serious popular demonstration of grief has been strikingly absent. It almost seems that it was always taken for granted that should happen.

Why? To say that the attitude was due to any grudge or hostility to him is absurd. To say it was due to indifference to his personality is certainly not true. No one who has known him could have been hostile or indifferent to him.

The reason is that the idea that there could be a person like Bishop Lakshman always seemed to be too good to be true, when he was alive.

His obvious holiness which seemed to be written all over him; in spite of this his bubbling gaiety, the face lit up with an unflinching smile the invariable joke on his lips that could adjust itself to any situation — all this seemed too good to be true. If it was real, it was felt that it could not last.

He seemed to be like a magic web or silken gossamer that had floated into our ken and would float away anytime, a vision that might vanish anytime. People felt that they had no right to expect that it would last long enough for their satisfaction. And now the web has floated away, the Vision has vanished.

But what an enchanting vision it was, while it lasted! We can only be thankful to God that it was vouchsafed that we in our generation should have been privileged to see it. It may be that there will be no further Lakshman Wickremasinghes; but it was good that there was one Lakshman Wickremasinhe.

K. A. SELLIAH

1904—1983

(Mr. K. A. Selliah was Vice Principal of Jaffna College from 1938 to 1947 and Principal from 1947 to 1966. He combined efficiency with great acceptability.)

SO K. A. SELLIAH has finally quit what was the scene of his labours for 66 years. After a religious service of great beauty and solemnity, held in Ottley Hall (according to his wishes) and in the presence of a large gathering which had come to pay him its last respects, his body was borne reverently on the shoulders of his old students and former colleagues to its last resting place, by the side of his wife in the Vaddukoddai Church graveyard. He was within a few weeks of completing his 79th year at the time of his death.

There are many things which are commonplaces of knowledge about him, to the point of being proverbial. These should be recorded in histories and would be noted by generations that never knew him. It is not our primary purpose to stress these in an article which will be read mostly by those who knew him, but his histories of course, cannot afford to ignore them without ceasing to be history.

The first of these commonplaces which cannot be treated here but which may well be illustrated was his total obsession with the College. One such revealing incident is that once when dealing with many other papers, he had to give the full name of his wife and he had to send a peon home to find it. This is a well attested story. Nor did his obsession lapse when he retired. Long years after, he was watching a football match between our boys and those of St. Patrick's and we had lost. I went to see him and he was crying. I tried to comfort him by saying that after all it was a game between boys and victory and defeat were incidental to every match, but he refused to be comforted and insisted on saying "No, our boys played very badly". Stories like these illustrate his devotion to the College which in biblical words was a "love passing the love of woman".

A second point that is a commonplace of knowledge is that his partnership with Bunker (which lasted 28 years) was the best and brightest period in the 180 years or so of the history of this College. Though a daring thing to assert, I have assumed it in the history of the College that I am writing as beyond dispute and have hammered away on it time after time; and it will be generally agreed that I was right. How can we assume this, when there have been so many outstanding figures in the history of College? There was Daniel Poor, a great Scholar, but he lived a long ago and the Seminary of which he was a Head was a small affair. There was H. R. Hoisington, a great Scholar of Hinduism. But how much impact he had made here is not known, since according to written records his scholarship seemed to have blossomed out, chiefly after he had gone back to America. There was Samuel Howland, Principal of the College during the last decade of the nineteenth century, whose encyclopaedic knowledge attracted many students to the B. A. and Intermediate classes. The number of students he left behind was a hundred and fifty.

In this century there was John Bicknell who dominated the scene and whose presence almost covered the horizon. His Vice-Principal, Mr. J. V. Chelliah, a scholar and a public figure in his own right, was scarcely his partner. But apart from the fact that these men were individual figures, and never worked in substantive partnership with anybody else, they did not create a period of academic achievement, that the Bunker — Selliah partnership did. The reason is that in the Bunker — Selliah regime each complemented the other, during what he could do and the other could not. The result was a tremendous upsurge in academic excellence and corresponding popular prestige.

What was the role played by either? Bunker came from some of the best seats of learning of America and England and lent an air of grace and distinction to the place. Outsiders coming in were impressed with the sight of an American, who had been educated in Oxford sitting in the highest seat of authority. And what was Selliah's role? Bunker could have searched high and

searched low, he could not have found a better partner than Selliah. For Selliah loved work for its own sake, and threw himself into it with an almost religious fervour; he knew no fatigue; details did not disgust him, they were a challenge. He drove himself and others to see that every wheel, small or great, was turning without a hitch and that the whole machine was humming.

Such indefatigable and unremitting attention to details has one defect; it loses the distinction between the important and unimportant. A cow straying across the campus, or a boy throwing a ball of crumpled paper on the verandah would arouse on his part the same kind of indignation that others reserve for a breach of the Ten Commandments. This is a kind of mentality not of the ordinary men who do well in life and are accustomed to weigh the pros and cons of "the nicely calculated less or more". It is not of the mentality of business men or statesmen but of those who rise to be more than business men or statesmen.

Looking back on Selliah's work it cannot be said that Selliah was able to effect what he did by sitting in his office and issuing orders. Because it is after all the teachers, who teach and it is they who produce results; they could have let him down because of his undue strictness. I learnt only recently that a teacher once came to him when he was watering his garden in the evening and asked him for a day's leave because he was getting married the next day. "Why could'nt you have fixed it for the vacation?" he asked. "Sir, it has all been fixed" he replied him; because Hindus have to wait for auspicious months and auspicious days. "What time is the wedding?" asked Selliah. "Tomorrow night" said the teacher. "All right, come to class during the day and be at the wedding in the evening" was Selliah's final say.

If Bicknell or Harrison had said this, there would have been serious resentment about Western barbarians showing disrespect to local customs. In this case, it was peacefully obeyed, because it was known that he would have done it to his own son. It

was not co-operation that Selliah obtained from his teachers but respect ; it would have seemed almost unholy to disregard any request coming from him, because it was known that it always came with the highest intentions and inspired by the purest motives to promote the common weal.

Because Selliah was a teacher and administrator it was unavoidable that the greater part of the article had to be concerned with his activities in such capacities. But quite a few never studied under him nor taught under him, and after all, school hours last only from 9 a. m. or 4 p. m. Many people knew him as a man.

After School hours how did Selliah strike his friends? As a man, Selliah struck his friends as a simple-minded, pure-hearted person, guileless, without a trace of malice, hatred or envy against any one ; and possessed of a wonderful habit of forgetfulness. To me who was accustomed, during the latter years to go for long walks with him daily, it was a great boon to be able to repeat a story which I had related only two days previously to him ; it would be a new story. It was not merely that he could forget, he would not know most of the ordinary news of men and matters around him. The Rev. K. S. Jeyasingham told me that he once had occasion to travel with him from Vellore to Bangalore and told him ten or twelve things, all of which were commonly known in Jaffna, and he treated every one of them with surprise. Probably he had heard them before but they had not registered. Memory after all is a matter of interest. It is curious that he could remember the names of all his old boys, and to the last made it a point to attend the weddings and funerals of their relatives.

It is related that early in the year 1804 a few days after the death of Immanuel Kant, the great philosopher two Prussian soldiers, standing together, noticed a small spec of cloud in the blue sky overhead and one said to the other "It is the soul of Immanuel Kant going to heaven". Immanuel Kant was a man of blameless life. But is blameless life enough to get a man to

heaven. Though the soldiers did not know it, according to Kant it was; for to him God was simply the guarantor of Morality.

But according to our belief, one would require something more than morality. The great Augustine has said, "a true philosopher is a lover of God" Selliah was not only a man of blameless life but a lover of God. He read his Bible regularly and every Sunday morning and evening he could be found in the usual seat in the third row on the right hand side of the altar of the Vaddukoddai Church, and he was the chief source of income to the Anaicoddai Church. To him religion was deep and fundamental; not only did he merely lead a blameless life but he walked humbly before God

We are not called upon here to perform the presumptuous task of fixing his place in heaven. We are trying to fix his place in the calendar of our great men. We are of course not trying to assess his place as a teacher of Physics or as administrator; probably there have been far greater men than he in these respects in Jaffna. But taking his qualities as a man, all in all, what shall we say of him. To what category shall we assign him? Not using the term in an ambitious sense, in the community we know there is only one category to which we can assign him and one term which we can appropriately use of him. In our own calendar and history we have, we can do none other than call him a "saint".

BISHOP C. L. WICKRAMASINGHE

(Bishop Lakshman Wickramasinghe (1927—1983), Bishop of Kurunegalla from 1962 till his death was one of the most beloved personalities of his time, and was popular among all races of the Island. Though of aristocratic parentage, he identified himself closely with the common people. His death due to a heart attack in October 1983 caused great grief to many.)

DURING a long life and a close association with the religious Press, I have written many obituary articles. In these articles I have prided myself that I had in each case done a fairly careful analysis of the character of the deceased person, and pointed out what had really accounted for his (or her) prominence or the esteem he evoked.

This I cannot do in this case, because, in the first place, I feel it to be almost unholy to do it with one who was bound to me by the closest and most intimate ties and treat him as if he were a specimen in a zoological laboratory. And secondly—and this is a reason that will hold good for anyone who attempts it—the task defies performance. Bishop Lakshman's characteristics cannot be sorted out, and classified by any one. His impact was total; and the quality of his personality cannot be accounted for by this or that particular trait. And that personality was enchanting, almost mesmeric in its influence. It was incapable of analysis; it was there; seeming almost ethereal. You could not go beyond it.

What was the secret of his greatness? It was greatness. What was the secret of his goodness? It was goodness. There our attempt at analysis must stop. Nevertheless, since he was a Bishop for twentyone years, and had mingled in the affairs of men one can certainly make some remarks on him.

He was a holy person; the fact was so obvious that nobody could have thought of denying it. Nor could anyone ever have

thought that it was an artificial holiness, induced by wearing prescribed robes, and carrying out prescribed duties at prescribed times. It was as natural to him as his breathing and his living.

He was a cultured person—Oxford was written all over him. But he seemed to be almost ashamed of it, as if it would cut him off from the rest of his countrymen. So, he tried to disguise it. His nieces and nephews once said to him “Uncle, you speak Sinhalese like an Englishman and English like a Sinhalese”, This meant that he had seen through his attempt at disguise.

However, if his culture was essentially British, he made a sincere, sustained and whole-hearted attempt to revive and develop Sinhalese culture. So, he insisted on doing his (Sinhalese) services in the Cathedral chorally, as the Buddhist form of worship is done in the villages. His Cathedral congregation was urban and accustomed to an anglicised mode of worship. His point was to make it clear that the national culture had come to stay and that it was high time for his congregation to realise it and fall in line.

Wedded as he was to Sinhalese culture, he was, however, aware that there was another culture and tradition also in the Island and the people who adhered to them wanted them to be preserved. He once told me. “If I were in your position I would take up the same stand that you do”. On one occasion he told me that he was inviting two eminent Sinhalese gentlemen to dinner and wanted me to put the Tamil case to them. I refused to have anything to do with such a task; but the dinner was held and the two gentlemen came; and for fully half an hour he put forward the Tamil case to them with a fervour and eloquence that I could not have commanded. He was not insincere, nor would he have thought he was practising an act of generosity to me. He saw that there was a Tamil case and put it forward as forcefully as he could.

I hear after the recent Riots, he came to Jaffna, but avoided seeing me, as he thought it would be embarrassing. If he had come, I would have given him a piece of my mind, and he would have entirely approved of what I said.

He moved with the high and low and treated them equally. He could easily be an aristocrat among the aristocrats and be the humblest among the humble, and be so without a shadow of patronage. When people came to him for help, if the request was legitimate, he would go to the utmost length "to do the needful". Petty rules and regulations mattered nothing to him, and red-tape were treated as if they did not exist.

I moved on the closest and most intimate terms with him, and often stayed with him, on my way to some other place, and treated his house as my own. Some years ago I was going to Kandy for an operation, having stayed with him for a day or two. He was not at home; but I picked up one of his blankets and packed it with my belongings. A servant came running and said the master would object. I decided the occasion called for an act of supreme bluff and said sternly to the interpreter, "Tell him that whatever belongs to Lakshman belongs to me, and whatever belongs to me belongs to him." It paid off. Lakshman might have balked at such a wholesale mutual transfer of goods in such a summary fashion, but he would have entirely approved of my bluff.

A Viceroy of India in the last century once said to his entourage, "Why does the Church make so much of Heber (Reginald)? What did he do?" and one of them said, "Your Excellency, it was not for what he did, but for what he was".

I do not know what Lakshman achieved; but that he lived among us for some years was a privilege granted to us. What a difference it made when he came into a room! One could feel that a benign presence had come among us. What a radiance he shed wherever he went! It was what the Bible calls "the beauty of holiness". I do not envy the generations that will not know him.

(The Churchman October 1984)

THE END

