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FOUNDERS OF MODERN CEYLON (SRI LANKA)



EMINENT TAMILS

THE PIONEERS — Part I

THE FOUNDERS — Part II

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Volume I

V. MUTTU CUMARA SWAMY B.A., M.A., A.S.

Founders of Modern Ceylon
(SRI LANKA)

EMINENT TAMILS

Vol I. Parts I & II

THE PIONEERS

THE FOUNDERS

FOUNDERS OF MODERN CEYLON (SRI LANKA)

EMINENT TAMILS

Volume I. PARTS I & II

by

V. MUTTU CUMARA SWAMY

author of "A Biographical Study of Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar",
"C. W. Thamotharampillai",
"Tamil Sages and seers of Ceylon",
"Three Dramas of Tagore" (in Tamil) etc.

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This series of Pen-sketches
is dedicated
to the Youth of our Motherland
SRI LANKA (Ceylon)
in the hope that they will
keep fresh in their hearts
the great ideals
cherished by their ancestors

The Saiva Prakasa Press,

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A Message

to the present generation and its heir
What is nation-hood?

"Mere occupation of land and living to eat, drink and be merry is not nationhood. its principal feature is deep attachment to a glorious past and the preservation of its precious memories and possessions, by which a corporate self-consciousness is kept alive and invested with a peculiar dignity. It is this mental attitude that will successfully resist the invasion of foreign ideals and degrading practices."

Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan

(Memorandum to the Donoughmore
Commission)

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PREFACE

Mr. V. Muttucumaraswamy has done a great service to the Ceylonese nation by producing his work entitled "Founders of Modern Ceylon — Eminent Tamils".

In this work, of which only parts one and two are published, he has given the biography and the works of the leading Tamils who built the Ceylonese nation.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and the great savant of Oriental culture, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy are some of the personalities dealt with. These parts are to be followed by the biographies of many prominent Ceylon Tamils who have left their imprint on the sands of time.

A historian who wishes to write a work on the British period in Ceylon will find this work very useful.

The publication of this work is most opportune at a time when the gap between the two major communities is widening.

The younger generation of Sri Lanka should learn the contributions made by these countrymen who belonged to different ethnic and cultural strains to the growth of Colonial Ceylon to manhood. I commend the work to all scholars.

"Leelasthan"
52, Fifth Lane,
Colombo-3

H. W. Thambiah,
Q.C., B.Sc., LL.B., Ph.D., LL.D. (London)

FOREWORD

Sri Lanka owes a great deal to many Tamil leaders who have helped in the foundation and building up of modern Ceylon. Mr. V. Muthu-Coomara Swamy, in his recent publication "Founders of Modern Ceylon - Eminent Tamils" deals with the contribution of 15 eminent Ceylon Tamils in the political, social, religious and cultural fields.

Part I begins with Arumugampillai Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar, the First Tamil member of the Legislative Council. It contains a valuable account of Sir Muttucomaraswamy, the first person who being neither a Christian or a Jew was admitted Barister of London. He was also the first knight in Asia. As a member of the Legislative Council he fought for social reforms and championed the Buddhist cause.

Part II assesses the contribution of these founders of the political and cultural freedom — Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy. The author has dealt at length (56 Pages) on Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan as a national political leader, as an eminent educationist, as a philosopher and as a Tamil Scholar. He has established that Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was the greatest National Champion of the people of Ceylon in the last quarter of the 19th Century and the first three decades of the 20th Century.

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the Champion of the Reformed Legislature and the father of the Ceylon University Movement, has been portrayed as a scholar, statesman, administrator and patriot who was held in high esteem as a national leader.

Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy, the Ceylon scholar of international fame, is shown as a nationalist in the cultural sphere who realised the intimate links between the art, the culture and religion of the people and who interpreted the East to the West.

Part III of the book gives biographical sketches of nine successors of the six eminent founders and pioneers of modern Ceylon.

This publication is very welcome in the present day context, as it gives a clear picture of the significant contributions made by the Ceylon Tamils to the political, social, economic, educational, religious and cultural development of Sri Lanka. Mr. V. Muthu Coomaraswamy deserves every encouragement for his attempts to enlighten the reading public on the distinct role played by eminent Ceylon Tamils in shaping the destinies of our country for the last 200 years.

University of Ceylon,
Peradeniya.

Professor S. Vumanantha,
M.A.(Cey.), Ph.D.(Lond.)

NOTE BY AUTHOR

On July 11th 1972, Ceylon has become a Republic within the Commonwealth nations assuming its old name Sri Lanka.

It is nearly a quarter of a century since Ceylon attained Independence. It is sad to find that generation is growing up in ignorance of the great names of those Pioneers who made significant contributions to the social, political, economic, cultural and religious advancement of the Island. The Education of the youth of Ceylon would be incomplete without some knowledge of such men and their achievements. "The history of the world" remarked Carlyle, "is the biography of great men; and no great man lives in vain." "Nations are made by artists and poets not merely by traders and politicians" wrote Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy. This is also true of Ceylon and those eminent Tamils who have been makers of history in different spheres.

There have been very few biographical sketches of Ceylon Tamils, either in Tamil or English. We find the Tamil Plutarch by S. Casie Chetty 1859, which includes a few sketches, the "Pavalar Charithra Deepakam" [Galaxy of Tamil Poets] (in Tamil) 1886 by J. R. Arnold, which includes more lives of Ceylon writers than the previous one, "Eelamandala Pulavar Charithram" [A concise history of Ceylon Tamil Poets] (in Tamil) by A. Mootootambipillai in 1914, "Men-makkal Charithram" [Tamil worthies of Ceylon] (in Tamil) by Pandit Ratnaswamy Aiyar, 1930, "Elanaddu Pulavar Charithram" [A history of Ceylon Tamil Poets] (in Tamil), by Ganesha Aiyar, 1939, "Pulavar Men-makkal" [A history of Tamil Poets in Ceylon] (in Tamil) 1967, by Kanapathipillai.

In the present work **Founders of Modern Ceylon**
EMINENT TAMILS Volume I (Parts I—III). We
present biographical sketches of three pioneers of
the nineteenth century (Part I) of three founders of
the political and cultural freedom of our land (Part II),
and nine of their successors; thus we present fifteen
Tamil outstanding personalities.

Those who would like to know What the Tamils
have contributed to the various spheres of progress
of Ceylon, will it is hoped, find an answer in this
and the volumes to follow.

Great is the country which honours its great
men. I am deeply grateful to Dr. H. W. THAM-
BIAH Ph. D (Lond): Retired Judge of the Supreme
Court of Ceylon, President of the International Asso-
ciation of Tamil Research and Author of Laws and
Customs of the Tamils of Ceylon, Laws and Customs
of the Tamils of Jaffna etc etc for his invaluable
Preface and my sincerest gratitude to Dr. S. VITHIA-
NANTHAN Ph. D Professor of Tamil, University
of Ceylon, An author of several books on Tamils
and their Culture for his appreciative FOREWORD.

I take this opportunity to thank those who have helped
me to produce this book. I like to thank in particular
Mr. S. DURAIRAJASINGAM, Author of "A Hundred
Years of Ceylonese in Malaysia and Singapore", Homage
to Ananda Coomaraswamy "Thought Gems on Ananda
Coomaraswamy" and "A New Planet in my ken"

The Author apologises for some of the printer's
errors that have crept in as direct supervision of
the printing of this book was not possible.

Forest Hill School,
Dacres Road,
London S. E. 23
November 20, 1973

FOUNDERS OF MODERN CEYLON

Eminent Tamils

Part-I

THE PIONEERS

1

Arumugampillai Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar

(1784 — 1836)

Coomaraswamy was born at Manipay in the year 1784. His father was Arumugampillai. He came from an aristocratic family. Coomaraswamy established his home in Colombo at Chekku Street which was at that time a residential quarter of the well-to-do.

Coomaraswamy was appointed a Mudaliyar¹ of the Governor's Gate in 1805. He was the first Tamil Member of the Legislative Council in Ceylon - the first assembly of its kind² in the East which was

1 The high officers of State were dignified with the title of Mudaliyar. They formed (in former times) the household personal attendants on the great kings.

— The Tamil Antiquary 1910, Page 28.

2 Forty Years in a Crown Colony. Vol. II. Page 164 and 165.

— Life of Sir Richard Morgan.

formed as a result of the Colebrook and Cameron Reforms in 1833. It was held in high estimation by English statesmen. It met first on October 1st 1833.

In the course of his duties as Mudaliyar and Chief Interpreter to Government, Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar was in constant contact with both Governor Brownrigg (1812 - 1822) and Sri Vikrama Raja Sinha, King of Kandy (1798 - 1815) who was deposed in 1815. It may be well to recall that Sri Vickrama Raja Sinha was the last of the Kings of Ceylon. He was a king of the Nayakka dynasty who ruled in South India. This dynasty was an offshoot of the Hindu Vijaya Nagar Tamil kings. The Kandyan Convention was signed both in English and Tamil in 1815. Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar contributed not a little to alleviate the trials of the deposed king and family in their transition from monarchy to exile in Vellore.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar did yeoman service as a Tamil Translator in connection with the Pearl Fisheries.

At the close of the administration of General Brownrigg, he gave Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar a gold medal and inscription in 1819 as a token of his deep appreciation. The Mudaliyar served under Sir Edward Paget who was Governor from 1822 to 1824.

Governor Burnes who was Governor of Ceylon from 1824 to 1831 was equally impressed with Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar. He presented him with a beautiful gold-headed Malacca cane bearing the English arms as a token gift on the occasion of his

being elected as the Head of the non-Christian Tamils in Colombo.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar identified himself heart and soul with the movement for the abolition of slavery initiated by the Chief Justice Mr (later Sir) Alexander Johnston, and his name appears amongst those who petitioned the Prince Regent of the United Kingdom for the Emancipation of slaves of Ceylon in 1816.³

During Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar's period, Ceylon was a crown colony. Its Governors were looked upon with awe and majesty just as the kings of old. The Governor presided over the sitting of Legislative Assembly which was arranged like a horse shoe.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar was a well read man in Tamil classics. He had a Crest of arms of an elephant's head with the words of Gandkari (Sanskrit) "Yato Dharma Stato Jaya", the meaning of which is "where there is virtue there is victory".

The crest and motto was subsequently used by his only son, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, his grandson, Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy, and his cousins, Sir Ponramba'am Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunasalam and his others descendants.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar married Visalachy. Although at first they lived at Chekku Street, they purchased a house at Amal Thottam, Mutwal and resided there later.

³ Annex to Regulation No. 9 of 5th August 1818.

Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar died on November 7th, 1836. Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, who was Governor of Ceylon (1831 - 1837), remarked on November 7th, 1836.⁴

"Since I last had the honour of meeting the members of the Legislative Council we have sustained a severe loss by the death of Mr. Coomaraswamy one of our native members. The conduct and capacity of that lamented gentleman are too well-known and appreciated by those whom I now address to render it necessary for me to offer any observations upon the subject beyond the expression of my sincere regret."

He was succeeded in the Legislative Council by his son-in-law Edirmannasingham Mudaliyar from 1846 to 1861.

His children were Muttu Coomaraswamy (son) and Sellachi (daughter) who became the wife of Ponnambalam Mudaliyar - the Founder of the Ponnambalavanesar Temple at Kochikadde, Colombo, Ceylon and the mother of three illustrious sons, Coomaraswamy, Ramanathan (Sir), Ponnambalam and Arunachalam (Sir Ponnambalam).

⁴ Governors Speeches, Vol. I of Ceylon. Pages 23 & 24.

2

Arunasalam Ponnambalam Mudaliyar

(1814 — 1887)

The greatness of a land cannot be measured by its material prosperity, but its culture has to be taken into account. An important aspect of its culture is evidenced by architecture and sculpture. It is the good fortune of the city of Colombo that it has a temple which is an excellent specimen of the best Dravidian architecture. That is the Ponnambalavar (Sivan) Temple — the only one in Ceylon built in granite stone.

The temple was originally built in brick by Arunasalam Ponnambalam Mudaliyar. The first consecration ceremony took place on the November 17th, 1857. It has been subsequently enlarged and rebuilt by his successors. It has a new Pyramidal

(Raja Goparam) now. Many visitors from the West have remarked on the workmanship in the temple.

The history of the Tamils in Colombo may without difficulty be traced back for at least one hundred and seventy-five years. The earliest family to achieve distinction in the metropolis was that of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar, and his son-in-law Ponnambalam Mudaliyar.

Their ancestors were from Manipay. It is said that a noble man, Mana Mudaliyar, came from Thondai Nadu (a part of the Cholian kingdom which included Madras) and came to North Ceylon and settled at Manipay, during the reign of Pararajasegaran, who reigned at Jaffna roughly in the 15th century.

Ponnambalam's father was Arunasalam — his great-great grand father, Mathar Kathirkama Kanakar who was descended from Mana Mudaliyar.

Ponnambalam's mother was Thengam. Ponnambalam was born in 1814 at Manipay. When Ponnambalam was sixteen (in 1830) he was sent to Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar of Governor's Gate to Colombo. Ponnambalam was brought up like a son by Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar and his wife Visaladchi. Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar had no children at that time Ponnambalam lived at Chekku Street, then a residential quarter of the well-to-do. The School which Ponnambalam was sent to study Eng-

lish was a Regimental School run by Mr. Mackenzie, an Englishman at Fort. Ponnambalam studied English there and Tamil at home privately Sir Edward Barnes who was Governor of Ceylon (1824 — 1831), visited the School (possibly in 1831) saw Ponnambalam's English writing and remarked on its excellence.

Ponnambalam never became very proficient either in English or Tamil, but the art and skill he showed in managing men and affairs was remarkable. He served in the Colonial Secretary's Office and also took to trade.

It was the Europeans who ran the export and import business in spices, coconut, oil, coffee and beer. Coffee business was in the peak. The circulation of Ceylon in the poor and profit in trade scanty. The exports of coffee in 1833 amounted to 2900 cwts. But then by 1847 that had shot up to 174,000 cwts. The volume of business had increased seven-fold.

Ponnambalam had an intuitive inclination towards business and made his fortune in it. He was a private Banker, as there were no private banks at that time. As a private banker, Ponnambalam had as his clients men such as George Turnour, who was a Pali scholar and translated the Mahavamsa into English, Phillip Wode House, the Government Agent of the Western Province, Sir Anthoni Oliphant, the Chief Justice and Torrington, the Governor of Ceylon.

Ponnambalam was appointed as a landing waiter and searcher by the Customs Department, at £ 145/- an year and having proved his integrity there, he was appointed Cashier of the Colombo Kachcheri in 1845. This post was formerly held by his brother-in-law, Edirmannasingham Mudaliyar, who was a Member of the Legislative Council from 1846 – 1861.

In February 1847 Ponnambalam was appointed Deputy Coroner for the Gravets of Colombo. On April 9th, 1847 he was also appointed Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate by Sir Colin Campbell – the Governor of Ceylon. This honour was the highest, next to the Maha Mudaliyar under the power of the government to bestow. In October 1847 Ponnambalam Mudaliyar was appointed a Justice of the Peace with the powers of a Magistrate.

Sir Emerson Tennent, who was then Colonial Secretary, expressed appreciation of the Mudaliyar's services on February 13th, 1848 Lord Torrington, the Governor, also expressed his appreciation to Ponnambalam on July 22nd, 1848.

Ponnambalam Mudaliyar was also made Native Revenue Assistant to the Government Agent (Western Province) in 1848 – a difficult period in Ceylon history. This was admitting him to the Civil Service proper, seventh heaven of officialdom at that time. But the Authorities in the Colonial Office in England did not see eye-to-eye with the

local Authorities and did not confirm this appointment.

The Builder of the Great Temple

At this stage worldly honours became distasteful to Ponnambalam Mudaliyar's mind. He yearned to visit the great Hindu temples of South India.

In January 1850 Ponnambalam Mudaliyar chartered a sailing vessel at Colombo and sailed Cape Comorin where the family party worshipped at the Kanya-Kumari Temple.

Kanya Kumari Munai or Cape Comorin is sacred to Hindus because of the Hindu temple of Kanya Kumari Amman which stands there and is the meeting place of the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. Here the sun appears to rise and set in the same sea.

Ponnambalam Mudaliyar and his party proceeded by easy stages to Thiruchendur Palayang Kottai (Palam Cottah) Alwar-Tirunelvely, Thiruparam Kunram, Madura, Alagar Kovil, Alagar Malai, Varali Malai, Tiruchchirapalli, KandorGauri Sangu Muham, Sri Rangam, Tanjore, Thiruvai Aru, Vaidyesvaran Kovil. Negapatam (Naga-pattinam) Nagur, Vedaraniyam, (Pt. Calimere) Koddai Karrai, Rames-

waram, Kandamadana Parvatham, and back to Ceylon through Jaffna. Wherever the Mudaliyar and his party went, they were received with the music of "Nagaswaram", Carnatic music and the dancing of nautch girls. About a hundred years ago this was the customary way of receiving kings, chieftains and prelates.

A few years afterwards, Ponnambalam Mudaliyar's wief Sellachchi, the daughter of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar died on September 8, 1854, and he tendered his resignation from his job. After this event the Mudaliyar's mind was fully bent on building a granite temple for Shiva with monolithic pillars on the model of the various shrines that he had seen in the Pandyan and Chola countries in South India.

The Mudaliyar at first built a sanctuary in his house and performed "Bala Yanthra Pooja" (this was the "Yantra" which was later placed under the statue of the Sivakamy Amman) in the temple. He bought a piece of land at Kochchikadde on which there was an ancient temple for Kali. He employed architects from South India and laid the foundations of the Ponnambalavaneswarar Temple on an auspicious day in 1857.

The first consecration ceremony (Kumba-bishekam) was performed for Sri Ponnambala Vaneshvarar and Sri Sivakami Amman on November 12, 1857. At the entrance to this temple there is framed a copper plate which records this event. Above this plate hangs a photograph of Ponnambalam Mudaliyar.

There was a Ceylon Saiva Maha Sabai, an Association for the preservation and propagation of Hinduism, attached to this temple, but it has ceased to exist several decades ago. The President in 1889 was P. Coomaraswamy his eldest son who was one of its founders.

The centenary of Ponnambala Vaneswarar Temple was celebrated magnificently on November 27, 1957. It was celebrated by the late Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva (Ponnambalam Mudaliyar's grandson) and Mr. Somasundaram Mahadeva (a great grandson) who were trustees of the temple at that time.

Ponnambalam Mudaliyar's wish of completing this temple in granite was fulfilled by his son Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and his successors. The granite structure was started in 1906.

A new Pyramidal (Raja Gopuram) has been built at a cost of about a lakh of rupees and the ceremonial crowning of this Gopuram took place on the December 6th, 1967

3

Sir C. Muttu Coomaraswamy

(1834 — 1879)

Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy enjoys the distinction of being the first person who being neither a Christian nor a Jew, was admitted a Barrister of London¹ as well as the first knight in Asia.²

His father Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar was the first Tamil Representative in the Legislative Council of Ceylon (1833 - 1836).



Sir C. Muttu Coomaraswamy

-
1. London Times, 12th August 1874.
 2. Homage to Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy by Thurai Rajasingham, Page 36, citing London & China Express; July 1874.

Early Life

Muttu Coomaraswamy was born in Amait-todam, Mutwal, Colombo in 1834 and was educated at the Colombo Academy (later called the Royal College). He had studied besides English and Tamil, Sinhalese and Pali, Latin and Greek. He won the much coveted Turnour prize for the best student. The prize was later to be won by his nephew, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the latter's son Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva and the latter's son, Mr. Balakumar Mahadeva - a unique record of academic distinction for four generations.

After leaving the Academy, Muttu Coomaraswamy was appointed to a writership in the Civil Service, but after a short spell of service he resigned and joined the legal profession in Ceylon. He was apprenticed as an Advocate under Mr. (afterwards Sir) Richard Morgan, who was to become the Queen's Advocate and Puisne Justice of the Supreme Court of Ceylon.

In 1862 Mr. Muttu Coomaraswamy was nominated to represent the Tamils in the Legislative Council of Ceylon. He succeeded his brother-in-law Swaminathan Edirmanna Singham Mudaliyar who was Tamil Representative of the Legislative Council from 1846 - 1861.* Mr

* Jaffna History, A. Mootootambipillai. page 132, 3rd edition, 1938.

Muttu Coomaraswamy was member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon from 1862 - 1879 — the year of his death.

In 1862 Muttu Coomaraswamy left for England where he was to blaze new trails. He was admitted a member of Lincolns Inn on July 10, 1862, and called to the bar in 1863. He was well-known in the salons of Paris and London and moved in the highest circles. Among his friends were Mr. Monkton Milnes, later the first Lord Houghton, Palmerston and Disraeli (afterwards Lord Beaconsfield). Disraeli thought highly of (Sir) Muttu Coomaraswamy. He refers in an unfinished novel which was published after his death to Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy under the name of "Kusinara". Lord Houghton writing of Sir M. Coomaraswamy said:

"I held him in great esteem and he has never received due credit for the energy with which he opened the Bar of England to all Eastern subjects of the Empress of India".

(In an appendix we reproduce what Lord Houghton thought of Muttu Coomaraswamy and three letters of M. Coomaraswamy to Lord Houghton.)

Lord Brougham who was responsible for many legal reforms in the United Kingdom, was

of great help in surmounting obstacles faced by him in being admitted to the English bar.

The Ceylon Patriot of 1864 had an interesting item of news about Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy who was then in the United Kingdom.

"On December 8, 1863, Muttu Coomaraswamy was presented to the Queen [Victoria] at an audience by Earl John Russel in order that he might deliver a book which he had received permission to dedicate to her Majesty - an English translation of the Tamil Drama Harischandra [sic] the Martyr of Truth."

In the Dedication to the above mentioned book, 'Arichandra', Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy wrote:-

To

Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria
Madam,-

The honour of dedicating a book to your Majesty has been sought, for the first time, by one of those millions of Orientals over whom You have been declared the first British Empress, and to whom by the proclamation last issued under the sanction of your august name, you have accorded a charter of rights which opens up to them new careers of usefulness and happiness.

Let it be not to commemorate events such as these, great as they undoubtedly are, nor, in verity, is it from being dazzled by the lofty eminence which Your Majesty occupies as the sovereign of one of the mightiest empires the world has seen, that I have solicited the distinction of this dedication; but because it has been my heart's wish to leave though but a fleeting record of the unbounded admiration which the many virtues adorning your character have inspired in the minds of all, both natives of these realms, and foreigners to them; as, also of the brilliant example which Your Majesty has set in Your own person to indicate, not only to Your successors, but indeed, to all the magnates of the earth, that their best title to govern men consists in their submitting themselves to be governed by the dictates of Piety, Morality, and stern and unswerving Truth.

Your Majesty's
Most Obedient Servant
Muttu Coomara Swamy

The Atheneum,
London,
November, 1863

This play is divided into five acts. The first act has nine scenes. The second act has one scene; the third act has fourteen scenes; the

fourth act has three scenes and the fifth act has eight scenes. This play has Notes and an Appendix.

The Play "Arichandra"

In Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's Introduction to "Arichandra" (1863) he wrote:-

Page VI

The Hindus in truth appear to have cherished a peculiar leaning for displays of historic talent; and, led by their ardour for theatrical representation, not only have they ransacked their ancient legends for subjects, but, not content with the immense field which these offered, they have also made their philosophy and metaphysics subservient to the same purpose. Thus the Praboda Chandrodaya of "Rice of the Moon of intellect", is, like many others, a purely philosophical play, in which the different faculties of the human mind, as analysed by Indian sages, are made the principal actors, its learned author embracing the opportunity to instruct Orientals on such abstruse subjects as the origin of man's misery and the means of redeeming his enslaved soul."

x

x

x

Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy served as a Member of the Legislative Council during the period of administration of the Government of Ceylon by:-

Major General O'Brien (1863-1865)
 Sir Hercules Robinson (1865-1868)
 Major General Hodgson (Officer administering the Government 1868-1869)
 Sir Hercules Robinson (1869-1872)
 Sir William Henry Gregory (1872-1877)

There were many social changes that were undertaken by the Government during the periods. One was the inauguration of the Kandyan Marriage Ordinance of 31st December 1860 — which effected a social and moral revolution in the Kandyan provinces.

Says Sir Richard Morgan as quoted in his biography "Forty Years in a Crown Colony", page 73 (by William Digby) :-

"Mr. Coomaraswamy was indignant that an amended ordinance was necessary. He felt it was his duty to state the Ordinance of 1859 should serve as a warning against hasty and ill considered legislation He also availed himself of that opportunity of a sophism propounded somewhere that the unofficial members of this Council were

irresponsible members while the officials were the really responsible members of the Council. Mr. Coomaraswamy said that only non-registration should be made penal and to legitimise past issue "

Mr. Coomaraswamy opposed Ordinance No. 2 of 1846 to provide for the Management of Buddhist Vihares and Devalas in the Kandy provinces; he announced that he was the voice of the Buddhist priests. When Sir Richard Morgan introduced the Ordinance Defining and Regulating all service tenures Mr. Muttu Coomaraswamy opposed this clause by clause*. Coomaraswamy charged Sir Richard with making this Ordinance a pretext for overthrowing the Buddhist Religion (Here we see him as a Champion of Buddhism, since at that time there were no Buddhists in the Legislative Council, the Sinhalese member being a Christian).

Sir Richard Morgan, quoted in "Forty Years in a Crown Colony" by W. Digby, Vol. II, (Page 112), Amendment of the 1871 Gansabhawa Ordinance :-

"Of the debate in the Legislative Council which accompanied the second reading of this measure, much need not be said, save that the Ordinance had not many

* Life of Sir Richard Morgan, Vol. II. Pages 73 & 74

friends on the unofficial side of the House. It was supported with bated breath by Sir Coomaraswamy Tamil member, who curiously enough, in the following passage uses language almost identically the same with that employed at Oxford in the same year and at much about the same time by Sir Henry Maine (author "Ancient Law" and several other books) Sir Coomaraswamy said:-

"It is not generally known that the mainstay and support of the form of Indian communal Government, whether in town or village, was the caste system. Gansabhawa or Panchayats flourished because Caste flourished and they declined when Caste declined. What bound small communities together in those days was the very principle which weakened the Hindus as a Nation. There are relics of the system to be witnessed even at present times and in Ceylon. Amongst the Indian settlers in Colombo there is self-government in full vigour. The Chetties call the Association by which such functions are exercised, the "Nakaiam". Every Sunday night it meets in one of the temples and disposes of not simply such paltry suits as this bill deals with, but cases of importance which would otherwise be dealt with by our district courts. And what enables this Association to carry out its

decrees? It is the caste of the Chetties. If either the plaintiff or the defendant will not abide by the decree pronounced the suppression of false litigation, communal self-government, the employment of natives as Magistrates, and the administration of Justice in a prompt, inexpensive and simple way, and on the spot itself by men best acquainted with the subject and the peaceable settlement of disputes, are most materially interfered with. It further proposes to disunite things which in my opinion do not admit of a division. I should not also forget that it is not fair and just to the old measure to call its efficiency into question so soon after its enactment."

Mr. Coomaraswamy did not always concur with the Government. When the Coffee Stealing bill was introduced (It was the buying and not the selling of coffee which was prohibited; it was the habitual receiver against whom the enactment was directed) Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy was in England. Says Sir Richard Morgan (in W Digby, "Forty Years of Crown Colony Rule in Ceylon," Page 158):-

"Mr. Coomaraswamy made most strenuous efforts to sanction being accorded to the above ordinance but did not succeed. It is very probable, he adds "that he

would have succeeded, but Mr. Birch, the Colonial Secretary arrived in London".

x x x

On another occasion on the discussion of a motion for curtailing the period of the Session in December 1872, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy said:-

(Sir. Richard Morgan, op. cit., pp. 164 - 165)

"The Ceylon Legislative Council, created in 1833 was the first assembly of its kind formed in Asia. There is no more important institution than this council. Whatever be the estimation in which it is held by the Official or Un-official community here, I know that it is held in high estimation by English statesmen, who look to it as the centre of much good. And on the extension of English liberalism, as involved in the establishment of Colonial Councils, even Lecky the historian, has many a thrilling period. It will be a disgrace, therefore, that in a British dependency any misunderstanding should prevent the full development of liberal institutions of which Englishmen are so proud that they have conferred them on us and of which the natives of this country should be equally proud, in that they find them the nucleus of self government".

These words, writes Digby in "Forty years of Crown Colony", were uttered in stentorian tones by a Tamil Legislator Sir, then Mr. Coomaraswamy, in whose voice could not be traced the slightest foreign accent.

x x x

Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy published a translation from the Pali "Sutta Nipata" (Dialogues of the Buddha) in 1874 and also a translation of the "Dathu Vamsa" (A History of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha) in 1874. Really, he anticipated the work of the Pali Society in Ceylon.

He also wrote a translation of the Psalms of Saint Thayumanavar (Tamil) into English. This has not been published, although this reached the stage of being printed in proof stage.

In 1878 while Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy was in England, he received his knighthood and Disraeli accompanied him to Queen Victoria's summer residence in the Isle of Wight to present him at the investiture. He married in the same year a young English lady, Elizabeth Clay Beeby (whose father is said to have been the Sheriff of Kent). When Sir Muttu returned to Ceylon, he left Amaithottam Uppukulam Mutwal where his father

lived earlier and moved to a mansion called "Rhineland", where Rhineland Place is now situated at Kollupitya. His more illustrious son, the late Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy, was born in this house on August 22nd, 1877.

Sir Muttu's sister was Sellachi, the only daughter of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar and the mother of Ponnambalam Coomaraswamy, Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

It was Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's guiding hand which shaped the early lives of these three illustrious nephews. The photograph published in the sixties in the "Illustrated London News" shows him, as he was, at the height of his fame.

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in his talk "A Plea for a Ceylon University" refers to Sir Muttu's services as follows:-

"Science is the most important factor of modern life and the renaissance of Japan has shown how the life and character of a people may be revolutionized by scientific study conducted in the proper spirit and manner. I remember that as a boy Sir (Muttu) Coomaraswamy was unceasing in his advocacy of the study of Science

and in his admiration of the Japanese, whom he held out to us as models. He looked forward confidently to their taking the high place which they have won. Great was his delight when the first Japanese man o' war manned officered by Japanese called at Colombo on her first voyage to Europe. He invited all the officers to dinner and entertained them. I shall never forget the impression made on us by that scene".

Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's untimely death at the age of 45 on May 4, 1879 of Brights Disease was a great blow to the Ceylonese. He was preparing to set sail to England the following day to rejoin his wife and infant son who had gone ahead.

On the occasion of his death the Morning Star (Udaya Tharakai) said:-

"It was like plucking one of the illustrious diadems, that crowned the Head of Ravana, the famous king of Lanka. Many magnates and prelates and members of the Legislative Council attended the funeral. The coffin was drawn by two horses for a distance of three miles. When

it reached the cemetery it was lifted down by Chief Justice Stewart, Queen's Advocate Ferdinand, Furn Lincolnburg and Advocate Ponnambalam Ramanathan. He was cremated on sandalwood which was brought in two carriages".

D. W. Ferguson of the "Observer" referred to late Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy as the foremost man of the twenty millions or more of the Dravidian race". Sir Muttu was idol of the people of Ceylon from 1862 - 1879.

Sir J. R. Longden in 1879 said (Governor's Adresses, 1877 - 1890, Vol. III, page 610) :-

"The oldest unofficial member of the Council, Sir Coomaraswamy had attracted the attention of distinguished men in Europe by his learning and ability. He had been specially honoured by the distinction conferred upon him by our Sovereign and he had won the respect of all his colleagues in the Council by his talents and by the unwearying attention he paid to every measure brought forward. After his death I received, in numerous petitions, proofs of the esteem in which he was held by his countrymen, by when his name will long be held in remembrance."

APPENDIX A

Excerpts from — The Life Letters and Friendship of Richard Monckton Milnes-First Lord Houghton, T. Wemyss Rud, 1890, Vol. II, page 87:- Two letters of Coomaraswamy

The Hindoo barrister to whom reference was made in the foregoing letters was Mr. Coomaraswamy a member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, of good family, broad education, and great intelligence. He was at this time on a visit to England. Milnes received him, as he had received so many other strangers and visitors from a distance; and he was, for some time an honoured guest at Fryston. Milnes' son and daughters still retain the pleasantest recollections of the accomplished Hindoo who was their father's guest in their early days. It happened that during his first visit to Yorkshire Mr. Coomaraswamy suffered from a very serious illness, which at one time threatened his life, and though which he was assiduously nursed by the family at Fryston. A lively recollection is still retained of the anxiety which Milnes showed at the time when Mr. Coomaraswamy was at the worst. He had given his guest

a promise that if the illness from which he was suffering ended fatally he should not be buried in the England fashion, but should be cremated. Those who know Lord Houghton will understand how having given that promise, he was eager to prepare for its fulfilment should the necessity unhappily arise; and legend is still extant of the way in which he wandered about the broad domains and umbrageous woods at Fryston, until he had at last fixed upon a spot which was, in his opinion, entirely suited to what would have been the first cremation on English soil in modern times. Fortunately for the object of these delicate attentions the good nursing at Fryston proved effectual saving him from the fate to which he had been dedicated. No one, it need hardly be said, rejoiced more heartily than Milnes at the recovery of his interesting friend, but mingled with his rejoicing was a droll sense of disappointment at the thought of the distinction which had been lost to Fryston forever."

London, Dec. 12th 1862

Mr. Coomara Swamy to R. M. M.

My dear Sir,

Since I wrote to Mrs. Milne yesterday I have received your note. Many

thanks for your kind enquiries. I would have written earlier, but I thought I had better wait till I got quite well. I am quite recovered now. Tender, please my thanks to those friends whom I met at your home and who were kind enough to inquire of me I hope to have the opportunity of seeing some of them in London where I shall remain for some time yet. The weather has been bright and glorious for the last few days - at least in this part of London. You showed me all the attention you could have possibly shown me; you could not have given me strength and health, and I was unlucky in having lost them just when I wanted them most. It is not the cold either of your country that affected me, for I never felt cold in your house; but it was the fearful exertion (fearful to me, who led a very easy life) which I had to go through in knocking about this Bench and that Bench of Lincolns Inn, that began to tell upon me when I visited you. Complete rest, not the Nirwana and a little quinine have restored my spirits and my health. In my anxiety to combine the utile with the dulce (as the Venetian bard suggests it during my trip to Europe, I fear I had overdone myself. I intend to take things more easily and

await the issue of events more philosophically.
But I fear I fatigue you with irrelevant matter.

I am,

Yours very truly
M. Coomara Swamy
The Grand Hotel, Paris
August 19th 1864

Mr. Coomara Swamy to R. M. M.

I am now here on my way to the East, and I think it my duty, before I travel further from the shores of England, to write and thank you for the great kindness which you showed me during my sojourn in your country. I say, in all sincerity, that, but for my having had the rare fortune to know you, and through you other kind friends, my stay in England, which I had originally intended to last only six months, would not have extended to upwards of two years, as it has. I now long for the day when I can revisit it, and see you all again.

Yours sincerely
M. Coomara Swamy

Page 89

Mr. Coomaraswamy went back to Ceylon, eventually attained high rank in the service of the Government in that Island, receiving the honour of knighthood, and died at

Colombo in 1879. In the interval between his first sojourn and his death he visited England on several occasions, always to be received with hospitality by Milnes, who derived from his friendship a new pleasure, finding in him a link between the Western world, with which he was so familiar, and the thought and feeling of the far East, which he had hitherto known only through books.

Crewe Hall Jan. 23rd 1863

R. M. M. to C. J. MacCarthy
Extract from a letter -
page 90.

We have been much interested in your friend Coomara Swamy. He came to Fryston to stay some time, but his visit was cut short.

POST SCRIPT:

The writer and his wife recently on a visit to the Isle of Wight about eighty miles South West of London discovered in a rock cliff gardens named "Blackgang Chine" a model of "Osborne House" the island home of Queen Victoria from 1846. Here she died in 1901. It was here that Sir Muttu Cumaraswamy was knighted by her in person.

ERRATA

CHAPTER	PAGE	PARA	LINE	WORD	CORRECTION
1	1	8	2	huousehold	household
	2	2	5	wa	was
	2	2	5	occation	occasion
	3	1	1	christian	christian
	3	3	4	sitting of	sitting of the
	3	4	3	Gandkari	Gandhari in
	3	5	3	Kala Yog	Kala Yogi
	3	5	5	others	other
	3	6	1	Visalachi	Visaladchi
	3	—	last	Annex	Annexe
	4	2	3	th	the
	4	3	1	Leoislative	Legis'lative
	4	4	2	Sellachi	Sellachchi
	4	4	2	Sellachi	Sellachchi
2	6	1	1	(Raja Goparam)	structure (Raja Goparam)
	7	4	8	Anthoni	Anthony
	8	1	3	intergrity	integrity
	8	2	8	appionted	appointed
	9	5	2	Thiruchendur	Thiruchendur,
	9	5	3	(Palam Cottah)	(Palam Cottah),
	10	2	2	wief	wife
	11	5	1	(Raja Goparam)	structure (Raja Goparam)
	13	1	12	dinction	tinction
	14	2	7	Monkton	Monckton
	17	1	1	ourth	fourth
3	18	3	5	whien	which
	20	2	15	Nagaiaam	Nakaram
	21	2	9	n Ceylon	in Ceylon
	23	4	9	Amaithottam	Amaithottam,
				Uppukulam	Uppukulam,
				Mutwal	Mutwal,
	24	2	1	Sellachi	Sellachchi
	24	2	5	am	lam
	26	2	2	to late	to the late
	26	2	4	was idol	was the idol
	27	2	5	vist	visit
	27	2	7	ceved	ceived
	27	2	11	accouplished	accomplished
	29	1	1	enquries	enquiries
	31	1	2	flrst	first
	31	1	4	wlth	with
	31	1	8	tha	the
	31	3	6	846	1846
APPENDIX	27	2	5	vist	visit
	27	2	7	ceved	ceived
	27	2	11	accouplished	accomplished
	29	1	1	enquries	enquiries
	31	1	2	flrst	first

FOUNDERS OF MODERN CEYLON

Eminent Tamils

Part-II

THE FOUNDERS



Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan

1

Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan

(1851 - 1930)

Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was the great National Champion of the people of Ceylon in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the first quarter of the present century. He was a lawyer, savant, statesman, educationist and sage, who played many parts and in all he was conspicuous figure.

He was the second son of Ponnambalam Mudaliyar and Sellachchi, the daughter of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar-the Tamil Representative of the first Legislative Council for the Island. He was born at Colombo on 16th April 1851.

He was educated at the Royal Academy (now the Royal college), Colombo. His father sent him after the course of secondary studies to Madras where he joined the Presidency College.

Lawyer

Ramanathan enrolled himself as an Advocate in 1873.

As a young Advocate Ramanathan undertook the task of providing the legal profession with a continuous series of law reports. He edited the reports of 1820 — 1833, 1843 — 1855, 1860 — 1862, 1863 — 1868, 1872, 1875, 1876, and 1877 - reports covering a period of thirty-six years. Thus he rescued these old judgments from oblivion and the ravages of termites in the Supreme Court Registry. The Queen's Advocate was so pleased with these reports that he recommended their publication by the Government of Ceylon and this suggestion was accepted.

When Sir John Budd Phear became in 1877 the Chief Justice of Ceylon, Ramanathan became the editor of the first official series of Law Reports - the Supreme Court Circular. Ramanathan showed his zeal for difficult work and love of perfection by editing these reports. He was later made Editor of the New Law Reports, the next official Reports which succeeded the Circular and remained Editor from 1897 - 1906, when he retired from Government service. For his work as law reporter alone, he deserves the eternal gratitude of the legal profession of Ceylon.

Legislature

For three generations Ramanathan's family had graced the Legislative Council; his maternal grand - father Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar (1833 - 1836), his uncles Mr Swaminathan Edirmannasingham from (1845 - 1861) and Sir C. Muttu Coomaraswamy from (1862 - 1879). Ramanathan had to fight an open contest with a Senior Tamil Advocate C. Brito. Eminent Scholars, Arumuga Navalar, Arnold Sathasivampillai (J. R. Arnold) and Carol Vyramuttu Visvanathapillai, campaigned for Ramanathan. Ramanathan finally was returned. He took his seat in the Legislative Council on August 27, 1879.

In 1886 Ramanathan planned a tour of Europe. Just before he set sail the leading Buddhist leaders, Ven. Hikkaduwe Sumangala Unnansa, Principal, Vidyodaya College, and High Priest of Sri Pada and A. P. Dharma Goonawardhana, President of the Ceylon Branch of the Theosophical Society presented him with an address on February 8, 1886 conveying their appreciation of his services to the Buddhists. It was due to Ramanathan's advocacy in the Legislative Council that 'Vesak', was declared a public holiday in Ceylon. A letter of appreciation was also sent to Ramanathan by Col. Olcott the Buddhist Revivalist in appreciation of his work for the Buddhists.

When Mr. and Mrs. Ramanathan (and their infant daughter) went to the United Kingdom in 1886, they were presented by H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle.

In the same year Mr. Ramanathan had the rare distinction of being called to the English bar "honoris causa" by the Honourable Benchers of the Inner Temple without keeping a single term. When Queen's Counsel were appointed in Ceylon in 1903, Ramanathan was amongst the first of those who were honoured in this way.

Ramanathan's Services

We may mention some of the measures which Ramanathan advocated during the first phase of his legislative career.

Under the Thoroughfare's Ordinance of 1861 every male adult had to do compulsory labour. A wholesale demoralisation had stressed the progress of the people. It was Ramanathan who helped in alleviating the rigours of this Ordinance.

He helped to introduce Ordinance No. 31 of 1884 — the Post Office Saving's Bank in Ceylon — a step which had been first advocated by Srila Sri Arumuga Navalar

Ramanathan was responsible for the establishment of Reformatories and Industrial Schools for Juvenile offenders.

He was responsible for modifying the Mohammedan Marriage Registration Ordinance of 1885. A section of the Muslims had wanted this to be done; while another section opposed this. Ramanathan who represented the Tamil speaking people including the Muslims in the Legislative Council pleased both the sections by making Registration of marriage optional for them.

Among the principal subjects in which Ramanathan, the Senior Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council, used his oratorical gifts during the period of 1879 - 1884 were:

- (i) The improvement of the general education of boys and girls of the school-going age.
- (ii) The re-organisation of the system of legal education and of admission to the legal profession. He held that a training in law was an asset for future citizenship and participation in politics.
- (iii) The codification of the Law of Criminal and Civil Procedure and of the Criminal Law of the Island.
- (iv) A critical examination of the Financial Estimates of the Revenue.
- (v) Retrenchment of Public Expenditure.

- (vi) Advancement of Irrigation in drought-stricken and riverless districts.
- (vii) The abolition of the grain taxes.
- (viii) Remedial measures for the collection of the poll tax and the amendment of the Thoroughfare's Ordinance.
- (ix) Facility to land-lords for the recovery of rents from dishonest tenants and the passing of the Small Tenements Ordinance.
- (x) Establishment of the Post Office Savings Banks throughout the Island.
- (xi) The improvement of the condition of the Clerical Servants.
- (xii) The free admission of Ceylonese into the Civil Service.
- (xiii) The unjustifiability of levying a Military contribution in excess of the internal needs of Ceylon.
- (xiv) The better administration of Buddhist Temporalities and the necessity of applying the income therefrom to its legitimate uses.
- (xv) Unfair treatment of the native merchants of Colombo.

- (xvi) The desirability of connecting the Northern parts of Ceylon with rest of the Island by Railway.
- (xvii) The Reform of the abuses prevailing in the Minor Law Courts of the Island.
- (xviii) The necessity of systematically registering title to land, etc.
- (xix) The right of public servants to memorialise the Legislative Council for Redress.

Here is an excerpt of Ramanathan's speech in the Legislative Council of Ceylon on December 5, 1888 on the "Better Management of the Buddhist Temporalities of the Island".

"I dwelt on the condition of the Buddhist clergy and the endowments as they were in 1717, when the Kingdom of the Sinhalese passed into the hands of the Tamil dynasty, and showed how careful the new rulers were in maintaining inviolate the endowments made by the Sinhalese kings and by themselves, for supporting the Buddhist priests and their dagobas, viharas and pansalae and for teaching the principles of the Buddhist religion and other shastras to the people in every village school and how Governor Mackenzie refused in 1840 to sign warrants as provided in

the Treaty between the British Government and the Kandyan Chiefs of 1815 (for appointing Buddhist incumbents and lay officers to manage temple affairs."

The British Government was not slow to recognize the worth of Ramanathan. He was invested with the honour of Companion of the Order of St Michael and St. George on October 15th, 1889 This was an honour rarely conferred on the "native" inhabitants of the colony at that time.

His contemporaries at that time were Sir Arthur Henry Gordon, Sir Bruce Burnside, Chief Justice of Ceylon, and Sir Samuel Grenier, Attorney General.

Solicitor General

On September 30, 1892, Sir Arthur Havelock (Governor of Ceylon) wrote to Ramanathan then the Unofficial Leader of the Legislative Council, and a Senior Barrister - at - Law (with over fifteen years of legal practice) whether he agreed to accept the post of Solicitor General.

Ramanathan agreed to this suggestion . On the day he bade farewell to them, the unofficial members of the Legislature showered praises on him

We would like to cite what the Hon.. T B. Panabokke, the Leader of the Kandyan Sinhalese said on December 14, 1892.

"In matters of religion, I think our interests are united, and in most of the manners and customs there are many things in common between the Tamils and the Kandyan Community, and therefore whenever a question of this sort, which was interesting to the Kandyan community was coming up, and I had an opportunity of discussing it, my Hon. friend (Ramanathan) was a tower of strength to me and to the enemy I should say, a battery constructed of adamant."

Mr. Dornhorst K. C. made a very eloquent and humorous speech that in the Solicitor's chair Ramanathan was like a race horse in a cart. Ramanathan's reply, was a model piece of eloquence, thanking them.

Acting Attorney General

While holding the post of Solicitor General, he acted as Attorney General, once under Governor Sir Arthur Havelock and twice under Governor Sir West Ridgeway who wrote appreciative letters to him.

He continued to be Solicitor General from 1862 to 1906.

Lecture Tour to America

Ramanathan was deeply interested in the study of Comparative philosophy and religion. In the spring of 1903, Myron H. Phelps of the New York Bar, Director of the Monsalvat School for the Comparative study of religion, met Mr. Ramanathan at his home in Colombo in 1903 and had the privilege of having many discourses with him. On his return to America he invited Mr. Ramanathan to address the leading universities in America.

Ramanathan prior to his retirement in 1906 was granted a year's full pay leave and he went on a lecture tour and addressed large and interested audiences.

"Western pictures for Eastern Students" by Lilavati Ramanathan, his wife, was published in 1907 in England and contains his main lectures in America.

Ramanathan had continued in 1905 the Mission of Swami Vivekananda who attended the Parliament of Religions in 1893. He taught the youth of America "Jnana Yogam". Ramanathan found in the teachings of the Old and the New Testaments the leading doctrines of the Sages of India, as laid down in the great Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the other sacred writings in Sanskrit and Tamil. Ramanathan's topic was "The Unity of faith" at the Greenacre Congress.

Ramanathan made a profound impression in the minds of his audience. He was regarded as a "Brahma Jnani" - a Hindu Sage.

His oration to the "Zionists in Boston" in support of the Jews for a home of their own touched their hearts and they formed a Society to achieve their objective.

At New York Ramanathan lectured at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences where he was invited to speak on "The Spirit of the East and the Spirit of the West". This speech became a favourite of many thinking people of America; it was printed and should be carefully studied.

He visited several Universities and Colleges and saw how the students were taught higher education.

The New York Times of the 8th October, 1905 published his portrait and had a long article on him. We would like to quote an excerpt.

"There is nothing of the foreigner, strange to say, in Ramanathan's use of English; just a shade of accent and a choice of phrase occasionally that recalls British usage in such matters. The low melodious voice may be a racial peculiarity, though it fits the amiable temperament of the speaker admirably. A Hindu sage ordinarily may be an extremely formidable personage to meet.

Ramanathan however has the gift of veiling whatever he has of mystic lore in so simple an exterior that one is led at first to regard him as being quite transparent, childlike mentally. A little experience, however, reveals the "artless art" of the oriental that is able to convey so much of the acerbities of criticism or the profundity of learning in a conversational manner that is outwardly charming in its apparent naivete.

Shorn of his charm, divested of this gentleness, the sage standing in the great modern hall way of the New York Bar Association, with its pillars and statues surrounding him, may be said to have really measured the proud America of today with the India of venerable philosophies and religions - and if the sentiment of scorn is possible to the mild Jnani, it certainly there, though unexpressed, as a result of his comparisons. There was a touch of sadness in his voice and eyes when he spoke of the spirit of the West".

He went to Yale University, Harvard University and to Philadelphia. He addressed the Quakers; he went to Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore and thence to Washington, the Capital of the United States of America where in the Library he was shown his own Law Reports in several volumes. He went to Ithaca and Cornell Universities where he addressed the undergraduates.

Ramanathan after he completed his tour, edited "The Culture of the Soul among Western Nations".

It emphasised truths which were often neglected by Americans.

It received very favourable reviews from the public press. Let us quote one example. Hon. H. C. Benjamin, Ex-Minister of the United States to Persia and to Turkey, wrote:—

"I find myself impressed with the catholicity of Mr. Ramanathan's thought and with the felicitous manner in which he harmonizes the essential principles of the religions and writings of the East and West. It seems to me his mission to become a powerful factor in removing the antagonism so long assumed to divide the spiritual teachers of Europe and Asia... His scholarly presentation of the dignified truths of the seers of past ages cannot but be of distinct benefit to those who are groping for more light in this age".

In addition to these lectures, Ramanathan wrote:—

An Eastern Exposition of the Gospel of Jesus according to St. John, being an Interpretation thereof by the light of Jnana Yoga.

A Commentary on St. Matthew in terms of Godly Experience (or Jnana Yoga).

"Both volumes are of the highest value as guides to the spiritual teachings of a Jnana Yogi.....They are illuminating commentaries, and the English in which they are given is remarkably clear and pure."

— Theosophical Quarterly

"There are beautiful and noble things admirably put in these brief notes.....Readers will find a real interest and value in the book..."

— Manchester Guardian

When Ramanathan returned in 1906 to Ceylon from America, he lectured to audiences in Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Kurunegalle, Jaffna and other places. Amongst the themes were his experiences in America and true principles of political conduct. He received public receptions in various towns. In 1906 he presided over the Saiva Siddhanta Samajayam inaugurated at Chidambaram. That year saw the foundations laid for a concrete structure for the Ponnambala Vanesvarar Temple, at Kochchikadde, Colombo. In 1907 the National Reform Association was founded by him. It was felt that the unofficals should be given a greater share in the government of the country. The McCallum Reforms in 1910 brought a few political changes. The official majority was reduced by one. The governing authorities conceded an Educated Ceylonese Seat—prob-

bly the first time that the word "Ceylonese" was used in official circles. Much against his will, Ramanathan was called out from his retirement to stand for election for this seat. His rival for the seat was Dr. H. Marcus Fernando. Mr. Ramanathan won by a thousand votes. According to Sir Ivor Jennings, Constitutional Government started in 1910. The elective principle that was later to be conceded to India, was conceded to Ceylon in 1912 — the first country in the East to get this reform. Ramanathan was Educated Ceylonese Member from 1911—1921

The Riots

"The outbreak of the riots in all the districts occupied by the Sinhalese in 1915 was owing to a religious fracas between the Buddhists and Mohammedans at Gampola."

"The misapprehension of the situation by Governor Chalmers and the Colonial Secretary, who through want of Colonial experience, failed to deal promptly and firmly with the disturbances by using their trained civilian officers and the police, allowed martial law to be proclaimed, surrendered their responsibility to the General Officer commanding the troops, who had been in the Island for only one month, and suffered him to adopt measures for the suppression of the riots which have left behind them a bitter legacy of grievances and hatred."

(An excerpt from the "Memorandum on the Donoughmore Recommen-

dations of Sir P. Ramanathan, 1930, page 5.)

"When the Great European War broke out in 1914 and was followed by the riots in the Sinhalese districts they [the British Government] jumped to the conclusion that the Crusade against Drink was an Anti-Government move and they ordered about forty leading Sinhalese gentlemen of high rank, literary attainments and religious fervour to be arrested in their bed rooms before dawn and shut up in the prison cells reserved for the criminal classes."

(op. cit., page 8,

Amongst these who were imprisoned were D. B. Jayatileke (who later became Minister for Home Affairs), D. S. Senanayake (later the first Prime Minister of Ceylon), W. A. de Silva (who later became a Minister of Health), Ramanathan showed conspicuous bravery on this occasion.

Ramanathan the patriot

Chalmers assured leaders like Ramanathan that "a revolt had been put down with rose water". It was at this time that Ramanathan received 350 petitions from the public who were groaning under the "illegal and unrighteous acts of the Commissioners appointed by the Governor" and brought out the other side, the case of the people.

A study of the contents of Ramanathan's book "Riots and Martial Law in Ceylon" will give the reader a glimpse of his eloquent speeches delivered to champion the rights of the Sinhalese. His marathon speeches (for hours) attained a Ciceronian quality. He exposed the actions of the Government and criticized the officers of the state for their wrongful acts having made an intensive study of the whole situation.

Ramanathan was not content with delivering speeches in the Legislative Council in Ceylon. Notwithstanding the submarines that infested the seas, he sailed to England to submit his findings about the riots and the Martial Laws personally to the Colonial Office in London. A young Sinhalese Advocate, Mr. E. W. Perera, also went to England and represented the case of the people of Ceylon.

* * *

The Ceylon Reform League and the Ceylon National Congress had been formed by 1917. Spearheaded by a brother of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the Congress pressed for an extension of freedom for the people in the art of self-government. The aftermath of this agitation was that from 1920, the un-officials were in a definite majority.

Ramanathan was knighted in 1921. He was nominated unofficial member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon from 1922-1924. When representative government began in 1924, Sir P. Ramanathan was elected Member for the Valigamam

North seat and he represented this constituency till his death in 1930.

From November 1927 onwards, constitutional reforms were in the air, as the Donoughmore Commissioners were in Ceylon till January 1928. They recommended a system of Government by Committees and Universal Suffrage.

Sir Pon. Ramanathan protested against this. He went to London on the May 10, 1930, and presented a Memorandum on the June 27, 1930. In that he said it would be ruinous to introduce Universal Suffrage in Ceylon at that stage.

The Educationist

We would like to cite an excerpt from Ramanathan's speech from "Western pictures for Eastern Students" (page 108). Scene: New York, Year 1905.

"On Mr. Ramanathan's return to Ceylon he expects to devote himself to educational efforts, whose aim will be the preserving of the national life of India that is threatened seriously, he believes, by the influx of the materialism and sensualism of the West. To this end he expects to open a College for higher education of the youth of his own land."

Page 109.

"The knowledge of their own past and their own philosophy", he declared, "will stem the

current of irreligion and irreverence for the things of the spirit, and lead automatically to the preservation of national ideals. It will be my endeavour to establish a college where a thoroughly sound education suitable to modern conditions of life in every respect will be combined with an adequate study of our own literature and the philosophy stored in our ancient books".

Ramanathan was a great educationist. As a seer he had the foresight to provide Hindu schools, one for girls and one for boys - in North Ceylon. Ramanathan College celebrated its Golden Jubilee on September 10, 1963.

But for Ramanathan College the Hindu girls would not have had education in the environment of their traditional religion.

In his Trust Deed of February 1913 appointing Trustees and endowing Ramanathan College of girls, he laid down among other things the following:

"...for the education of Saiva girls ... having in view the spiritual, intellectual or moral wants of the Saivites or for any other purposes connected with the Trust of these presents which the Trustees may think proper, the education imparted in the said College shall include the Vedas, the Agamas, the Dharma Sastras, the Ithihasas, the epic stories of the Ramayana, Maha Bharata, the Puranas and the singing of

Thevaram and Thiru Vasagam in addition to the ordinary course of instruction in English and Tamil to apply any part of the Trust Fund in establishing Schools in any part of the Island for the education of Jaffna girls and for the proper training of Brahmin youths to fill the Office of Priests in Saiva Temples "

Ramanathan's second wife was a daughter of the late F. D. Harrison of Adelaide, Australia, who adopted the name of "Lilavati" after marriage. She continued the educational work of her husband as Principal Ramanathan College, Chun-nakam. She also edited the " Ramayana " and "Western Pictures for Eastern Students". Her daughter, Mrs. Sundari Natesan, succeeded her mother as Principal.

The Parameshvara College was founded in August 1921 for boys.

In his Last Will dated July 21, 1923 the following directions appear:-

- (1) To the Board of Directors of the Parameshvara College, I give and grant in support of the instruction of Shaiva children in the principles of the Shaiva religion and the extension of Tamil learning and sacred Music, vocal and instrumental as inculcated by Manikkavasaka Swami, Thirunavukkarasu, Suntharamurthi,

Thayumana Swami proceeds to be held in Trust by the Board of Directors of the said Ramanathan and Parameshvara Colleges and used for the promotion of the objects for which both Colleges were founded.

In his speech introducing in the Legislative Council in 1925 the Bill to incorporate the Board of Directors of Parameshvara College, he said, among the other things the following:-

"The boys and girls want something more than a knowledge of the perishable things of life, too much of which is pressed on the attention of students as if there was nothing else worth considering and attaining. The results of this one sided system of education are painfully manifest in all parts of the British Empire and elsewhere. The great difficulties experienced by Administrators in governing the people in Europe, the United States of America and other places is due to the fact that the curriculum of studies prescribed in the Universities and Schools of the West, except in theological circles are confined to the things that relate to the perishable side of life..... the principles which make life a thing of beauty and joy for ever have all been forgotten....."

"I have thought for many years that it was my duty to help Hindu parents in this country and India to attain their hearts

wish. This is the reason, Sir, why Parameshvara Vithyalayam was founded. Vithyalayam means a house of learning, and Parameshvara means the Most High. Any student who is admitted there will be given facilities to know something more of life than the perishable side of it. He would know that the Spirit within the mortal body and God within and beyond us are the only imperishable things which we should labour hard to attain, at least as hard as we labour for the perishable things of the body. In our endeavour to attain the imperishable, we have first to discover the individual spirit which is in the body, and then come to know God who is in the spirit. The Spirit is therefore called the Temple of God - Unless boys and girls are taught these truths early in life and helped to prefer the principles and practices which relate to the discovery of the Spirit in the body, and God in the spirit, they would be engulfed in the vortices of selfishness and sensual desires. They would naturally sink more and more into corruption, and become terrible sufferers here and in the lives to come."

The chief aim of the Parameshvara College was to save our boys in this way and to make good citizens of them.

Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was the chief force behind the Hindu Board of Education which was founded on 9th December 1923.

The Buddhist Renaissance had started by 1850. Col. Olcott and Madam Blavatsky came in 1872 to Ceylon and electrified the Buddhist masses and stemmed the tide of Christianity. Col. Olcott had such great confidence in Sir P. Ramanathan that he was made an Educational Trustee of the Buddhists.

Sir P. Ramanathan says in his memorandum to the Donoughmore Commission:-

"I had retired (in 1905) from the Solicitor-Generalship of Ceylon and was busily engaged on educational work, which had for its object the conversion of the people from denationalisation and from the consequences of too slavishly following the ideals of modern times which were being inculcated in almost all the schools of the Island, to the exclusion of faith in God, ethical conduct, loyalty to the King and respect for elders. Irreligion, unrestrained indulgence in the pleasures of the senses, ridicule of ancient traditions and constant cultivation of the spirit of controversy had gradually undermined the sanctity of home and society to such an extent that lectures on the higher aspects of life"

Ramanathan said:-

The establishment of Schools and Colleges, equipped with responsible teachers suffi-

ciently able to stem the current of materialism, agnosticism and atheism became virtually necessary. All my time and resources were devoted to this work".

The establishment of a Hindu University utilising Ramanathan College and Parameshvara College and the buildings and resources would be a fitting tribute to the services rendered by Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

Not also was he responsible for founding institutions for the education of the Hindu students, but also he took a leading part in the proposals for the establishment of the University of Ceylon, being a member of the Riddell University Commission.

Professor R. Marrs, who was Principal of the Ceylon University College for ten years preparing the Ceylon University, wrote of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan's services as an Educationist as follows:-

"All educationists had special reason for deploring the absence of his noble and inspiring personality because of his life-long splendid advocacy of the cause of education and he ventured to believe his services to education were among his most enduring gifts to the people of Ceylon."

"He belonged to that noble band of educational founders who were the greatest

benefactors of the countries in any part of the world. What would England be but for its Wykhams? What would Ceylon be without its similar pararray of educational missionaries and benefactors?"

It was Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan who founded the "Ceylonese", an English Journal in 1911 which was later bought by the late Mr. D. R. Wijayawardena and was published as the "Ceylon Daily News"

The Temple of Siva

The Kōchchikadde Sivan Temple built in brick by his father, Ponnambalam Mudaliyar, was trasformed by Ramanathan into a grand edifice of granite, perhaps the most splendid temple in Ceylon. This temple is popularly known as "Ramanathan Sivan Temple," although its correct name is Ponnambalavanesvarar Kovil.

Its monolithic pillars remind one of the massive pillars in the corridors of the great Ramanatheesvara Temple at Ramesvaram in South India. Thousands of devotees can be accommodated on a day of festival in the outer corridors of this temple.

Ramanathan also organised a Saiva Tamil School in the premises of this temple in 1909. This was known as the Ponnambalavanesvarar

Tamil School. But this was closed after a few years. He also started a School for the training of Hindu Priests.

Tamil Scholar

Ramanathan's commentary on the "Bhagavat Gita" affords the reader with a glimpse into his many-sided intellect. Although it may be criticised by the purists for the proponderance of Sanskrit expressions, the exposition of the philosophy is masterly.

His editions of "Senthamil Ilakkanam" and "Attisridi Mantra Vilakkam" are examples of the literary heritage he has left to posterity.

* * *

He presided for the second time at the Saiva Siddhanta Samaj held at Madras in 1922.

When Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan died on November 26, 1930, his embalmed body was placed in a carriage which was drawn along the streets of Colombo by people of all nationalities.

The mortal remains were laid to rest in "Samadhi" in the precincts of the Ramanathan College, Chunnakam. A Sivan Temple has been built to mark this place.

A grateful public erected the statue of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan which stands in the grounds of the Parliament House in Ceylon. This was the second statue to be erected there

the first having been that of his younger brother, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

On the anniversary of his death each year on November 26th, Ramanathan's admirers gather to garland the statue.

At Ramanathan College, Chunnakam, distinguished men are invited to deliver lectures to commemorate his memory.

An oil painting of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, painted by that doyen of Ceylon painters, Mudiliyar A. C. G. S. Amarasekara and presented by the public was unveiled at Parliament House on November 26, 1931 by H. E. the Governor Thompson.

An oil painting of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan painted by Mr. de Niese was unveiled at Parameshvara College by Adigar Meedeniya.

Long may live the Ramanathan tradition ! The best way of remembering him is to establish a Hindu University in Jaffna. The Government should make his anniversary a National Holiday in Ceylon.

Homage of a Nation

Excerpts from public eulogies to Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

C. W. W. Kannangara said:-

"He was matchless in eloquence, unrivalled in debate, sound in judgment, profound in

scholarship and diligent in the study of every important question that engaged public attention."

"His conspicuous merit and outstanding ability place him high above his fellows and he soon became the leader of his people and the fearless champion of their rights."

"Our undying gratitude is due to him for the bold and courageous manner in which he vindicated the honour and the good name of the Sinhalese people in the dark days of 1915 and I hope Sir, that ere long will be erected in his honour a worthy memorial to the noble and glorious part played by Sir Ramanathan in the deliverance of our people."

"It may well be said of him, that he laid the foundation of fearless criticism in our Council of State and opened to all the path of public duty which he trod so nobly, fearlessly and manfully to the last".

Sir D. B. Jayatilake said:-

"As has already been stated as scholar, as author, as philosopher, as educationist, as lawyer, as legislator, as statesman he has left the impress of his conspicuous position, which he did in so many spheres of activity."

"The truly great never die. It is true their bodies perish but their name and fame will endure forever."

"Some of his contemporaries may have excelled him in one particular respect or another, but I think it could be said without fear of contradiction that no man of his day occupied the conspicuous position, which he did in so many spheres".

E. W. Perera, a patriot, and a younger contemporary of Ramanathan said:-

"It was Sir Ramanathan who manfully and strenuously, although he was not of his (the speaker's) blood yet feeling as a child of the country for his motherland, who did all he possibly could as the one Ceylonese member to vindicate the Sinhalese and help them in their great agony and in their great Travail."

"One of the things he said in 1915 was "private friendship has nothing to do with public duty". That was the keynote to his character".

E. W. Jayawardhana a Judge of the Supreme Court said:-

"He was perfect master of the parry and the thrust and in repartee he was un-excelled. There was a certain calmness in his advocacy which appealed to everybody."

"As a statesman and as a politician, I think, if we searched the records of the last hundred years under British rule, we cannot find a person who has played a larger part in politics than Sir P. Ramanathan".

Hon. A. F. Molamure (who was The Speaker of the State Council) said:

"Sir Ramanathan as a politician was equal to Mr Lloyd George whose ready wit and ability to retort was well known."

"... they always felt that Sir Ramanathan was one of them and the chief of them".

Sir Herbert Stanley, Governor of Ceylon on June 14, 1929 at a Jubilee Dinner on the 50th year of Sir Ramanathan's service as a Legislative Councillor said:-

"...but the quality by which you would think of him most readily is that of a great patriot — a great Ceylonese patriot. Though he belongs to the Tamil Community... and though he is a very good Tamil he is still a better Ceylonese".

Governor Thompson who was Governor of Ceylon (and who presided over the Jubilee Celebrations) said of Sir P. Ramanathan in 1929:-

"Above all he had the essential quality of patriotism. He was not only a good Tamil, he was one of the best Tamils; he was one of the best Ceylonese, and he was one of the best citizens of the Empire."

"During the long and active period of over fifty years there was no occasion on which he did not assist his people in their long struggle towards self-government at every stage of which he fought in the van".

At Parameshvara College, Tirunelvely, Jaffna on unveiling the portrait of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Adigar Meedeniya said of Sir Ramanathan:-

"He was the greatest public servant this country had produced".

Justice T. F. Garvin said of Sir P Ramanathan:-

"No man had rendered more distinguished or more valuable service and no one received in full measure the gratitude and appreciation of the people among whom and for whom he lived".

H. A. P. Sandrasegara, Q. C. speaking on behalf of the Ceylon Tamil League said:-

"During his life time Sir P Ramanathan said that the salvation of this country depended on its agricultural development. That was a think he firmly believed. He was a great legislator, councillor and educationalist but nobody would have thought that he would have come forward to launch the Kilinochi Scheme. He himself launched the scheme and got 500 acres under the Iranamadu Scheme and cultivated it. That was a great and noble example Sir Ponnambalam left behind and he hoped that it would be followed by others".

Sir Ramanathan was a great lover of beauty. Evidence of this is the buildings of Ramanathan

and Parameshvara Colleges and beautiful Hindu temple he had erected in Colombo. That temple was one of the most beautiful not only in Ceylon but even in South India. He was a great lover of art and that shrine would always stand as a monument to his love of art.

B H Bourdilon, Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, said of Sir Ramanathan after his death in 1930:-

"We shall never forget the vigour of his mind until the last, the pungency of his humour, the characteristic little chuckles of amusement that used to escape from him when he would score a point against the Government or some other member".

Mr. K. P. S. Menon, Agent of the Indian Government unveiling the portrait of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan at the State Council on December 13, 1931 said:-

"Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was a national figure with an international reputation. The great thing about Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was that he had a universal mind".

Referring to Sir Ramanathan's speech on the Donoughmore Constitution, Mr. Menon continued:

"It was more than a speech, it was a philippic against the reforms. It was a speech which let itself to much misconstruction. Some people

referred to the speech as if it showed signs of his waning powers, as if it showed that even Sir Ramanathan was sinking into senility. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Those who said so do not realise the significance of his speech."

"Those who have heard Sir P. Ramanathan find it difficult to forget the wild irony, the incisive humour, the mordant wit of his graceful and occasionally delightfully rambling eloquence. On that particular occasion when he denounced the Donoughmore Constitution, one felt as if a prophet had come from another world opening the eyes, stirring the hearts, and shattering the illusions of smug, self-complacent individuals. On that occasion he was distinctively in combative mood. The mood of 1915 was again upon him. But while in 1915 he trod heavily on the no less sensitive corns of unofficals. But on both occasions he was distinctly on the side of purity and integrity and justice in political life."

"Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan was an aristocrat at heart, but the aristocracy to which he belonged was not the aristocracy of birth, it was not the aristocracy of wealth, but it was the aristocracy of character and intellect".

ADDENDA:

A Campaign for the Tamil Seat in the Legislative Council

Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy had died on May 4, 1879. Two candidates vied with each other for his place in the Legislative Council. Those were days when the Governor nominated the Tamil representative on the recommendations of the executive members and the general public. He had the power to nominate anybody whom he considered suitable.

C. Brito

One of the candidates was C. Brito. He was educated at the Colombo Academy and the Queen's College under the late Dr. Boake, the then Principal. He had won the Mathematics and Turnour Prizes. After the affiliation of the Colombo Academy with the Calcutta University, he was the first to obtain the B. A. degree. He acted as Principal in a College at Agra. He acted as a teacher in the Colombo Academy. While thus acting, he passed out as an Advocate of the Supreme Court. He acted as Deputy Queen's Advocate, while as District Judge in Batticaloa. He practised also at Jaffna and Colombo and was considered as a man of means, who hailed from an aristocratic family

and gifted with talents and philanthropist. He translated the Vaipava Malai into English in 1876 under the title of History of Jaffna.

His father-in-law was Nannithamby Mudaliyar who made a gift to Arumuga Navalar. He was also related to Ponnambalam Ramanathan. But he was a Catholic, and he had many supporters in Catholic circles. He held extensive lands from Kalpitiya along the coast down to Chilaw, Madampe and Negombo.

Batticaloa, Negombo and many other coastal towns where there was a preponderance of Christians were in favour of Brito. The Guardian edited by an Irishman, the Examiner and the Patriot and "Lankai Nesan" supported Brito. In December 1879 Brito was elected as a representative of St. Paul's Ward in the Colombo Municipality.

Brito was a prominent personality in the social circles of Ceylon. From July 1878 until 1879 when Jaffna was stricken with cholera, dysentery and famine, Brito had organised Alms Centres along with the help of leaders such as Arumuga Navalar to feed the poor, the sick and the destitutes; he subscribed heavily to the Poor Relief Fund. As there was rain in January and consequently a plentiful harvest, the rest of the money collected for charity was banked in the Jaffna Oriental Bank. His services were well recognized by the Government Agent.

About 1876 there was a case brought by the Bramins of the Nallur Kandaswamy Temple against the Administrators. Brito appeared for the Brahmins. When Navalar entered the court premises, he rose as a token of respect; this was followed by the other lawyers. Brito had solicited Navalar's support by promising that he would lead evidence in such a way that the Brahmins would win. But Arumuga Navalar was one who was above board and was not going to be taken in by the deceitful guiles of the lawyer, C. Brito. After this incident Navalar had lost faith in Brito.

Navalar and Ramanathan

The other candidate was Ponnambalam Ramanathan, a young advocate and Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's nephew. The latter had been the accredited Tamil Representative in the Legislative Council (1862 — 79). Navalar was a Seer to recognize Ramanathan as his due successor and went about from village to village lending his support. He spoke of the services of Ramanathan's grandfather, Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar (1833 — 1836) and his uncle Swaminathan Edirmannasingham (1836 — 1861) and Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's services to the people.

Navalar had made many enemies among the Hindus and Christians by his fearless criticisms.

They all supported Brito. There was no Tamil newspaper then to support Ramanathan. The 'Udaya Bhanu' was started later.

On 22nd May 1879 there was a public meeting got up by Arumuga Navalar at the Saiva-prakasa Vidyalaya, Vannarpannai. The hall was packed by men of all ranks and creeds. It was presided over by Pundit Daniel Carroll Visuvanathapillai, an eminent educationist. Please see a report of this meeting as appeared in the Colombo Observer of May 29th 1879.

Governor Longden nominated Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan for the Tamil Seat.

After the results were announced by the Governor Longden, C. Brito drew up a petition and sent it to the Secretary of State for Colonies. When this was referred to the Governor for his observations and his comments, he maintained that in his opinion Ponnambalam Ramanathan was the fittest candidate. The Secretary of State concurred with the Governor in his decision. A copy of the petition sent by C. Brito follows.

Enclosure of Dispatch 4 of 19 June 1879

To

The Right Honourable,
Sir Michael Hicks Beach, K. C. M. G.
Her Majesty's Secretary of State for
the Colonies.

Right Honourable Sir,

In connection with the telegram which I had the honour of despatching to your address on the 6th of June Instant, I beg to submit the accompanying papers for your favourable consideration.

From them it will be readily perceived that in nominating Mr. Ramanathan to the Tamil Seat of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, His Excellency the Governor has completely disregarded the feelings of the Communities whose interests are affected by the nomination.

The Tamil speaking Communities of Ceylon are the Tamils proper, the Moors and the Malays numbering near a third of the entire population of the Island and inhabiting the Tamil Districts of Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Mullaitivu, Jaffna, Mannar, Calpenty, Puttalam and Chilaw, and the following towns in Sinhalese districts, namely, Negombo, Thorpu, Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Anurachapura, Mattale, Kururegala, Kandy, Nawalapitiya, Gampola and Badulla

The towns of Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mannar, Calpenty, Puttalam, Chilaw, Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Nawalapitiya and Gampola held public meetings, and, in accordance with resolutions, which were adopted therein, forwarded numerous and influentially signed petitions to His Excellency the Governor praying that I might be appointed to the Tamil Seat in the Legislative Council.

Like meetings were held in the villages of Kopay, Point Pedro, Chavakachcheri, Kayts, Mallagam, Maviddapuram, Changanai, Nallur, Vannarponnai and Thorpu. Six of these meetings petitioned for my nomination, and the remaining four influenced by the Government Agent and the Deputy Queen's Advocate of Jaffna who are under the impression that I took part in certain representations that had been recently made against them to His Excellency the Governor, voted for Mr. Ramanathan. To these four must be added the Singhalese town of Matara which declared in favour of Mr. Ramanathan and of which place Mr. Ramanathan's brother is Police Magistrate.

Negombo, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Matalle, Mullaitivu and Badulla held no meetings, but a very large majority of their Tamil inhabitants petitioned for my nomination.

It is not possible to form an adequate idea of the preponderance in number, wealth, res-

pectability and social position, of my adherants without an actual analysis of the signatures appended to petitions that have been forwarded to His Excellency the Governor in favour of Mr. Ramanathan and myself respectively And I pray that those petitions may be sent for and a comparison instituted between the two sets.

Six local newspapers took part in the discussion about the Tamil Seat. The "Observer" edited by a Scotchman and the "Morning Star" by a Tamil, declared for Mr. Ramanathan. But the "Guardian" edited by an Irishman, the "Examiner" and the "Messenger" by Burghers, and the "Patriot" and "Lankasnakan" by Tamils, declared in my favour.

As soon as the vacancy occurred in the Tamil Seat, a rumour having gained currency that certain high dignitaries in Government service had promised to interest themselves on behalf of Mr. Ramanathan, I waited on His Excellency the Governor, and understood from him that he would give due weight to petitions - numerous and influentially signed by the Tamil speaking people. Such petitions have been forwarded to His Excellency the Governor in my favour, and while the people were still holding meetings and preparing petitions His Excellency the Governor suddenly appointed Mr. Ramanathan.

Although by the constitution of this Colony no Communities possess the right of election,

yet a quasi elective right have been conceded in the case of the Planting, Mercantile and Burgher Communities in the appointment of their respective members, and His Excellency the Governor having himself promised, in connexion with the Tamil Seat, I should be wanting in my duty to, myself and to the large and respectable section of the Tamils, Moors and Malays who have supported one, if from delicacy of feeling, I hesitated to make this appeal.

The Governor's nominees in the Council are conventionally known as the Representatives of the respective Communities over which they are appointed. It is unjust to force upon the Tamils a Representative in whom the Community has no confidence, and who is no manner qualified to represent them.

I therefore pray that you will, in justice to a large, wealthy industrious, and intelligent Community, send instructions to the Governor of Ceylon to cancel the appointment of Mr. Ramanathan and appoint a person in accordance with public opinion.

I have the honour to be
Right Honourable Sir,
Your Most Obedient Servant
C. Brito

Colombo
June 18, 1879.

The Tamil Seat

(Colombo Observer, May 29th, 1879)

A large meeting was held on Thursday evening last (22nd May) at Vannarponnai, Jaffna, in which Mr Advocate Rama Nathan was unanimously selected as the best fitted among the Tamils for the Legislative seat. The learned Mr. Arumuga Navalar not only gave the use of his spacious vernacular school for the purpose of holding the meeting but made an effective speech on the occasion. Well nigh 3,500 were present. The building was densely crowded, while the adjoining temporary pandals were also full.

Mr. Visuvanatha Pillai (alias D. Carroll) B. A. of the Madras University, and formerly registrar at Tanjore, India, was moved to the chair. In opening the meeting he said he need not say much of the great loss they had sustained by the death of Sir Coomara Swamy. They all felt it deeply, [and he spoke very feelingly of the late knight.] To find a successor to him as a member of our Legislative Council was the object of this meeting and that was no easy task. His nephew, Mr. Advocate Rama Nathan of Colombo, had been pointed out as the fittest person. It was for the meeting to decide if he was such. The speaker knew him while he was studying at Madras. Every one liked and admired him there. Born of noble parents of affluent circumstances, learned, virtuous, mild,

and active, he would form a good representative; above all, he was an Advocate of the Supreme Court in good repute with Government officials, connected by blood with our country, and a follower of our national creed; all things considered he believed him to be a fit person, but he left things to the consideration of the learned assembly before him. (Cheers).

Mr. S. Appapillai seconded the resolution in a few appreciative words, and the resolution was carried.

Mr. Arumuga Navalar, in moving the next resolution said the Legislative Council was established for the purpose of deliberating for the country's good. On the first establishment of a Legislative Council for Ceylon, Coomara Swamy Mudaliyar was appointed member. [He then traced the history of the Council and of the Tamil members the late Coomara Swamy Mudaliyar and his son the late Sir Coomara Swamy and then said] they had now to select a successor. Mr. Rama-Nathan was the second son of Sir Coomara's sister. He was educated at the Madras Presidency College and was now an advocate of the Supreme Court, and enjoyed the esteem of the Judges of the Court, for to him had been entrusted the responsible duty of editing the " Supreme Court Circular " intended as a guidance for provincial judges. He had published several volumes of reports which would be found on the table of

almost every respectable lawyer in Ceylon. A member of the Council should have the respect of both the people and chief men of the state. Mr. Rama Nathan stood above all others in this respect. In answer to the remarks made as to the age of Mr. Rama Nathan, he reminded them that the late member was younger at the time of his appointment than Mr. Rama Nathan now. It was also said that Mr. Rama Nathan did not go about the country, and ascertain the wants and wishes of the people by personnel inquiry. Sir Coomara Swamy was never at Jaffna after he became an M. L. C. ; even before his appointment, his sojourn there was very short. From his station at Colombo he made enquiries, and knew intimately the wants of the people and their habits. Why could not Mr. Rama Nathan do likewise, who was at Jaffna for several months when he came there three years ago ? A man endowed with enlightenment and capacity, would extend his mental vision to the utmost corners of the land. He would therefore take care to walk honourably, if not for anything else, to sustain the honour of his unblemished house. A man who was not descended from the good and noble and did not associate with the good and high, could not be expected to be good himself. He would be suspected by those high in state, and the very people who might clamour now for his appointment would rue their hasty and injudicious selection. The speaker, therefore, moved. " That this meeting considers

Mr. Advocate Rama Nathan to be in every way the best fitted among the Tamils to be their representative in the Legislative Council ; he being an Advocate of the Supreme Court, and possessed of deep acquirements and of ample private means.

Mr. T. Ponnampalappillai, Magistrate, Travancore seconded this resolution and said he knew Mr. Rama Nathan while he was in India, perhaps better than many there present. Of noble lineage, he was rich, learned and in every way accomplished. Though young among Advocates, he was highly honored. His ample private resources did not necessitate hard work at the bar for his living. He was therefore able to devote much of his time to legislative work. He closely watched Sir Coomara Swamy's career and had the advantage of being schooled by him in the ins and outs of legislative life [Then he gave instances from history of great and noble men succeeding the British Parliament as orators and legislators while much under 30.] There was much said on the claims of a certain candidate for legislative honors regarding the help he had given in the question of the maladministration of the Northern Province, and in that of the " kenchitoddi " (boiled rice water) during the famine in Jaffna. There were many who helped the latter, especially the last speaker, Mr. Arumuga Navalar, Mr. Seivanayagampillai and others. Messrs. Rama Nathan, Coomara Swamy and others contributed 200 bushels of

rice for the object. He (the speaker) had not learnt of any one else so munificent. Mr. Brito was credited with having done much. But it was not his wish to detract from the merits of any. (Loud cheers.)

The motion being put to the meeting, was carried unanimously.

Mr. Hensuman, a young practor, with several others, walked up to the chairman and asked in an excited tone, if he would be allowed to put in an amendment

The Chairman replied that as the resolution was seconded and carried with acclamation, an amendment could not be then allowed. The party then withdrew quietly, but when they reached the road, they yelled out "Shame" "Shame", clapped hands and hooted.

A Memorial to the Governor was then read by Mr. Edward Spaulding.

Mr. S. K. Lawton, in moving the fifth resolution said: that though the person who required to speak on the amendment was out of order, they would have done well in giving him a hearing. They knew they had with one voice given their consent to Mr. Rama Nathan's selection, and the refutation of any adverse proposal would have strengthened their position. He urged this, also on another ground — and that was, to the dis-

credit of journalistic veracity, which perhaps he regretted more than any one else there, there were certain correspondents ever ready to misinterpret and misrepresent facts, and in the instance the meeting might be represented as having been held informally. If the respectable assemblage had felt disinclined to listen to Mr. Hensman, (a voice: We have happily avoided a rabble), they might have listened to Mr. S. John Pulle who moved as if he wished to speak. He might have given a clear and temperate statement to their object. Still, the speaker was not sorry that the recognized rules of public meetings had been upheld by the chairman. To come to the point, however, they had assembled there to consider the most weighty political question, regarding the interests of the Tamils. There were several important topics connected with the Tamils which should occupy the attention of the Council, and therefore it was their paramount duty to select a fit man. That man was no other than Advocate Rama Nathan. He had long and impassionately considered the subject and had come to that conclusion. Speaking of the age of their nominee, he (Mr. L.) said that industry and intelligence formed part of the weapons of the legislative crusader's panoply. Then what was the average age of Ceylon's noblest son? If he was not mistaken scarcely 45 or 50! He cited the cases of Sir Coomara Swamy, Sir Richard Morgan, Messrs Lorenz, Alwis, Stewart and others. They had undertaken

more work than was compatible with the preservation of their health. Considering these facts, age was, if anything rather against a person's eligibility, for when he was just becoming well practised in his duties, the world was called upon to bemoan his untimely death. They knew Advocate Rama Nathan's many good qualities and he was pleased to move "that the memorial now read in favour of Mr. P. Rama Nathan, be accepted, and after being signed, be sent to H. E. the Governor."

S. Tilliampalam (Udayar of Chandelupai) in seconding this resolution said that the mention of Mr. Rama Nathan's name did not awaken any surprise: all acquiesced in his being fit. His name was unanimously greeted with joy. He (the speaker) need not add that the whole land would gladly hail his appointment. (Loud cheers)

Kanthar Kasipillai (Merchant) moved that a committee be formed (the names forming which he submitted to the meeting) for the purpose of collecting names and of sending the memorial to the Governor.

S. T. Sivasragasapillai seconded, and it was heartily adopted.

Mr E. Mailvaganam moved and Mr. S. Thurayappa Cheddyar seconded: a vote of thanks to the Chairman, which was carried amidst cheers.

At the suggestion of Mr. Lawton, each motion was put to the vote of the meeting once more. A show of hands was taken on each motion and when the name of Advocate Rama Nathan was pronounced much enthusiasm was expressed and the show of hands and cheers were unanimous and prolonged. The memorial was then sent round for signature and hundreds of persons signed. All who had affixed their names to other memorials were distinctly asked not to sign this.

We hope to be able to publish in due time the reports of the proceedings of the meetings held at Chankanai on the 24th, and at Nallur on the 27th instant.

(By Telegraph)

KANDY, May 29 — Another petition supporting Mr. Rama Nathan was sent to-day, containing about one thousand signatures.

JAFFNA

Jaffna, looked upon by Mr. Brito as likely to declare unanimously for him, has not so far betrayed its trust. There is an overpowering majority for Mr. Rama Nathan. The meeting on the 15th instant in favour of Mr. Brito was a miserable affair. The notice sent around was

that "the members of the Jaffna bar are going to hold a public meeting in the District Court House on the 15th instant for the purpose of electing Mr. Advocate Brito as a Representative of the Tamil inhabitants in the Legislative Council." Thus the meeting was merely a gathering of Brito's partisans. Where were the leading proctors? Messrs. Sinnetambyi, Tampoo, Changarepullai, Ponnampalam and others, conspicuous by their absence, because they were not supporters of Brito. It is true, the conveners of the meeting put Mr. Tampoo's name down on the committee, without his consent and against his wish: one of their dodges, but which was unsuccessful and the candidate's friends have to rue it.

The meeting for the most part consisted of schoolboys &c., and very different to the meeting in favour of Mr. Rama Nathan held last evening, and very different will be the other meetings to be held within the next few days.

The people as a body are in favour of Mr. Rama Nathan, and considering how little they know him personally, and how his arrival had bid for popularity in various ways, some of them being highly approved of by his organ, the action of the people clearly show their opinion of Mr. Brito. - Cor. - Observer, June 2.

The Tamil Seat and the Native Association of Trade

(From the Observer, May 15th, 1879)

A very large and influential meeting of the Nattukotta Chetties of Colombo was yesterday morning held at their usual place of meeting, the Hindu temple in Sea-street, and the following resolutions were passed.

The chetties, as our readers know, are bankers, merchants and ship-owners, and notwithstanding their unpretending appearance are really next to European planters and merchants, the most energetic section of our community, and they hardly exaggerate their own importance when they say in their address, which we give below, that "Ceylon is in almost as great a measure indebted to their enterprise as to that of Europeans for the maintenance of its prosperity." A meeting of the nagaram such as was held yesterday morning is the authoritative exponent of the opinions of the Nattukotta Chetty community. Some of our readers may remember the interesting exposition of the late Sir Coomara Swamy, in the Council debate on the Gansabba-wa ordinance, of the constitution, aims and ends of the nagaram, and of the religious and social sanctions by which it enforces its authority.

When the Chairman of the nagaram meeting yesterday morning had explained the object of the meeting, the following resolutions were carried unanimously :-

I. That this meeting wishes to record its sense of, and to express its heart felt sorrow for the great loss sustained by the Tamil people, by all the people of Ceylon, and by the Government, in the death of Sir Coomara Swamy.

II. That this meeting desires to present a petition to His Excellency the Governor praying that the vacancy caused in the Legislative Council by the death of Sir Coomara Swamy may be filled up by appointment of Mr. P. Rama Nathan, and to adopt and obtain signatures to the petition now read to the meeting.

III. This meeting appoints the following gentlemen, [here the names are given in full and they are rather long names] to obtain signatures from Nattukotta Chetties to the petition now read and to forward it to His Excellency the Governor.

The petition is as follows and has been signed by all the chief men among the Nattukotta Chetties :-

Respectfully Sheweth,

That Your Excellency's Petitioners are bankers, merchants and ship-owners resident in Colombo, and crave permission to lay before your Excellency their humble wishes, in reference to the selection of a successor in the Legislative Council to their late lamented representative the Hon'ble Sir M. Coomara Swamy. Your Excellency is not unaware of the extensive and valuable commercial interests represented by the petitioners, and that Ceylon is in almost as great a measure indebted to their enterprise as to that of Europeans for the maintenance of its prosperity. And in view of the fact that the European Chamber of Commerce has the privilege of sending a deputy solely to represent its interests, in addition to the two European gentlemen who represent other sections of the European community, the petitioners with due respect venture to hope, and they pray, that Your Excellency will be pleased to take this expression of their wishes, made in assembled nagaram and after due deliberation, into your favourable consideration.

The petitioners beg leave to express to Your Excellency their pain and sorrow at the death of Sir Coomara Swamy, whose many good qualities had endeared him to his constituents, and whose talents and high character made him a tower of strength to them. While deeply deploring his loss, the petitioners have been obliged by the

importance of their interests to turn their attention to the securing of a competent successor, and it is the unanimous and deliberate opinion of their community that their interests would be most efficiently represented by, and most safely entrusted to Mr. P. Rama Nathan, Advocate of the Supreme Court, a nephew of Sir Coomara Swamy, and a grand-son of A. Coomara Swamy Mudaliyar, who, in his time, did only less valuable service to the Tamil-speaking community, as their representative in Council, than his son, Sir Coomara.

The petitioners beg, therefore, to submit to Your Excellency's favourable consideration the name of Mr Rama Nathan as the Gentleman best qualified to fill the vacant seat, and the petitioners humbly pray that Your Excellency will be graciously pleased to appoint him as the Tamil representative in the Legislative Council.

And your humble petitioners as in duty bound,

Shall ever pray.

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Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam

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Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam

(1853 - 1924)

SIR PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM was a scholar, statesman, administrator and patriot. He was the champion of the Reformed Legislature and the father of the Ceylon University Movement. He was a man of wide and varied parts, a great man whose fame shines brighter as years roll by.

He was the youngest of the three sons of Ponnambalam Mudaliyar and Sellachchi, the daughter of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar. He was born in Colombo on the 14th September, 1853. His eldest brothers were Hon'ble Mr. P. Coomaraswamy and Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

Arunachalam attended the Colombo Academy which is now the Royal College. He won the Queen's scholarship and the Turnour Prize for

the best student. Dr. Barcroft Boake, Principal of this Academy wrote:- "In my forty years of experience in the instruction of youth I have never met with any pupil who gave greater evidence of ability and scarcely one who gave so great".

Winning the English University Scholarship in 1870 Arunachalam went on the recommendation of Sir Walter Sendall, then Director of Public Instruction, Ceylon to Christ's College, Cambridge.

He distinguished himself in classics and mathematics, while at Cambridge, winning the Foundation Scholarship at Christ's College.

During Arunachalam's college days at Cambridge, the Archbishop of York who had preached a sermon to Cambridge undergraduates spoke slightly of the Indian religions. The youthful Arunachalam decided that these remarks by the Ven. Archbishop of York should be challenged. He wrote a reply to the Archbishop which was published in the Spectator in 1874.

In 1875 Arunachalam, much against his inclination, was persuaded by his maternal uncle, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, to sit for the Civil Service. He had qualified for the L. L. B. and was ambitious for a legal career in England, but it was not to be. Arunachalam was the first

Ceylonese to enter the Civil Service through the door of open competition.

Arunachalam began his career in the Ceylon Civil Service in April 1875. He was attached for a year to the Government Agent's Office, Colombo, and later to the Police Court at Kandy. For at that time Civil Servants still held Judicial offices.

Judicial Offices

He was given appointments as Police Magistrate and Commissioner of Requests and served at Kalpitiya, Puttalam, Matara, Avisawella, Pasyala, Matale, Kalutara and Colombo. He was District Judge of Chilaw, Kegalle, Kalutara, Batticaloa, and Kurunegala.

Even as a Magistrate at Matara, Arunachalam showed the high quality of his work. His work attracted the favourable attention of Sir John Bhudd Phear — one of the greatest Chief Justices of Ceylon. Before he retired in 1879, Sir John commended Arunachalam's work to the notice of the Governor and the Secretary of State.

In 1886 when Arunachalam was District Judge of Batticaloa, the Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon promoted him over the heads of about thirty seniors and appointed him to act as Registrar General and Fiscal of the Western

Province, because of outstanding merit. A memorial was sent up to the Secretary of State, signed by almost half the Civil Service protesting against the promotion. Sir Arthur Gordon, who recognised merit where he found it, had his way.

Registrar General

The Registrar General's Department was in a chaotic state in 1887. Arunachalam cleaned the Augean stables. He separated the Fiscal Department from the Registrar General's and made them efficient departments. He sat by the side of clerks and patiently got to know their work. Then he launched his reforms. He founded a Benevolent Fund for the Department, which saved many a clerk from the clutch of the rapacious money-lender.

In 1893 Arunachalam wrote to his close friend, William Digby who was a journalist with the Ceylon Observer and later editor of a paper 'India', and who had a keen sense of justice for the inhabitants of the Colonies — to interview the Secretary of State Lord Ripon to urge the grant of an extension of local self-government in Ceylon.

Social Conditions

In 1895 Arunachalam drew the attention of the country to the alarming death rate. This he

attributed to the insanitary condition of the slums; he advocated model tenements and a proper drainage system. The social plight of the poorer classes was presented in such a vivid and arresting manner by Arunachalam that the Government had to take immediate action.

The Census Report of 1901

To Arunachalam was entrusted by the then-Governor, Sir West Ridgeway with the taking of the 1901 Census of Ceylon.

Armand de Sousa, Editor of the 'Morning Leader', wrote:

"The curious reader will find the Report which introduces the Census of 1901 perhaps the most luminous dissertation on the ethnological, social and economic conditions of the Island. A Government official report would be the last document the public would care to read for beauty of diction. But in Sir P. Arunachalam's account of the history and religions of the Island in his Census Report would be found the language of Addison; the eloquence of Macaulay and the historical insight of Mommsen".

Acting Chief Justice Moncriff presiding at a public lecture delivered by Arunachalam said:-

"Mr. Arunachalam is a Classical and Oriental scholar, a master of the English language and literature, whether in law or official work, he has exhibited habits of thoroughness and exactitude and a practical mind. Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit." [There is nothing that he touched that he did not adorn.]

Finding the Civil Law of Ceylon to be in a very uncertain state, Arunachalam embarked single-handed upon the truly heroic task of trying to re-state the law in the form of sections of a Code with a comment explaining each section. He was able to complete only the first volume, dealing with the Law of Persons, of "A Digest of the Civil Law of Ceylon".

Recently three years ago Justice C. G. Weeramantry of the Supreme Court of Ceylon described this book as "assuredly among the classics of modern Roman-Dutch Jurisprudence".

In 1912, Governor Sir Henry McCallum appointed Arunachalam as a Member of the Executive Council. He showed remarkable courage and independence in his task. In 1913 at the close of a debate in the Legislative Council on a Salaries Scheme, he voted with the un-officials against the Government.

He retired from the public service in 1913 with a record of achievement unsurpassed by any officer of the Crown-European or Asian. He was knighted in 1913, receiving the accolade at the hands of King George V at Buckingham Palace. This honour was received with universal acclaim by every section of the public in Ceylon.

In 1913 Sir Ponnambalam left for England. He corresponded with Lord Chalmers, the Governor elect of Ceylon, whom he met and advised him to abolish the Poll-Tax. His activities found little abatement for he served on various Public Commissions.

By 1915 Arunachalam was convinced that Ceylon should agitate for political reforms. He organised the Ceylon National Association which was to become the Ceylon National Congress later.

It was a life-long dream that Arunachalam cherished even whilst a youth at Cambridge to organize a Ceylon National Congress, which would work for the freedom of the country, very much on the same manner as the Indian National Congress which was founded by one of his Cambridge friends, Ananda Mohan Bose and others in 1885 to obtain self-government for India as he himself stated in his Presidential speech at the Ceylon National Congress later in 1919.

The speech that Arunachalam made on a previous occasion on the April 2, 1917 at the Victoria Masonic Hall, Colombo, on "Our Political Needs," was an epoch-making one. It was to be the political Bible for nationalist Ceylonese.

To quote from Arunachalam's addresses —

"In the clash and interaction of minds from daily intercourse and discussion with fellow students and teachers — the most precious gifts of a University to its alumni — and under the spell of the vision of Italy newly arisen from the torpor of centuries, there dawned in the minds of us Oriental students, the idea of a national Renaissance of India and Ceylon."

* * *

"We in Ceylon desire that our Government shall be a Ceylonese Government, that our rulers shall identify themselves entirely with the Ceylonese interests and in the striking words of the Mahavamsa 'be one with the people'."

* * *

"With the increasing complexity of the administration, the concentration of all power in the hands of the officials and the demands on their time and labour, the best of them can only keep pace with the day's work and are

unable to look around or ahead. Important questions affecting our permanent welfare are inevitably neglected."

"We are practically under a benevolent despotism wielded by a Governor who is responsible only to Downing Street; and he exercises his powers through a bureaucracy predominantly European. The Governor changes about once in five or six years, of late oftener. There is no settled policy for him to follow, and therefore no continuity of policy."

"Each Governor makes a policy for himself. He generally spends the first year of his administration looking round and studying local matters and conditions with the help of his Executive Council and Heads of Departments. He prepares a programme and sends it to Downing Street for sanction. Having got it, he subordinates everything to his programme and carries it through the Legislative Council with the help of an Official Majority. What is left of his programme generally goes by the board, for his successor has his own policy and programme."

"There has been no real attempt to train the people in self-government and we have fallen far behind even India. A bitter commentary on the expectations of the Royal Commissioners on whose recommendations our political

and judicial system was organized in 1833. The peculiar circumstances of Ceylon, both physical and moral, seem to point it out to the British Government as the fittest spot in our Eastern dominions in which to plan the germ of European Civilisation, whence we may not unreasonably hope that it will hereafter spread over the whole of these vast territories."

Social Services

Arunachalam was also deeply conscious of improving the social condition of the people.

With the active co-operation of Sir James Peiris, he inaugurated the Ceylon Social Service League on the January 29, 1915. Arunachalam was elected its first President, and the rules drafted by him were adopted by the League. It is interesting to note that these rules were adopted by the Servants of India Society organised by Gokhale.

He started Night Schools to be run by the Social Service League. (The first was one at Deen's Road, Maradana.) He instructed workers in lane by lane visitation of slum-houses. Industrial education was imparted and cottage industries were revived by him.

Arunachalam also suggested the creation of Co-operative Credit Societies to help the people to develop industrial and agricultural enterprises.

A Bureau was opened to secure the craftsman a market for their goods.

Founder of Labour Union

The first Labour Union that was established in Ceylon was founded by Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He was elected its first President and its first Secretary was Mr. Perisunderam who was later to become Minister of Labour under the United National Party regime. He agitated for statutory provision by which minimum wages would be fixed, and hours of labour would be regulated. He also successfully agitated against the criminal penalties such as jail and fines which were imposed on workers who broke their civil contract. He founded the Ceylon Workers Federation in 1920, the earliest Trade Union in the Island with Arunachalam as the guiding hand.

The Educationist

Arunachalam was deeply interested in the education of children. He was among the first to stress the importance of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, be it Tamil or Sinhalese.

He has rightly been called "the father of the Ceylon University". He was persistent in his view that the Governor should establish a "Ceylon University". To begin with Royal College should be raised to a University College. Those who were associated with the work of the

University Movement were his cousin Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Mr. F. L. Woodward, an educationist. He started the Ceylon University Review in 1908.

We quote here an excerpt from Arunachalam's "Plea for a Ceylon University":-

'It will be a chief aim of the Ceylon University, while making efficient provision for the study of English and the assimilation of western culture to take care that our youth do not grow up strangers to their mother-tongue and to their past history and traditions. Here they will learn to use their mother tongue with accuracy and ease, to appreciate the beauties of their classical languages and literatures, to realise that they are inheritors of a great past stretching back twenty four centuries and to make themselves worthy of their inheritance. The vernacular literature of the day will then be rescued from its pedantry and triviality and be made a worthy vehicle for the dissemination of what is best in Western and Eastern Culture and of the thoughts, hopes and aspirations of our best men and women. Then at last the masses of our people will be really influenced for the better by Western civilization, which seems otherwise likely to leave no more enduring mark than

the addition of some European words to our vocabulary and the incorporation of some European customs in our social life".

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam was a scholar and a savant. He was the first Ceylonese to be elected the President of the Ceylon branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1917. Some of his contributions adorn the journal of that society.

The Historian

Among his publications was "Sketches of Ceylon History" in 1906. He published this at a time when even educated Ceylonese were ignorant of the history of our motherland which he described as one of the oldest and most fascinating histories in the world.

His "Sketches of Ceylon History" was first published in 1906 in the Ceylon National Review edited by Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Arunachalam in the opening chapter of his Sketches wrote :-

"It is scarcely creditable to us to remain in such profound ignorance of the history of our Motherland and to be so indifferent to our past and surroundings. It is a great loss, for not only is the history of Ceylon, among the eldest, most interesting and fascinating in the world, going back twenty-four centuries, but no people can break with its past as we are

trying to do. It has been truly said 'a people without a past is as a ship without ballast' How dreary too, is the life of many of our educated men and women, with eyes fixed and ideals formed on Bayswater and Clapham, and their intellectual food trashy novels and magazines."

The concluding paragraph of the Sketches reads thus.....

"Over the garden gate of my old College (Christ's) at Cambridge — the College of Milton and of Darwin — stands the motto of the noble foundress, the Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII. The motto is Souvent me Souvient ("It often comes to my mind" "Often am I reminded"). It is a perpetual reminder to successive generations of her family and her College of her ancestor's loyalty to duty, to king and country and to high ideals. Well would it be for us Ceylonese if we too kept fresh in our hearts the deeds done and the great ideals cherished by our ancestors and strove to make ourselves worthy of our inheritance".

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Several of Arunachalam's writings have been published under the title of "Studies and Trans-

lations - Philosophical and Religious" — published in 1937. This shows the wide extent of his knowledge of European as well as of Sanskrit, Tamil, and Pali literature. His rendering of some of the hymns of Saints Manickavasagar and Thayumanavar are invaluable. The famous Tamil scholar Dr. G. U. Pope refers appreciatively to his translations from the Tamil. In the notes to the Purananuru translations we are given the English translation with parallel passages from Greek and Latin. Arunachalam suggests that in some places the Tamil poet has surpassed his western classical counterparts.

This book "Sketches and Translations....." contains an appreciative foreword by Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, the eminent Indian statesman and scholar.

Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar wrote:-

"The world cannot be sufficiently grateful to Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam for having in his philosophical and religious "Studies and Translations" unlocked these treasures of thought and of language to those wholly or partially unacquainted with the wonders of Tamil thought and Tamil poesy..."

"He has discussed such varied subjects as "Luminous Sleep" — the sleep in which while there is no darkness or oblivion but

perfect consciousness a state of being which has been referred to in Plato and Tennyson and realised by the yogis in India "

'Not the least valuable and stimulating amongst the essays collected in this volume is the reprint of an Address on the "Eastern Ideals of Education and their bearing on Modern Problems" ... There is embedded in it much original thought evolved by one to whom Greek, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil literature were equally open books. The significance and value of his contributions are enhanced by the circumstance that the author was not a cloistered savant nor a recluse but was one who as a great lawyer and administrator exemplified in his own life the achievements, the supreme exemplar of which was King Janaka of Mithila. It was my privilege to have personally known Sir P. Arunachalam and his equally distinguished brother Sir P. Ramanathan and I account it a piece of good fortune to have the privilege of introducing this volume to a world which will be all the better for the knowledge and assimilation of that varied culture whereof the author was an exponent as well as an embodiment."

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Arunachalam founded the Ceylon Tamil League in 1923. His main idea was to make

this into a social and cultural organisation for the Tamils.

He also founded a "Senthamil Paripalana Sabai", to foster Tamil literature and Tamil research, which was inaugurated at Navalar Saiva-prakasa Vidyasalai at Vannarpannai, Jaffna

He reformed the Colombo Saiva Paripalana Sabai, (which encouraged the study and practice of Saivism) into the Ceylon Saiva Paripalana Sabai of which he was President.

Lady Arunachalam and he built the Sivan Temple at Mutwal over the "Samadhi" of Anaikutty Swamy - (a sage).

Arunachalam cherished the idea of having a Central Institution for the Hindus, somewhere in the Cinnamon Gardens as he felt that the young Hindus were in danger of losing their heritage.

He helped to safeguard the Kataragama shrine. He wrote a comprehensive essay on Kataragama which was published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch).

Arunachalam had as his spiritual Guru — a Gnani from Tanjore. He introduced this "Gnani", or Seer, to Edward Carpenter, a very dear friend of his from his undergraduate days at Cambridge. Edward Carpenter recounts his visit to Kurune-

galla to see his friend Arunachalam (who was then District Judge) and his meeting the spiritual preceptor in his descriptive work "From Adam's Peak to Elephanta". Carpenter also wrote a book "A Visit to a Gnani", where he explains for the benefit of western readers the doctrines of Saiva Siddhanta, as expounded by his Guru.

In Carpenter's autobiographical "My days and Dreams", he also expresses his great indebtedness to Arunachalam for having introduced him into the Bhagavad Gita and how that influenced the ideas which he was to embody in his famous book "Towards Democracy".

After Arunachalam's death, Carpenter published some of his friends's letters to him under the title of "Light from the East" - which contain the quintessence of the wisdom of the Saiva Siddhanta. Further letters of Arunachalam to Carpenter are found among the papers in the Sheffield Central Library.

The following extracts from Carpenter's "My Days and Dreams" and from "Light from the East" give glimpses of Carpenter's estimate of his friend Arunachalam:-

My Days and Dreams, Edward Carpenter, pages, 250-253:-

"I will conclude this chapter with a few brief notes on my almost life-long friend Arunachalam. I feel that I owe a great debt to him because long ago, in '80 perhaps or '81 he gave me a translation of a book, then little known in England, the Bhagavat Gita — the reading of which as I think I have said before, curiously liberated and set in movement the mass of material which had already formed within me, and which was then waiting to take shape as "Towards Democracy". As when a ship is ready to launch, a very little thing, the mere knocking away of a prop, will set her going; so - though it was something more than that - did the push of the Bhagavat Gita act on "Towards Democracy". It gave me the needed cue, and concatenated my work to the Eastern tradition."

"I first came across Arunachalam at a meeting of the Chit-Chat or some such society at Cambridge, when he was an undergraduate of Christ's and I a newly made Fellow of Trinity Hall. As in the case of other Hindus his extra-ordinary quickness and receptiveness of mind had very quickly rendered him au fait in all our British ways and institutions. With engagingly good and natural manners, humorous and with some of the

Tamil archness and bedevilment about him he was already a favourite in his own college - and at that time these early comers to the Universities from India were certainly received by our students with more friendliness and sense of equality than they are today."

"His father having been a wealthy man and occupying a good position in Ceylon, Arunachalam had received a good education and was fairly well up in Greek and Latin, French and German, and their literature, besides his own Eastern languages like Tamil and Sanskrit. Altogether he was a very taking all round sort of fellow capable of talking on most subjects, and full of interested inquiry about all. Many were the afternoons or evenings we spent together - walking or boating or sitting by the fireside in College rooms - and I learned much from him about the literature of India and the manners and customs of the mainland and Ceylon. When he left Cambridge he went to London and studied Law for some years, and then going out to Ceylon joined the Civil Service there, and in due time became Judge, Registrar General, and finally Member of the Legislative Council. In 1890 he wrote to me about the Gnani Ramaswamy whose acquaintance he had made, and asked me to come out and meet him; and I gladly

went - for it just chimed in with my wishes at the time; and, as I have told in my Gnani and elsewhere, for six weeks or so we called on the Guru every day and absorbed all he had to say on the traditional esoteric philosophy of India in general and of the Tamils in particular. After settling in Ceylon, Arunachalam paid from time to time various visits to England, at one time to bring his wife over, at another to put his sons to College and so on. The last occasion was in 1913 when he received a tardy recognition of his really important services to the Crown in the form of a knighthood."

"On these occasions, whether he was conversing with the humblest of my friends at Millthorpe or at Sheffield, or with high officials and "great ladies" in London his manners had always just the same charming frankness and grace about them, which established at once the human relation as the paramount thing. And yet this man, whose artistic culture and practical knowledge of the world was miles above most people he met, had often to suffer from the boorish rudeness of Anglo-Indians in his own land, or of belated Britishers on board ship. Alas! for the vulgarity of my countrymen.

I cannot leave him without one little anecdote. Being a guest on some occasion

at a Mansion House dinner he was duly of course introduced to the various big wigs present, and took his seat with the rest; but immediately caused consternation (being a Vegetarian) by refusing turtle-soup and other carnivorous dishes in favour of spinach, potatoes and the like, and finally nearly wrecked the whole show by asking for a glass of water! Such a thing had never been heard of before. Waiters hurried to and fro, but water could not be found; and at last with many apologies, he was asked to put up with a bottle of Apollinaris ("Whiskey, Sir, with it?" "No thank you.")!

Selections from *Light from the East* by Edward Carpenter. Extracts from the letters of Arunachalam to Edward Carpenter.

From the Introduction (pages 27, 28 & 29)

"I may, in concluding this introductory chapter, dwell for a moment on some characteristics of Arunachalam himself. One of these was (to me at least, since my own mind works rather slowly) the surprising rapidity of his thought. And with this rapidity went, as its natural accompaniment, an extreme receptivity. I was often impressed by the ease and celerity with which he drank in and absorbed all sorts of different and recondite matters (doubly difficult to a foreigner) as e.g., a question of procedure in the House

of Commons, while at the same time this receptiveness was healthily counterbalanced by a certain almost elfish spirit of chaff and opposition which one might notice at times.

This last peculiarity is, I am inclined to think, characteristic of the Tamils, who are noted for their originality and their sturdy independence of mind. For the Tamils, indeed as a people. I have always felt a strange sympathy and admiration. Their perception of the Occult and the Magical is quite remarkable and is felt, I believe, as a pervasive influence in their philosophy and poetry.

x

x

x

In 1883 Arunachalam married Svarnam, daughter of Namaswayam Mudaliyar, originally of Manipal, later settled at Colombo. They had eight sons and five daughters.

Arunachalam undertook a pilgrimage to South India towards the end of 1923 and when he was at Madurai, he passed away on the 9th January 1924.

The eldest of his sons, Padmanabha died in London in 1921 and the youngest Ramanathan, in 1939 and the second Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva in June 1969.

Among the daughters now living are:- Lady Padmavathi Pararajasingam and Mrs. Sivanan-

dan Tambyah-the mother of Professor T. Nadaraja (Professor of Law, University of Ceylon, Peradeniya) an alumni of Cambridge University).

After Arunachalam's death a movement with Sir James Peiris as chairman of the Arunachalam Statue Committee, was set afoot to perpetuate his memory.

A statue — the first to be erected in Parliamentary Square — was unveiled on April 23, 1930. The anniversary of his death is an occasion of national importance and celebration; admirers gather to garland the statue.

Portraits of Arunachalam were unveiled at his old school, the Royal College and at the offices of the Ceylon Social Service League and the Ceylon National Congress of both of which he was the first President. The University of Ceylon also named its first Hall of Residence at Peradeniya, Arunachalam Hall in 1951. By his Will he left money to the University of Ceylon for valuable prizes and scholarships. The gift of a large collection of books from the library of his late son Padmanabha (who died prematurely in England in 1921) formed the nucleus of the library of the newly formed 'Ceylon University College' established in 1921.

SUPPLEMENT

Excerpt: — From Population, from Arunachalam, pages 340 & 341.

An answer to Who are the Ceylon Tamils ?

'The Ceylon Tamils are the descendants of the bands of Tamils who came over, upon the invitation of the first Sinhalese king Vijaya, and his successors to develop the country, and later bands, by whom Ceylon was frequently overrun, and who on several occasions acquired the supreme power. The indigenous Tamils inhabit for the most part the Northern and Eastern provinces. The Jaffna District which is the chief centre of the population, is (says Sir Emerson Tennent) "almost the only place in Ceylon of which it might be said that no one is idle or unprofitably employed.....There is a satisfaction experienced in no other part of Ceylon in visiting their villages and farms and in witnessing the industrious habits and improved processes of the peasantry". The indigenous Tamils receive yearly large accessions from the Tamils on the continent, and together with them are among the principal factors of the Island's prosperity. At the census of 1901 the immigrant Tamil coolie population of the Tea estates numbered nearly half a million, and in some districts such as Nuvara Eliya, was greatly in excess of the indigenous population.

Bishop Caldwell writes:-

"All throughout Ceylon the coolies in the coffee (now tea) plantations are Tamilians; the majority of the money making classes even in Colombo are Tamilians The majority of the domestic servants of Europeans and of the camp followers in every part of the Presidency of Madras being Tamil people; Tamil is the prevailing language in all the military contonments in Southern India, whatever the vernacular language of the district. The majority of the Kalingas or Hindus who are found in the further East are Tamilians: a large proportion of the coolies who have emigrated in such numbers to the Mauritius and to the West Indian colonies (South Africa might now be added) are Tamilians. In short, wherever money is to be made, wherever a more apathetic people waiting to be pushed aside, thither swarm the Tamilians, the Greeks or the Scotch of the East, the least superstitious and the most enterprising and persevering race of Hindus."

The chief Tamil settlement, which is at Jaffna, is said by tradition to have been founded by a blind minstrel from the Choli country of South India,,

ADDENDA

As the nephew of Sir MuttuCoomaraswamy Sir P. Arunachalam was welcomed in the household of Moncton Milnes. He later kept up a correspondence with his son, the Marquis of Crewe.*

The first issue of the Ceylon Daily News which was published on January 3, 1918 contained a special message from Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

It is remarkable that the men who were at Cambridge, namely Sir James Peiris, who was the first Asian to be the President of the Union Society, influenced the history of Ceylon by becoming the President of the Legislative Council of Ceylon. Jawaharlal Nehru went to Trinity College, Cambridge. How Cambridge affected Arunachalam can be seen by his account of Cambridge in "Sketches of Ceylon History."

* Life of Wijewardene by Hulugalla, page 60

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London Times 6th February 1924 page 14, Column F.

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3

Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy

(1877 - 1947)

NATIONALIST in the cultural sphere and interpreter of the East to the West, Ananda Coomaraswamy is the Ceylonese scholar best known in international circles.

He was the son of Sir Muttu Ccomaraswamy the first knight in Asia, and the grandson of Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar, the first Tamil Legislative Councilor of Ceylon. His mother was Elizabeth Clay Beeby, the descendant of an old English family. Ananda Coomaraswamy was born at "Rhineland", a mansion situated where Rhine-



Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy

land Place now stands at Colpetty on August 2 1877.

Ananda Coomaraswamy, then an infant eight months old, was taken to England by his mother, Lady Coomaraswamy in April 1878 because of her declining health. Within two years of Ananda's birth, his father Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy died prematurely at the age of 45 on May 4, 1879 on the very day that he was to have set sail for London.

Ananda Coomaraswamy was educated at Wycliffe College, Gloucestershire, and later at University College London. He passed the London Intermediate in Arts examination in Science with Honours in Botany in 1899. He passed the London Bachelor of Science examination with first class Honours in Botany and Geology in 1900. He thereafter proceeded to obtain the degree of Doctorate of Science at the London University and was made a Fellow of the University College, London.

He was appointed as Director of the Mineralogical Survey of Ceylon in 1903 and continued to be so till 1906. Ananda Coomaraswamy did much research work on the geology of Ceylon. He made the first geological map of the Kandy district. He discovered the metal called Thorianite; he did not give his name to that metal, as other scientists would have done.

"An open Letter to the Kandyan Chiefs" published in 1905 was intended to open the eyes of the Sinhalese to the threat posed to their ancient culture by Western influences.

Ananda Coomaraswamy together with W. A. de Silva and F L Woodward started the "Ceylon National Review" in 1905 and continued to edit it from 1905 to 1907.

In 1905 he published "Burrowed Plumes". In it Coomaraswamy appealed to the Ceylonese to arouse in them a sense of their own traditions and national culture - language, literature, art, music and dress. He advocated a complete nationalism in dress and manners.

Soon after a meeting was convened at 'Museum Hall' in Colombo and a Ceylon Social Reform Society was formed on April 22, 1905, of which Coomaraswamy was elected President.

In 1906 he published "Anglicization of the East", "Kandyan Art, what it meant and how it ended", "Two Kandyan Brass Boxes", "Old Sinhalese Embroidery" and "A Handbook to the Exhibition of Arts and Crafts in connection with the Ceylon Rubber Exhibition". "Kandyan Art, what it meant and how it ended" was a warm expression of feeling as well as an appeal to others to participate in a revival. "Old Sinhalese Embroidery" is very clear and accurate.

In 1907 Ananda Coomaraswamy published "India and Ceylon" and "The deeper meaning of the struggle between the English and the Indians".

Coomaraswamy and Woodward were associated with the "Ceylon University Association" founded in 1908, of which the first President was the founder's cousin, P. Arunachalam. In that year Coomaraswamy published "Vegetarianism in Ceylon" and "Medieval Sinhalese Art" - a classic on that subject.

The "Medieval Sinhalese Art" had chapters on Sinhalese art of the 18th century, social economy of the period, system of education of the youth, of the artificers and discussed the teachers and their training. There were also separate chapters on architecture, stone-work, wood-work, painting, weaving, embroidery, pottery, smithery and mat-making.

This book was a result of studies of ancient forms of art and paintings, sometimes found in caves overgrown with forests. He realised the intimate links between the art, the culture and the religion of the people. Before his time, there was no book of this kind; after this was published (only 500 were published in hand-made paper) this became a treasure-house for future generations of nationalists. The Ceylon Government realising its worth, has reprinted this.

in 1956 and also published a translation of the same in Sinhalese recently.

In 1908 Ananda Coomaraswamy published "The Influence of Greek on Indian Art" and "Netra Mangalya or Ceremony of painting the eyes of images."

Coomaraswamy left Ceylon in 1908 for England to seek wider fields of study. He settled down at Campden in Gloucestershire where he set up a printing press once used by William Morris and published "Ceylon Art", "30 Indian Songs, etc." He went to India where he was placed in charge of the Art Section of the United Provinces in Allahabad. Where he worked from 1910 for six years. He initiated a movement towards a national educational system for India and left for Boston in 1919.

Coomaraswamy's "Essays in National Idealism", "The Message of the East" and "Mahayana Buddhist Images from Ceylon and Java" were published in 1909. The "Oriental View of Woman", "Art and Swadeshi", "Domestic Handicraft and Culture", "Indian Drawings", "Selected Examples of Indian Art", "Indian Bronzes" and "The Arts and Crafts of Indian and Ceylon" were published in 1910.

Long before Mahatma Gandhi became the pole-star of India, Ananda Coomaraswamy had sowed the seeds of cultural nationalism in the

minds of Asian youth, particularly the Ceylonese and the Indians, from the beginning of the present century. Even eminent leaders in India, such as Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society from 1904, copiously quoted Ananda Coomaraswamy's writings in their speeches.

Hans Kohn in his "History of Nationalism in the East" says:-

"A far reaching revolution took place in a quarter of a century. Social reforms acquired a new meaning. Indian nationalism learned a new speech. The Shastris and Pandits of today approve of what would have wounded their susceptibilities profoundly a generation ago. The Asiatic cult has assumed new forms, corresponding to Europe's expressionist tendencies, her reaching out towards the mythical and primitive; the roots of nationalism struck deeper, man meditated upon its spiritual value, as is seen in the writings of Coomaraswamy and his contemporaries and all has reached its climax in Gandhi's agitation"

Coomaraswamy was an ardent nationalist, but with cultural rather than political orientation. He supported the movement for national education, the teaching of the national languages (Tamil or Sinhalese) in all schools and the revival of Indian culture and became the President of the Ceylon Reform Society with these objectives.

Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer said (an excerpt of his appreciation in Homage to Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy, page 148) : -

"Combining in himself a deep knowledge of Buddhistic philosophical and artistic masterpiece and those of the Aryan and Dravidian intellect and spirit Dr. Coomaraswamy started a movement for national education in Lanka in the vernaculars as an essential preliminary to the revival of Indian culture."

Dr. Coomaraswamy stressed the importance of preserving and fostering the folk arts of Ceylon, India and other countries. He was interested in the simple humanity and unsophisticated art of the people. The trend of his interests in the direction of social reform, political advance, revival of national arts and the absorbing study of all things pertaining to eastern countries.

Dr. Coomaraswamy's concept of nationalism was that it was a duty, that it should be rooted in a lofty idealism, and that its highest was in literature, art, philosophy and religion. He did not consider nationalism separate from internationalism which recognized the rights and worth of other nations to be even as one's own.

He has been acclaimed:-

"What Dr. C. V. Raman and Dr. J. C. Bose contributed to Science, Dr. A. K. Coomara-

swamy contributed to aesthetics and related metaphysics. Dr. Coomaraswamy seems to have done one step further in not only unravelling the folds of Indian culture for Westerners, but also projecting new clarities on Western philosophical doctrines in his fields of aesthetics and related metaphysics by their comparison with their Indian replica."

Coomaraswamy was a savant. The learned quality of all his works shows his familiarity with the literature of many diverse fields of learning written in nearly a score of languages - western and eastern.

Having been trained as a scientist who later became a student of culture, it had always been his aim, he explained in his writings, "to endeavour to speak with mathematical precision but never employ words of our own or make any affirmations for which authority could not be cited by chapter and verse."

Coomaraswamy was a master of English style; he had a chiselled simplicity, limpid purity, a directness and pointedness of phrase, vigour of thought more than charm of style - that is the secret of his power.

The volume of Coomaraswamy's publications is truly prodigious. It is said that when he was sixty (in 1937) he had collected enough material to publish for the next sixty years.

"The Dance of Siva" by Coomaraswamy crystallises the great concepts of the Cosmic Dance of the Hindu God. There is science, and art and philosophy in his conception. Romain Rolland in his Foreword to the "Dance of Siva" says:—

"Nationalism does not suffice for the great idealists of Young India. Patriotism is but a local interest.....Great souls have greater destinies to fulfil. Life, not merely the life of India, demands our great devotion. The happiness of the human race is of more import to us than any party triumph. The chosen people of the future can be no nation, no race, but an aristocracy of the whole world, in whom the vigour of European action will be united to the serenity of Asiatic thought".

Romain Rolland, that advocate of Internationalism says:—

"Ananda Coomaraswamy is one of those great Hindus who nourished like Tagore on the culture of Europe and Asia and justifiably proud of their splendid civilisation have conceived the task of working for the Union of Eastern and Western thought for the good of Humanity."

To the student of Eastern Culture the following books of Coomaraswamy will appeal to him or her

- (1) Indian Dances
- (2) Hindu Sculpture - the Mahesvara Group and South Indian Bronzes.

- (3) Medieval and Modern Hindu Religion
- (4) Indian - Sinhalese Art and Architecture
- (5) Indian and Indo Chinese Bronzes
- (6) The place of the Arts in Indian Life.

"Arts Islamica" Vol. II was published in 1942 on Coomaraswamy's 65th birthday contains a bibliography of his writings, 494 items in all.

"Why Exhibit works of Art?" was published in 1943. Coomaraswamy here has interpreted Indian thought forms, such as the allegories of Lord Natarajah's dancing, the Cosmic dance, Krishna, the protector of his flock and the eternal virgin "Kanya Kumari".

"Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought" was published on July 21, 1946. This is a masterly presentation of Coomaraswamy's views on aesthetics

About "Am I my Brother's Keeper" published on April 23, 1947, a critic in the London Times said:—

"It is one of those rare books which force us to think of man, not as occidental or oriental, but as the embodiment of the ageless human spirit"

"A History of Indian and Indonesian Art" was Coomaraswamy's "magnum opus" It is a masterly survey of Indian art in all its phases. It traces

how both Hindu and Buddhist culture form the warp and woof of south-eastern countries of Asia particularly of Indonesia.

Among other works of Coomaraswamy which are interesting and informative are: "Art in the East and in the West" "Indian, Persian and Islamic Art, philosophy and Metaphysics" and "Transformation of Nature in Art."

Philosophy or Religion, Linguistic or Sculpture, Sociology or Folk-lore whatever field Ananda Coomaraswamy wrote on, he brought his analytical genius into operation. His profound views covered many fields. The different systems of philosophy Coomaraswamy opined were parts of the same truth. The subtlety of the mind of the Oriental and the scientific approach of the Occidental, Coomaraswamy combined in happy measure.

Coomaraswamy was not for a socialism of the Western pattern, but for Humanism, the veritable socialism of Ancient India.

Rural welfare, rural centres, rural education are very familiar today in Asia. It was Ananda Coomaraswamy who first advocated these concepts. He was for reviving decentralised cottage production. Unlike Gandhiji whose idea of "Swadeshi" was political and economic, Coomaraswamy's idea of it was essentially cultural and spiritual.

Coomaraswamy held that civilisation was not a matter of possessions, but of the spirit. He preferred India to set herself deliberately to achieve real happiness and spiritual progress of her people even at the cost of material wealth.

Coomaraswamy did not want capitalism with all the attendant evils, unequal distribution of wealth, crass profit motive, commercialisation, sham life and vice. It mistook progress and culture for increase in material comfort and self-indulgence.

Coomaraswamy believed in economic democracy and self-government; he wanted ordinary articles of every day use to be beautiful. Life should be simple; there should be time for thought and reflection, for art and human companionship. Coomaraswamy would have an economic and social order of such a kind.

Coomaraswamy was for cultural revival. Even if we have secured political freedom and economic prosperity, if in the process we have lost our soul, we have lost all.

Coomaraswamy saw the need for national schools, 'slokas' from the Gita, vows of truth and non-violence. He knew the great educative and cultural value of handicrafts.

Yoga is skill in action said Bhagavat Gita. "Yoga" said Coomaraswamy, "is mental concen-

tration carried so far as to overlooking of all distinction between the subject and object of contemplation, a means of achieving harmony or unity consciousness". Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy undoubtedly answers to the above description of one who practises Yoga - a yogi. He was known as a Kala Yogi. Kala meaning the Fine Arts. He was the prophet of a new age. He was the greatest authority on Indian Art. His was always the traditional view of art as the projection of eternal realities rather than the accidents of human character and society.

Dr. Coomaraswamy said on January 1944 to the Indian students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"Make Indian culture your foundation, and western technique (in so far as it makes for quality, and not merely for quantity) your means. Beg, borrow, buy or steal modern inventions, if you must in self defence, but do not imitate modern ways of thinking or forget that however novel these ways may seem to us, they are already stale in their own environment. I warn you, to invert the well-known Indian parable that what you take for a rope may be really a snake, and that to weaken, however little, is to play with fire in a forest."

That was his message to the youth of India.

Coomaraswamy was a Fellow of the Linnean Society and the Geological Society and a mem-

ber of the Royal Asiatic Society. He contributed articles to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the Atheneum, the Burlington Review and many other British and foreign publications.

He was Fellow for Research in India, Persian and Mohammedan Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from 1919 till his death.

He died at 649, Smith Street, Needham Massachusetts, in the U S. A. on September 9, 1947, shortly after his 70th birthday was celebrated in many parts of the world. After living for nearly thirty years in Boston, Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy had announced his intention to leave America and settle down in the foothills of the Himalayas. But this wish of his was not realised

Coomaraswamy was indeed a many sided genius. It was remarked of him that he had the power of intense concentration on what he was doing, whether designing a picture, copying a figure, painting a fine page or writing an article. By heredity he had been endowed with a finely complex brain, a rich Karmic record of past lives, and to this he added immense powers of concentration.

Coomaraswamy was tall of aquiline features, handsome, had a distinguished bearing, wearing European clothes with a turban when in Ceylon and India.

Eric Gill, the distinguished Art Critic, wrote in his autobiography :-

"There was one person to whom I think William Rothenstein introduced me, whom I might not have met otherwise and to whose influence I am deeply grateful, I mean the philosopher and theologian Ananda Coomaraswamy. Others have written the truth about life and religion and man's work. Others have written good clear English. Others have had the gift of witty exposition. Others have understood the metaphysics of Christianity and others have understood the true significance of erotic drawings and sculpture. Others have seen the relationship of the true and the good and the beautiful. Others have had apparently unlimited learning. Others have loved; others have been kind and generous. But I know of no one else in whom all these gifts and all these powers have been combined. I dare not confess myself his disciple, that would only embarrass him. I can only say that I believe that no other living writer has written the truth in matters of art and life and religion and piety with such wisdom and understanding."

He left behind him Mrs. Dona Louisa Coomaraswamy who was a photographer of her own right, a son Rama and two daughters.

Supplement

Mrs. Dona Louisa Coomaraswamy was interviewed on or about the 82nd Anniversary of Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy by Mr. R. N. Sivapirakasam, the Editor of the Hindu Organ.

Editor Sivapirakasam - "I took particular interest in including Boston in my visit to pay homage to the most distinguished son of Lanka".

Mrs. Coomaraswamy: - "The best way for the world to pay homage to him is to produce many more Coomaraswamys."

The Editor thereupon suggested that Mrs. Coomaraswamy should visit India and Ceylon:

Mrs. Coomaraswamy. - "This is good, I grew up in a village and stayed in India and would not have come back to America if not for my revered husband. It was there that I studied Sanscrit. I consider myself extremely fortunate I have learnt by example from him how to keep myself busy."

Hindu Organ, August. 28, 1959

x x x

"The collected writings run into volumes - who knows how many?"

x x x

"This work is only a recording of all Indian work. Every footnote, every reference could be the title of a book or an article. By no means can this be the last work of this kind. It will be an encyclopaedia of directions for the future scholars and students doing work of this nature.....Scholars should be summoned to a Round Table Conference to compile a compendium."

Greenpath, Colombo, where the National Gallery was situated, has been renamed as Ananda Coomaraswamy Road in his honour. Long live the name of cultural emancipator Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy!

The Government of Ceylon has honoured itself by issuing a stamp with a bust portrait of Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy on November 27, 1971. It was released first at Manipay Post Office — the home of his ancestors. Long live the name of Cultural Emancipator Kala Yogi Ananda Coomaraswamy.

From "Burrowed Plumes" 1905 by Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy

"I do not know which was the worse looking. The mother had on a filthy blouse half unbuttoned it through which the angularities of bony corsette were easy to be seen and a long skirt dragging in the mud

half hid a very ancient dove-heeled pair of black leathern shoes. The child had on a very ugly straw hat, with a bedraggled leather in it, a red dress and tight pointed shoes. Those were not the paupers of the village as might be supposed, but thought rather well of themselves, and were looked up to, as wearing European dress. They were the local converts to a foreign religion and a foreign dress, equally unnatural and equally misunderstood. And therewith came before my mind all I had seen in the last two years of the ruin of native life and manners before advancing civilisation which last indeed I had sometimes escaped in the remoter jungle districts, but which after all, dogs one's footsteps everywhere. I thought of all the natives I had seen in European dress, and of the ladies, there was not one who looked other than vulgar; I think it is quite impossible for a native lady to look anything but vulgar in European dress, or anything but a lady in her own. I thought of the homes of native friends, how they were filled with ugly and useless furniture and ornaments, utterly unsuited to their needs, and pitiful even as specimens of the worst that the European trader can turn out. I thought of the way in which all native ways of courtesy and beauty are daily more and more despised, and free and easy European manners assumed by the well-to-do English speaking native; and I knew it to be a part of what is happening all the world over, the continual destruction of national charac-

ter and individuality and art by "the ceaseless pressure of what in bitter unconscious irony is called the civilizing factor; the deadening of a new and dull ideal of prosperity the losing of old virtues in the half eager, half sullen assumption of other ways and manners" (Fiona Macleod).

I thought how different it might be if we Ceylonese were bolder and more independent, not afraid to stand on our own legs, and not ashamed of our own nationalities. Why do we not meet the wave of civilization on equal terms, reject the evil and choose the good? Our eastern civilization was here 2000 years ago; shall its spirit be broken utterly before the new commercialism of the west; or shall we be strong enough to hold our national ideals intact, to worship beauty in the midst of ugliness, to remember the old wisdom and yet not despise the new? I fear not. Yet if the hope be forlorn, it is the more to be fought for; neither will the result be measured by immediate and apparent effects. Can we not join the tiny handful in the west that stand for the ideal, and help to make men masters of the art of life instead of slaves of civilization? Sometimes I think the eastern spirit is not dead, but sleeping, and may yet play a great part in the world's spiritual life. "It is not ill to dream, in a day when there are too few who will withdraw from a continual business."

From "Burrowed Plumes" by Ananda Coomaraswamy (1905) and Excerpts from S. THURAI RAJA SINGAM's recent pamphlet:—

* A NEW PLANET IN MY KEN *

INTRODUCTION TO

Ananda Coomaraswamy

"Please, Sir, tell me still more," said the son.

"Be it so, my child," the father replied.

— Chandogya Upanishad.

How many of you have heard of Ananda Coomaraswamy, a Kala Yogi? It is a name of which every one, particularly Indian and Ceylonese, should be proud. Most of us have hardly heard of him or read any of his books or writings. It is only a name to some.

More than forty five years ago, as a young boy of twelve, I first heard of Ananda Coomaraswamy. To our little home in Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia, my father brought one evening a new red-covered book. It was the "History of Jaffna" in Tamil by the late A. Moototambipillai. All that I could remember my father telling me to do was to look at the pictures of the distinguished Ponnambalam brothers and that of their illustrious cousin Dr Ananda Coomaraswamy. Years rolled by I had forgotten the last mentioned name, not

having heard anything further. I had seen and talked to the illustrious brothers Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and heard of their eldest brother Ponnambalam Coomaraswamy.

Months later at a concert given at Nallur, Jaffna, Ceylon, I witnessed an Indian dance performed by a youth's organisation in honour of the visit of Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins to Jaffna. My teacher, Professor T. Muttucumaru, asked me if I had read any of the writings of Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy. He went on to speak of his writings with the enthusiasm of a disciple I could only recall the photograph in the red book which my father had brought home. Nor did I know of him and my answer to my teacher seated by my side was in the negative.

The account I had heard of Ananda Coomaraswamy from my teacher had the effect of my reading his Essays in National Idealism.....I liked especially the references in his writings dealing with the cultural connections between India and Ceylon we discovered truths so profound that we bent our knees before him and sought for more from him. The experience I have gathered after reading his books has been of no mean order. In spite of all that has been done for Indian studies we were unable to understand many aspects of Indian Art and philosophy. Coomaraswamy made

us to be much in advance of those Indians and Ceylonese to whom he has been a closed book. The supreme interest in his writings lies in what he explains of our heritage, that has been shaped in the course of several thousand years. || Never will a reader turn un-Indian in foreign lands after a perusal of his writings. When we were boys, the study of India meant the study of a country where stress was laid upon fights and dynastic figures rather than upon the evolution of the religious and social institutions and the religious ideals of India. We did not study India in the light of her living cultural tradition. This was the B C. era of Indian art — Before Coomaraswamy. For such a study one must sit at the feet of Coomaraswamy. He has rightly taught us to believe that the key to new conquests lies always in taking up earnestly our connections with the past and the man or woman unaware of his or her heritage has no future. For my own part, I cannot help thinking that Coomaraswamy has contributed in a vast measure towards the growth of traditional movements in India, the crowning point of which has now been achieved. He laid the germ of a powerful movement that developed in later years towards securing the advance that India and Ceylon have made. His writings has built up a consciousness of national life. As a sincere patriot he took an active interest in the welfare of India and played an im-

portant role in the national regeneration of his country. His contribution to the awakening of India is very great. Though he lived for more than 30 years in America far away from India he was Indian to the very marrow of his bones and lived every minute for the cause of Indian Art and Thought, in fact he lived for the realisation of the Self. Like a true nation builder he revealed a vision of India to her sons and daughters. In the sphere of art he waved aside the curtains that for years had obscured the great artistic heritage of India. Now that the bonds of the East have been broken it is all to his credit that a proper appreciation of Eastern art is being made. Swami Vivekananda, Poet Tagore and Ananda Coomaraswamy form a great triad. *These great men have performed the task of interpreting Eastern culture to the synthetic civilization of the West in the realms of religion, poetry and art. Great personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghose and Ananda Coomaraswamy have met with deep understanding and appreciation in the West.

As soon as World War II concluded and it was possible to communicate with the outside world. I began to correspond with Kalayogi Coomaraswamy. His letters are great gifts which I treasure. Today an artist's sketch of Ananda Coomaraswamy is on my table. Several of his rare books, some autographed by him, are on my bookshelf. A biographical extract from a "Who's Who" is on my

table and my own library has been named "Ananda Coomaraswamy Home Library." There is my youngest boy Ananda, who received Gurudev's blessings, keeping company with the other children Gandhi, Jawaharlal and Rabindra, to remind me of Ananda Coomaraswamy who became my own GURUDEV and from whom I have had the good fortune to have had his love in abundant measure. And finally it is Gurudev Ananda Coomaraswamy who (as the Poet Rabindranath Tagore declared in Gitanjali)

*"made me known to friends whom I knew not,
given me seats in homes not my own, brought
the distant near, and made a brother of the
stranger."*

THOUGHT GEMS OF

Kalayogi Ananda Coomaraswamy

(SOME SELECTIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS AND
SPEECHES — SELECTED AND ARRANGED)

1. Thirty years ago my father was the leading Tamil in Ceylon and it will recur to most of you that he himself had become exceedingly westernized. At that time it was necessary both that we should in some measure adapt ourselves to a changed environment and also prove ourselves capable of equalling the attainments of Western men on their own lines. Had he lived, I cannot doubt that (like my cousins, Messrs. Arunachalam and Ramana-
than, who also at one time trod the same path) he would have seen that we were liable to overshoot the mark and he would have been the first to preserve and protect the national ideals and Eastern traditions with which our lives and those of our forefathers are inextricably bound up. It is therefore fitting that his son should carry on such work. Of my mother I may say that it was her hope that her marriage with my father would contribute to a better understanding and sympathy between English and Tamils for whom she felt

great admiration and affection and I may say I am now working for a cause which has her fullest sympathy.

2. I was not bred on Indian soil, yet now when I go about my friends in India. I often find they quarrel with me because I am much too Indian in my ways of thinking for their anglicised tastes.
3. If I were not getting solid food out of scholarship, I would drop it tomorrow, and spend my days fishing and gardening !
4. Every man holds dear his homeland. As for me, my love for India is my destiny. I feel for her what a child feels towards her parents.
5. Look at this house. I don't have a radio because I can't stand one. The longer I have lived in the United States the more Indian I have become and therefore I shall be happy when I settle down in India.
6. My wife and I are returning to live in Northern India for the rest of our lives. This will be by the end of 1948. We mean to live in *retirement* I shall not take part in any public functions or affairs whatever but individuals who wish to do so will be free to visit us.
7. Be yourself. Follow Mahatma Gandhi, Bharatan Kumarappa, D. V. Gundappa. Abdul

Kalam Azad, Abdul Gaffar Khan and Sri Ramana Maharishi. Co-operate with such men as Earl of Portsmouth, George Bourne, Wilfred Wellock, Jean Giono, Fernando Nebre. Why consider the inferior philosophers? Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

8. Nehru is the man of the hour and of the moment because we have been caught unawares and unprepared, and he speaks a language the West understands; Gandhi, despite all his errors, is the man of the age our age. Gandhi is great because he has dared to speak of non-violence in a time of violence, of peace and brotherhood in a time of degradation and human destruction. He has spoken of man's highest inner quality, and though we, who are of limited vision, cannot expect to follow him, we cannot refrain from admiring and even worshipping him — a man who is showing us a way which cannot be followed until mankind is tamed.
9. We in the West want Gandhi's India and no other. Don't think that imitate us in the West, monkey do as monkey see, you are doing anything but monkey tricks. The greatest tribute I can pay the Mahatma is that he is the only unpurchasable man in the world.

10. The more I know of Ceylon, the more inseparable from India does it appear, and indeed I regret sometimes that Ceylon and India are not at present under one administration. Ceylon is in the truest sense a part of India.
11. Of the unity of the Indian peoples, Ceylon is economically, mentally, spiritually, a part; and with the culture and life of India, must Ceylon's own survive.
12. Ceylon from the standpoint of ethnology and culture, is an integral part of India.
13. The more I know of India, the more wonderful and beautiful appear to be her past achievements. If then we would attain the liberty of spirit, which is the true end of education, if we would recover our lost character of Orientals, we must turn to India and base our education on Indian ideals.
14. In the first place all Hindu art (Brahmanical and Mahayana Buddhist) is religious.
15. Indian art and culture was a joint creation of the Dravidian and Aryan genius, a welding together of symbolic and representative, abstract and explicit, language and thought.
16. In Asia all roads lead to India.

17. *In the Aims of Indian Art.* the significance of form in Eastern Art: "It cannot be too clearly understood that the mere representation of nature is never the aim of Indian art. Probably no truly Indian sculpture has been wrought from a living model, or any religious painting copied from the life. Possibly no Hindu artist of the old school ever drew from nature at all. His store of memory pictures, his power of visualization, and his imagination were for his purpose finer means. For he desired to suggest the idea behind sensuous appearance, not to give the detail of the seeming reality, that was in truth but Maya, illusion.....'to mistake the Maya for reality were error indeed'." And then he quoted that marvellous saying from the Bhagavad Gita. "Men of no understanding that or me, the unmanifest, as having manifestation, knowing not my Higher Being to be changeless supreme"

18. "Art contains in itself the deepest principles of life and is the truest guide to the greatest art of all, the art of living. The true life, the ideal of Indian culture, is itself a unity and an art, because of its inspiration by one ruling passion, the desire to realize a spiritual inheritance. All things in India have been valued in the light of this desire."

19. "The anonymity of the artist belongs to a type of culture dominated by the longing to be liberated from oneself. All the force of this philosophy is directed against the delusion 'I am the Doer.' 'I' in fact am not the 'Doe' but the 'Instrument.' Human individuality is not an end but only a means." Further, "The absence of names in the history of Indian art is a great advantage to the historian of art, for he is forced to concentrate all his attention upon their work and its relation to life and thought as a whole, while all temptation to anecdotal criticism is removed."

20. "As regards India, it has been said that 'East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet' This is a counsel of despair that can only have been born of the most profound illusion and the deepest conviction of importance. I say, on the contrary, that human nature is an everlasting and unchanging principle"

Now it is a common saying in England that "you cannot change human nature" It is so trite that it is true; but although you cannot change it you can develop it, so that it can shed at its outer trappings and prejudices vis-a-vis another country, if it equally obvious platitude that human nature is the same in every

country of the world. Only it is so overlaid with local habits and customs that it cannot shed them quickly enough "to understand the other fellow" If it were ever absolute truth that we could not change, i.e. develop, human nature, then the sooner we all cut our throats the better, since religion would have no sense behind it.

Ananda Coomaraswamy's last word on Indian culture is summed up in the following: "When I survey the life of India during the last 3,000 years, and bear in mind her literature, traditions and ideals, the teachings of her philosophy, and the work of her artists, the music of her sons and daughters, and the nobility of the religion they have evolved, and when from these elements I form a picture of an ideal India and an ideal earthly life, I confess that it is difficult for me to imagine a more powerful source of inspiration, a deeper well of truth to draw upon."

MORE APPRECIATIONS

1. DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN to Mr. Raja Singam:

"Among those who are responsible, not only for the Indian Renaissance but for a new Renaissance in the world, Dr. Coomaraswamy holds a pre-eminent position. It is my hope that students who are now led away by the passing fashions of our age will turn to his writings for a proper orientation." To them I say "Amen," and I salute with reverence the passing away of an idealist and a true scholar.

THE WRITINGS OF

DR. ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

(Dr. Richard Ettinghausen, Washington)

2. There are few scholars anywhere in the world whose publications cover a wider range than those of Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, since many years a Fellow for Research in Indian, Persian, and Mohammadan Art in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. His researches embrace philosophy, metaphysics, religion iconography, Indian Literature and Arts, Islamic Art, Mediaeval Art, Music, Geology, and especially, the place of art in society. His publications comprise many voluminous books and a very large range of pamphlets, articles,

and critical reviews published not only in India, Ceylon, England and the United States, but also in France, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Portugal and Rumania. More astounding than the sheer quantity of his publications are their extra-ordinary profundity and originality throughout his career, and their deep influence on the spirituality awakened, scholars and laymen alike all over the world. There are, indeed, few scholars who like him, are able to go straight to original sources and at the same time have the ability and courage to hand on a clear cut, uncompromising message of what they have seen, heard, and learned. Never has he had time for, or interest in presenting personal ideas or novel theories, so constantly and tirelessly has he devoted his energies to the rediscovery of the truth and the restating of the principles by which cultures rise and fall.

33. WILLIAM YORK TINDALL in 'The Asian Legacy and American Life' (p. 187) says that D H Lawrence's, "devotion to Shiva may have been increased by Coomaraswamy's 'Dance of Shiva' which he read and liked." On page 175 of "D. H. Lawrence: Reminiscences and Correspondence" by Earl and Ascher Brewster (Martin Secker) Brewster states: "Lawrence returned my copy of Coomaraswamy's *The Dance of Shiva*, saying:

I enjoyed all the quotations from ancient scriptures. They always seem true to me" It is just possible that Lawrence refers elsewhere to Coomaraswamy — possibly in one of the pieces in "Phoenix", a posthumous collection of miscellaneous writings — but if so the references are only brief. There is definitely no extended comment. (I am indebted to Mr. Richard Aldington for this information.

— Author

4. At a time when most Indians abroad sacrificed their culture at the altar of the modern West, Coomaraswamy almost alone, was able to maintain the prestige of Indian culture as the source of all culture."

—Alain Danieolu in "*Visvabharati*"
Quarterly "Nov. 48—Jan. 49 p. 226.

5. Sir Aurobindo Ghose, a great modern Indian spiritualist and philosopher, held Ananda Coomaraswamy in the highest respect. When Mr. William Archer wrote a book attacking Indian civilisation, culture and art. Aurobindo was moved with indignation and wrote a series of essays contributed to a journal to expose the maliciousness and racial arrogance — so did Sir John Woodroffe in his 'Is India Civilized?' At the outset Sri Aurobindo mentioned that Dr. Coomaraswamy's writings

were a complete refutation of what Mr. Archer and people of his type, unfortunately too numerous, write to vilify India and the Indians, but that he had undertaken to write as he was expected as a spiritualist to defend Indian culture. As Aurobindo himself never had time or occasion to study Indian art, his rejoinder is obviously based on the writings of Coomaraswamy whose works he seems to have studied. The rejoinder was most effective and this was possible only because Aurobindo had the material from Coomaraswamy. Had it not been so, Aurobindo would not have been able to say all that he has said. That a great philosopher should be so dependent on another shows how great the other must have been. This is a great tribute to the genius of Coomaraswamy which defended Indian civilisation on the occasion and had been defending it all his life against the rancorous attacks of some Westerners.

(The author is indebted to Mr. S. Durai Raja Singam of Malaysia for recent by sending him his, selections from Guru Dev Ananda Coomaraswamy's writings and speeches and also appreciations.)

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கொழும்புத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கம்

வார நினைச் சபை.

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