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DIFFICULTIES OF CO-OPERATION IN NORTH

Death of Leadership

CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IS A PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

I have thought it worth while to write a special note under this heading (leadership) this year in order to draw attention to one of the outstanding difficulties of Co-operation in Ceylon, namely, the difficulty of securing good leaders, says the Registrar of Co-operative Societies in his report for May 1, 1937—April 30, 1938. The great object of Co-operation as a departmental activity is to discover the local leader. When the co-operative movement springs from the people themselves, the leaders are presumably already there, but when it is the State that initiates the movement, the leaders must be sought out and fetched from their homes. The Co-operative Movement is a People's Movement, and the only concern the State has in it in countries like ours is to launch it for the people's good and to look after it until the people are trained to look after it themselves. There is no quickening breath of life in a completely State-ridden Co-operative Movement, but before de officialization can take place there must be competent leaders who can lead the movement for the people. (Competence, incidentally, where Co-operation is concerned, is much more a matter of character than of intelligence and knowledge).

Where there is death of leadership, there can be little achievement. In India, where the State plays the same part in Co-operation as here, there appears to be no lack of leaders among the people to quicken and guide the Movement. In all countries where the Movement is of popular growth the natural leaders of the rural population, the Village Schoolmaster, the local priest, the country doctor or lawyer, the enlightened farmer, willingly and unselfishly give the benefit of their services to the peo-

ple. In Ceylon the Movement has not been so fortunate and there have been few who have been prepared to come forward in a disinterested and unselfish way to work with us and lead the people towards Co-operation. The highest honour is due to those few, but one heartily wishes that there were more swallows to make the summer.

It is not to the rich or to the high that Co-operation looks for its leaders, although leadership from amongst them, if sincere and genuine, will always be welcome. The best leadership comes from those who themselves feel the need of co-operation. A brother Registrar, writing not very long ago in the Indian Co-operative Review, stresses the difference that character and leadership can make to the efficiency of a society. He makes a parallel study of societies working in villages where economic conditions are almost identical, one composed of rich landowners with an Honorary Magistrate as President, the other consisting of tenant colonists from a neighbouring district. He contrasts the progress made by both, or rather the deterioration of one and the progress of the other, and concludes: "What is the reason for the striking contrast between these two sets of figures? As has been said above the agricultural and general economic conditions were practically the same in both villages; departmental audit and supervision have been exercised in the same degree, it is obvious that the status and prestige of the big society have prevented effective action being taken and pressed against him and his family; the degree of education in the two villages is not materially different. The answer can only be the difference

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ANCIENT HINDU MARRIAGE

XII. Suttee

By S. R. Muttukumar

(Concluded from our issue
of 28-11-38)

IN mediaeval India the closing chapter of marriage, especially amongst the Aryan Hindus, was the inhuman practice of Suttee or immolation of widows. That this barbarous custom was not prevalent in pre-historic India is evident from the fact that polyandry was then allowed amongst both the Thamilian and the Aryan Hindus. A woman could take as many husbands as she liked, though the Thamilian wife was restricted to one husband at a time. Under this circumstance, suttee, as it meant later could not exist amongst these people of ancient times. This is supported by the fact that, after the Mahabharata war, the dead bodies of the slain were burnt on funeral piles, but none of the widows were burnt with them. Again, none of the numerous women of Dasaratha, father of Rama, were put to death at his funeral obsequies.

It is somewhat remarkable that in the Vedic rite of cremation there is no authentic appearance of suttee, or the sacrifice of the living wife or concubine in the cremation ground nor is there any mention of it in the Code of Manu or even of Yajnavalkya. It is only in Puranic literature that we first trace the origin of this custom.

Origin of Suttee

J. T. Wheeler is of opinion that the slaughter of a wife or a concubine at the funeral of her deceased husband was most probably a Scythian custom, and that it was an outgrowth of a belief in ghosts. The dead man was supposed to require the society of a favourite wife or concubine in the world of shades⁽¹⁾. This opinion is endorsed by Dr. Vincent A. Smith.⁽²⁾ However, there was a difference between the Scythian and the Aryan usages.

The Scythians buried their dead, while the Aryans burnt them. The Scythians slaughtered a living female to enable her to accompany the dead man; the Aryans burnt the living woman along with her husband in order that she might accompany him to the world of spirits. The female was not slaughtered as an unwilling victim to the selfish sensuality of a barbarian, as in the case of the Scythians, but was a high-souled wife prepared to perish with her husband in order that she might accompany him to a heaven of felicity.⁽³⁾

It may be noted here that amongst the Thracians the widows of the deceased man are said to have disputed among themselves as to who was the best beloved, and consequently the best entitled to accompany her husband.⁽⁴⁾ The Mahabharata gives expression to the same idea in an imaginary conversation between the widows of Pandu, the reputed father of the Pandava brothers.

Suttee Among The Aryans

The terrible custom of Suttee in later India was originally confined to Kathei, the modern Kathiawar, and to Taxila. The people of Kathei were no doubt a Rajput tribe, and Suttee has always been commonest among this stern and warlike nation. These Rajputs and the Brahmans who came to be the warmest supporters of this custom subsequently carried it to nearly every quarter of India. Suttee was then governed by the worship of Fire and the Sun. Agni (Fire) was not only the domestic deity, but the divine messenger who carried the sacrifice to the gods, and the purifying flame that bore away the widow and her deceased lord to the mansions of the Sun. In this manner, the horrible rite, so revolting to civilization and humanity, was

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(1) Herodotus, iv. 71.

(2) Early History of India, p. 62.

(3) History of India, iii 89, 90.

(4) Herodotus, v. 3.

A SHORT STORY

HOW HE GOT HER

BY DEWAKI

PARVATHI was thrilled as Janardhan twice or thrice in the day sent his smiles towards her and often tried to enter into conversation with her. It was the first time that she had felt that she was not an ominous wretch to withdraw from company—that outrage in the orthodox Brahmin home: a widow.

Her father was kind to her, indulged her tastes in needle works and brought her books. But in her ignorance and added to the extreme poverty of the house, her mother's love often showed itself in thorns. For instance when Parvathi, whose husband had died in her tenth year, grew up to sixteen, the first thing her mother was to send away the part time servant to sweep the house and to clean the vessels.

"Parvathi—" she had said in sweet reasonableness, "If you had been a married girl, you would have now one to your husband's house. Father would have had no expense on you, is it not? Kittu has to be educated. Every year his school fees are rising higher—and the fellow is backward in English and needs a private tutor—we have no money, my dear. So let us try to economise. You have now strength enough to work, and has not Gandhiji himself often said that he is a scavenger by profession? And Lakshmi bent himself to work. Yes, she read Gandhiji's writings and drew inspiration from them. She would devote herself to work. Perhaps God had intended that when He in His inscrutable wisdom denied her a home of her own. *The world shall be her home.* She would do the servant's work more thoroughly than the servant.

"Is that necessary, daughter?—" And her father had almost choked as he saw Parvathi, her clothes tied up sweeping the compound and imparting to it the orderliness and beauty of a real garden. "I do not see why we should not keep our tiny plot clean, father, when the Government keeps a whole garden. Gandhiji has asked us all to keep our surroundings clean. I am going to ask our neighbour also to help me by keeping their adjacent plot in order—they throw their rubbish near our side."

II

Janardhan was their neighbour—the son of a wealthy father, who had recently come to his heritage. He was a distinguished graduate—unemployed.

"Why should he care for a job?" they were saying among themselves if Janardhan's name was mentioned.

"If he will keep his father's property safe, that itself were work enough."

Janardhan's mother had flared up at the suggestion from Parvathi about keeping their compound clean—at any rate not to shoot the rubbish just at the edge of the fencing.

"This is house, and we will do what we like in our house."

The woman had raised her voice high—there was almost a scene. Parvathi's mother had rushed out to apologise to her wealthy neighbour.

"Parvathi, how can you, how dare you? Ask her pardon—what are we poor things, to give anger to

Rukmani Devi?"

"I am sorry, aunt if I have annoyed you—" Parvathi most humbly said, I thought that I was doing a good thing—"

"Good thing indeed—" the wealthy neighbour thundered, "the little chip of a girl trying to teach me how to keep my house and compound! It all comes from her having nothing to do except read books. If she had a child or two, then she will know—"

The brought tears from Parvathi's mother because the reference was to her daughter's widowhood and then Rukmani, the wealthy neighbour apologised enough.

* * *

Janardhan was an early riser. He had learnt that habit in his college days. Standing on his terrace one early morning, when the moon's rays still struggled for supremacy with the heralding effulgence from the east, he saw some one moving in the compound.

He took his revolver for protection and tiptoed downstairs. There have been of late some thefts of coconuts from his compound. He would catch the thief.

But as he approached nearer, he stood struck dumb.

He found a beautiful girl, her cloths tucked up above her ankles, with a basket and broom.

She had dug a pit in her part of the compound and was removing the rubbish from his own compound and dumping it in the pit.

It was Parvathi at work—she was cleaning her neighbour's compound, because her neighbour would not do it!

"Parvathi, what are you doing?"—and Janardhan stood before her, "I am glad I saw you in time. I thought it was a thief—"

Parvathi stood dumb—she was not to speak to young men. That is part of her training.

"Why should you do this? I hear my mother's ignorant raving. Our women are like that. But why are you doing such work?—"

"I want to keep our house clean—and this dirt here interferes. So I thought I would clean it unseen."

The struggling moonlight—the girl who hastily had covered her ankles—the sweat on her forehead, the dishevelled hair—all contributed to paint a picture of Parvathi that stole into the young man's heart.

"Very well, then, Parvathi, I shall also help you. Yes, I too have read of Gandhiji's writings. Work is God. And I have no work."

And not waiting for a reply, the young man lifted the basket—the basket filled with rubbish and walked to the pit.

III

And then Janardhan had condescended to visit Parvathi's house—a high honour indeed for the parents.

"I have no work—" Janardhan as Kittu's deficiency in English was brought to his notice, "Let Kittu come to me every morning. I shall coach him up."

Friendliness—only Rukmani had protested against the look of things.

"Parvathi is a widow—she is a very forward girl—have an eye and

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ANCIENT HINDU MARRIAGE

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imbued with an element of religion.

The practice of *suttee* at Taxila is referred to thus by Strabo who copied Aristoboulos, a companion of Alexander the Great. "He (Aristoboulos) says that he had heard from some persons of wives burning themselves along with their deceased husbands and doing so gladly; and that these women who refused to burn themselves were held in disgrace. The same things have been stated by other writers.⁽⁵⁾

A hymn in the Rig Veda⁽⁶⁾, which was perfectly harmless, and which only relates to a procession of women at a funeral ceremony, was mutilated and misinterpreted by the Brahmans to sanction this barbarous custom. This passage may be translated thus:—

'May these women not suffer pangs of widowhood. May who have good and desirable husbands, enter their houses with collyrium and butter. Let these women, without shedding tears, and without any sorrow, first proceed to the house wearing valuable ornaments.'

R. C. Dutt remarks that "there is not a word in the above relating to the burning of widows. But a word in it *Agre* was altered into *Agne*, and the text was then mistranslated and misapplied in Bengal to justify the modern custom of the burning of widows. In the words of Professor Max Muller, "this is, perhaps, the most flagrant instance of what can be done by an unscrupulous priesthood. Here have thousands of lives been sacrificed and a fanatical rebellion been threatened on the authority of a passage which was mangled, mistranslated and misapplied."⁽⁷⁾

Miserabile dictu! Further comment is unnecessary.

The religious element thus introduced into the custom of *Suttee* elevated the helpless widow into a self-sacrificing heroine. She ascended the funeral pile as the chariot of fire which was to carry her away to the arms of her glorified husband in the realms of bliss.

"Though *suttee* was at first the expression of the highest conjugal affection, yet later it came to be combined with the lowest state of female degradation. The unfortunate widow had no way of escape from a joyless life of servitude, excepting by this most horrible of sacrifices. She was too often condemned to the pain of martyrdom when the heroism was altogether wanting. The victim was stupefied with drugs and led by the Brahmans to the funeral pyre from which flight was impossible. The pile of wood was set on fire by the nearest kinsman, and often by her own son amidst the deafening noise of drums and the cries of an excited throng⁽⁸⁾

The earliest notice of *suttee* amongst the Hindus is found in

(5) Book XV. 1. 62; trans. Mc Grindle in *Ancient India*, p. 69.

(6) Op. cit. x. 18. 7.

(7) *Civilization in Ancient India* 1.74.

(8) Wheeler's *History of India* iii. 90, 91.

the Greek accounts of the expedition of Alexander the Great in the fourth century before the Christian era. The rite is there said to have been adopted as a check upon the women who occasionally poisoned their husbands for the sake of younger lovers⁽⁹⁾ The Greek story might have been based upon authentic tradition, but this statement does not harmonize with the assertion that marriages in those days were based upon mutual affection. *Suttee* might have proved a check to poisoning when girls were compelled to accept old men as their husbands, but nothing was to be feared from loving wives who were imbued with an unquestioning faith that they would join their husbands in a heaven of felicity.

Suttee Among the Thamilians

No doubt, there was *Suttee* of some sort amongst the ancient Thamilians too. A betrothed couple invariably committed suicide, if their union was frustrated in any way. Many of the widows also died with their husbands, but this too was generally a kind of suicide and not a formal *Suttee*. We are told of some wives with bated breath how, on hearing of the approaching death of the beloved, they turned smiling and went to sleep, saying: "I must precede, not follow." And from that sleep they never woke again.

We are also given to understand that priests are spoken of as having striven to hinder this suicide, but in no case as having prompted it. The word *Suttee* is Sanscrit (*Cati*), and means a virtuous woman, but has been specialised to denote one who burns on the funeral pyre with her deceased husband. There is no word in Thamil equivalent to it, nor is the custom at all consonant to the feelings of the Thamil people. It was altogether Brahmanical idea. We are, therefore, obliged to believe that in most cases the immolation was purely voluntary on the part of the victim, the result of over exalted feeling. This is apparent from the following verse:—

"பல்சான் நீரே பல்சான் நீரே
செல்சென்சு சொல்லா தொழிசென்
விலக்கும்
பொல்லாச் சூழ்ச்சிப் பல்சான் நீரே
யணிலவரிக் கொடுக்காய் வான்போழ்ச்
கூட்ட
காழ்ப்போ னல்லினர் நறுசெய் தீண்டா
நடையிடைக் கிடந்த கைபிழி பிண்டம்
கென்னெட் சாந்தொடு புளிப்பெய்
தட்ட
வேலோ வெந்தை வல்சு யாகப்
பாற்பெய் பன்னிப் பாய்ந்து வதியு
முயவற் பெண்டிரே மல்லை மாதோ
பெருங்காட்டுப் பண்ணிய கருங்கோட்
மம
நுமக்கரி தாகுக தில்ல வெமக்கெம்
பெருந்தோட் கணவன் மாய்க்கென்
வரும்பற
வள்ளித நலிழ்த்த தாமரை
நள்ளிரும் பொய்கையுச் சீயுமோற்ற"
(10)

meaning:—"Ye, great and wise men! why restrain us from death? Your counsel is in vain. Our much beloved consort is dead. Do you think that we care to live in widow's weeds, lying on bare and rugged stones? Remember that we at one time slept

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(9) Strabo *India* § 30.

CRIME IN JAFFNA

Psychological and other Causes

REMEDIES SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH PEOPLE'S LIBERTIES

(By A Student)

I READ with interest the report of the resolutions passed by the Executive Committee of the Jaffna Association on the subject of crime in Jaffna. I read the editorial in the "Hindu Organ" asking for governmental action. I believe that the matter needs more than a superficial examination.

First the causes of crime should be discovered and removed. A mere attempt to smother the incidence of crime without eradicating its causes will not be of any avail at least in the long run.

An eminent advocate in a lecture he delivered recently before a club in Colombo gave the causes of crime as poverty and certain other psychological factors. I cannot claim to be able to give the reader an exhaustive list of all the causes of crime. Nor can I give the cure for all the cases. But if I can provoke the reader to think on the subject I shall have done enough.

Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty and unemployment do certainly cause an increase in crime. The feeling that society is treating him unjustly will make many a man to stoop to crime. The expression of the ego in some men might take the shape of crime. Sheer hunger and want will overcome the fear of any sanction placed by society on offences against rights of property. Recently I read in the papers that a man was sentenced to two years of rigorous imprisonment for stealing a breakfast basket and eating its contents. The particular offender was a reconvicted criminal. But anyone who has been hungry will admit that the pangs of hunger can drive a man to stealing. Poor men do not feel it wrong to steal in order to keep their body and soul together. They sometimes have a feeling, perhaps just, that the social wealth belongs to all. The richer people who talk of the inherent viciousness of the poor men cannot often realise the extent to which hunger can drive a man. Therefore the first step in combating crime should be the alleviation of poverty and the reduction of unemployment.

Psychological Factors

There are psychological factors. Repression of all kinds can lead to crime. The interconnection of sex and crime is now fully admitted by scientific men. Manias

and complexes set up by the bad conditions of living and the unnatural ways of civilisation are potent factors that contribute to incidence of crime. Sex repression and neurosis caused by artificial standards set up by a capitalist civilisation in its present degenerate state cause more crime than people care to admit. The extension of the property idea to the relationship between the sexes, with the result that sometimes incompatible elements are held together by force, causes a great deal of mental aberrations which result in crime. Many a murder is the direct result of the formation of the eternal triangle. It is caused by the outraged possessive feeling of the male. In a society where equality of the sexes is a fact there can be no feelings of property outraged. The unnatural rigidity of the divorce laws should be taken into account. When ill-mated people are not allowed to separate the result can be crime. The economic conditions that make normal life impossible to many before they are well advanced in age should be remedied. This difference between the biological and the economic age for marriage along with the strict segregation of the sexes has made Jaffna not a very safe place for school boys.

The lack of sufficient recreation and sufficient work for everybody is another cause. Increased social amenities and opportunities for the poorer people to have wholesome recreation will go far towards lessening crime. Peoples, clubs, sports organisations and theatres and other forms of wholesome amusement and recreation will keep people away from crime; and where criminal tendencies exist they will be at least sublimated into some nobler channel.

Strong Public Opinion

The mobilisation of a strong public opinion will certainly check crime. This of course does not so much do away with the factors that cause crime but sees to it that even though the cause exists the result is not always crime. Proper education for citizenship will lessen the incidence of crime. Children ought to be taught at school their elementary obligations to society and how to discharge them. But the teachers must set an example too! The remarks of a presiding judge at a recent session of the Supreme Court held at Jaffna show up the lack of any education for citizenship in the top rungs of Jaffna society. One shudders to think what it will be in the bottom rungs. A step in the right direction will have been taken when such men are hounded out of the public life of Jaffna.

If the men of each locality band themselves together and take a

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POVERTY IN JAFFNA

Causes Analysed at Social Workers' Conference

THE Group which discussed the subject of Poverty in Jaffna at the Social Workers' Conference held on Saturday at the Central College hall was presided over by Atigar A. Nagarathar.

Mr. A. Cumaraswamy, Principal, Jaffna Hindu College, who led the discussion said:

In the brief time allowed to me I shall endeavour to give you the causes that make Jaffna become increasingly poor, and also shall indicate some practical remedies to remove them. Though the various causes are inter-related, I shall, for purposes of easy discussion, classify them under four broad headings:—

(1) Economic, (2) Political, (3) Educational, and (4) Social.

Let me take the first: Economic. Under this heading I note the following:— (a) Extremely low price of coconut; (b) The protective tariff on Jaffna Tobacco in Malayalam and the specified quota allowed for export therein; (c) Failure of cigar industry to compete with cigarette and beedy; (d) Failure of crops due to unseasonable rains; (e) Decay of cottage industries; (f) Business including banking is mainly in foreign hands. (g) Closing of the Northern ports.

Remedies

Most of these causes show that our economic life is the least organised and that we leave everything to drift. At times we have primitive faith. If the rains fail to come at the proper season we feel that we have an effective remedy in the Kodumpavi funeral procession. What is required is organisation and expert advice. If the rains fail us it behoves us to devise means and methods to supply water to the fields. Everybody is aware of irrigation, but nobody seriously considers of providing irrigation facilities. If ever the subject received any consideration, it was mere academic. A scheme of water supply to dry Jaffna cannot obviously be undertaken by private enterprise; our farmers own small holdings and cannot dream of meeting the cost of it. Attempts to irrigate certain sections of Jaffna from the Nilavari or some wells at Tinnevely may be undertaken by these farmers provided they do their farms on a co-operative basis. But schemes of the type of deflecting the course of the Mahavali Ganga or of converting the Jaffna Lagoon into a fresh water one, for purposes of irrigation can only be undertaken by the State. The State should step in here, and provide this desideratum without delay. An important matter like agriculture cannot be allowed to depend for its success on the merciful dispensation of the "elements".

Cigar Industry

Again, the cigar industry requires organisation and standardisation. Through want of these, cigars have been manufactured of such inferior material to make them cheap enough to compete with cigarettes and beedies with the result that this industry is in a sad and deplorable condition. The Jaffna cigar has no standard and it varies in proportion

to the number of boutiques you buy it. The only way perhaps, to promote this industry is to have a central distributing agency which should satisfy itself as to the standard of the cigars; this agency should standardise the cigars and be the sole distributor to the markets.

In like manner the cottage industries should be encouraged. There must be a clearing house and a central agency through whom all orders are to be made. This agency will then know what kind of things are required at the market. It should then advertise for the kind of things required. Cottage industries will then revive; the people's time will then be more usefully and profitably occupied.

Then again, business is in foreign hands. The closing of the Northern ports has made things coming from India dearer, and has killed much indigenous enterprise, like ship-building, deprived our sea-men of work: Kayts, Kankesanthurai, Thondaimannar, Pt. Pedro will be enviable centres of commercial enterprise.

Further Jaffnese lack very much the spirit of venture. They live in the faith that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Because of this faith business is in foreign hands. It may also be partly due to want of capital. The spirit of venture can be fostered by propaganda, and capital can be had by business men grouping together on co-operative basis.

Political

Under the second heading, Political, I give the following causes. (a) The closing of the doors of the F.M.S. for Ceylonese (b) Appointment to Government service is subject to racial bias since the advent of the Donoughmore Constitution. Now, against the first cause I do not think that we have any right to insist on F. M. S. doors being thrown open to us; but as regards appointment in Government service in the island, there should certainly be no other consideration than sheer merit; appointment in proportion to racial population should never be encouraged where the indigenous races are concerned. We in Jaffna have a suspicion that some such bias is discernible in the appointment in Government service.

Educational

Under the third heading, Educational, I would mention, (a) Educated unemployed, and (b) Want of Vocational Education. Every country should adopt its education to suit the needs of the country. There should be an employment Bureau which should be in touch with all the firms, Schools, etc., and must give all necessary advice, and informations to people who want work. It should be the agent to supply men required for the various private services. Further, want of vocational education is so much spoken of at this moment that I need hardly enlarge it here. The want is commonly felt everywhere, but things are moving too slow to provide for it.

Social

Under the 4th heading, Social, (Continued on Page 5)

House for Sale

House and premises in extent 4½ Lms. V. C. situated at Main Street, Chundikuli adjoining St. John's College, Jaffna, with plantations, viz. 25 bearing coconut trees, 4 bearing mango trees, limes, oranges etc. The house consists of 2 Rooms, 1 Hall, 1 dining room, Show room, Kitchen and a Bath room.

For further particulars apply to Mr. T. Arumainayagam, Proctor, 1st Cross Street, Jaffna.
(Mis. 220. 8—15-12-38.)

Order Nisi

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF
JAFFNA

Testamentary Jurisdiction No. 669.

In the matter of the intestate estate of the late K. Visuvalingham Ponnampalana of Pungudutive West

Deceased.

Kumaraswamy Visuvalingham of Pungudutive West Petitioner.

Vs.

Visuvalingham Sallathurai of Respondent.

This matter coming on for disposal before C. Coomaraswamy, Esquire, District Judge, Jaffna on the 9th day of November 1938 in the presence of Messrs Aiyadurai and Thambirajah Proctors on the part of the petitioner and the petition and affidavit of the petitioner having been read

It is ordered that the petitioner as father of the deceased be and he is hereby declared entitled to take out Letters of Administration to the intestate estate and that Letters of Administration be issued to him accordingly unless the respondent or any other person shall on or before the 14th day of December 1938 show sufficient cause to the satisfaction of this Court to the contrary.

The 16th day of November 1938.

Sgd. C. Coomaraswamy,
District Judge.

(O. 79. 8 & 12-12-38.)

Order Nisi

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF
JAFFNA

Testamentary Jurisdiction No. 637.

In the matter of the intestate estate of the late Thangammah wife of C. Nagamattu Eliathamby of Kanderodai

Deceased.

Nagamattu Eliathamby of Kanderodai

Vs.

Petitioner.

1. Maheswary daughter of Eliathamby
2. Eliathamby Sithamparanathan
3. Eliathamby Pathmanathan all of Kanderodai
4. Wallippillai widow of Velupillai of Navakkery in Puttur

Respondents.

This matter of the petition of the abovenamed petitioner coming on for disposal before C. Coomaraswamy, Esquire, District Judge, Jaffna on the 11th day of August 1938 in the presence of Messrs Aiyadurai and Thambirajah proctors on the part of the petitioner and the petition and affidavit of the petitioner having been read

It is ordered that the abovenamed 4th respondent be appointed Guardian-Ad-Litem over the minors the 1st, 2nd and 3rd respondents for the purpose of protecting their interests and of representing them in this case and that the petitioner be declared entitled to have Letters of Administration to the estate of the said intestate unless the respondents abovenamed or any other person shall appear before this Court on the 25th day of November 1938 and show cause to the satisfaction of this Court to the contrary.

This 25th day of September 1938.

Sgd. C. Coomaraswamy,
District Judge.

November 4, 1938.

Time to show cause is extended for December 15, 1938.

(Inld.) C. C.
D. J.

(O. 62. 8 & 12-12-38.)



Hindu Organ.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1938.

POVERTY IN JAFFNA

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT came up for discussion at the Social Workers' Conference which met last week in Jaffna was poverty, which is a contributory cause of crime. There is no gainsaying the fact that there is considerable poverty in Jaffna, and that ever since the world depression set in Jaffna has been steadily becoming poorer. Jaffna possesses none of the advantages which other parts of Ceylon enjoy, such as abundant rainfall, rivers, and lakes, and fertility of the soil. Nature has been a step-mother to the Jaffna peasant. It is by sheer hard toil that he is able to earn a bare subsistence. The economic problem in Jaffna has certain distinctive features which mark it out from other parts of Ceylon. In industrial countries unemployment is most pronounced among the wage-earning labour class or proletariat, while in Jaffna it is almost entirely confined to the educated section or bourgeoisie. Labour is fairly well paid and is in great demand. But for his indulgence in drink, the labourer should be assured of something more than a mere competence. Owing to the hard conditions of farming, there are none of the evils of landlordism in Jaffna. Wealth is much more evenly distributed than elsewhere and consequently there are no peaks and no depths.

The two chief factors which till recently contributed most to the well-being of Jaffna, the tobacco industry and employment in the F.M.S. have failed. The doors of the F.M.S. have closed for ever and in the course of another ten years with the entire stoppage of that source, the plight of Jaffna will be very sad indeed. It is the agricultural class that is most hard hit in Jaffna. About 80 per cent of this class depend on tobacco directly or indirectly for their livelihood. Jaffna Tobacco was able to maintain its position in Malabar till recently even after the imposition by the Indian Government of a high protective tariff and a quota some twenty-five years ago. But of late Travancore has been able to avail itself of a cheaper supply locally and consequently the demand for Jaffna tobacco has

fallen considerably. Another industry which has fallen on evil days is the cigar industry. The popularity of cigarette and beedi has ousted the Jaffna cigar not merely in South Ceylon, but even in Jaffna. Several factories have closed down and others have considerably reduced their output. Among other causes of poverty may be mentioned the false idea of dignity engendered by caste which prevents educated men from taking to industry, the rooted conservatism of the people and lack of initiative and enterprise which make them cling to the beaten track without looking farther ahead, and the bookish system of education. Consequently we find today the wholesale trade of Jaffna is almost entirely in the hands of outsiders, the land is flooded with articles and food-stuffs which could have been produced locally. The homing instinct of the Jaffna man makes him a bad colonist. He is reluctant to move beyond the Elephant Pass.

The remedy lies in industrialisation and in giving a vocational bias to education. Our leaders must put their heads together and start some big scale industries like weaving, cement, soap-making for which Jaffna provides facilities. Jaffna students should be sent abroad to study industries and take charge of some industrial concern on their return. The farmers have to be instructed in modern methods of production, must be provided with cheaper means of irrigation and should be encouraged to grow other varieties of crops besides those now grown. The present variety of tobacco must give place to some other which is suitable for cigarette manufacture and a cigarette factory must be started. Dairy farming and fruit cultivation may be profitably started in Jaffna conducted on modern scientific lines. All this demands the rapid development of co-operation in Jaffna without which the necessary capital cannot be found. The education which is given in our schools should take into account the future needs of the individual student and should not be content with mass production of passes at examinations. There should be an Employment Bureau to advise students as regards the choice of a career and vacancies that are available. The business firms must be requested to train capable young men for a business career. These are some of the lines on which relief can be given to the poverty and unemployment obtaining in Jaffna. There should be planning on a national scale, if any happy results are to be expected. If our leaders are merely content to make speeches, there will be no improvement in the situation.

Armed Police To The Rescue

Rs. 5000 Worth of Beedy Seized

Jaffna, Monday.

Mr. Albrecht, assistant preventive officer, who was accompanied by excisemen and police seized seven bags of 'beedy tobacco' in Kambamulai, a village a mile from Valvettiturai.

When the bags were piled on the car a hostile crowd collected, armed with clubs, swords and knives. A protest was made against the removal of the tobacco, and stones were thrown. The car was damaged and Mr. Albrecht, constable Peter, an Excise Guard, Ramanathan, and one tide waiter, Sinsathurai, were injured.

Sergeant Nair sent constable Ibrahim to the police station to fetch a rifle and ten rounds of ammunition. In the while a baton charge was ineffective.

When the rifle was brought he warned the crowd to disperse. But as the crowd continued to throw stones the sergeant fired three rounds warning the crowd before each discharge. After the third round they ran away.

The party came back to the station and telegraphed to Jaffna. Inspector John Attygalle left for inquiry last night.

The contraband said to be worth over Rs. 5000.

Review

The Urban District Council Gazette Vol. I, 1938

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the first number of the U. D. C. Gazette published at the instance of the Association of the Urban District Council of Ceylon and edited by its Secretary, Mr. S. Pantanjali. The journal is a timely publication in view of the steady progress of Local Government bodies in this Island, and it is confidently expected that it would serve as an "effective link to keep the several units in constant touch with one another". The functions of the Gazette, as lucidly set forth by the Editor, would be to survey comprehensively the field of local activities, study foreign experience and make available knowledge that would accelerate the progress of Local Self-Government in Ceylon. Its objective, indeed, commendable, nay indispensable to the healthy growth of Local Government in this country. The Gazette is aptly illustrated and contains several informative articles calculated to interest the public in subjects relating to Local Government institutions. The neat get-up, the apt illustrations and the thoughtful contributions of the Gazette reflect much credit on those who are responsible for its publication.

SIR BARON DECIDES TO RESIGN

Will Ministers Follow?

CENSURE MOTION OF MINISTERS READY

Colombo, Dec 6.

SIR Baron Jayatilaka, Minister of Home Affairs, has decided to resign from the Board of Ministers.

He communicated his decision to his colleagues whom he summoned to a meeting held at his residence, Treleven, Union Place, Colombo, yesterday evening. All the Ministers, except Mr. W. A. de Silva, were present at the meeting.

It is understood that Sir Baron explained the position he took up when, following the publication of the Bracegirdle Commission's report, various sections of the members of the State Council urged him to tender his resignation.

If he resigned at that time, he thought, the Council might not have had an opportunity of expressing its disapproval of the findings of the Commission in the manner it did.

Sir Baron insisted yesterday that no other Minister should follow the course of action he proposed to take because at the present juncture it was not advisable, nor in the interests of the country.

Sir Baron will not resign his seat in the State Council, where he represents Kelaniya. He will lead the fight for constitutional reforms to prevent a recurrence of the impasse created by the Bracegirdle incident, and, if this is unsuccessful, the question of the dissolution of the State Council will arise.

Another Committee

For the present, after his resignation from the Board of Ministers, Sir Baron will occupy a back bench and apply for a transfer to another Executive Committee, for he does not wish to remain in the Executive Committee of Home Affairs and place himself or any other in an embarrassing position. It is likely that he will seek a place in the Executive Committee of Agriculture and Lands.

Sir Baron's place as Leader of the House will, in all probability, be filled by Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, who has on several occasions acted in that capacity.

The Leader of the House is usually the vice-Chairman of the Board of Ministers and is elected at a meeting of the Ministers.

The Board of Ministers met today to transact normal business, and Sir Baron's decision was informally placed before it. Mr. D. S. Senanayake was not present at today's meeting.

Ministers Discuss Next Move

Colombo, Dec. 7.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, I understand, will make a personal stat-

ment in the State Council next Tuesday afternoon and thereafter tender his resignation from the office of Home Minister to the Governor.

In the meantime a question that is to be decided upon by the other Ministers is whether they should themselves resign their offices along with the Home Minister on the same issue.

The Ministers have already discussed this question in informal talks and they will probably meet on Friday to settle the point.

Sir Baron's own view is, as far as my information goes, that the matter should be treated as a personal one in which he alone is concerned and that the other Ministers should not resign.

On the other hand the view of some of the other Ministers is that they should stand or fall with Sir Baron and that if he resigns it is obligatory on the rest of the Ministers to do likewise. I believe that three of these Ministers have indicated that this is their view, and one of whom is so adamant about it that he has threatened resignation even if the others do not resign.

Censure Motion on Ministers

It is understood that Mr. Bernard Aluwihare, after consultation with the Sama Samajist Party, has given notice of the following motion to be moved in the Council:—

"The Board of Ministers having, without consultation with the State Council, demanded the removal of P. N. Banks from office; having supported the vote of confidence in Sir Baron and the rejection of the Bracegirdle Commission report; and having now acquiesced in the resignation of Sir Baron on the Governor's refusal of the request originally made by them to advise retirement, in the public interest, of Mr. Banks from his office, have acted without a sense of responsibility, have deprived the Council of the leadership of Sir Baron at the most critical stage of its progress, and have lost the confidence of this House."

Anti-Crime Measures at Urumparay

A largely attended public meeting of the residence of Urumparay was held at the local Pullayar Temple mandapam at 7 p. m. on Sunday, the 4th December, 1938 to take steps to stop the unusual prevalence of crime in Jaffna spreading in their area. Madaliyar V. Ponnampalam was voted to the Chair. He explained the object of the meeting and urged the immediate establishment of a volunteer corps in the village to safeguard the safety of the place by patrolling the different roads and lanes at nights in co-operation with the Police and local headmen. This was readily accepted by the whole gathering and a volunteer corps of 60 units was immediately registered at the spot with the assistance of the Udayar and Vidan of the place.

NO-WAR PACT BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY

Declaration Signed in Paris

Paris, Tuesday.

MERR Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Reich Foreign Minister, and M. Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister, signed the Franco-German "No-War" declaration today. Under this they agree.

(1) To do the utmost possible for the development of peaceful and good neighbourly relations;

(2) To affirm that there is no question of Franco-German territories whose nature remains to be examined; and

(3) Resolve to consult each other where there is risk of these questions leading to international difficulties.

Obituary

MR S. SELLAPPAH

We regret to record the death of Mr. S. Sellappah, Manager, Jaffna Mutual Benefit Fund and Secretary, Saivapattipalan Sabha, Jaffna, which occurred last night at his residence "Thava Vasu", Chundiculi. The funeral takes place this evening.

He leaves behind a widow, a daughter and son-in-law, and a host of relatives and friends with whom much sympathy will be felt.

MRS. S. KANDIAH

The death occurred on Thursday last of Srimathy Sivakampillai, wife of Mr. S. Kandiah, retired overseer, Karampan. The funeral took place on the following day and was largely attended. She leaves behind two daughters (Mrs. Chelliah, wife of Mr. S. Chelliah, retired Senior Inspector P. & T. Taiping and Mrs. S. Elaguppillai, wife of Mr. S. Elaguppillai, Senior Sanitary Inspector, Taiping) and two sons Messrs S. Raja Gopal, State Store-keeper, Taiping and S. Ratnam of Karampan, and a large circle of relatives and friends. Our condolence to the bereaved family.

Poverty in Jaffna

(Continued from page 3)

I would mention (a) Want of Thrift, (b) 25% of the population has to earn for itself and for the remaining 75%.

We have drifted away from our time old ways of life and have increased our wants which are obviously not essential. Our ways have become expensive and to a degree wasteful; thrifty habits for which we were once famous have been lost, and few people cut their coats according to their cloth. Further, in Jaffna there are so many people who depend on the earnings of one man, and take all in all, I believe that only 25% of the people work and it is these who support the rest 75%. No wonder that such a society is poor. We have become not merely a thrifless people, but a wasteful people. Look at the amounts spent in splendour and vanity at weddings, on fireworks, in festivals at Temples when these moneys could be spent

to the lasting benefit of the people. Propaganda and Organisation

There is nothing so powerful like ideas. The Urban authorities like Municipality, U. D. C. and rural ones like village Committees should be organisations or forums for the propagation and dissemination of knowledge. No person should be left ignorant, and every kind of information should be made available to the people. Propaganda work should be done in as many ways as possible. The benefits of co-operative enterprise should be told and retold to the people and encouraged. The natural resources of the peninsula should be explored by Experts and taken advantage of instead of following the policy of 'balance', we should organise and harness modern science to supply us with the resources which nature fails to give us. Organisation and knowledge are the two things we most need; we should energise ourselves to apply this knowledge for practical ends. The State and private enterprise should join hands and organise to enable our people live decent human lives.

Ceylon Government Railway RAIL CAR SERVICE

The Rail Car service between Killinochchi and Kankasanturai has been revised as from 15th December 1938.

An additional Rail Car between Kadugannawa and Kandy has been provided and rail car halts opened at Coal Sidings (Dematagoda) and Wanawabala from same date.

Please see posters at stations for full particulars.

W. G. Hills

Acting General Manager

Colombo, 5-12-38

(G. 35. 8-12-38)

Order Nisi

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF JAFFNA

Testamentary Jurisdiction No. 671.

In the matter of the estate of the late Murugesu Veerasingham of Urumpiray.

Deceased,

Valliammai widow of Murugesu of Urumpiray.

Vs. Petitioner.

1. Kuddithamby Arulampalam of Urumpiray
2. Sellappah Retnapiragasam of do presently of Daily News Office, Colombo and wife
3. Kathiramaiah of Urumpiray.
4. Sinnatungan widow of M. Veerasingham of do. Respondents.

This matter coming on for disposal before O. Coomaraswamy, Esquire, District Judge, Jaffna, on the 14th day of November 1938, in the presence of Mr. R. R. Nalliah, Proctor on the part of the Petitioner and the Affidavit of the Petitioner having been read: It is ordered that Letters of Administration to the estate of the abovenamed Deceased be granted to the Petitioner as the deceased's Mother's sister and one of the heirs unless the Respondents appear before this Court on the 14th day of December 1938 and state objections to the contrary.

Sd. C. COOMARASWAMY,
District Judge.

Jaffna,
21st day of November 1938.

(O. 68 8 & 12-12-38)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IF I WERE SIR BARON

Sir,—If I were Sir Baron Jayatilaze, I should feel highly gratified at the handsome testimony so unstintedly given by the 100% representative Council as to the merit of my services to the public and the tributes paid to my character by the leftists and all.

Thus lifted in spirit as I should be, I would deem it a worthy acknowledgment of the public testimony to return the accolade of my Knighthood to the Governor and resign the rank. I should consider the surrender should place me in a more advantageous position to serve my country and at the same time the present and prospective Knights should have no uneasiness at a crowd leaving the company of a bevy of swans.

I would resign my seat and office in Council as well, and would go to the country with an appraisal on the issue of Constitutional reform and vindication of the principle of self-determination.

In doing so, I will forswear that I would hereafter attempt to make no unholy alliances with foreign capital or white bureaucracy; but would be prepared to promise solemnly to make common cause with the indigenous minority communities.

I would declare my experiences in the 7 years of experimentation of the Donoughmore Constitution. Any attempt to lift anything higher than one's conscience in contravention to dictates of humanity, I would say, is fraught with danger. The Karmic law is operative and none can escape its punishment. I would tell my constituency that my policy during the rest of my life would be fostering and maintaining existent corporate bodies. I would not attempt to destroy anything however small.

I would tell my electorate that politics is not an exact science. Applied politics is the art of compromises, so the school master's insistence on rectitude or for deduction of exact principles or results as in problems of mathematics or cock-sureness of facts would not suit in the game of politics. I would ask that I be given a free hand.

I would also tell my constituency that the Donoughmore Constitution is nothing better than a chain forged to bind our country more firmly to the Imperialistic Car and that the Board of Ministers could not do anything more than carrying out the "suggestions" of Imperialism. The Board was not more useful than pulling out chestnuts for the Imperial monkey from fire. The 7 years game of playing at Government has cost the Island tremendously. It has depleted the Island's resource as well as involved it in heavy expenditure in the future. The public debt has mounted. The people were demoralised.

I should be quite sure of being returned to Council. There I would work for all my worth for the attainment of Poorna Swaraj.

Yours truly
Wis Mie Naine

Rajakadawwe
3-12-38

Crime in Jaffna

Sir,—As I sat penning this letter (it is 1.30 a.m.) I can hear distinctly the reports of several guns coming

from all parts of the Town. While night apparently reigns over the city, half the Town is well awake and is keeping a vigilant watch over the other half. Any suspicious movement or noise in the vicinity of the house brings the house-holder's gun into action or the people on watch rush in the direction from which the disturbance came. The situation thus created in Jaffna has no parallel in her history.

It has been greatly deplored by many that house-breaking, highway robbery, hooliganism of the worst type, violent assaults on innocent citizens and dresome murders are the order of the day—and night. On the suggestion of Mr. Saw A. Sabapathy at the recent emergency meeting of the Jaffna Association, young men have formed themselves into Volunteer Night Patrols in various parts of the peninsula and are carrying on very efficient patrolling of their respective areas, in co-operation with the Jaffna Police.

The Jaffna public are greatly indebted to these Volunteer patrols, particularly to the Nallur corps for the courage and boldness displayed in capturing one of the suspected cars used by these terrifying bands of marauding gangsters. The driver was forced to surrender, while the occupants of the car made good their escape, leaving behind deadly weapons supposed to have been used by the burglars in their nocturnal adventures.

While appreciating the fact that the suspects under arrest were not allowed bail, the opinion has been expressed that until the tide of crime in the North subsides, culprits and suspects should not be allowed bail as there is every likelihood of their committing greater violence and thefts to meet their lawyers' fees.

During the past few weeks the Police Chief in Jaffna has been repeatedly appealing to the Public for its co-operation, and how the Public has responded could be seen in the splendid spirit shown and the solid work done by the various Volunteer Corps throughout the Jaffna District. The Jaffna man by nature is peace-loving and abhors anything that is contrary to true citizenship. If, as they say, it is difficult for the police to get people to give evidence for the prosecution, who is really to blame? Not the public. Why? For the simple reason that such witnesses are not given adequate police protection during and after the trial. Criminals have their own ways of punishing those who have given evidence against them.

The 'Law's delay' is one of the chief reasons for the increase of crime in this country. The criminal makes capital use of the time that elapses between the commission of the offence and the punishment that would be meted out to him. As a temporary measure for arresting the crime wave in Jaffna, I would suggest that criminals should be whipped in public and murderers executed publicly in Jaffna itself. Hoping the authorities would consider this suggestion seriously and take stringent measures against the culprits who are breaking the peace of Jaffna.

Yours truly
Jaffna 1-12-38 Tarzan

CRIME IN JAFFNA

(Continued from page 3)

pledge of mutual assistance against bullies and hooligans, then bullies and hooligans will cease to exist. But no one seems to mind it until he himself is the victim of the rowdy's pranks. (Perhaps Jaffna anticipated the universal disbelief in the principle of collective security especially prevalent after the betrayal of the smaller nations by the bigger ones and after the success of the bully, Hitler!) The system of hiring assailants can be stopped only by the united action of the peace-loving people. Effective social boycott against the patrons of these hirelings will do great good. Lawyers will help in this direction by not appearing free for the wellknown rowdies. It is an open secret that rowdy-kings never pay lawyers' fees. The lawyers defend them free in return for their services as touts. No doubt they make efficient touts because of their intimate knowledge of the criminal population.

Class and caste oppression also cause crime. The low-caste man's grievances against the oppression by the high caste men takes definite shape as violent aggression when his self-control is slightly relaxed.

The Police

A word about the police will not be out of place. The police in Jaffna have to be persuaded to act in criminal matters. Normally they ought to act by themselves the moment they get information of a crime. The members of the public have spoilt them by making them believe that they are doing a favour and not their duty when they detect crime. For example, it has become the custom in Jaffna for the victims of crime to send cars for the police in order to get them down in time. Jaffna has no social life in which a non-Tamil police officer below the rank of A.S.P. can take part. The result is that a few never-do-wells collect round the police officer, who is starved for company, and give him a "good time" of sorts. Slowly but surely they begin to influence the officers in the conduct of their official duties. These "friends" gradually become liaison officers between the police officers and the shadier citizens in the conduct of extra-legal negotiations for the settlement of criminal cases or for the dropping of criminal charges. I know of one man who makes his livelihood by making friends with police officers and then acting as go-between. The remedy is to make non-Tamil officers feel at home in Jaffna by giving them a place in the social life of the place. It would be a good plan for police officers to be transferred every few years. Long stays in one place are apt to be a corrupting influence on police officers. Lawyers should not find themselves protesting when a police officer is transferred from Jaffna after a decade or more of his stay in Jaffna!

I do not think an enforced abstinence from toddy will curb crime. Abstinence and prohibition should be the result of education. Toddy in itself does not

make a man vicious or wicked. It only makes the viciousness apparent.

It has been suggested that the law should be amended. It has been also suggested in the editorial of the "Hindu Organ" that criminals are acquitted by the courts for want of evidence. I hope that the implication is not that the minimum of evidence necessary to convict an accused person should be reduced. The judges will then have to depend on the inspiration of the Muses for deciding on a person's guilt. Justice will become a farce and the liberty of even law abiding citizens will be in jeopardy. It is better that ten guilty men should go free than that one innocent man should be punished. The reduction of the quantum of evidence necessary for a conviction will end in the government curtailing the civil liberties of the people. The same thing applies to the speed at which justice should be dispensed. It would be very shortsighted indeed to dispose of criminal cases with lightning speed. Just because crime is on the increase in Jaffna the ordinary citizen should not be made to run the risk of being branded a criminal after a hasty and therefore necessarily ill-considered trial. It would also be a serious encroachment on the civil liberties of the people to remand to the prison all accused persons simply because some witnesses are frightened. The correct way to proceed would be to bring about the existence of such public opinion and public spiritedness as will prevent a witness from being frightened. The panic created by an increase in crime should not make us surrender our liberties or ask the government to curtail them.

It will be futile to attempt to eradicate crime while the economic order which gives rise to poverty and unemployment remains unaltered.

Ancient Hindu Marriage

(Continued from page 2)

on sumptuous couches. Our feasts once shone in splendour. Shall we now exist on bitter herbs, and nurse our deep sorrow? What terror is there in a funeral pyre? Our bed is where our spouse lies. By right we seek his couch of fire. Fond friends! We stay not here alone. To us, whose mighty spouse is dead, the water of the lake, where lotus blooms, and fire are one"

Conclusion

It is pleasing to note that under the British rule this terrible suttee has become a thing of the past, and that its memory has been blotted out for ever. Its prohibition by law was effected during the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck 1825—1835) at the instance of the great Rajah Ravi Mohon Roy.

I cannot but conclude this series of articles on *Ancient Hindu Marriage* with the following passage which is both beautiful and true:

"By sweet experience know
That marriage rightly understood
Gives to the prudent and the wise
A paradise below"

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Difficulties of Co-operation In North

(Continued from page 1)

in character and leadership. Whereas in the one society there has been a President who, without possessing any marked material or social advantage, has steadily taken the lead by force of character and has himself set an excellent example of thrift, hard work and better living, resulting in a material improvement in the position of the villagers even through four years of depression, in the other society the leader of the village, with all the advantages of tribal headship and the prestige conferred by Government favour has led his village and his fellow tribesmen down the road to ruin."

Ready Finance

Dealing with objects of loans the Registrar says:

There has been a commendable decrease in the percentage of unproductive loans all round, but it is noteworthy that the ratio of unproductive loans is very much higher in the Northern than in the other two Divisions. In the Western Division the ratio is $\frac{1}{5}$, in the Central Division $\frac{1}{6}$, while in the Northern Division it is $\frac{1}{4}$. It must, however, be said that the ratio shows a decrease even in the Northern Division, although Jaffna is yet inclined to place too much faith in the unsafe finance of debt redemption by village societies.

One great virtue, though, in the Northern Division is the ready finance it gives to agriculture. The great proportion of its loans are for cultivation, while in the other two divisions, agriculture takes second place after trade. This, however, is not so much the fault of the societies as of the state of village agriculture in the Western and Central Divisions. Tea, rubber and coconut are not products grown on the village scale, and in the present condition of their market the villager has little incentive to develop whatever little he has of them. As for paddy, vegetables, and other products commonly grown in the villages, the Sinhalese peasant must be weaned from his traditional methods of agriculture (which seems to be a difficult task) and must find a more organized market for his produce before he needs more money to spend on cultivation. Until this happens, borrowings from Sinhalese societies will continue to be more for trade than for agriculture, for trade in the Sinhalese districts is pursued not only as a profit yielding occupation but as the last hope of the destitute. The case is different with Jaffna. Jaffna is the land of intensive agriculture (comparatively speaking) and its tobacco crops require considerable finance.

Loans for land purchase and land lease have increased, although the percentages, both of amount and of number, have decreased. The total number for the Island is 3,476. Jaffna has given out very few of these loans, while the Western Division has granted considerably more than both Jaffna and the Central Division put together. My own opinion is that in certain respects loans for purchase or lease of land deserve to be classified among "unproductive" loans. It is not always

HEADMEN TO CONTINUE

Home Committee's Decision

Colombo, Dec. 3.

The Executive Committee of Home Affairs decided yesterday to recommend the services of the superior headmen such as vidanes, korales and udayar's be continued.

Accordingly the Minister of Home Affairs will ask the State Council for a supplementary estimate to pay their allowances from January to the end of the current financial year.

All vacancies arising in this branch will be filled in future with the consent of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

that the money is taken to satisfy a real need for land. Quite frequently the money is borrowed to satisfy the Sinhalese man's itch to possess more land than he actually requires or can profitably cultivate. Yet again, these loans can sometimes be thoroughly unco-operative when they enable members to take advantage of the unfortunate position of their fellow villagers. For our frequent experience is that the villager who sells or leases his land does so under the compulsion of necessity, because he needs money, more often than not, for a useful purpose. In such cases it is the duty of the society to make a member of the distressed villager and give him all the assistance it can instead of financing its members to buy up his land. There was an instance recently where a society had lent most of its money for purchase and lease of land and inquiry revealed that the members had spent their time buying up almost the entire village! Where no genuine economic need of land is felt, this type of loan must be severely discouraged, for it not only leads to bankruptcy but operates as an effective barrier to the admission of the poor into societies. A very vicious form of "lease" is the usufructuary mortgage. It is timeless, is scarcely ever redeemed and the mortgagee becomes the virtual owner of the land by paying less than half its value. It cannot be morally justified except perhaps in the few places where usufructuary mortgage is the customary form of land lease.

A rather striking feature of the loan list this year is the large increase in "food" loans. Last year there were only 484 such loans, this year there are 1,178. We have been trying to impress on our societies that they must satisfy all the necessary needs of their members and our teaching appears to have taken effect. The purchase of provisions on credit delivers the villager to the bondage of the boutique-keeper, from whom he must not only go on buying, but to whom he must go on selling, all at the most uneconomical prices, and societies that advance credit for the purchase of food help the villager to increase his bargaining power and render a distinct service to the rural community.

A SHORT STORY

(Continued from page 2)

do not bring shame on this great house," she had warned her son, "I do not like your going to their house. It is beneath our dignity."

"Mother—" Janardhan had replied, "You are living in the past, not in the present. To visit our neighbour's house is a duty—much more so if they are poor and honourable. I propose to do it. And Parvathi is a very good girl. Do you know her Guru? Gandhiji—I saw her herself clean our rubbish heap. You were wondering who did it? I saw her do it—and mother, how clean that spot is now?"

Six months hence. Parvathi stood before Rukmani with a bunch of plantains usually big and beautiful to the eye.

"Come, sit down, Parvathi—" Rukmani had said as she accepted the gift of the plantains, "I was wondering whether plantains can grow so big. But you have brought the whole bunch to me—surely you must eat also."

"Aunt, the plantain is yours—I planted the little tree on the rubbish which I had stealthily removed from your compound—it is the rubbish that has given it the growth."

"No, one—you must have some of them—" and the woman selected some of the smallest from the bunch and gave them to Parvathi.

* * *

"Parvathi—" The voice was sweet as it struck her ears as she was sweeping her compound in the very early hours of the morning.

"No—I do not want your help now—I am doing it in my own house—" She had said, her broom held high and the end of a young palm tree bathing her head.

"I have not come to help you—I want you—Parvathi, I love you."

Janardhan extended his arms—and in one unknown impulse, Parvathi had sunk into them.

But it was for a moment. She hastily shook herself. "What have I done, oh God—" She exclaimed, "Father forgave me, but the force of sin was irresistible."

"Your father has permitted me to make love to you—" Janardhan said, "I gave him a loan of fifty rupees he wanted—and I will not ask it of him."

Parvathi then looked up. Shame, contempt, sorrow, anger, all flashed from those eyes.

"When I said Father, I meant my God—" She said, "And proud man who thinks that you can purchase me for your pleasures, never talk to me again."

IV

Janardhan was unhappy. He found it impossible even to see Parvathi though she was his neighbour. She cut him off. Kittu still went for his studies—Kittu was happy because of the little money and other presents he got from Janardhan. Kittu was all praise for him.

* * *

"Parvathi, I want you to speak to Janardhan—the young man is unhappy—"

It was her father speaking. Janardhan unhappy? God, was she not unhappy too? Did she

not love him? But what would God and Gandhiji say?

"Father—" and Parvathi burst into tears, "Do you want me to be dishonoured for the sake of money? Was it for this that God made me widow? Do you want to live a higher standard of life by selling your daughter?"

He father winced under the force of the words.

Oh, what a mighty force is a pure heart and a clean soul!

The father would not speak. He withdrew in silence.

If you would not return his Rs. 50 when you drew your salary, father, I shall fast unto death."

V

One week of fast—her father had not returned the money—and Parvathi had started her fast.

Her mother never knew anything at all—poor woman, she was lamenting loudly.

"Gandhiji is killing my daughter" she was saying, "The silly girl is fasting—How long will she fast."

The second week—for her poor father had not been able to pay back the Rs. 50. He had paid the debts due last month. Where had he money? He begged his daughter—but her look terrified him. There was no one guiltier in the house than he—

And another skulled round the fencing—sad and anxious. It was Janardhan. He knew why Parvathi fasted.

"Poor girl—she wants to die—it is better to die than suffer widowhood—" Janardhan's mother whispered as the talk was on Parvathi's fast.

If only his mother knew what was in her son's mind just then!

* * *

Parvathi lay like a piece of silk cloth on a mat on the bare floor—will she die?

Her poor mother was in tears. Kittu had stopped going to school. The guilty father went to his office—but the man was miserable.

Twenty first day—it is said, that Parvathi did not open her eyes.

Janardhan hastily sent for a doctor—and as the doctor felt her pulse, Parvathi opened her eyes.

She looked at Janardhan and smiled.

"Do you love this shrivelled up dirty body now, Janardhan—" Her voice was clear and into her face came a light that seemed to light up the room.

Those around heard it and were surprised. Janardhan's own mother shrunk back in horror.

"Yes, mother—" Janardhan said in the presence of all, "I am the sinner that is sending her to her death—Mother; I must marry Parvathi or I also will follow her—I will fast unto death from now."

* * *

Two hours hence—And placing her on his lap, before the sacred fire, Janardhan tied the sacred strip.

"Have the will to live Parvathi—forgive me and live—We are husband and wife now."

The wife heard—and heard not—but she smiled.

* * *

One week hence—Parvathi did not die. She had rallied to the gentle treatment of the best doctors of the town.

Husband and wife!
"And Parvathi's father was now manager of Janardhan's estate!"

(Roy's Weekly)

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