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## The Hindu Organ.

JAFFNA, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13, 1899

### Religion and the Appointment of Maniagars.

With reference to a communicated article appearing in the *Ceylon Standard*, the writer of which advocates, among other things, the continuance of the practice hitherto adopted by Government, of appointing as chief headmen in the Jaffna District Hindus only, a correspondent of our Catholic contemporary states that no satisfactory reason has been assigned to show that Christians are "ineligible" for appointment as Maniagars. The writer in the *Standard* does not put forward exhaustively the reasons and arguments for confining the appointments to Hindus. Before we proceed to examine the arguments adduced for the appointment of only Hindus as chief headmen, we have to correct one or two errors into which the *Guardian* correspondent has, we fancy, inadvertently fallen. He is wrong in stating that the people of Puttoor objected to the appointment of Mr. Duraisamy, on the ground of religion or on any valid ground. Mr. Duraisamy is a Hindu very much of him, and belongs to a most respectable and well-known family. We are not aware if the people of Puttoor objected to his appointment; if they did, it was perhaps due to a desire on their part to have one of their number appointed to the post, the predecessor of Mr. Duraisamy having been a gentleman of Puttoor. As to the appointment of Mr. Chandrasegava as Maniagar of Poonakari, it was the first appointment made by Mr. Ievers in the District of Jaffna, since his assumption of the duties of Government Agent. Poonakari is an out-of-the-way division, and there are no Hindu temples of eminence to which the general public of Jaffna resort, and none could be found among the local Hindu residents worthy of filling the post, if we except the people of Cholombuturai, who own landed property in that division and reside there during a part of the year. Besides, what is the necessity for following within a year the appointment

of one Christian by another? Why not allow a reasonable amount of time to elapse, to try the success of the experiment, before a second appointment is made? In this connection we feel bound to state that an impression is fast gaining ground among the Hindus that Mr. Ievers is determined to appoint, for the most part, only Christian Maniagars.

Sir William Twynam, a very pious and earnest Christian, and before him Mr. P. A. Dyke, a far-seeing ruler and an accurate judge of men and things, never appointed a Christian as a chief headman in the Jaffna District, if we except Mr. Muttutamby, the Maniagar of Pachchilappalli, whose appointment was made by Sir William. But as regards Pachchilappalli it must be borne in mind that the leading and influential inhabitants of the division are Christians, European and native, and the generality of the people are, like those of the Wann, sunk in ignorance, having no knowledge of any religion, whether Christianity or Hinduism. Mr. Muttutamby himself is closely connected by marriage with one of his Hindu predecessors in office. Besides, in Mr. Muttutamby's division, Hindus competent to fill the post are not found. Such is the case with Poonakari also. Poonakari and Pachchilappalli have to draw on other divisions for their Maniagars. But the circumstances of Valigamam North differ materially from those of Poonakari or Pachchilappalli. Valigamam North is inhabited by some of the most influential and leading high caste Hindu families of the District; two of the most important Hindu temples, where thousands of Hindu devotees from all parts of the Peninsula congregate during the annual festival, are situated there; and one of them is, in the estimation of the Hindus, the holiest and most sacred shrine in North Ceylon, if we except *Tiruketecharam* in Mannar now in ruins. Compared with the total population, there are only a handful of Christians in the whole division. Apart from religion, the men most competent to fill the post are found among Hindus only. Thus, not only justice, but public policy requires the appointment of a Hindu to the Maniagarship of Valigamam North. What will a Christian Maniagar do, if a disturbance occurs in the Maviddapuram Temple, where peace and order are now maintained by the influence of the Hindu Maniagar, whose word will carry more weight with the Hindu worshippers than that of a Christian?

Why in the name of all that is reasonable, we ask, a departure should be made from the time-honoured practice of appointing a Hindu to the Maniagarship of Valigamam North. The practice of appointing only Hindus as Maniagars in the chief divisions of Jaffna, has had the sanction and support not only of all the past Government Agents, but also of the Government ever since the commencement of the British rule. The Maniagars, in addition to being chief headmen, are Registrars of marriages. As they have been invariably Hindus, the Catholics and Protestants have been given Registrars of their own persuasion. In each division, there is a Protestant, and a Catholic, Registrar, besides the Maniagar, who is the Hindu Registrar. Why was Mr. Lawrence appointed Protestant Registrar last month, after the appointment of a Protestant Maniagar had been decided upon? Should not the appointment rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Stickney, have changed sides and gone to a Hindu, if it had been decided to appoint a Christian Maniagar? Why, again we ask, a Hindu Registrar has not been appointed to Poonakari when the people of that division have been deprived of the services of a Hindu Maniagar?

Was not Mr. Ievers bound, in fairness to the Hindus, to recommend at least the appointment of a Registrar of their own persuasion? It is this and similar action of the Government Agent that has lent colour to the belief that the rights of the Hindus are not being safeguarded by the responsible ruler of the Province.

With the soundness of the abstract proposition that a Christian is as much eligible for a Maniagarship as a Hindu, we do not quarrel. Let Christians be appointed Maniagars of divisions where the majority of the population are Christians or which are not strongholds of Hinduism. In the circumstances of Valigamam North or any other division similarly situated, where the population is not only mainly Hindu, but men of light and leading are Hindus, the appointment of a Hindu gentleman is, if not imperative, much more desirable than that of a Christian. The question may be asked—If the appointment of a Christian Maniagar is obnoxious to the Hindus, will not the appointment of a Hindu Maniagar prove obnoxious to the Christians? We reply that Government cannot, in the nature of things, provide for individual cases of hardship. The advantages or disadvantages of an appointment to the people, are to be ascertained by looking to the number of people whom the appointment of one or the other will affect. The Government will have to consider on what side the balance of advantage lies. In other words the Government will have to seek in revenue and police administration, as in legislation, the greatest good of the greatest number. We say so on the assumption that the appointment of a Hindu Maniagar will prove obnoxious to Christians. But hitherto the experience of the public and the Government has been that no Hindu Maniagar has given offence to the Christians in matters relating to their religion. Sir William Twynam who, what ever his other failings as a ruler might have been, always respected the religious feelings of the Hindus, will bear witness to this fact. Indeed, even if a Hindu Maniagar is bigoted and inclined in his mind to commit acts of intolerance, he will not put his views into practice for fear that the European Missionaries, to whom the Government Agent and other officials are more easily accessible than to native Hindus, will complain against him and bring him to book. Taking for granted that a Hindu Maniagar will be liberal in his sentiments and narrow-minded, whom does it affect? Not his co-religionists certainly who form the bulk of the population nor the Christians whose interests their European pastors can be relied on to protect. On the other hand, if a Christian Maniagar proves a fanatic and plays into the hands of the missionaries in their propagandistic and proselytising operations, to whom will the Hindus go for redress? The Government Agent is inaccessible, and very seldom are complaints which the people prefer against the Maniagars, heeded by the authorities. The chances are ninety-nine to hundred that the Government Agent will take the side of his American or European brother in holy orders, who meets him on terms of equality. The Government will, therefore, be erring on the right side, if at all they err, in appointing only Hindus to the chief headmanships of the divisions, where there are leading Hindu temples and which are the strongholds of Hinduism. A Christian is obliged by his religion to carry on aggressive missionary work, but a Hindu is not bound to find fault with the faiths of other men. Thus the tenets of the two religions have also to be taken into account. Generally speaking, the Hindu Maniagars have been found to be imbued with the most liberal sentiments in matters of



religion. Indeed a true Hindu cannot but be so. Hinduism tolerates all religions. A man is a Hindu, Christian, or Muhammadan according to his Karma.

We shall now cite some concrete examples to show how beneficial the appointment of Hindu Maniagars has hitherto proved to the Government and the public. In the Nainativu Temple, there have been constant disputes between rival claimants to the managership during the last ten years. Two or three years ago the disputes were coming to a head, and the rival factions threatened to break the peace. If not for the salutary influence exerted on, and the counsel given to, the people by the veteran Maniagar of Valigamam West and the Maniagar of the Islands, both staunch Hindus, Nainativu would have become the scene of bloodshed and murder. A Christian Maniagar would have been utterly out of his element at Nainativu. In the Kandaswamy Temple of the Jaffna division, the rival claimants to the management are kept quiet by the genial Maniagar of Jaffna. As long as there is no law regulating the management of Hindu temples and the administration of their temporalities, the Government is bound, in the interests of public peace, if on no other ground, to appoint Hindu Maniagars.

Not long ago, the Rev. Mr. Griffith of Nellore and his catechists repaired to the precincts of the Nellore Kandaswamy Temple, on the occasion of an important festival, and not content with distributing leaflets and tracts calling in question the faith of the worshippers and the sacredness of the temple, preached vehement invectives against the God Kandaswamy himself. In fact, they sent an ultimatum to Kandaswamy standing on his own territory. The lower orders among the Hindu worshippers, not being able to stomach the insults heaped on them and their Deity, attempted to lay violent hands on the over-zealous and misguided apostles of Christianity. It required all the tact of the Maniagar of Jaffna to persuade the worshippers to desist from assaulting the Christian trespassers, and the catechists to understand that Kandaswamy Temple was neither their own nor neutral ground. If the Maniagar happened to be a Christian, not only he would have had no influence with the Hindu worshippers, but they would have marched to the Police Station en masse and prosecuted for laying violent hands on the unchristian Padre and his followers. Unto this day the padres and their catechists attend the annual festivals at the Maviddlaparam, Manipay and Nellore temples and distribute tracts and pamphlets to the Hindu worshippers, and now and then resort to the abuse of the Deities also. Indeed no assemblage of Hindus takes place in any part of the District without the emissaries of the missionaries being there and insulting the Hindus.

We should not be understood to mean that the profession of Christianity is a disability or disqualification for any appointment. What we say is that in the existing circumstances of the country, it is indisputably necessary for the protection of the Hindu population that the chief headmen of the chief divisions of Jaffna should be Hindus. Native Christians have found no stauncher advocates of their rights than ourselves. Our columns have borne ample testimony to the high character and sterling merits of Mr. T. M. Tampoo and Mr. R. W. Allegakoen, good and true Tamil Christian gentlemen, whose appointment to the Public service we have times without number advocated. In asking a Christian Government, which certainly will not impose any disability on Christians, to appoint Hindu Maniagars, we take our stand on one of the fundamental principles of the British constitution—religious toleration. To afford toleration to the Hindus practically, and not in theory only, Government must appoint only Hindus as their chief headmen. We say *their* because they form nine-tenths of the population. The Dutch told the Hindus that they ruled them with their might, and the Hindus did not ask for toleration at their hands. But the British Government tells us that they grant all our rights. We therefore ask our rulers to appoint as headmen among us our co-religionists only.

As to Mr. Barr Kumarakulasighe we have nothing personal to say against him. We should be glad to see him rise in the public service either in his own department or elsewhere. It is on principle we object to his appointment as Maniagar of Valigamam North.

## Notes & Comments.

A change suggested—Mr. Ievers holds a first grade office in the first class of the Service, and got his Rs 1800 appointment before Mr. Ellis, the Government Agent at Colombo. It is to be, therefore, hoped that Mr. Ievers will be promoted to the Treasurership rendered vacant by the lamented death of the Hon L. F. Lee, in connection with which Mr. Ellis' name is mentioned. Mr. Ievers' experience of the Secretariat will stand him in good stead, and he will prove a valuable acquisition to the Executive Council. It is not always easy to secure the services of Councillors possessed of such varied experience as Mr. Ievers is. Mr. Ievers' translation to the Treasurership will give a chance to Mr. Fisher to administer the affairs of the Northern Province which he did so very well when acting for Mr. Ievers in 1898. In this connection we beg to impress on the Government the duty and the necessity of considering the Government Agent of the Northern Province as belonging to the same Service, and as entitled to the same promotion as the officers in the South. When an officer is appointed Government Agent of the North, he is allowed to vegetate and fossilize in that office. Why he should not receive the promotion due to him in due course or why he should decline a promotion if offered to him, we fail to see.

C. Coomariah Mudaliyar—Everybody in Jaffna, high and low, will testify to the efficiency, ability, and the high sense of duty with which the veteran Mudaliyar discharged the duties of his office as Registrar of Lands, Jaffna. Scrupulously honest and thoroughly impartial, Mr. Coomariah Mudaliyar was a model public servant. Indeed if Mr. Coomariah's services are to be properly rewarded, he ought to be made a Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate. Judging by the standard of public servants who have been created Mudaliyars of the Gate in the south, Mr. Coomariah's claims are paramount. His retiring disposition perhaps accounts for the non-recognition of his claims. Mr. Coomariah was a terror to the Notaries of Jaffna, and was instrumental in getting most of the peccant notaries dismissed, at a time when some of the predecessors of Mr. Arunachalam did not devote much attention to the work of pruning the profession of its black sheep, and latterly heartily co-operated with Mr. De Saram and Mr. Arunachalam in the detection and punishment of offending Notaries. Mr. Coomariah's name was so much identified with the office he held that even now, more than a year after his retirement, the ignorant classes in Jaffna, call the office of the Registrar of Lands, Jaffna, as the office of Coomariah. We are led to make the above remarks on perusing the report of the Registrar-General who acknowledges the valuable services rendered by Mr. Coomariah in the following terms:—"Coomariah Mudaliyar, though he had attained his 60th year, had still many years of good work in him, and his loss to the Department is irreparable. I have not known a more devoted and conscientious public servant. His one thought was the efficient service of the Government and the public, and he never spared himself. The very high repute of the Jaffna Land Registry during the last twenty years was entirely due to him."

## LOCAL & GENERAL.

The Government Agent—Mr. R. W. Ievers has returned from a tour of inspection in the Wanni.

Mr. W. T. Garrett—Mr. Garrett, Wesleyan Missionary stationed at Jaffna for several years is about to leave for England on a holiday. He is the Secretary of the Jaffna Public Library, and has arranged for the signalling of important war news from Colombo to Jaffna immediately on the receipt of such news in that city.

Mr. Advocate Tirunayakarasu—This gentleman has left for Colombo with Mrs. Tirunayakarasu to spend the Christmas Holidays in that city. They will return by the beginning of the next year.

Mr. W. Nevins—We understand that this gentleman has been appointed self vaccinator on a salary of Rs 240 per annum.

Mr. Simon Ollegiangaram—We are glad to hear that this gentleman who lately retired from the head clerkship of the Provincial Road Committee, Jaffna, has been awarded an allowance of Rs. 360 per annum.

Personal—Mr. P. Arulampalam, Dispenser Government Civil Hospital, Vavuni, has come here on six weeks' leave.

A Public Meeting—A public meeting of leading Catholics was held in the St. Patrick's College Hall on the 3rd instant, to concert measures for the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the ordination to priesthood of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Joulain, and of the golden jubilee of the foundation of the St. Patrick's College formerly known as the Jaffna Boys' Seminary.

A Marriage—T. A. Elmer, Professor, Jaffna College, Battaramulla, was married to Miss Henrietta Horsley a daughter of the Rev. Mr. Horsley of Nellore on the 1st instant. The Solemnization took place at the Nellore Church.

## LAWYERS IN CEYLON.

We understand from a Ceylon paper that the Ceylon Government is considering the question of the desirability of conferring on the local Council of Legal Education the power to limit the number of students for each examination. Very possibly the profession of the Law in Ceylon is getting as uncomfortably crowded as it is in the Madras Presidency, with the result that touting and pettifoggery is becoming a stern necessity for the poorer practitioners; but, nevertheless, it would be a most dangerous thing that the right of pursuing the profession of the law should have to be acquired from a Council. For certain departments under the Government of India, a would-be employee has to secure a "nomination" from Government to compete at the competitive examination; and the Government, as an employer of labour, has at least a show of a right to make its own arrangements regarding its candidates; but the profession of the Law stands on a different basis, and no Council of Legal Education has a right to keep a qualified man out if he wants to get in. The medical profession is also somewhat crowded out, and we might suppose that, next, the Council of Medical Education would be wanting, by similar means, to keep the number of budding doctors down. Any such powers would be for much evil, and not the least amongst those evils would be the door that would be opened to canvassing for nominations, sometimes perhaps with persuasives of not the most honest sort. It is a regrettable fact, no doubt, that the profession of the Law, like a good many professions, is getting too full, but the true remedy will not lie in any artificial means of contraction. The law of supply and demand invariably works right in the end, and when the profession of the law becomes absolutely "impossible," the candidates will fall off spontaneously.—*Madras Time*, October 12th.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

VAVUNIYA.

6th December 1899

The Government Agent who was here on circuit left this for Jaffna on the 2nd instant after hearing some irrigation cases from Touakai and Kavadinavalpattu. The District Mudaliar, Mr. E. R. Sandrasagara and the sub-Inspector of Village Tanks Mr. A. Rajakarim were in attendance. This time the Government Agent underwent great hardships as the roads are very bad owing to continual rain. The Assistant Government Agent of Mullaitivu who went to Anuradhapura as acting Government Agent has returned and assumed duties. He was also on circuit and tried the irrigation cases which he fixed for hearing at different places. He left Odduchattan on his way to Mullaitivu on the 5th instant after hearing some cases over there. The Kachcheri Mudaliyar Mr. A. Arisakuddy, and the sub-Inspector Mr. A. Rajakarim were in attendance while he was on circuit besides, of course the different District Mudaliyars.

I am  
A Jaffnese

## SELECTIONS.

### BENGAL AND NATAL.

Apparently in the eyes of some of the European officials in the Lower Provinces of Bengal and Assam the reputation which Natal made in recent years is worth striving for. No other intelligent explanation is possible for the outbreaks of anti-native feeling that are being reported in quick succession. The Sublet Magistrate who ordered a native gentleman to be flogged for the sin of having prayed for copies of complaint petitions in a case would not have behaved so brutally towards any white man. When the Assam Government saw the justice of punishing him in the mildest way by a transfer, somebody higher-up interfered and ordered his restoration to the original place. We then heard of the case of Judge Peniel of Chupra who was transferred to



settlement for the offence of having done justice or native police constable whom an army of sup-European officials, such as the District Magistrate, District Superintendent of Police, the District Engineer and the Assistant Superintendent of Police, had conspired to ruin. This was followed by another case in which a Deputy Magistrate, a European, denied the right of a 'native' to occupy a bungalow in the neighbourhood of his own, for the 'native' was in the habit of receiving visits from all sorts and conditions of men, and besides the 'native' was causing nuisance to his European neighbour by neglecting to prevent the issue of smoke from his house being blown by the winds to his (European's) bungalow!

likely to be in a foreign land,—and, indeed modern writers have not failed to point out the absurdity of this notion by repeated references to the electric light in London being much more brilliant than moon-light itself, say, on the heights of Simla or Darjeeling in summer: more important than all these is the newly inculcated faith common to continental nations in what historians call the 'doctrine of nationalities.'

Offered was taken away. Had the Pandita avowed her objects from the beginning, much of the mortification shared by our men of light and leading at that time would have been saved! Since that time the Pandita identified herself openly with the Missionaries. During the last famine she travelled the whole of Maharashtra and reaped a good harvest. I remember to have read in some Missionary paper that she has done more than fifty years' work in the single year of 1896.

A branch of Sharda-Sadan has been opened at Kedgaon, a village near Poona, with the imposing name of "Mukti Sadan." The Missionaries now think that their energies and resources are wasted in founding Schools and Colleges in towns and cities. The money spent by them there on such institutions does not become so much profitable to them as it used to be in former years, and hence they have now preferred to work in villages.

THE EAST AND WEST—A CONTRAST.

(FROM A HINDU)

By the unanimous verdict of historians and anthropologists, the East has been received to be the mother of nations, the abode of the highest religion and all that is noble and virtuous in it. Above all others, the Hindus have been sustained alike in success and adversity by their aspiration from the truths inculcated to them by their ancestors alike by precept and example.

The people of the East have always done what lies in their power to advance the cause of humanity and every action, little or great, has been permeated by the instinctive and potent factor of religion. It is religion that is the adoubted cause of the many charitable institutions private and public, the institution of trusts, and the colossal temples with the finest architecture over which countless sums have been lavished, that stand the land all over India and in the neighbouring islands.

PANDITA RAMABAI AND HER MISSION.

(FROM A BOMBAY CORRESPONDENT.)

Your readers may be aware that when Sharda-Sadan was first established at Poona, it was announced by the Pandita that it was wholly a philanthropic undertaking and would not be made to serve the purposes of any religious mission. Men like Mr. Justice Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar believed this in earnest and began to enlist the sympathy and procure the help of our people for making the Sadan a complete success.

THE NATURE OF THE ENGLISHMAN.

There is no disparagement we presume, in an avowal that we owe to the recent events in India the materials to judge the average Englishman, his nature and his conduct towards a 'native' other than his own. The English are a patriotic people who carry their notions of national honour to the farthest limit, applying them to the commonest matters of everyday life as if the 'native' were considered selfish and biased.