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A THREAT TO UNITY

O. RAJAGOPALAHARI

(This article reproduced in the Bhavan's Journal of December 23, 1974 is again reproduced here for its high value. Of the lofty ideas of a world famous statesman and scholar on the use of English are worth endless repetition.)

The linguistic isolationism that has risen like an evil spirit from the States reorganization cauldron will surely result in the break up of India into islands, with no means of co-ordination, co-operation or even communication, if English be thrust out of the secretariats, the universities and the courts.

It is obvious folly to give up the string that blinds, as a result of a hundred and more years of history, education and legal and administrative development.

English must not only be retained if we desire to maintain Indian unity against the centrifugal linguistic fanaticism, which is enveloping every field of activity, educational and political, but also greatly strengthened in the educational field. Every observer has noticed and remarked about the deterioration in the English standard of schools and colleges. This must be immediately attended to. The fallacy that attention to one's mother-tongue must be accompanied by a neglect of English must be effectively demolished. The greater fallacy that attention to English is a favour done to England should be exposed and removed. The notion that it is patriotic to neglect English must be countered.

While it is true that education must be through the mother tongue it does not follow that worthless translations of textbooks of modern knowledge should be prescribed in place of standard English books. If English as a language subject must re-

main in the curriculum there is no earthly reason why the good text-book should not continue and furnish exercise in the use of English, while the explanations in the classroom are given in the regional language. The students must be drilled indirectly in the handling of English by means of this wise combination of good English text-books written by eminent English authors along with teaching through the mother-tongue. It is well-known that the translations made to order are less intelligible than the original English books, and often full of errors and defects. The love of one's own language and the application of it to modern subjects should not lead to perversion of knowledge at the source. There is no contradiction or disadvantage in the text-books functioning side by side with oral lectures and

explanations in the regional language.

The teaching of English should be changed as far as possible into the 'direct' method through exercises, both oral and written in the English classes on subjects handled in the other classes. English should not be sought to be taught in the air, so to say but with reference to the knowledge obtained in other fields of study.

The choice of books prescribed for attaining proficiency in English, should also be more sensible. There is a growing racket in the text-books business that should be firmly handled by enlightened men of integrity before it gets too deeply entrenched in politics like the sister racket in admissions to colleges. Good text-books are the basis of the language education and the abomination of notes and synopses, the very enemy of education.

(From *Swarajya*)

BOOK REVIEW

Songs and Sayings of Yogaswami

Translated from the original Tamil with an Introduction by Members of the Sivathondan Society, Jaffna, Sri Lanka, Pp. xi+218+xxiv with three Appendices and a glossary. Price Rs 20/-

This is the testament of a contemporary Tamil mystic made available in English for a wider public. Yogaswami (1872-1964), an English educated Tamil of Jaffna, fell under the spell of Chellappaswami of Nallur and thereafter lived a life of austerity, but not cutting himself adrift from the fellowmen who daily sought his spiritual grace. Chellappaswami himself, who spent his days near the Nalur Maragan Temple, spoke little, and like to a madman never befriended the crowd of men, but used repeatedly

to utter 4 or 5 cryptic sentences which brought Yogaswami to a realization of the truth of the Atman within the framework of God's order of creation. Chellappaswami's mahavakyas which stirred Yogaswami were: (1) There is not even one wrong thing—Oru pollappum illai. (2) Namariyom—We do not know. (3) It was all finished long ago—Eppavo mudintha karyam. and (4) All is truth—Muzhavathum unmai. These utterances were the metaphysical basis for Yogaswami's self-realization and for his outbursts in simple songs and in dialogues with disciples. He did not reduce his comprehension of the Divine in a set term of a doctrine, and although nurtured in the liberal and non-sectarian

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Hello Kachchativu!!

(By E. P. Rasiyah,
Area Commr. St. John Amb. Brigade.)

According to the Epic of Ramayana, in the battle royal between Rama and Ravana, Letchumanan (Rama's brother) is said to have been wounded. To save him from the jaws of death the Ayurvedic Physician Sukhena wanted 'Sanjeevini Boothi' a rare, miraculous herb found on the Himalayas. Hanuman, the monkey-god, who was despatched to fetch it, was unable to identify that life-saving herb: so he had dislodged and uprooted an entire hill with medicinal herbs and flown with it back to Lanka's battle-field. Whilst so flying over the Palk Strait, massive blocks had broken loose from it and fallen into the sea, forming a chain of tiny islands—one such is said to be Kachchativu, a water-less waste dominated by lofty coral formations and thorny shrubs about 1½ sq miles in extent and lying midway between Rameswaram and Delft.

Legend

Roman Catholic missionaries sailing from Goa, en route to Jaffna appear to have broken journey on this island and tradition has it that they had installed a shrine and dedicated it to St. Antony. It is today housed in a low, dilapidated, but tiled building of modest dimensions, the ostensible object of attraction to pilgrims, annually, occupying a more conspicuous spot between the Church and the sea-beach stands a white painted pillar with a statue of our Lady of Good Voyage enclosed in a niche. Two other statues, recent additions, dedicated to St. Jude and St. Antony, are there with a wooden Cross declaring the sanctity of the spot. As I entered the Church about a hundred devotees were there—some kneeling and praying, some lighting candles. I too followed suit, thought of my own God and prayed and parted.

Outside, the sun was

scorching hot and the humidity was unbearable. Yet about 25,000 people were moving about the place. Improvised trade stalls plied their trade, mostly on the barter system.

Present Position

This tiny island that was the bone of contention for several years between India and Ceylon has today become part and parcel of Sri Lanka. Thanks to Mr. Abeyasekera, our popular G.A. and his enthusiastic officials, satisfactory arrangements had been made for the maintenance of law and order, sanitation and medical attention, supply of water and food articles, despite the limited funds placed at his disposal. This is perhaps the last of a series of important assignments that had fallen to his lot, before he leaves Jaffna on transfer.

This uninhabited island remains uncared for throughout the year, but bursts into activity in March, when St. Antony's festival is celebrated. Thousands of pilgrims and petty traders from India and Ceylon gather here. It also serves as the meeting point of Indians domiciled in Ceylon and their relatives living in India.

St John Ambulance

Our First Aiders were privileged to create history by establishing for the first time, a First Aid Post here. Over it fluttered the St. John Ambulance Brigade Flag—the symbol of voluntary service to mankind, without any discrimination of caste, creed, nationality or status. A dozen hand-picked officers and men worked round the clock inspired by a sense of service, collaborating with the campus Medical Staff, who had treated on an average about 90 persons daily. The majority of them had sustained minor injuries and received only First Aid.

A 2½ year old youngster, whilst chopping the branch of a tall shrub

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THOUGHTS TO BE TREASURED

காதலாகிக் கசிந்து கண்ணீர் மல்கி
ஒதுவார் தமை நல் நெறிக்கு உய்ப்பதும்
வேதம் நான்கினும் மெய்ப்பொருள் ஆவதும்
நாதன் நாமம் நமச்சிவாயவே.

With melted hearts and eyes in tears
Who utters it it leads to heav'n.
The Truth proclaimed in all four Ved's
That's NaMaSiVaYa Lord's name.



சிறப்புநிலைபெற்ற

நமச்சிவாயவே குரானமுல் கலியுக
நமச்சிவாயவே நூரானி விக்கையுல்
நமச்சிவாயவே நூதலிஃ நேத்துமே
நமச்சிவாயவே நூர்னெறி காத்தமே.

சிறப்புநிலைபெற்ற

Hindu Organ

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 1975

MISTAKEN METHOD

Disrupting proceedings of any program, public meeting or any other similar gathering cannot be defended even on grounds of justification, particularly in countries where democratic conception is said to be understood and subscribed to by the people. However, demonstrations that lead to the disrupting of public meetings have all along been witnessed but varying in dimensions and determining effect. Such courses of action in political affairs certainly tend to harm the cause for which they are taken.

In modern times the Press occupies a pre-eminent and prominent place in helping the discussion of every issue by diverse groups. Day in and day out opinions are expressed by means of journals and counter views are published. The common man whose daily needs include the newspaper with claim for priority is able to judge every question that affects him in public life. To him there cannot be any necessity to organize demonstrations to disrupt meetings where one view is explained even if he held the opposite opinion. Hence the shameful situation that was stage-managed in the course of a public meeting at the Jaffna Esplanade last week cannot be interpreted to have the backing of the common man. The people in general condemn this cowardly and corrupt method in no uncertain terms.

The few mischief-mongers who move about in society passing for political crusaders stand exposed as enemies of culture and destroyers of decency.

A disturbed meeting always tends to gather more momentum of the organisation that convened it. Hence the misguided miscreants cannot enjoy any satisfaction that their purpose has been achieved.

Jaffna regrets that this shameful act had been committed by a few foolhardy frustrated persons who cannot in any reckoning reflect the opinion of the people.

Songs and...

(From page 3)

Saivism and deeply devoted to the deity at Nallur, he did not see any distinction between the absolute Vedanta and theistic Siddhanta and asked his disciples not to go about hair-splitting. For him there was no need to regard the world as evil or illusory, in order to see the loving God in the Self. On the other hand our error is in regarding the law of causality as evil or avidya. In unison with his master's utterances, "there is nothing evil, We do not know, This is the Truth". Yogaswami has in many of his songs sung, "How lovely is the world! How beautiful is God! Yogaswami was well versed in the Tamil sacred scriptures, Thevaram and Thiruvachakam, and the songs of the more recent mystics like Thayumansvar, but he did not repeat the much abused words of philosophy whose significance is beyond the understanding of even scholars. He spoke a homely language but, we see in it the reflection of the sayings of the seers and sages of the scriptures. Yogaswami started a meditation hall or sram called Sivathondan for his growing number of followers where only minimum rituals were observed. He had hearkened to his master's exhortation "summa iru" and correctly grasped its significance. To keep still (summa) is possible only in Samadhi or in death and to keep monum is not silence, but quelling the pangs of desire raging in the heart, "Summa" really means not to be awayed by the influences of the ego and to retain the calmness of the mind which helps to realize the Atman, as pure consciousness. This in brief is the credo of Yogaswami.

(To be continued)

Hello Kachchaitivu!!

(From page 3)

sustained a serious gaping wound from which blood spurted to the roof. Dr. Gangadharan, our Area Surgeon sutured the blood vessel and personally attended on the casualty. The Govt. Medical Staff—both Senior Apothecaries

—remarked that it was providential that Dr. Gangadharan happened to be there; but for his expert knowledge and surgical attention a precious life may have been lost.

Commendations

The G. A. who visited our Post commended our work as "Excellent" Rev. Fr. Devarajab, the Administrator in charge of the Church stated "I am grateful to the services rendered by the St. John Amb. Brigade.....their work is being appreciated by the pilgrims....." Mr. K. V. Navaratnam, the Magistrate, remarked "... Dr. Gangadharan has sacrificed a lot of his practice to do this service to mankind..."

If ever Govt. decides to develop this Island it can become a health resort to the sick; a gold mine to prospectors of oil; a real place of pilgrimage to the truly devout; and a trade emporium to business men.

The Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd.

Whereas Kanagaratnam Somasundaram, of Kokuvil East Kokuvil, has applied to the Directors of the abovenamed Company for the issue of a duplicate Certificate in respect of 9 Ordinary Shares of Rs. 100/- each numbered: 2938 - 2943; 4826 - 4828 registered in his name, the original of which is represented to have been lost or mislaid NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT if within two weeks hereof no claim is made to or no objection lodged with the undersigned, the Directors will proceed to deal with the application for duplicate Certificate the original of which will be deemed to have been cancelled.

T. Somasundaram,
Secretary.

420, Hospital Road,
Jaffna,
21st March, 1975.

THE JAFFNA ACADEMY

The following Courses will be started in March/May 1975

1. Institute of Cost & Management Accountants (I.C.M.A.)
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(b). Classes begin —24-3-75
(ii). May 1976 Exam (New Syllabus) (Foundation Stage: Section A)
(a). Closing date for application to Join Academy —24-4-75
(b). Classes begin — 5-5-75
2. City & Guild's of London Institute (Day and Evening Classes).
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(a). Preliminary, (b). Inter-mediate.
(c). Final.
(ii). Builders Quantities.
3. Council of Engineering Institutions—Part I (C.E.I.). (Day Classes).
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Classes begin 5-5-75

Apply to the Director for particulars and forms, enclosing a Postal Order for Re. 1/.

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வாங்குமுகி வழாது பெய்க் கலிவளஞ் சரதிக மன்சை
சேரக் குறை அரசு செய்க குறைவிலா துயிர்கள் வாழ்க
நாள்மறை யறங்க னோங்க நற்றவம் வேள்வி மல்க
மெய்கமமொள் சைவநிதி வினங்குக உலக மெய்கமம்?

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF R. N. SIVAPIRAKASAM