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TRINCO-ANURADHAPURA MOTOR SERVICE.

A motor service to convey passengers and goods to and from Anuradhapura has been started on the 4th April, 1917.

For the present the Lorry will run every other day from each end, viz—

From Trincomalie, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 A. M.

From Anuradhapura on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 2 P. M.

On Sundays the Lorry will start from Trincomalie at 7 A. M. and return on the same day.

The fares will be Rs. 10/- for First Class and Rs. 5/- for Second Class for through journey.

This will be welcome news for those intending to visit the beautiful and the picturesque town of Trincomalie with its splendid natural Harbour and the Hotwells and the Historic Serundadila shrines.

For further particulars please apply to:—

THE MANAGER,

Trinco-Anuradhapura

Motor Service,

TRINCOMALIE.



The Hindu Organ.

JAFFNA, THURSDAY, MAY 3, 1917.

THE HEADMAN SYSTEM.

It is an undeniable fact that the Headman system is indispensable for the carrying out of the machinery of Government in Ceylon. It cannot be denied, however, that the vast majority of the Headmen in Ceylon are uneducated and that the system is a stumbling block to the improvement. A remedy generally suggested is to do away with the unpaid Headman system altogether and to pay

every Headman according to his class and office. While we agree that the unpaid system should be abolished, we do not think that this measure will remedy the whole evil. In our opinion the most potent remedy consists in the selection of the right men in the right place—men of character, education, experience, social position and independent means. It is a well-known fact that paid Headmen are not free from corruption, and those few among them who are honest and not exacting in the discharge of their duties are men of character and intrinsic worth.

If Government Agents and Assistant Government Agents would be very careful in the selection of Chief Headmen, conferring the responsible offices only on men possessing the qualifications above referred to with special regard to probity and character, we have no doubt that the Headman system would be, to a very great extent, free from the blemishes now attached to it. When the Chief is corrupt, how can we expect the subordinate Headmen who secure their appointments by the payment of a large sum of money to the former to be honest and free from corruption. It is only when the Chief Headman is honest and deserving of the great trust imposed on him by the Government, deserving subordinates will be selected and the villages will be free from the tyranny and exactions of the latter. It is common knowledge that throughout Ceylon, in very many cases, the Chief Headmen who are not the best men available for the posts recommend for subordinate Headmanships the highest bidders, without adequate regard to character and other qualifications, and this accounts for the disrepute into which the system has fallen.

In these days when education has advanced among the masses and English educated men of respectability and requisite qualifications could be found willing to take up even subordinate Headman appointments, if they will in course of time lead up to higher appointments in the line, the system could be improved and reformed, if Government would through their Agents adopt effective measures to recruit Headmen from among the educated classes and men of honour and character. If capacity, honest discharge of duty and meritorious services on the part of subordinate Headmen would entitle them to higher posts including the Chief Headmanship, surely the subordinate Headmen will before long be men of the right stamp, instead of, as the majority of them are, men of bad character and worse morals, who earn their living by illegal levies and exactions on the people. Government Agents, should, therefore, not only select the best available men as Chief Headmen but also in the appointment of minor Headmen more largely use their own discretions and respect the feelings of the people as much as possible, rather than be led away by the interested recommendations of the Chief Headmen.

In this District in the time of the late Mr. Dyke, all appointments of Headmen were done in public and with the consent and approval of the people interested in those appointments. But in the time of his successors that system was given up. Although even now the appointment of minor Headmen are made in public, yet the public voice has no potent influence as it had in the time of Mr. Dyke. Now that Village Councils have been established in the Jaffna District, it would be a reform in the right direction if the choice of Police Vidhans at least be left in the hands of these Councils subject to the approval of the Government Agent.

It is only right to say that some of the Maniagars of this District are exceptions to the general rule, including those who have been appointed by the present Government Agent. It is to be hoped that their example will be followed by the other Maniagars who cannot do even a right thing without an inducement or "santcum." We are, however, glad to observe that the number of such Headmen is now on the decrease.

NOTES & COMMENTS.

It must be gratifying to lovers of Sivaism and the Tamil literature to learn that Scimath A COMMENTARY ON Swamy Vedas PURANAM. Swamy Veda-chalam Avl. of Pallavaram, Madras, has kindly consented to write an exhaustive commentary on the Peria Puranam of Sekkilar Swamikal. The work is no doubt one of great magnitude requiring great scholarly attainments for one to accomplish. One requires also a deep spiritual insight to discern and bring out

clearly before the reader, the underlying spiritual significance of many incidents connected with our Saints' lives and we may be sure the Swamy possesses these qualifications in a high degree. The Swamy's great reputation and the intrinsic importance of the work itself, must draw a large number of subscribers to finance the undertaking. We draw our readers' attention to the short instructive article on the subject by "S. S." appearing in the correspondence column of this issue.

At the last sitting of the Vaishnava Conference held at Tinnevely on the 24th ultimo

REDEMPTION OF THE AN IMPORTANT BACKWARD CLASSES. resolution moved was on

the "redemptor of the backward classes." Mr. P. S. Acharya who spoke on this said that the special feature of the Ramanuja Siddhanta was the amelioration of the condition of the submerged classes, spiritually as well as materially. It was also unanimously resolved by the Conference to form an independent association in Tinnevely for carrying on organized work for redeeming the backward classes of Tinnevely and neighbouring districts, with Sri Govindacharya Swamy as the President. A magazine in Tamil is also to be published and night schools started with the same object. This is a subject in which there is large scope for work in Ceylon. The Buddhists and Hindus should encourage such movement for the amelioration of the backward classes.

THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT TAMILS.

(By S. Sabaratna Mudaliyar.)

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TAMIL SACRED BOOKS.

The Vedas and the Agamas are the revelations or the *Srutis* of the Hindus,—be they Aryans or Dravidians. These *Srutis* are in Sanscrit or the *Deva Basha*, and their meaning is so deep and mystical in their esoteric aspect, that they cannot admit of a translation—and this is why they have not been translated into any of the many Indian languages. (Our modern critics who base their criticisms on the English translation of the Vedas would do well to bear this in mind.) The Vedas and the Agamas, however, are not the only sacred books of the Hindus. They have a large number of *Puranas*, *Ithihasas*, *Smirthis* &c., &c., which are considered subsidiary to the *Srutis* and which have their own sanctity about them. Their authorship is traced to several ancient Aryan sages who are entitled to great respect and veneration.

The Vedas themselves, although revealed by God, were communicated through the medium of ancient *Rishis*, and their value is in no way affected on that account. We have in the same way several sacred books in Tamil, and their sanctity is due to the saintly character of the authors who were guided by the Grace of God in giving utterance to these sayings. This is borne out by the fact that in many cases, the initial verses of these sayings are in the words of Lord Siva, as I have said before, and some of them were even taken down by Siva, when improvised by the Saints. The bulk of these sayings viz *Thevarams* were discovered to the public by the Grace of God miraculously, when their whereabouts were unknown at one time. These are facts that are fully admitted by the South Indian Brahmins, and it is very amusing to find that even then, they very much hesitate to respect the sanctity of these sayings.

These sayings are no doubt on a much higher level than the *Puranas* and other subsidiary *Shastras*, and they embody in themselves a good deal of hidden truths, just like the Vedas, while in their external aspect they may even be said to be more emotional and instructive than the Vedas themselves. Still our Brahmins of South India would not even assign them a place by the side of the Sanscrit *Puranas* or *Smirthis*. Such is their admiration for Sanscrit!

The Tamil sacred books were arranged into eleven codes or *Tirumurais* by Nambiyandar Nambi a Brahman of great erudition and religious zeal. We could see by this codification that the Tamil sacred books represent the Vedas and the Vedic Mantras in Sanscrit. As there are four Vedas in Sanscrit, so there are four Vedas in Tamil—the *Thevarams* of the three Saints Appar, Suntharar, and Sampanthar, and the *Thiruvagam* and *Thirukkoviyar* of Manickavasagar. The Tamil sacred books were codified into

eleven *Tirumurais* to represent the eleven Mantras that constitute the form of Siva. The Sanscrit *Siva-Ukhasya* which is assigned a place next to the Vedas, and which is therefore known as the fifth Veda, testifies to the fact that the Dravida Vedas were themselves given by Lord Siva and that they were communicated by Him through the Tamil Saints Gnanasambantha and others. The Tamil *Periya-Puranam* takes the place of this *Siva Ukhasya*, and it was therefore placed as the twelfth *Tirumurai* in the collection of the Tamil sacred literature.

The Sanscrit *Agamas* are represented in Tamil by the *Siddhanta Shastras*. The *Agamas* are twenty-eight in number and so are the Tamil *Siddhanta Shastras* including the *Pandara Shastras*, which explain the *Agamic* religion at great length and with accurate precision. The Tamil *Sivagnana Botham* is a translation of the *Gnanakanda* of the *Bouravaa Agama*, and the translation, I should think, is a marvel in itself. It may be boldly asserted that there is not a single work in the whole of the Aryan or Dravidian literary field that can stand a comparison with this work for conciseness and soundness. It was perhaps the will of Providence that the *Agamic* truths should be explained more forcibly in Tamil than in Sanscrit, the *Deva Basha* having been intended to convey the truth generally to a larger circle of souls. Our Brahmins who are fond of committing to memory the Sanscrit *slokas* bearing on Vedic rituals do not care to have a study of this wonderful translation the value of which the Hindu religion cannot afford to overlook. We have again the *Sivagnana Siddhar* the merits of which as a Philosophic treatise are too well known to need any mention. The author, *Arunanthivacharia*, was himself a Brahmin and so was *Umapathisivacharia* the author of eight of these *Siddhanta Shastras*. He was one of the orthodox Brahmins of Chitamparam whose ancestors came from the North, and he was a great saint; but none of these considerations seem to carry any weight with the modern Brahmins of South India whose aversion to Tamil sacred books is quite inexplicable.

*Gnanakanda* is the cream of the Hindu religion, and the Tamil sacred books deal largely with *gnanakanda*. Our Brahmins must therefore set an example to the public at large and shew their appreciation of these high class religious literature and promote thereby the cause of their religion. If, on the contrary, they are found to speak disparagingly of such superlative literature, they must either be said to be too materialistic to be called Brahmins, or they must be said to have been prompted by an envious spirit towards the South Indian *Athinams* or *Mutts* whose object is to maintain the superiority of the South Indian form of Hinduism.

Whatever may be the distinction between the two forms which the religion has assumed in the North and in the South, there can be no question as regards the merits of the Tamil sacred books which are admittedly highly religious and quite consistent with the Vedic and *Agamic* creeds. The *Siddhanta* school of South India does not in any way despise the Vedic or the *Agamic* religious literature, but it fully admits their importance and freely makes use of them in all religious practices. But the Brahmins of South India treat with contempt the sacred literature of the Tamils,—and this has wounded the feelings of a certain section of the Tamil community, who have now started a campaign against every thing Aryan and every thing Vedic. This is highly prejudicial to the cause of the Hindu religion as a whole, and I should think that the Brahmins are solely responsible for the present state of things.

LOCAL & GENERAL.

THE WEATHER.—Refreshing showers of rain fell here on Monday afternoon and Tuesday night last. We understand, however, that these rains were not general and did not fall beyond Urumpiray on the North and Navakuly on the East of the Peninsula.

THE GOVERNMENT AGENT.—Mr. Horsburgh, the Government Agent, leaves this evening for Colombo to attend a meeting of the Honours Committee. He returns from Colombo and goes on long circuit to Mullaitivu returning to Jaffna at the end of this month.

THE JAFFNA HINDU COLLEGE—re-opened yesterday after the Hindu New Year holidays.



