

The Hindu Organ.

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF JAFFNA.

Testamentary Jurisdiction No. 3722.

In the Matter of the Estate of the late
Tangam wife of Veeravaku Kanapathipillai of Arali North

Deceased.

Sinnathamby Murgessampillai of Arali

Petitioner.

Vs.

1. Sinnathamby Kandiahpillai

2. Sinnathamby Tharumalingampillai of Arali

North and

3. Veeravaku Kanapathipillai of Arali North,

presently of Talavakkolle

Respondents.

This matter of the Petition of Sinnathamby Murgessampillai of Arali, praying for Letters of Administration to the estate of the abovenamed deceased, Tangam wife of Veeravaku Kanapathipillai, coming on for disposal before P. E. Pieris, Doctor of Letters, District Judge, on November 20, 1918, in the presence of Mr. A. Ratna-Sapathy, Proctor, on the part of the Petitioner; and the affidavit of the Petitioner, dated November 23, 1918, having been read: It is declared that the Petitioner is one of the heirs of the said intestate and is entitled to have Letters of Administration to the estate of the said intestate issued to him unless the Respondents or any other person shall, on or before December 19, 1918 show sufficient cause to the satisfaction of the Court to the contrary.

P. E. Pieris,
District Judge.

December 5, 1918.

Order Nisi extended for January 7, 1919.

J. Homer Vanniasingam,

Acting District Judge.

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JAFFNA.

10-12-18.

NOTICE.

All Old Boys of the Jaffna Hindu College resident in Ceylon and elsewhere are requested to kindly communicate their names and present addresses to the Principal.

R. SIVAGURUNATHAN,
Acting Secy., J.H.C.O.B.A.

Jaffna,
December 12, 1918.

Wanted

A trained teacher as Headmaster of the Pondaianar English School, which is a branch school of the Jaffna Hindu College. Pondaianar is a very healthy village by the sea side. Free quarters will be given. Apply before the end of this month, stating salary required to the Manager of the school.

Hon'ble Mr. A. SAPAPATHY
Jaffna, JAFFNA.
16th December, 1918.

The Jaffna Hindu College Old Boys' Association.

The Annual General Meeting of the above Association, will be held on Saturday the 28th December, 1918, at 3.30 p. m., at the College premises.

Business:

1. Presentation and Adoption of the Secretary's Report and the Treasurer's Balance Sheet.
2. Election of Office bearers and Committee.
3. Amendment of Rule No. 3 re ordinary Members by the interpolation of the words "and all Members of the Teaching Staff of the College" immediately after the word "Principal"—Proposer Mr. K. Kandiah.
4. Amendment of Rule No. 7 re subscription by the substitution of the words "One rupee" in place of "Two rupees and fifty cents" and the interpolation of the word "Minimum" after the word "Annual".
5. Any other business of which notice may be given.

Jaffna, R. SIVAGURUNATHAN,
December 12, 1918. Acting Secretary.

Kopay United Training School
Saiva Manava Paripalana
Sabai.

An admission class for the Entrance examination (in Tamil) of the United Training School is being opened at the Saiva Prakasa Vidyasalai Kopay. The students who have passed the 8th or 7th standard will be admitted. Students wishing to join the school should come with their Leaving Certificate before the January 1, 1919. Any further particulars can be had from Mr. M. Swaminathan, Kopay and Mr. V. Arumugampillai the Treasurer of the Sabai.



The Hindu Organ.

JAFFNA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1918.

THE COMMON BASES OF HINDUISM.

The religious allegiance of mankind is shared by many world-religions of which Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Muhamadanism are the most prominent. When one or more of these takes up an aggressive attitude for the purpose of rooting out the rest, it becomes the necessary duty of the others to say, in self-defence, hard things of the aggressors who provoke religious controversies. But the time is sure to come when the public mind becomes satisfied with the excitement and bitterness of the whole thing, and under the reaction which sets in, a statement of the common bases of all religions will be eagerly welcomed by many and, in our opinion, will do immense good also.

Each world-religion has its own sects, each with its own followers. The ran-our of sectarian controversy is very often as bitter as, if not more bitter than, that which prevails when it is indulged in by the followers of the different world-religions. Remembering that Hinduism has sects of its own, and remembering also that it is very often necessary for one to severely criticise the others, let us equally remember that the frequent statements of beliefs common to all of them are equally good in the true interests of our religion. An undus and prolonged emphasis on differences among the sectaries of the same religion renders their ready sinking in the presence of a common opponent a very slow and difficult affair. The evolution of Nature is carried on under the influence of two forces, the centrifugal and the centripetal. The centrifugal force is that "by which all bodies moving round another body in a curve tend to fly off at any point of their motion," and the centripetal is that "which draws a body towards a centre." We do not deny that the setting in motion of the centrifugal force among the sectaries of a certain religion is under certain circumstances of great value to each of the sects in that it consolidates and defines each sharply from the others, provides "a rock where it could lie at anchor, and an authoritative utterance in which it might recognise itself." But it cannot be denied that to lose sight of the common essentials of a religion in the midst of heated and tumultuous controversies would be a calamity in the interests of the common religion concerned. Therefore we make no apology in setting in motion, now and then, the centripetal force also, so that a common pride in their religion might sway Hindus in the midst of their differences, and show in what respects they are sharply defined from the other religionists of the world.

Hinduism has a trunk as well as branches all of which, though they may differ (as branches of a tree differ in their size), derive their sap and strength from the trunk. The branches may now and then be drawn towards or away from each other according to the weather that prevails. But if the storm is so great as to break them away from the trunk and let them fall to the ground, they die. Having this in mind, we proceed to lay bare the Unity of Hinduism and leave the variety of it to be dwelt upon on some future occasion if it is necessary to do so.

First, "We are all brothers in the Vedas." We believe that the Vedas are eternal, without beginning or end. We believe that the Vedas have been inspired by God. We may differ as to the way in which the Vedas should be interpreted, but we are all agreed in thinking that the Vedas, are of divine authorship. Not the Bible, nor the Koran, nor the Tripitaka are our authority though we may shake our heads in approval of those teachings in the above books which are in consonance with the teachings of the Vedas. While the word Bible means the book, while Koran means the book, Vedas means knowledge, and refers to divine, eternal, unwritten knowledge, though we have the Vedas in the literary form also. We are all agreed that the Vedic knowledge should be realised in supersensuous planes and not by simply reading the literature.

Secondly, We all believe in God. We are distinguished from other religionists in thinking of God as He, She and It. God is not only our Father, but our Mother also, and the word It emphasises the point that while reverently looking on Him as Father and Mother he should not be considered to belong to the male or female sex in the human sense. Again God to us is Arupa, Rupa and Rupa-rupa, that is Formless, with Form, with and without Form.

Thirdly unlike all other religionists, we do not believe in the beginning of either the universe or the Soul. We do not believe that either the universe or the Souls were created out of nothing. We all hold that the Jagat, Souls, and God are eternally co-existent. We believe that God is not responsible for the ignorance of souls, but that He is doing the noble work of extricating them from the mire they are in and setting them free on the path to Moksha, that is union with Himself. This Nature or universe is changing, and that "psychological periods this gross material of the outer universe goes back to its finer state, thus to remain for a certain period, again to be projected outside".

Fourthly regarding the Atma, we all hold that it is neither the physical gross body, nor the finer bodies of mind,

Buddhi, etc., nor that it is any body at all but that it is pure spirit birthless and deathless. Not only is it birthless and deathless, but it is *Vibhu*, omnipresent. Again, whether we are Saktas or Sauras, Saivas or Vaishnavas, we hold that the soul is in its nature *Chit*, intelligence, pure and blessed. Like God it is *Tatva-tita*, beyond the *Tatvas* or its *Vestures*.

Fifthly, we all believe in Karma and Reincarnation, in the rigorous working of the law of cause and effect, in other words, in the unerring course of proportionate (not disproportionate) justice or punishment, and equally in the unerring progress of all souls towards Moksha or Absolute Freedom.

Sixthly, we all believe that not human beings alone, but all living beings are souls, and their progress also, like that of human beings, culminates in Moksha.

These are the points on which all Hindus are agreed. While an unceasing emphasis on their differences will inevitably tend to disunion among them, the frequent statement of the common bases of Hinduism will draw them all together to meet on a common platform.

Important Notice
to Our Subscribers.

As we are reprinting the Addresses of Subscribers, and as we understand that there are some cases in which our paper is sent to wrong addresses owing to the failure of some of our Subscribers to notify to us the change of their address, we invite them to communicate to us instances of such mistakes so that we may amend them.

LOCAL & GENERAL.

WEATHER.—It is again very wet. There was plenty of rain last night and this morning.

THE REVENUE OF CEYLON—for the first 11 months of the last financial year has amounted to Rs5,263,684 against Rs6,661,420 and Rs6,157,463 for the same period in the previous two years. The total for the last financial year was Rs6,981,878.

LIBRARY FOR THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.—The Director of education is appealing for support through the columns of some of the News Papers in Colombo towards the formation of a Library for the Ceylon University College. He says that it is important that steps should be taken at once to collect books so that when the University College is opened there will be a considerable nucleus for a Library which it is hoped to make a valuable reference library for all students in Ceylon. We hope that many will come forward to help Mr. Denham our popular Director in his laudable undertaking.

PERSONAL.—Mr. J. M. Nalliasami Pillai, B.A., B.L., the well known translator of "Shivaguna Botham" and "Shivaguna Siddhar" and an enthusiastic worker in the cause of Saiva Siddhanta is now in Jaffna and is residing with S. Sabaratna Mudaliyar, Deputy Fiscal, Jaffna.

—Mr. V. Thamby of the office of the Director of education Colombo, has come to Jaffna for the holidays and is staying at his residence at Vannarponnal West.

—Mr. P. Somasundaram of the Forest Office, Kurunegala, has come to Jaffna for the Holidays and is staying at Aiyankovilady.

THE PROJECTED TOUR OF H. R. H. THE PRINCE OF WALES—throughout the Empire will shortly be begun. It is said that already one of the latest battle cruisers is being refitted for this purpose.

A HUGE SHAPLANE.—Washington, Dec. 1. —A newly built American seaplane has made a successful flight, carrying 60 men.

H. H. THE MAHARAJA OF MYSORE—will be leaving for Benares to preside at the Convocation of the Hindu University early in January.

NEW STEAMER LAUNCHED AT BOMBAY.—Bombay, Dec. 20.—Mrs. Grant, wife of the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's ships and vessels, East India station, performed yesterday the ceremony of launching H. M. S. "Kennery" at the R. I. M. Dockyard, Bombay. Admiral Grant and a number of R. I. M. officers were present on the occasion. The "Kennery" is the third of the type of small steamers which the Government have recently undertaken to build for service on Indian coasts. —"M. Times"

INDIAN CONGRESS PROGRAMME.—Calcutta, Dec. 20.—President at a public meeting at Calcutta to consider the Congress programme,

Mr. B. Chakravarti said they should go to Delhi in large numbers. Efforts are being made to secure attendance of the representatives of the cultivators and artisans in Bengal. The Chairman said they had nothing to expect from the bureaucracy and they would have to appeal to the Englishmen and women who admire a frank demand and that with a certain degree of bluntness. He supported the holding of a special Congress in London, and, if that be not possible, to send a large number of delegates to approach the electorates all over England. He also supported the suggestion of sending a petition to H. M. the King, signed by millions of people. Mr. Bapin Chandra Pal said that, in view of the fact that the prominent Moderates, who seceded from the Special Congress were likely to attend the Delhi Congress, it was the duty of the people belonging to his school of thought to master strong at the Congress to defeat any attempt that might be made to undo the work done by the Bombay Special Congress. The Reform Committees have arrived in Calcutta, and have begun the examination of witnesses from Assam.

—("M. Mail," Dec. 21.

THE LADIES—were coming to the front everywhere and in every department of public life, and a close observer of the Indian Press will discover that India is no exception to the rule. Bombay women are anxious to take part in municipal affairs and the other day some ladies gave evidence, before the Reforms Committee. Other ladies are anxious to know what their part is to be in the future when all India is happy in the possession of a vote. It is no unusual thing nowadays to hear of Indian ladies addressing meetings. The most recent instance of a lady distinguishing herself in public affairs is that of Mrs. Jinnah, who, on the occasion of the Willingdon Memorial meeting, seems to have taken a prominent part in the open air proceedings. She addressed a speech to the "free and independent" and encouraged them not to be afraid of the Police and, according to one enthusiastic admirer, who acted as her escort, she professed advice as to the best method of dealing with the horses of Mounted Police, when they backed into the crowd. People talk of the unchanging East. When Eastern ladies begin to interest themselves in public affairs and from passive spectators become active participants to the extent which this lady has done, it is time (says the "Madras Mail") to recognise that the East no longer bows down before the blast in silent deep disdain. —"Observer".

SINGAPORE'S FIRST CONCRETE BOAT.—A reinforced concrete ferry boat was built and launched at Tanjong Rhu some months ago for the F. M. S. Railways ferry service in the Johore Straits. It sustained some injuries during the launching operations. These were very rapidly repaired in dry dock, and the vessel was refloated and her equipment completed. She has now been in service at Woodlands for over two months. A formal inspection of the boat took place a few days ago by Mr. Trowell, Surveyor General of ships, and Mr. Barriere. Mr. Trowell, who advocated the use of reinforced concrete for the building of this boat, declared the vessel to be a very great success from every point of view. This ferry is a great credit to the promoters of the scheme who did not hesitate to assume the responsibility of the experiment and also to the builders, Messrs. Brossard, Mopin & Co., who have afforded a very good demonstration of what well-designed and well built reinforced concrete is capable. —"S. Times," Dec. 19.

COCHIN SHIP BUILDING.—In connection with the telegram which we published today regarding the launching of a vessel from the Royal Indian Marine yard in Bombay for the Indian coastal trade, we gladly give the details regarding the construction of a steamer that is now being built at Cochin by Messrs. Geo. Brunton & Sons especially as it corrects certain errors in a paragraph on the same subject recently contained in a letter from our Cochin correspondent. The vessel is to be propelled by internal combustion engines and not by sail, and its tonnage is 900 and not 200. It is to be built of teak entirely and its dimensions are as follows:—Length between perpendiculars 185 ft., beam 30 ft. and a moulded depth of 20 ft. She will displace about 1,500 tons at 12 ft. draught and will be capable of carrying 900 tons. The propelling machinery is to consist of nine twin-screw semi Diesel engines, each developing 160 h. p. and she will be fitted with a Marconi wireless installation. This will be the first vessel of this type to be built in the East. —"M. Mail" Dec. 21.

OBITUARY.—It is with deep regret we have to record the sad and untimely death of Miss Ratnam Kandiah, youngest daughter of Mr. V. Kandiah, a well known Physician of Alavudhy South, on the 21st November 1918. The deceased was aged 10 at the time of her death. She was the sister of Messrs. V. K. Murugan Pillai, Assistant Manager, Changanacherry Estate, Taling, F. M. S. K. Ponnampalam, Telegraph Inspector, F. M. S. Rye, Taling, V. K. Thamby Pillai, Student, L. M. & S. Class, Medical School, Singapore, and V. K. Nagarathnam, General Merchant, Penang. The deceased leaves behind her parents, two sisters and four brothers, and a large circle of relations to whom her loss is felt. —Cor.

LIBRARY FOR THE CEYLON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

AN APPEAL.

Sir,
I have the honour to appeal through your columns for support towards the formation of a Library for the Ceylon University College. It is important that steps should be taken at once to collect books so that when the University College is opened there will be a considerable nucleus for a library which it is hoped to make a valuable reference library for all students in Ceylon. Ceylon, though it has several old established lending libraries, has not benefited by the generosity of a local Carnegie and is still without a Free Library or any good library of reference books. There are valuable collections of books dealing with special subjects in the libraries of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch), the Colonial Medical Library, and the Botanic Department, Peradeniya, but these collections are necessarily only concerned with particular branches of research.

The Council of the Asiatic Society has already kindly promised to give whatever is available of the Society's publications to the proposed Library of the University College and a handsome presentation of books has been made by the Colonial Medical Library.

It can only be, however, by a general and generous response that a library can be formed which will be worthy of the object. It is proposed not merely to establish a college library, the use of which will be limited to the College students, but a library which though primarily for the use of the University College students and enclosed in a part of their buildings shall be open to readers on tickets which will be issued according to regulations similar to those in force at public libraries in Europe such as the British Museum Library.

At the present time in Ceylon if any one wishes to work up a particular subject or even to deal with a period of history or literature application must be made to a number of lending libraries and private libraries to obtain any books on the subject and it is doubtful whether prolonged enquiries will result in more than a very limited number of the books required being found.

There are also books which are required for reference but which nobody has, as it is believed that they can be obtained at any good library. It is quite common in Ceylon for a reference to be made to a well known "classic" which it is found that nobody possesses, no library has, nor is it even to be purchased in an Everyman's Series as being "so well known" a copy has not been introduced in the limited supply of "classics" on our book shelves.

There are however many who have in their libraries editions of standard works, books of history and biography, &c. which are books of reference and which if they were properly housed and made available whenever required for purposes of reference their owners would be quite willing to place at the disposal of the many. Their existence at present is known only to the very few.

I therefore appeal for help towards the foundation of a Library for the University College, which shall serve as reference library open to all readers and students and suggest that such help may take one of the following forms:—

(1) Gifts of money to be spent on the purchase of books either in a lump sum or vested in the College for the interest to be spent yearly on buying books. At the commencement it is desirable to provide an adequate library which certainly does not exist at present.

(2) Donations of books—there must be many who have an expensive work on their shelves which is valuable as a work of reference but which they seldom use.

(3) Offers to purchase certain books or to spend a sum of money on books dealing with a particular subject.

It is not of course desired to invite gifts of books, all and sundry, but only of books which will be of value to the library of such an institution and to a modern reference library.

Gifts of money will be accepted without demur but donors of books are requested to communicate with me in the first instance and before despatching the books, giving the names of the books they are so good as to offer to present. Unnecessary duplication will thus also be saved.

To deal with the choice of the books I am appointing committees to consider offers and advise on selection of books under the following heads:—

- (1) Literary works
- (2) Historical works
- (3) Books on Ceylon and the East
- (4) Books of travel
- (5) Scientific works
- (6) Biographies
- (7) Classical works
- (8) Oriental languages and literature
- (9) Archaeology
- (10) Mathematical works
- (11) Religious works
- (12) Agriculture
- (13) Economics
- (14) Botany
- (15) Medicine

and other branches as the need arises.
I shall be glad to give any further information with regard to these proposals.

SUGGESTION FOR A WORTHY WAR MEMORIAL.

Sir,

The Right Hon'ble Mr. Asquith expressed the pious hope at the historic meeting of Parliament in connection with the Armistice that War may become an anachronism in future. In this he echoed the universal wish. Every one is thinking of plans at this moment for making the coming peace permanent on earth. Anything that should tend towards lessening the chance of falling out between men—whatever might be the source of dissension—was worthy of attention as a means towards the desired end. The steady elimination of every element of strife should be the aim of our united efforts. May I ask your powerful aid and sympathy to put before the intelligent public a little idea of mine in this behalf?

Religion is no longer the ruling factor in human affairs it once was. Nevertheless as a motive force of thought and action it is second to none even in the West, while in the East its predominance is maintained to this day. To us Hindus, for example, Religion is still all in all. There is hardly any fear now of nations flying at each other's throat for the sake of Religion. Yet it cannot be denied that sectarian bigotry and religious fanaticism are still things to be reckoned with, not only in the case of backward Orientals but also of fairly advanced Occidentals. It is significant in view of our context that the cleavage in regard to Home Rule in Ireland has followed the line of division in the population according to religious persuasion. Broadly speaking, the difference in the salient national characteristics of Prussia and Austria, the inhabitants of both countries being mainly of the same ethnic stock, is due chiefly to religious causes. One still hears of Jew-baiting here and there in Europe. The Turkish Empire affords a vivid illustration of ceaseless discord between jarring sects and creeds. In our own country, in spite of the ingrained spirit of tolerances of Hindus and Mussulmans alike and the unifying effect of British Rule, painful instances of sectarian bickerings now and again are not wanting. In short, I am sure every one will admit that though Religion has ceased to be the principal cause of conflict in the world it is one of the potent sources of ill-feeling affecting vast populations of almost every grade of intellect.

The primary purpose of Religion, however, is (to repeat a mere truism) to promote the spirit of harmony and brotherliness in mankind by making all races and classes of men realise that they are the children of the Almighty God Who is Father of all. It is simply ignorance of the basic tenets and creeds of each other's faith (which are common to all Religions and schools of Theology) which is responsible for keeping alive the smouldering fire of religious animosity that has raged so fiercely everywhere in pre-modern times.

It is obvious, therefore, that we should seek some means of gradually eradicating the root-cause of surviving religious differences as one of the most effective ways of discharging the duty that lies on every one of us of helping towards insuring the establishment of uninterrupted reign of peace and goodwill hereafter on earth. In thinking of measures for making War impossible, you must consider all important causes of discord, as I have said above. You cannot therefore leave out of count the influence of Religion, it being at all events second to none in importance.

My humble suggestion in view of the above is to set up in Benares, what I might call a *Hall of All Religions*. I need not dilate upon the indisputable appropriateness of Benares for the location of such a parliament of all sects and creeds. And I need not also explain in so many words why the project is peculiarly suited to the genius, needs and conditions of India. I give below in the barest outline the essential features of the proposal which I venture to think, would be a fitting memorial of the War, in that it would be helpful in diffusing the feeling of brotherliness among the followers of different faiths.

First, I would have a Hall to serve as a meeting place for Hindus (including Sikhs), Mussulmans, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Jews. Of course, the recognised denominations coming under the common name of Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jains, etc., would have equal title to the Hall. The various schools of Dissent such as Brahmos and Arya Samajists among Hindus, and non-conformists of other persuasions, will of course be equally welcome.

Second, a Library (either accommodated in the Hall or in a separate building according to the means and space available) containing the Holy Books of, and other religious and philosophical works pertaining to, all creeds and sects.

Third, places of worship for followers of the various creeds and sects, for example, Hindu and Sikh temples, Islamic mosques, Christian churches, Jain mandirs, Buddhist viharas or pagoda, Jewish synagogue and so forth.

Fourth, homes for Priests, Ministers, Teachers, etc., of the various creeds and sects.

Fifth, rooms for the accommodation of the students of Comparative Religion and Philosophy. (The incomparable facilities to be offered by such an institution for the direct study of different creeds and philosophies connected therewith, will draw students and enquirers from all parts of the civilized world).

Sixth, offices, servants' quarters, etc.

At first sight the notion may appear as rather Utopian, but it should not be forgotten that the most practical people in the world, the Americans, gave partial effect to the idea in their Parliament of Religions, which was held in the most American city in America—Chicago.

I am told that sufficient land is available in a central situation in Benares and there need be no difficulty in this respect.

Thanking you for giving me this valuable opportunity of bringing before the public the present great need of such a library, which I hope this appeal may help to remove.

I am sir,
Your obedient Servant,
E. B. DENHAM,
Director of Education.

Education Office,
Colombo, 21st December, 1918.

BENARES.

By SHROUT PREM NATHAN MEHRA,
RAI BAREILLY COLLEGE.

The early history of Benares is involved too much in obscurity; but it is presumed that it is named after the two rivers Ganges and Asi. As time went on, the name too went on changing and in the present time it is called Benares. It is also called Kasi, which means splendid. It is certain that this city is regarded by all Hindus as coeval with the birth of Hinduism. For the sanctity of its inhabitants, of its temples and reservoirs, of its wells and streams, of the very soil that it trod on, of the very air that in benediction, and of every thing in it and around it, Benares has been famed for thousands of years. The Hindu, believing all he has read and heard concerning this ideal seat of blessedness, is possessed with the same longing to visit Benares, as a Mohammedan to visit Mecca. At Benarth, near Benares, Sakya Muni in the 6th century began to preach the teaching of Dharma and Nirvana. It is very clear that Benares must have been at this time, a city of power and importance. It welcomed the teachings of Sakya Muni, and for several hundred years, gave the same support to Buddhism, as it had previously given to the Hindu faith.

About the 7th century largely through the great exertions of Sankaracharya, Buddhism lost its way. The Hindus seem then to have rebuilt a considerable portion of the city, which extends from these to four miles along the northern bank of the Ganges. The river more than a third of a mile in breadth, sweeps round like a bow. Temples, mosques, palaces and other buildings of every description, rise above a cliff of a hundred feet in height from the summit of which, a multitude of stone ghats descend to the bed of the sacred stream.

The streets of Benares are generally crooked and some are so narrow as not to admit even small carriages. Many of the houses are built of stone, some of them being six stories high. There are shops of every kind and for every trade. Benares is noted for the silk and other cloths exquisitely embroidered with gold and silver. Besides innumerable shrines, it contains about two thousand temples and nearly 800 mosques.

The places of pilgrimage in Benares are as follows:—

The *Dasasvamedh Ghat* is where the ten-horse sacrifice is said to have been performed by Brahma. The *Manikarnika well* is a great resort. Vishnu is said to have dug this well with his own hands and in lieu of water filled it with the perspiration from his own body. An earthen called *Manikarnika* is said to have fallen into this well from the ear of Mahadeva, hence its name. It is generally the first place sought after by the pilgrims and its foetid water is considered as a healing balm, which will infallibly wash away all the sins of the soul and make it pure and holy. The *Panch Ganga Ghat* is also a place of pilgrimage. It is close to the mosque of Aurangzeb. The Hindus believe that at this spot five rivers meet, but only one however is visible.

The *Bisheshwar temple* or the golden temple of Siva receives the highest honour. Bisheshwar is considered as the reigning deity of Benares. The dome and the towers of the temple are plated with gold. The expenses were met by Maharaja Ranjit Singh when he was confined to bed for the last time, in the vain hope of prolonging his life. The present temple was erected by the famous Ahalya Bai, Maharani of Indore. Close to the temple is the famous Gayan khp or Gayan bapl 'well of knowledge' in which it is said that Siva resides. Flowers and other offerings are cast into the well to the deity below. The temple of the goddess Annapurna is of great reput in as much as under the orders of Bisheshwar, she is supposed to feed all the local inhabitants and to take care that none of them will suffer from hunger. Not far from her temple is that of Sakshi-Vinayaka. Pilgrims, on completing their journey of the Panch Kosi road, must pay a visit to this shrine, in order that the fact of their pilgrimage might be verified. Should they neglect to do this, it is said that all their pilgrimage would be without merit or profit.

Pilgrims and devotees, are seen entering and departing from this sacred city throughout the year, specially on the occasion of great festivals. Here Barahma Mangal, a fair which is held in boats after Shivaratri. On the occasion of the Dusseerah festival this Holy City is filled with innumerable pilgrims that generally come from all parts of India. Many carry back with them the sacred water of the Ganges in small sealed bottles, placed in baskets, hanging from the extremities of the poles which they bear upon their shoulders.

Besides these places of pilgrimage there are some other interesting buildings as well in Benares. The observatory of Raja Jay Binha, erected nearly three centuries ago, is an interesting sight. The mosque of Aurangzeb with its lofty minarets forms a most imposing building. The Central Hindu College and the Queen's College have all the more increased the beauty of Benares. —The "Mahamanda Magazine."

I may also add that the Local Committee of the Mahamanda, consisting of the leading Hindu Rishis of Benares, is ready to take charge of the works, if my diffident suggestion receive tangible support, the proposed scheme being a manifestation so to say of the ideals and principles of the Sanatan Dharma. Should the leaders of the various Indian communities evince adequate interest in the idea (kindly communicating their approval and advice to the General Secretary of the Mahamanda), the Committee will proceed to form a strong and representative body of influential gentlemen belonging to different communities in Benares and other places to see to the carrying out of the scheme. In the Mahamanda Committee there are two distinguished Engineers (retired Government Officers) who will gladly lend their services.

Yours, etc.,
RAMESHWAR SINHA,
Maharaja of Darbhanga,
General President of the Mahamanda.
Benares Cantt.
11th December, 1918.

THE REFORM CONFERENCE.

(Continued from our last issue.)

SIR PONNAMPALAM'S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

Regarded not merely as an instrument of national culture and for the production of good citizens, but even from a purely material point of view, education, especially scientific and technical education, is of vital importance to us. Science is the most important factor of modern life, and the renaissance of Japan has shown how the life and character of a people may be revolutionized by scientific study conducted in the proper spirit and manner. This is in my view no more pressing need than the development of Ceylon's industrial resources, a great store of wealth to her people and an imperial asset. Such development is impossible without scientific and technical education vigorously promoted by the Government. Without it Ceylon will continue to be a helpless victim to economic exploitation by other countries.

Is it creditable to Ceylon, after over a hundred years of British rule, to be behind even India States like Mysore, with less than half the wealth and resources of Ceylon and no monopoly of highly paid British officials, but manned by Indian Officers from top to bottom. Our Director of Education, Mr. Denham, has visited Mysore. Ask him what he thinks of that progressive state, with her great educational and industrial activities. They should make us blush with shame. The other day, in organizing a series of what would in Ceylon, and no where else, be called advanced lectures for students, we borrowed a lecturer from the Mysore University. All remember the benefit derived from the lectures on economics delivered by Mr. Subbarao. Why had we not to go to Mysore for a lecturer on a subject of this kind? Why, too, has Ceylon not such men as Mr. Ramannajar, a poor Tamil clerk of Madras, who has just been elected a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, for mathematical research, which had previously gained him the highest scientific distinction in the British Empire, a Fellowship of the Royal Society at the youngest age since Huxley. There are hosts of others in India distinguished in every department of knowledge. We have no such men in Ceylon, not because we are inferior in capacity, but because we have not the opportunity and the training.

In July last, when one of the band of noble Englishmen, who have espoused our cause and are determined to see British ideals and principles vindicated by being applied to Ceylon, asked in the House of Commons what steps had been taken by the Colonial Office on the memorial sent to it by the Public Conference on December last, the reply given by Mr. Hawkins for the Secretary of State was dilatory and unsatisfactory. He said that the time was inopportune for fully considering the question and that the report of the new Governor would be awaited. The Ceylon Reform League and the Ceylon National Association, on receiving telegraphic intimation of this answer, cabled at once on the 16th of August, expressing their disappointment and their inability to understand why the time was deemed inopportune, when the Indian Government had dealt with the far more complex and difficult problems of the Indian Empire and propounded a Reform Scheme for India. In a later cable of the 28th August the League and the Association again jointly invited the attention of the Secretary of State to the debate on Indian Reforms in the House of Commons and to the principle of self-government accepted by it for India; they requested application of the same principle to Ceylon and the grant of Reforms not less liberal than granted to India, to which Ceylon is akin in race and culture but with conditions more favourable for political development; they begged for an early declaration of the policy and broad outlines of reform, with instructions to the new Governor to adjust the details; and especially asked (a) an enlarged Legislative Council on a wide franchise with a substantial elected majority, (b) for Ceylonese Members of the Executive Council, (c) for Ceylonese Ministers in charge of departments, (d) for a substantial percentage of superior posts in the public service for Ceylonese, (e) for complete popular control of Municipal Councils and other local bodies, urban and rural, with elected Chairmen; all which have been conceded to India.

The resolutions that will be submitted to-day for your acceptance proceed on these lines, and have for their aim to express the vital principles and broad outlines which are considered essential by a vast mass of public opinion in this Island. These being accepted, the details on which opinions naturally differ will need to be adjusted by committees appointed for the purpose and consisting of representatives of the peoples as well as officials. The wisdom of our request to the Secretary of State has been demonstrated by the course of the debate that was raised in the Legislative Council last Wednesday by Mr. Ramannathan the Ceylonese Member. There was not a dissenting voice as to the need for reforming our administration, though speakers differed as to details. It is much to be regretted that the Government gave no indication of their views and deferred an announcement of them until the Governor had had the time and opportunity to ascertain the views and wishes of all sections of the community and to study the question thoroughly. As the Governor is quite new to Ceylon and the conditions, this means a very long delay which the people of Ceylon, already put off too long, will find it hard to brook. The delay would have been greatly curtailed if the Secretary of State had first laid down for the Governor's guidance the principles and broad outlines as requested. Until this is done the Governor would be rather floundering in the dark, and his investigations will be long and may be abortive. It is not fair to him or to the people and is certainly not conducive to an early and satisfactory decision of the very important questions involved. It would have some extent softened the bitterness of popular disappointment if His Excellency the Governor had given in his reply to Mr. Ramannathan's motion some hint of the spirit in which these questions were going to be tackled. It is realized that the war has changed and is changing the whole world face and deep, that it has put the clock of time hundreds of years forward, and that our outlook can never be what it was before 1914. Has the new spirit, which the war has spread over the world and which has been the chief factor in winning the victories we are celebrating, found a sympathetic echo in the hearts of our authorities—the spirit of liberty and of self-de-

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