

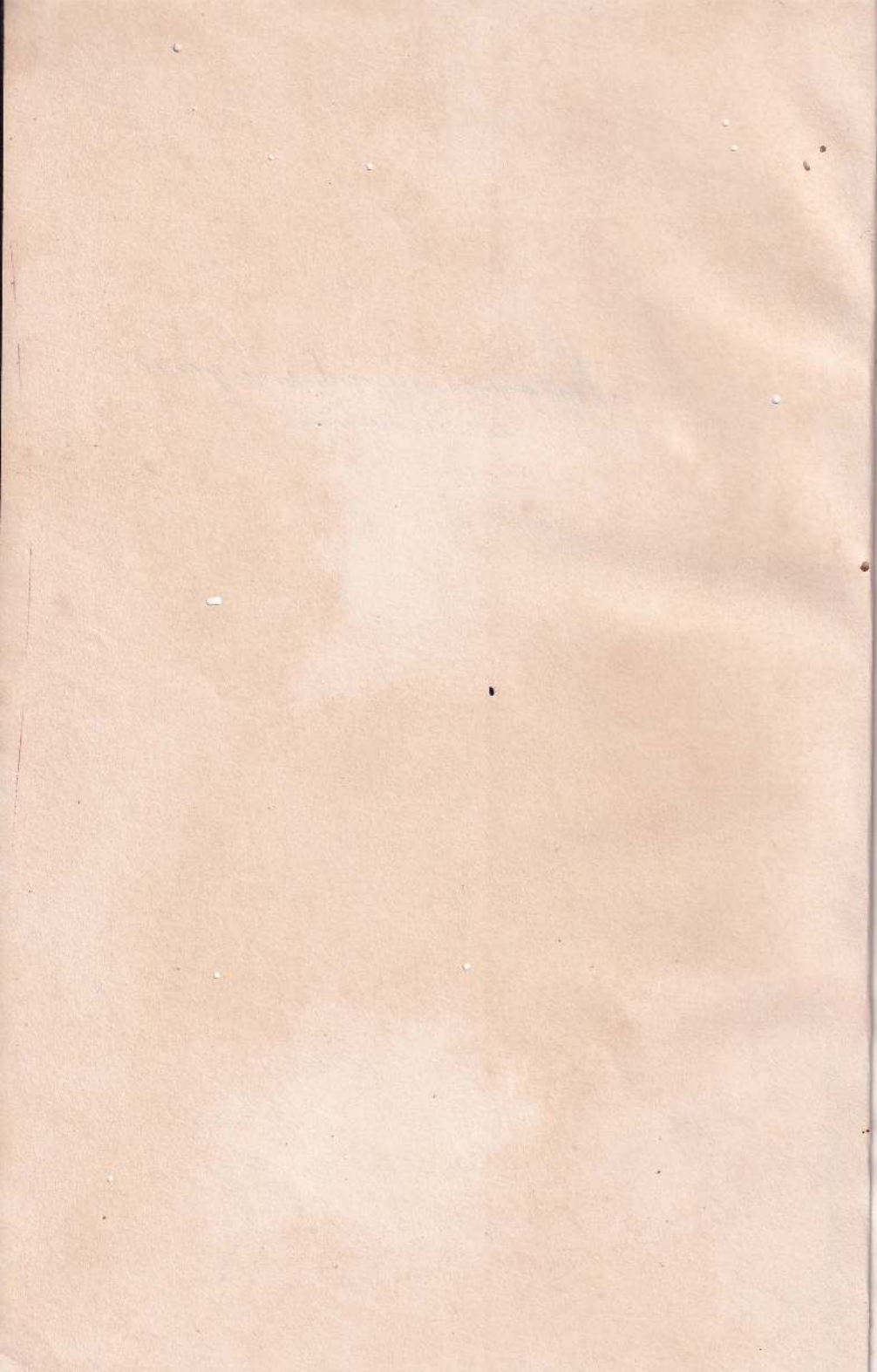
PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM

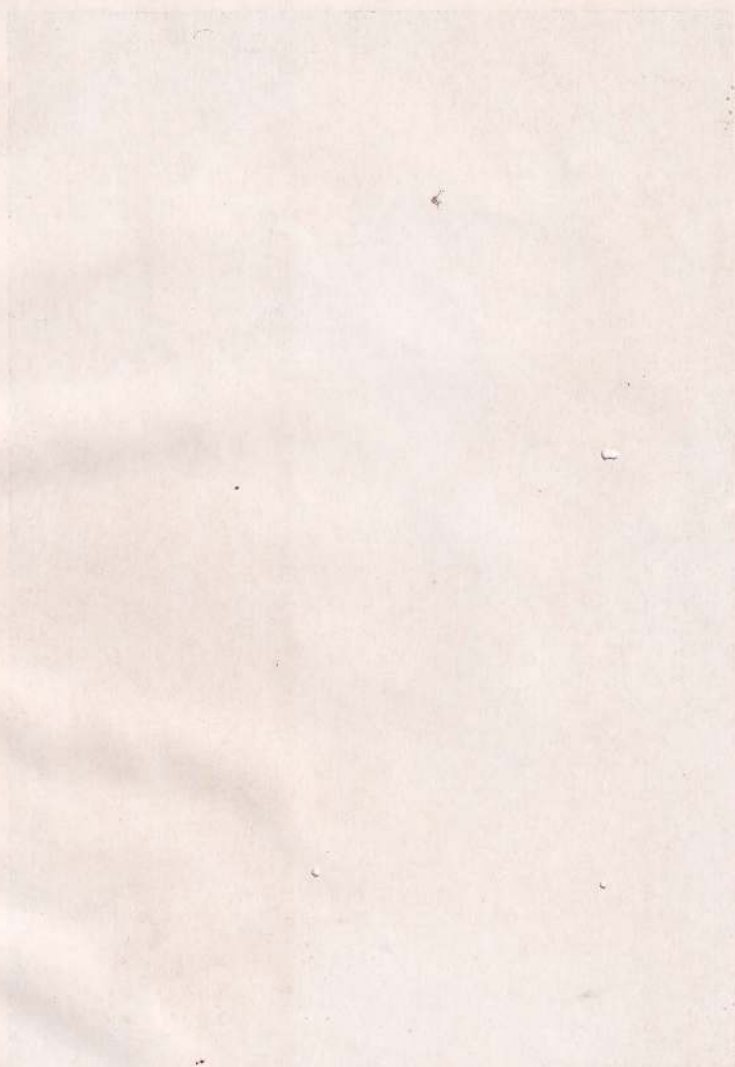
FOUNDER OF MODERN CEYLON



M. VYTHILINGAM

K. Swanwick





FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM

PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM

FOUNDER OF MODERN CEYLON



M. VYTHILINGAM

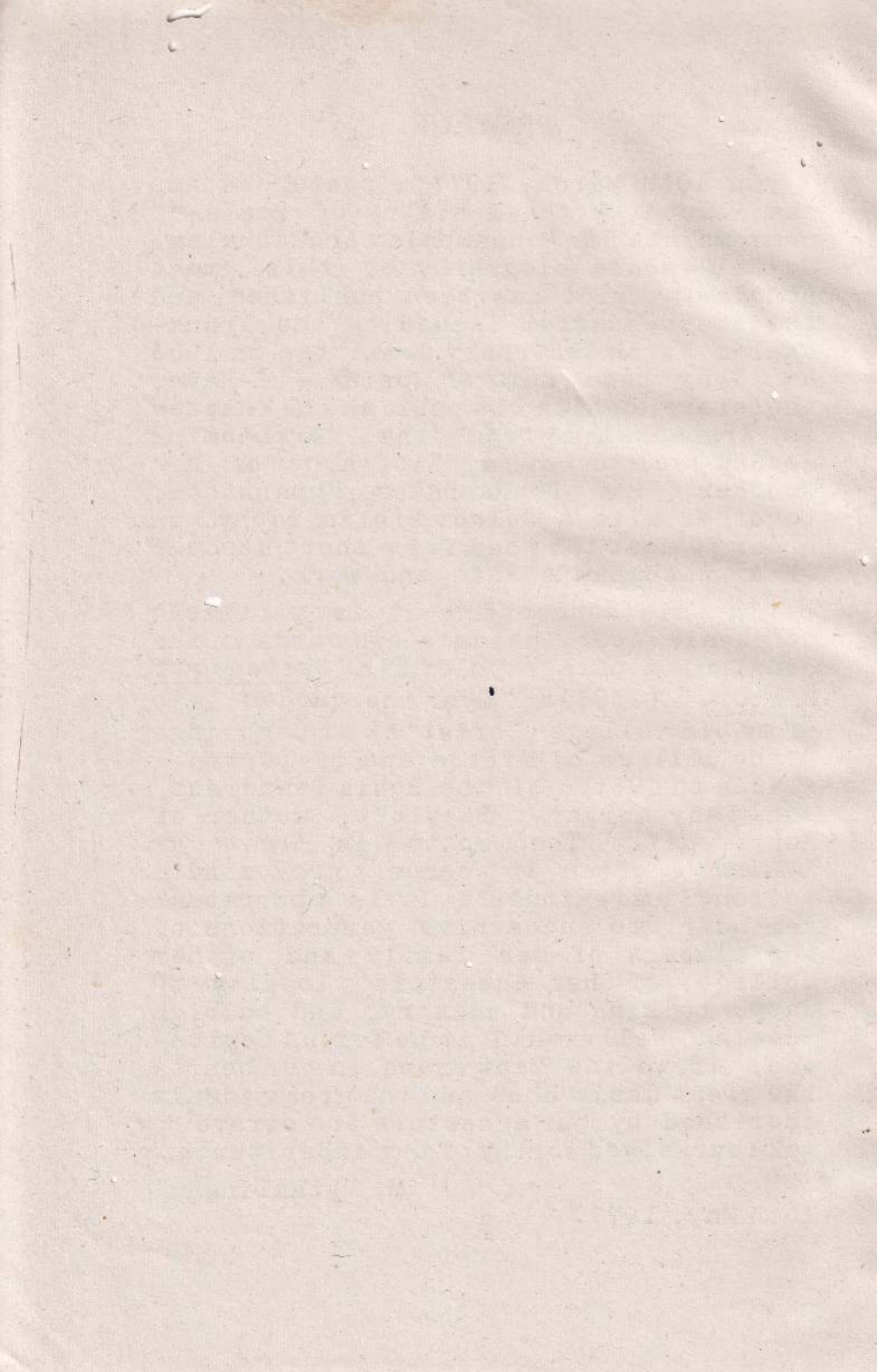
PREFACE

On 10th March, 1977 a postage stamp was issued by the Ministry of Posts to commemorate Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. No full-scale biography of this great scholar-patriot has been published, and the short booklet issued by the Arunachalam Birth Centenary Committee in 1953 has long been out of print. I have, therefore, decided to publish the chapter on Arunachalam from the forthcoming second volume of my biography of his brother, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, together with a Select Bibliography, in order to meet the need for a short account of Arunachalam's life and work.

In this connection it is pertinent to recall Arunachalam's own words in the concluding paragraph of his 'Sketches of History' (1906): "Over the garden gate of my old college (Christ's) at Cambridge — the college of Milton and of Darwin — stands the motto of the noble foundress, the Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII. The motto is *Souvent me Souvient*: 'often it comes to my mind', 'often I am reminded'. It is a perpetual reminder, to successive generations of the members of her family and of her college, of her ancestors' loyalty to duty, to king and country, and to high ideals. Well would it be for us Ceylonese, if we too kept fresh in our hearts the great deeds done and the great ideals cherished by our ancestors and strove to make ourselves worthy of our inheritance."

M. Vythilingam.

15th May, 1977.



SIR PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM

Arunachalam did more for the political organization of the Island and for the social advancement of the people than almost anyone in the past or recent times.

—*Sir James Peiris*

A famous historian called Napoleon the most productive man of his age in Europe. I think that quite rightly and fairly we can apply that description to Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He was the most productive man in Ceylon of his time.

—*S. W. R. D. Bandaranayake*

How often have men stood on the verge of the Promised Land and seen, near and tantalizing, the country of their dreams, only to be driven back again to the thirst and hunger of the wilderness.

—*Sir Richard Livingstone*

IT will not be out of place in a work which purports to be the life of a great national leader to devote some pages to a brief sketch of the character and career of a man who, in addition to being the leader's younger brother, was among the most seminal figures of his time. Though the glare of publicity and national acclaim that shone on him was only a shade less than that which illumined the elder brother, Arunachalam possessed qualities no less remarkable. As the perfect pattern of public servant, as scholar and writer of uncommon distinction, as philosopher and man of religion, as the pioneer of social reform and champion of the under-dog, as the valiant fighter in the cause of national freedom, he, like his celebrated brother, left an imprint upon his age that time can hardly efface.

Arunachalam, the youngest of the three sons of Gate-Mudaliyar A. Ponnambalam, was born in Colombo on 14th September, 1853. After receiving his early Tamil education at home, he proceeded to the Colombo Academy (the precursor of Royal College) as a lad of seven years and remained there for nine years. His career at the Academy was distinguished by talent, industry and perseverance. In fact, Dr. Barcroft Boake, the Principal, writing of him said, "In my forty years' experience in the instruction of youth, I have never met with any pupil who gave greater evidence of ability and scarcely one who gave so great. Mr. Arunachalam's conduct has always been most satisfactory and I consider him to be in every way a young man of the very highest promise." And Dr. Boake was a prince of educationists and no mean judge of promise in youth. Over four decades later, at a public reception to him, Arunachalam paid his meed of tribute to Dr. Boake: "I cannot but recall how much I owe to my Principal, Dr. Boake, whose name is indissolubly connected with education in Ceylon and among whose pupils were nearly all the greatest men of Ceylon of the 19th century—Charles Lorenz, James Stewart, Sir Richard Morgan, Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, James Alwis and a host of others."

In 1866 Arunachalam was awarded the Turnour Prize for the most outstanding student of the school. In 1870 he won the English University Scholarship which entitled the holder to a course of studies in a British University at State expense. He entered Christ's College, Cambridge, on the suggestion of Sir Walter Sendall, then Director of Public Instruction, who wrote to the authorities there that he was sending to their care "an Eastern youth of exceptional merit and promise." Within a short time of admission, young Arunachalam made his mark by winning the Foundation Scholarship and distinguishing himself both in Classics

and Mathematics. In the records of Christ's College, he is referred to as a "brilliant mathematician and an able classics scholar."

Arunachalam has placed on record, in a speech at a public reception to him in 1914, the following reminiscence of his Cambridge days: "It was at Cambridge that I spent four of the happiest years of my life with the best of friends and teachers. It was my good fortune to come under the influence of Sir John Seely, Dr. Peile, Dr. Skeat, Dr. Jebb, Dr. Reed, Lord Moulton, my mathematical tutor, and Professors Fawcett and Harcourt. To these and other teachers I owe more than I can tell, and not less to the friendship and inspiration of many able young men who then adorned Cambridge and have risen to distinction in various parts of the Empire—the Balfours, the Lyttletons, the Tennysons, Maitland the great jurist, the Homeric scholars Butcher and Leaf, Bishops Chase and Weldon, Christie the Astronomer Royal, Stanford the Composer, Edward Carpenter the poet, two Chief Justices of Ceylon, Sir Wilfred Bonser and Sir Joseph Hutchinson, and many others."

At Cambridge, he zealously maintained the spirit of sturdy independence and the pride of race and culture that were characteristic of the Ponnambalam brothers. When the Archbishop of York preached to Cambridge undergraduates a sermon showing "scant respect for Indian religions," the young Arunachalam, scarcely past his teens, took exception to the prelate's remarks and lodged a vigorous protest through the pages of the *Spectator* on 26th December, 1874.

During his stay in England, he kept terms at Lincoln's Inn, to which his uncle Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy had belonged, and was called to the English Bar. In 1875, in deference to the wishes of his uncle but much against his own, he also entered for the Civil Service examination, passed high in the list and secured for himself the distinction

of being the first Ceylonese to gain admission to the Civil Service by open competition. On his return to Ceylon in April, 1875, he was attached to the Government Agent's office in Colombo. It seems an irony of fate that he who in later life was destined to be a relentless foe of imperialism in any shape or form and to lead the struggle for his country's freedom should have commenced his career in the service of the government that held his country in subjection. He was later appointed to judicial office in various parts of the Island. In the judiciary his success was so marked that Sir John Budd Phear, the Chief Justice, commended his work to the notice of the Governor and the Secretary of State, saying that he knew of only two men in Ceylon who rose to the standard of what judicial officers ought to be, and they were Justice Berwick and Arunachalam.

In 1887 Sir Arthur Gordon, who recognized Arunachalam's talents and desired to give better scope for their exercise, appointed the young Ceylonese, who was still in the Fourth Class of the Civil Service, over the heads of about thirty seniors, among whom was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Alexander Ashmore, to act in the onerous office of Registrar-General and Fiscal of the Western Province. This appointment caused a commotion in official circles, and a memorial of protest signed by almost half the Civil Service was sent to London, but the Governor and the Secretary of State stood firm.

Arunachalam came to the Registrar-General's office only to find it a veritable Augean stable. He rallied all his powers of mind and body and toiled indefatigably to reorganize the whole Department; and when he left, it had become the pride and envy of the public service. His singular success in the Department will remain a lasting testimony to his great administrative ability. Sir Arthur Gordon thanked him profusely for his services

and expressed "great satisfaction at a success which merited His Excellency's warm acknowledgements." *The Times of Ceylon* paid the following tribute: "In the Registration Department, chaos and corruption held merry sway, when Mr. Arunachalam came to it. The registration of deeds was subject to infinite delay and harassment. There was no index worth speaking of, and references to transactions and encumbrances affecting land were exceedingly difficult to ascertain. Fraud was rife; dishonest transactions often took precedence over genuine dealings and everybody's property and titles were endangered. The records of the Department littered the floor of one particular room and valuable documents, which cannot be replaced, lay where no man but an interested clerk could lay his hands upon them. There was plenty of 'baksheesh' exacted and little honest work done, and yet the record room fees came to something like Rs. 25,000/=. Nobody could tell where the money went to. It was another Augean stable, and no Hercules could hope to cleanse it. It was not lack of will but lack of knowledge. Mr. Arunachalam had a persevering mind. He sat by the side of the various clerks and patiently learned their work. Then he took charge and launched his reforms. He stopped the unconscionable delays and dishonesty in the registration of deeds, secured a fair day's work from each clerk throughout the Island and reduced the lazy, overgrown staff. He would have none of the private practice and fees in connection with official work. He reorganized the record room, appropriated the fees to the legitimate objects of the department, recast the whole system, increased and set apart a special staff to keep the records, inaugurated a real record room, with a system and an index, built fine shelves, and with the surplus money derived from the fees, he founded a Benevolent Fund which has now saved many a clerk from the clutches of the

usurer, from disgrace and penury, relieved many a widow and orphan and conducted more than any grandmotherly scheme of philanthropy to make the clerks of the department a thrifty, contented body of men. The same money has also helped to establish a reading room, a library, and generally to make the lives of the clerks lighter and brighter."

Any account of Arunachalam's official life will not be complete without reference to his masterly compilation of and report on the Census. It was a monumental achievement which was acclaimed in many parts of the world. Suffice it to observe that in the compilation of that Census, he exhibited such extraordinary ingenuity, skill and mastery of facts and figures as to place him among the great statisticians of the world. A distinguished American statistician, Frederick L. Hoffman, writing from Newark, New Jersey, to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Island to acknowledge receipt of the report on the Ceylon Vital Statistics for 1898 said, "I will be permitted to express to you my great surprise at the exceptional care and thoroughness with which the Report on Vital Statistics has been prepared. Certainly in an experience extending over many years and including a knowledge of nearly all the British Colonies, I have never come in receipt of a similar report at once so comprehensive, so scientific and so useful. There is not published in the entire United States a report equally valuable and comprehensive."

A writer in the *The Ceylon Observer* wrote of the Census Report:—"Mr. Lionel Lee was considered to be the ablest Civil Servant of the time. Yet how bald and tame does his Census Report of 1891 read by the side of Mr. Arunachalam's of 1901. Extensive reading, unwearying industry, apt powers of condensation and critical discernment, leave their impress in happy combination upon its pages, forming altogether what is at once a most pleasing work and a singularly valuable contribution."

Arunachalam's Report was described by the *Times* of London as "the most comprehensive authority on the ethnology of Ceylon and of its varied peoples, their history, religions, languages and literatures." S. R. Wijemanne, writing in the *Ceylonese*, said: "The curious reader will find in the report which introduces the Census of 1901, perhaps the most luminous dissertation on the ethnological, social and economic conditions of the Island. A Government official report would be the last document the public would care to read for beauty of diction. But in Mr. P. Arunachalam's account of the history and religions of the Island in his Census Report would be found the language of Addison, the eloquence of Macaulay and the historical insight of Mommsen." The Colonial Government in Whitehall gave Arunachalam a reward of three thousand rupees as a token of their appreciation of this splendid piece of work.

Many of the reforms in the Registrar-General's Department involved extensive administrative changes and legislation. Arunachalam was responsible for the Ordinances Nos. 1 and 2 of 1895 on the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths, the Notaries Ordinance No. 1 of 1907 and the Land Registration Ordinance No. 3 of 1907. The piloting of the last two Ordinances through the Legislative Council, a work normally assigned to the Attorney-General, was entrusted to Arunachalam by the Government. The question of the registration of titles to land and of the deeds affecting land was considered by a Commission presided over by the Chief Justice. In its report the Commission stated: "We cannot close our Report without acknowledging the valuable service rendered to the public by the Registrar-General, Mr. Arunachalam, in drafting the results of our prolonged labour. We cannot claim for it perfection; but we venture to think that it will conduce to the interest of the public and to the suppression of much litigation and crime."

From the office of Registrar-General, Arunachalam was reverted to the judiciary and made the District Judge of Kurunegala. As a judge, he earned glowing tributes from members of the highest tribunal in the Island. One of Arunachalam's best-known judgements was in the well-known *Adippola Sannas Case*, which dealt with obscure points in Sinhalese social history. It was acknowledged to be a masterly study of the subject. In 1910, having earned encomia as a judge, he won the additional laurel of being hailed as a jurist, when he published his "A Digest of the Civil Law of Ceylon", dedicating it to the Marquis of Crewe, the son of Lord Houghton, his uncle Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy's friend.

This work was an ambitious and pioneer undertaking, inasmuch as it sought to restate the general "common law" of Ceylon, a huge, indeterminate medley of Roman-Dutch and English law based on Latin, Dutch and English texts and statutes and declared in judgements in hundreds of volumes of law reports, in the form of sections of a concise code, justifying each proposition by reference to the relevant authorities. It was his hope that such a Restatement of Ceylon Law could eventually be used by the legislature as the basis for an authoritative Code on the lines of the great German Civil Code of 1900. He was able to complete the first volume only of this gigantic task, but it sufficed to show the great pains he had taken to bring out a work of scholarship, at once systematic, compact and accurate. The book earned the praises of Lord Halsbury, the famous Lord Chancellor, and Sir Winfield Bonser, Chief Justice of Ceylon. Appreciative reviews appeared in the *Law Journal* and other law magazines of the United Kingdom. This "Digest" has been cited on more than one occasion by the Supreme Court and in the standard text books on the Roman-Dutch Law in other countries; and Mr. Justice

C. G. Weeramantry, LL. D., has recently described the work as "among the classics of modern Roman-Dutch jurisprudence."

In 1905 Arunachalam returned to the Registrar-General's Department and in 1906 was nominated to the Legislative Council, where he was responsible for introducing and carrying through the Ordinances relating to the registration of titles to land and to Notaries. He sat on various Commissions in which his wealth of wisdom and learning were acknowledged to be of great value. In 1912, Governor Sir Henry McCallum took the bold step of appointing him to the Executive Council in place of Lord Broadhurst who retired. Sir Richard Morgan and Sir Samuel Grenier were the only Ceylonese before him to occupy permanent seats in the Executive Council, but they did so by virtue of the offices they held. In Arunachalam's case the appointment was a personal one and was ample evidence of the high esteem in which Sir Henry held him.

Though an Official, he showed remarkable courage and independence. As a member of the Railway Commission of 1912, he dissented in its Report on the question of wages, in an effort to obtain an increase of wages for railway workers, although he knew that this would cause annoyance (as in fact it did) in official circles. Again, when at the close of a debate in the Legislative Council on an increased Salaries Scheme in 1913, a division was called, quite a sensation was caused when Arunachalam was seen to rise from his seat and walk up to the Governor who was presiding. After a whispered consultation, he returned to his seat and voted with the Unofficials against the Government. This was an incident unprecedented in the history of Crown Colony government and caused widespread comment in official and unofficial circles and in the public press. His objection was based on his conviction that the finances of the

Colony, as they then stood, would not permit an increase in the salaries of the officials. He completely ignored the fact that, as an official himself, he too would be one of the beneficiaries of an enhanced Salaries Scheme. But with him public good outweighed private advantage. Such was his conception of public duty, his courage and independence in the face of entrenched power and privilege.

With regard to his work in the Executive Council, Sir Anton Bertram, said at a public reception: "I was always struck by the character of his attainments. They always displayed a high feeling of the dignity of Government both in the largest and smallest aspects. Whatever question came before the Council, whether it was some question as to the past history of the country or the religion of the people or some question as to the country's future such as that of the new University College, on all these questions his official minutes were kindled with a kind of unofficial enthusiasm. Not only was he so in large questions, but when he had to deal with the interests of the humblest cultivator in a Gansabhawa appeal, he showed the same earnestness, concentration and conscientiousness as in large questions. No ordinance was too long or too tedious for him to analyse. No question, whether relative, as I have said, to the humble cultivator or the humble employee of the Railway, failed to engage his earnest attention. He seemed to me to bring to his work all the highest qualities that the Executive Councillor should have."

Arunachalam should, in the normal course of things, have scaled the topmost heights of the public service, had not his path been beset with all manner of insurmountable obstacles. First and foremost, he was a "native" and the highest places in the public service were at this time and for some decades to come the exclusive preserve of the White Sahib. Secondly, he showed uncommon

originality and independence, wide learning and an exceptional flair for making speeches, which again were taboo in the higher echelons of the public service where mediocrity and sealed lips were the accepted preconditions to success.

Mr. J. R. Weinman says, "The Official Members of Council further consist of certain Heads of Departments and Government Agents, some of whom are of the Executive Council. They put Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam there as some sort of solatium for not giving him an Agency; and from the Government point of view they were quite right, for Sir Ponnambalam showed some originality and could make good speeches, even when the speeches contained quotations from the Vedas and the Mahabharata. Official Members of the Legislative Council are there to vote solid for Government. They are not there to make speeches.....

"Any Civil Servant may become a Government Agent, a Member of the Legislative Council, and in his retirement be made a C. M. G. provided he lives long enough, never has made a speech unless in reply to the illuminated address presented by the Kachcheri Mudaliyar and staff on his transfer to another district or province. In England the private member who can make a better and more telling speech than a Cabinet Minister is regarded with extreme disfavour, and vain attempts are made to suppress him, as was done in the case of the late Lord Randolph Churchill. In Ceylon it would be considered treason for an Official Member to make a better speech than the Colonial Secretary.....

"Future ages will consider it extraordinary why Heads of Departments should leave their Provinces for Colombo merely to record their votes. Why not they send down their Office Assistants or Chief Clerks? If the Government Agent is summoned to produce a document in Court, he does not carry it himself. He sends it by a clerk.

In the same way, when the Member of the Legislative Council is summoned to the Council, why cannot he send down his vote by a clerk who could be most spared? Or why should not his vote be taken as read or rather recorded in favour of Government?"

In another place Weinman says, "The other Members of the Executive Council are usually put there *honoris causa*. Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam would have acted as Colonial Secretary, if he was not Ponnambalam Arunachalam, and he was told so by Sir Alexander Ashmore. They might have given him a Province, but, instead, they made his appointment a first class one, gave him the highest salary possible for a Civil Servant and put him into the Legislature, and finally into the Executive Council. 'What more can you want?' they asked, but they made his junior act as Colonial Secretary. It is doubtful whether these extra Executive Councillors carry any weight with, or affect the policy of Government in the slightest degree. If they agree with the Colonial Office, so much the better for the Colonial Office. If they disagree, so much the worse for them. Mr. W. H. Jackson, one of the ablest of our Civil Servants, who never did full justice to himself, used to say that he always wrote, 'I quite agree with the opinion of the Colonial Secretary,' not knowing what the opinion was, or whether there was any opinion at all. As a rule, these minor Executive Councillors are quite satisfied with their dignity, and give no trouble either to the Government or to themselves. It would naturally be dangerous for them to do so within a measurable distance of their retirement from the service and the showering of birthday honours. Besides, why should they spoil their record by doing anything original? The remaining official members of the Legislative Council are there mainly as silent voters."

Moreover, another besetting vice with Arunachalam was that he was an incorrigible nationalist in love with all things national. He gloried in his national attire, in his distinctive turban and tunic coat, and prided himself on the greatness and glory of his national language, culture and traditions, matters which were gall and wormwood to the Colonial Englishman. Arunachalam's intellectual and moral superiority, his amazing success in the public service, his sturdy independence and above all, his labours in the cause of national freedom while yet he was in the service of an alien raj were hardly calculated to conciliate the foreign bureaucrat with his airs of presumptuous superiority and his expectation of obsequious acquiescence from the "natives".

Given a wider field and a freer scope, there is not the smallest doubt that Arunachalam's exceptional talents and learning, his sterling character, unflinching industry and dedication to duty would have achieved far greater triumphs; but the foreign autocrat willed otherwise. Arunachalam's well-known reputation for legal scholarship and his long judicial experience naturally suggested his elevation to the Supreme Court Bench. But the simple fact of subjection to alien rule was enough to dash all such hopes and expectations to the ground. Had he been given that honour, he would certainly have ranked among the greatest judges of all time, for he possessed every virtue needed to adorn that high office. He was offered a Puisne Judgeship in Singapore, but he turned it down on the ground that to serve one's own country in a humbler capacity was preferable to serving a foreign land.

He retired from the public service in 1913, with a record of achievement unsurpassed by any other officer of the Crown. His official career will ever be a source of inspiration and pride to the Ceylonese, inasmuch as once and for all he dispelled from the minds of imperialist Englishmen the notion

they had for long cherished that administrative efficiency and acumen were a special gift of the Gods to them, and proved to the statesmen at Westminster that the Ceylonese were more than equal to the task of governing themselves and that Britain's strangle-hold on them was unwarranted and iniquitous in the extreme. The following official appreciation of his distinguished services appeared in the Government Gazette: "His Excellency desires to place on record his high appreciation of the value of the services rendered to the Colony by Mr. P. Arunachalam during an honourable career extending over thirtyeight years." As a reward for his services, he was knighted, receiving the accolade at the hands of King George V at Buckingham Palace. The initiative for the conferment of the honour came from the Colonial Office and not from any "men on the spot" in Ceylon. "No Ceylonese better deserved this honour than this Tamil gentleman whose great abilities, spotless integrity and meritorious services to the Government and the public entitled him to this, if not greater rewards, long ago, and this is only tardy justice done to him," said a leading newspaper.

On his return from England after receiving the Knighthood, all communities joined in honouring him. In 1908, the Royal Asiatic Society made him its Vice-President, the first Ceylonese to hold the office, and in 1916, he became the Society's President, being again the first Ceylonese to achieve this distinction. He had also been elected a Life Member of the Athenaeum Club in London, an honour which he shared with only two compatriots, his brother Ramanathan and his uncle Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy.

Availing himself of his stay in Europe, he made an enthusiastic study of social service settlements, charity organizations, labour unions and municipal institutions. He met Lord Chalmers,

the Governor-elect of Ceylon, and immediately took upon himself the duty of advising him on matters relating to Ceylon. In a letter dated 15th July, 1913, he wrote: "There is now an agitation in Ceylon for the abolition of the poll-tax, a tax payable by every able-bodied man except the Buddhist priest or immigrant cooly. I have always thought it an inequitable tax, for it falls on the rich and the poor, and I have worked several years to abolish it. The rich are fortunate in Ceylon, for they pay nothing else except on luxuries. Some years ago a Commission was appointed to consider the subject of Incidence of Taxation, but it died without making a Report. Your financial knowledge will no doubt reveal to you gross anomalies and inequalities in the Ceylon system of taxation. The most pressing Reform is the abolition or considerable reduction of the duty on salt, which is a Government monopoly. Such a policy will be a great blessing to the poor and an encouragement to agriculture for which salt is needed but not used owing to its cost. The rich, who, as tea and rubber planters and in the professions, make large incomes and the Companies which make and send out of the Colony huge profits remain untouched. There is no income tax or land tax. The richer classes only pay the poll-tax equally with the poorest peasant. I cannot help thinking that the abortive result of the Commission on Taxation was largely due to the influence of the capitalist classes and to the inadequate realisation by the Commissioners of the miserable condition of the poor."

Prolific of great achievement and lasting renown as Arunachalam's official life undoubtedly was, more prolific and of far more enduring value was his life of retirement. The ten years of retired life that the niggardly Fates vouchsafed to him were among the most strenuous, the most crowded and eventful not merely of his long and illustrious

career but of his country's history. For the first time after thirtyeight years of servitude to an alien raj, he felt himself a free man, free as a bird, free to fulfil the secret longings of his heart, free to move in the direction his genius prompted him. And his genius, inherent, inborn, inherited was no less than a passion to recreate in Mother Lanka a free society, free from the many political, social and economic bonds that had for long centuries held her in thrall to alien conquerors. He possessed for a time a more general ascendancy over the minds and imaginations of his contemporaries than any other leader of his time, not excluding his brother Ramanathan. He opened all the ground, touched all the issues, posed all the questions in the spheres which had hitherto remained untouched by man.

The subject that was uppermost in his mind and engrossed his whole attention was social reform. The condition of the working-poor, their appalling poverty and ignorance, their misery and degradation had for long been a sore in the body-politic and a source of profound distress and heart-searching for him. It was, he felt, a serious indictment and a paradox of our twentieth century materialism that in the midst of plenty, poverty should be rife, that large masses of human beings should in any human society wither away in want, in ignorance and squalor through man's inhumanity to his fellow-men. He was the first among us to preach to a callous and unheeding generation the gospel of social justice, to stir up the slumbering social conscience of his people, wake them up to a consciousness of their social responsibility. With a pertinacity, courage and broad humanity that baffled his contemporaries, he grappled with the social consequences of casual, ill-paid labour, of illiteracy, malnutrition, disease and human degradation.

He summoned a few of his friends to 'Ponklar', his home and birth-place of many progressive and

philanthropic movements, and expounded his plans for improving the lot of the poor: "We must study the needs of the masses and bring to their doors knowledge and recreation and brighten and beautify their lives and establish a bond of sweet human relationship between the educated and the wealthy and their less favoured brethren. The work is almost appalling and includes education of the masses, medical relief, economic improvement, and the improvement of their housing and teaching them to lead cleaner and better lives by coming into personal contact with them in their homes and giving medical relief as well as securing the benefits of compulsory insurance and minimum wages." The result was the birth on 29th January, 1915 of the Ceylon Social Service League of which he was the first President. He formulated a Constitution which served as a model for Gokhale, the great Indian patriot and statesman, when he drew up one for the Servants of India Society. It was his aim to make the head-quarters of the League, where he worked unremittingly, a "Social Settlement" like Toynbee Hall in England where men like the British Premier, Asquith worked.

In Ceylon, owing to the novelty of the idea and the want of social awareness, his appeal for spare-time, voluntary service did not meet with encouraging response from a generation permeated by self-interest and blind to all the woes of the poor. But undeterred, undaunted, this indomitable man, in the evening of life and in the infirmity of advancing years toiled at his office for ten hours of the day in a supreme endeavour to bring light and good cheer into the darkened homes of his less favoured brethren. Under his magic touch, the League soon became a hive of vigorous and sustained activity, a centre of light and leading, a dispenser of social benefits to the poor and the needy, the ignorant and the afflicted. He started night schools to impart education to the workers

and personally conducted a Social Study Class for the training of members in social work. The slums in the city were visited by volunteer workers who collected information on the social condition of the poor, instructed them in the principles of health and sanitation, granted medical relief and distributed free milk to expectant mothers and children. First-Aid classes were held and lantern lectures on sanitation, hygiene and civic duties were given. Athletic clubs for slum children were organized and run under proper supervision. Industrial education was imparted to enable children to earn their living and cottage industries such as pottery, basket-weaving, furniture-making, silver and brass work, the cultivation of silk worms and the weaving of silk and cotton cloth, which were fast dying out were revived. For this purpose he moved for the creation of Co-operative Credit Societies to help the people in their industrial and agricultural enterprises by providing them with funds for buying raw materials and improved implements. A Bureau was opened to secure for craftsmen a market for their goods. As a result of his activities, workers in the plumbago industry, domestic servants, artisans, skilled workmen in engineering firms, formed their own co-operative societies. He also pressed on Government, the necessity for the appointment of an Industrial Commission (with Unofficials and experts) to survey the economic resources and the industrial possibilities of the country, to report on the measures that should be adopted to encourage the growth of existing industries and to promote new ones. The Government appointed a Commission with him as one of its members.

During the floods of May, 1916, which rendered many thousands of people homeless and caused widespread distress and suffering, he acted with promptitude and organised several flood-relief-parties which did much to relieve suffering over a wide

area and rehabilitate the victims. Moreover, he inaugurated a Flood Relief Fund and distributed several lakhs of rupees among the flood-stricken villagers. In forty-nine villages, over seven thousand people were given monetary aid for rebuilding their houses. In the debates of the Legislative Council, the prompt and energetic action taken by the Ceylon Social Service League in relieving the distress of the victims of the flood was contrasted with the tardy and lukewarm measures taken by Government officers. Arunachalam brought to the notice of the Government the laxity and neglect of its officers in tackling the flood situation and urged on it the necessity for reforming the system of village administration with non-officials to protect the interests of the peasants.

For several years Arunachalam agitated vigorously for the introduction of free elementary education for the children of the poor in the city of Colombo and pressed on Government in memorandum after memorandum the necessity for Government to undertake this urgent duty. With characteristic vision he saw, long before other leaders dreamed of it, that compulsory free education was the most potent remedy for the many ills that afflicted human society. At first, the Government vacillated and even tried to evade its responsibility, but as a result of the increasing pressure he brought to bear on it, free elementary schools were established in Colombo. He it was who first blazed the trail that subsequent generations have followed with lasting success.

While engaged in social service work, he did not overlook the interests of labour. He was the pioneer of the Labour Movement in Ceylon. The first labour union that was established in Ceylon was founded by him on 25th June, 1919; until then the Ceylon Social Service League had looked after the interests of labour under his personal direction. The new organization was called the

Ceylon Workers' Welfare League. Arunachalam was elected its first President and Mr. Peri Sunderam, its first Secretary. The aim of the League, as stated in its constitution, was 'to protect the interests of the working classes in Ceylon and promote their welfare; to improve their social and industrial conditions and help their material and moral development; and to encourage the study of questions bearing on the social and economic conditions of the people.' So harsh, so merciless and punitive were the labour laws that his sensitive and compassionate mind revolted against the hideous cruelties and even barbarities practised upon labour. Writing to the Rt. Hon. I. Harcourt, M. P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, on July 16th, 1913, he said, "The minimum reform needed, I would submit for your favourable consideration, is to exempt women and minors from imprisonment for breaches of this law [i. e. the penal clauses of the Labour Ordinance] and to secure estate coolies a living wage by the establishment of Wages Boards in the various planting districts."

The League played an active role in the negotiations between employers and labourers during the Railway and the Harbour strikes of 1921. In September, 1920, the Rev. C. F. Andrews visited Ceylon on the invitation of the League in order to examine the conditions of Indian labour in the Ceylon plantations and addressed a large meeting of workers and supporters, presided over by Arunachalam, at the Tower Hall in Colombo. Col. Josiah Wedgewood, another champion of the Labour Movement and a member of the British Parliament, arrived in Ceylon in 1921 and similarly addressed large meetings. In February, 1920, Arunachalam enlarged his labour organizations and established the Ceylon Workers' Federation. In his inaugural address, he said: "This is a great day in the history of Ceylon and I deem it a great privilege to be associated with the inauguration

of this movement. I pray that it may bear lasting and blessed fruit to the people." He never ceased to encourage these organizations to strive for the amelioration of the conditions of the working classes. He was ever one with them, their philosopher, guide and friend. It was largely due to his efforts that the penal clauses in the Labour Ordinance were repealed. His Unions waged relentless war against the *Thundu* system, then operating oppressively against Indian labourers; and indeed these Unions were the only effective organizations then existing in the Island at this time to watch and protect the interests of labour. Colonel Wedgewood paid a glowing tribute to Arunachalam in a speech in the House of Commons on the 14th July, 1921. He said: "I should like in this connection to mention the great work done for these semi-slaves in Ceylon by two men, one in India, Mr. Andrews, and the other an old Government servant, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. He has gone on year after year, with society after society, pegging away at this question. He is unpopular with Officials because he was an Official. He is educated, he is alive to abolishing this cooly labour, and I congratulate him, as one can, from these Benches, on having achieved the liberation of a large mass of his labouring countrymen." Lord Crewe wrote to him on 27th July, 1922: "You must indeed be gratified at the successful close of your long exertions on behalf of the Indian coolies. It is a real service to the Empire, contentment to these people who deserve well of us all." For these and other services to the poor, the hungry and the down-trodden, many of his contemporaries derided him as a "Bolshevik."

In paying a tribute to his work for the social uplift of the poorer classes, on the occasion of the unveiling of his portrait by the Governor, Sir William Manning, at the headquarters of the Ceylon Social Service League in 1924, Chief Justice, Sir Anton Bertram said: "Sir Ponnambalam was

a man of wide and varied culture. There never had been a man of more distinguished culture in this Colony. He did not live wrapt in his own studies and books. He felt the sorrows of the common people. He did not start the social service movement because it was a fashionable movement. He realised the sorrows of the poor and heard what Wordsworth called 'the still sad voice of humanity'. He felt for the dwellers of the slums and every one of them should cherish as one of their most precious ideals their duty to follow the example of Sir Ponnambalam."

Arunachalam was pre-eminently a scholar and lived the life of disinterested culture. All learning both ancient and modern, all that was best and noblest in the literary, philosophical and religious thought of both the East and the West, he took in his giant-stride. He drank deep and long of these inexhaustible springs and found in them a well of delight and refreshment, an unfailing source of spiritual solace and sustenance, a stimulus to noble thought and action. Justice Moncrieff, Acting Chief Justice of the Island, once said of him that he was "a Classical and Oriental scholar, a master of the English language and literature, who brought to every task he undertook, whether in literature or law or official work, habits of thoroughness and exactitude and a practical mind. *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.*" His deep insight into matters philosophical and spiritual is revealed in his writings, notably in the collection of learned essays and articles which were published posthumously under the title "Studies and Translations, Philosophical and Religious" (1937). The distinguished Indian scholar-statesman Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, who contributed a Foreword to this volume, has declared elsewhere, in an article on "Books that have Influenced Me", how an earlier version of Arunachalam's "Studies and Translations" had profoundly influenced his own thought, which until the age

of forty had been almost exclusively formed on Western philosophy and literature, the only mental pabulum afforded in Indian schools and universities in the days of his youth.

In the above mentioned Foreword he wrote: "The world cannot be sufficiently grateful to Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam for having in his 'Studies and Translations' unlocked these treasures of thought and of language to those wholly or partially unacquainted with the wonders of Tamil thought and Tamil poesy... The task of translation from these classics is inexpressibly difficult and no higher praise can be given than to say that Sir P. Arunachalam's translations enable us to comprehend the spirit and some part of the formal beauty of the original... In a carefully arranged series of essays which display a unique acquaintance with European literature, classical and modern, in addition to a mastery over Eastern lore, he has discussed such varied subjects as 'Luminous Sleep', the sleep in which, while there is rest and absence of thought, there is no oblivion but perfect consciousness... He discourses on the symbolism of Siva worship with special reference to the bronzes found at Polonnaruwa... Not the least valuable and stimulating amongst the essays collected in this volume is an address on 'Eastern Ideals of Education and Their Bearing on Modern Problems'..... Although the book is styled 'Studies and Translations' there is embedded in it much original thought evolved by one to whom Greek, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil literatures were equally open books... I account it a piece of good fortune to have the privilege of introducing this volume to a world which will be all the better for the knowledge and assimilation of that varied culture whereof the author was an exponent as well as an embodiment."

Arunachalam possessed a keen intellect which could take in at a sweep the most recondite and

intractable subjects. Added to this natural endowment was his capacity for patient and strenuous work, a quality which was with him (as with his brother Ramanathan) a life-long possession. Edward Carpenter, in the Introduction to his book "Light from the East" which he designed to commemorate his friend Arunachalam and in which he embodied a selection of Arunachalam's letters, says, "I may dwell for a moment on some characteristics of Arunachalam himself. One of these was (to me at least since my own mind works rather slowly) the surprising rapidity of his thought, and with this rapidity went, as its natural accompaniment, an extreme receptivity. I was often impressed by the ease and celerity with which he drank in and absorbed all sorts of difficult and recondite matters (doubly difficult to foreigners) as a question of procedure in the House of Commons, while at the same time this receptiveness was healthily counterbalanced by a certain almost elfish spirit of chaff and opposition which one might notice at times. This last peculiarity is, I am inclined to think, characteristic of the Tamils who are noted for their originality and their sturdy independence of mind. For the Tamils indeed as a people I have always felt a strange sympathy and admiration."

Arunachalam was first and last a gentleman, one of the finest that ever lived. His mind was free of all things base or ignoble and full of the noblest thoughts of all ages and climes. This is not surprising in one whom contemporary opinion adjudged a fine flower of Cambridge culture, with whom the pursuit of religion, philosophy and the fine arts was a lifelong passion, whose life was dedicated to the cause of human freedom and fellowship and the promotion of social justice and human dignity. No wonder that a personality so noble, so dignified and so wise radiated charm and compelled admiration whithersoever it went. Edward Carpenter wrote: "Whether he was

conversing with the humblest friends at Millthorpe or at Sheffield or with high officials and great ladies in London, his manners had always just the same charming frankness and grace about them, which established at once the *human* relation as the paramount thing". Chief Justice Sir Anton Bertram said of him: "It was a rare privilege to see a man who combined the high and unusual qualities of being a scholar and a gentleman." Decades earlier Colonel Olcott, who met Arunachalam when he was a young Magistrate at Kalutara wrote in his "Old Diary Leaves": "We made a charming acquaintance today, a graduate of Christ's College, Cambridge, one of the most intellectual and polished men we have met in Asia." Sir William Rothenstein, the artist, wrote of him: "He seemed to me to have real interior beauty, which shone through him, steadily and quietly. It was always a delight to be with him. His fine humanity, his scholarship and his gentle courtesy made of his friendship one of the true assets of my life."

Arunachalam has been rightly called the Father of the Ceylon University Movement. A finished product of University culture himself, he realised the immeasurable good that a university confers on youth and saw no reason why such good should be denied to our youth. The absence of a university, he felt, was the gravest impediment to national progress and he addressed himself to the task of discovering a remedy. In one of his public speeches he said, "I have ever since felt that the greatest advantage of a University is not the book-knowledge you acquire there, but the breathing of the atmosphere of high culture and high ideals, the contact of mind with mind, the clash of opinions by association and discussion with teachers and fellow-students and the stimulus thus given to intellectual and spiritual growth. Who can estimate the loss we have suffered here in Ceylon by the lack of such a fountain of life? This feeling was the main

reason why some of us, Dr. H. M. Fernando, Mr. James Peiris and others started some years ago the Ceylon University Association."

This Association was founded in 1906 with Arunachalam as President, and from that time onwards the idea of establishing a University for Ceylon engrossed him. He and his brother Ramanathan carried on a strenuous and sustained agitation, ably supported by their cousin Ananda Coomaraswamy, Marcus Fernando and James Peiris. Governor Sir Henry McCallum, a man of liberal sympathies, gave his benediction to the movement and the outcome was the founding of the Ceylon University College in 1921, designed to be the nucleus of the future University.

Arunachalam, like his brother Ramanathan, had some very original and clear-cut views on the scope and nature of university education. While the generality of the country's intellectuals clamoured for a university founded on strictly Western lines, giving all prominence to Western learning and thought, he and his brother Ramanathan pleaded vehemently for a university with a distinctively national bias, giving special importance to the national languages, cultures, religions and fine arts, while at the same time enriching itself with all that was best and noblest in Western learning and the study of the natural and social sciences.

He was profoundly dissatisfied with the prevailing system of education in so far as it relegated to the background the language and literature, the history and traditions, the arts and the crafts of the country, while enthroning those of the West. Writing about education in Ceylon, he said, "It certainly does not develop the qualities I have just mentioned. How can it, with the mother tongue and the national history neglected in our schools, and our boys and girls growing up ignorant of the ideals, traditions and achievements of their race and by

dwelling exclusively on the achievements of others, hypnotized into self-depreciation and a sense of inferiority? No greater disaster can overtake a people. Mistral and his inspired brother-poets of Provence recognised that the soul and essence of a people lie in their language."

On 8th July, 1900, Arunachalam had submitted his views to the Director of Public Instruction in a memorandum wherein he stated that the fundamental flaw in our system of education was that English was employed as the medium of instruction. In a real sense he was the father of the Swabasha media in education, since in the early years of the century, when our educationists and the people as well, gloried in the use of the English medium and even banned the use of the mother tongue in schools and colleges, he alone of all men at this period sounded a note of warning and pleaded vehemently for their use as the media of instruction at all levels. He pointedly asked the Director, to "think what it would be in England if, say, German was made the medium of instruction in the elementary schools and English was entirely excluded. And German is more akin to English and less difficult to an English child than English is to a Sinhalese or a Tamil." He also urged the introduction in the curriculum of the history and the geography of Ceylon in the place of English history and geography. In January 1906, he delivered a public lecture on Ceylon History under the presidency of Governor Sir Henry Blake, in which he deplored the prevailing "profound ignorance of the history of our motherland", one of "the oldest, most interesting and fascinating histories in the world". An expanded version of this lecture was published under the title "Sketches of Ceylon History", which enjoyed a wide circulation and helped to stimulate much interest in the subject in schools and among the general public.

Arunachalam's view of what the aim of the Ceylon University should be was expressed by him thus: "It will be a chief aim of the Ceylon University, while making efficient provision for the study of English and the assimilation of Western culture, to take care that our youth do not grow up strangers to their mother tongue and to their past history and traditions. Here they will learn to use their mother tongue with accuracy and ease, to appropriate the beauties of their classical languages and literatures, to realise that they are inheritors of a great past stretching back twenty four centuries and to make themselves worthy of their inheritance. The vernacular literature of the day will then be rescued from its pedantry and triviality and be made a worthy vehicle for the dissemination of what is best in Western and Eastern culture and of the thoughts, hopes and aspirations of our best men and women. Then at last the masses of our people will be really influenced for the better by Western civilisation which seems otherwise likely to leave no more enduring mark than the addition of some European customs in our social life." The University, he maintained, should primarily be an instrument of national culture.

The intellectual and moral advantages of a University are inestimable. In this connection he said, "The University will bring together in one place under the personal influence of Professors of high attainments and culture the best youths in the country. Who that has studied at a European University such as Oxford or Cambridge, Berlin or Paris, Bonn or Heidelberg, does not know how the character and example of the Professors,—true high priests at the shrine of learning—and the clash of opinion caused by association and discussion with teachers and fellow students, stimulate intellectual life and create an atmosphere of culture and loyalty to high ideals? This is

the most valuable result of University life, not the learning of books or the passing of Examinations. Who can estimate the loss we have suffered for want of such a fountain of intellectual and moral life?... The University will be a powerful instrument for forming character, for giving us men and women armed with reason and self-control, braced by knowledge, clothed with steadfastness and courage and inspired by public spirit and public virtue. The standard of ability, character and general efficiency will be raised throughout the public service and in every profession, the natural resources of our Island will be developed and its prosperity increased and made secure."

The Obituary Address of Professor R. Marrs, first Principal of the University College to the undergraduates the day after Arunachalam's death throws a flood of light on this facet of Arunachalam's work. He said, "Gentlemen, I have asked you to assemble here at this hour as a mark of respect to the memory of one who was in a real sense the Father of the University Project in Ceylon. Much has been written already of his varied distinction and activities as servant of the Government, Politician, Scholar, Savant, Educationist, and Social Reformer. Little or nothing has been said of that side of his activities which to those who were in close touch with him was the inspiration of his latter days, the side which concerns you and me as members of an institution so dear to his heart, the Ceylon University College. I may remind you that Sir Arunachalam presided over the public meeting which was called to consider the question of the establishment of a University in Ceylon, on the 19th January, 1906, and I should like to quote to you the concluding words of his address at that meeting, a meeting which led to the formation of the Ceylon University Association. 'In seeking, therefore, to form a Ceylon University Association, we are not only following precedent but

doing an indispensable work. We do not commit ourselves to the form the University is to take, to the details of its organization as to teaching, examination, etc. Those are matters that must be developed later, and on which at present there cannot but be differences of opinion. Meanwhile, whatever scheme for higher education may be now before the public, whether in connection with Cambridge, London or Madras, may be pursued without let or restraint. These schemes, it is generally felt, are transitional and require modification to suit our special needs. The aim of our Association will be to make this period of transition not long or fruitless, and to strive for the establishment of a University which will be the Crown of a well-ordered series of elementary and secondary schools and colleges, which will systematize and concentrate the energies now dissipated in various institutions for general and professional education, and which will render it impossible for our schools and colleges to go on in a drowsy and impotent routine, but will raise the culture of our people ever higher and higher by their means.'

'From that day to the day of his decease, Sir Arunachalam has pursued his object, to use his own words, 'without let or restraint', undeterred by the doubts of men without vision or the delay to which an untried project must, I suppose, always be subjected by conservers of tradition. No man in this Island has pressed his advocacy of the University with so clear a conception of its ultimate significance to the political progress of this country or with such single-minded and forceful enthusiasm. The outward evidence of his interest we at the College know. There is first and foremost his great gift of the Padmanabha Library whose value has in my opinion not yet been sufficiently realised. There is his bequest of the Sir Coomaraswamy Science Prize and his generous donations to the Union Hostel. But these are as nothing

compared with the gift of time, energy and thought to the affairs of the College not only as a member of the College Council and the Academic Committee but as one who was ever ready to extend help and advice to those on whom has fallen the task of guiding the destinies of the College and preparing the foundations of the University of Ceylon.

"Here I speak with fuller knowledge than others. From the time I landed in this country which he loved and for whose good—all must agree, whatever their political opinions—he strove throughout, I have been in the closest contact with him and can assure you that he gave of his best in will and thought and time to the furtherance of our projects. When progress seemed impossible, it was he who confounded the pessimists and inspired us to fresh efforts. It is not easy for me, as Principal of the College, to measure the debt of gratitude which I owe to his courtesy, encouragement and support or to express the deep sorrow and sense of personal loss which I felt when I read of his death.

"Gentlemen, you have in him who has just left us an example and an inspiration. Whatever the difference between him and others in religion or politics, he is an example of certain human qualities which lie at the root of all greatness and which you will do well to emulate in your adult lives. Of these, I would single out moral courage, independent judgement and single-minded pursuit of the ideal. He fought the good fight for his ideal in the spirit of the poet's admonition to his soul:

Heart, Heart, still vexed with troubles past the curing,
Up and be doing, steel thyself and stay,
Mid thronging foemen to the last enduring,
Steadfast amid the forefront of the fray.'

His proximate ideal was the University. But his ultimate ideal was the ideal of all of us, to raise the natural tone of his countrymen by turning out,

as generation succeeds generation, ever increasing numbers of true men, men of thought and men of action, who think and act according to the highest standards of human civilization."

Great and of enduring value as were Arunachalam's achievements in many fields of national activity, greater far and more enduring were his achievements in the domain of national freedom and self-rule for his motherland. Like all great nationalists and liberators of mankind, he had in early life discerned the truth, the cardinal, the elemental truth that national freedom is a people's prime need, the first of national priorities, its sole basis and warrant of existence. Fortified by that belief, rooted in that conviction, in his retirement he flung himself whole and entire into the freedom struggle and galvanized the nation into vigorous and spirited action, which accelerated, as never before, the pace of constitutional reform and the achievement of democratic freedom and national sovereignty. He was a meteor that set the whole firmament ablaze with an unwonted radiance, a leader who sounded his trumpet-call and rallied the nation round him, drew up a many-sided programme of national regeneration, in the forefront of which he placed national freedom and sovereignty and worked for it with an intrepidity, a tenacity and single-minded dedication that inevitably and irresistibly led up to a rapid succession of constitutional reforms which culminated before long in self-rule. An admirer though he was of Western culture and institutions, and counted many eminent Westerners among his choicest friends, none chafed more than he under the trammels of Western domination, as none others, with the possible exception of his brother Ramanathan, had pondered longer or deeper on the complex problems of politics and statecraft. Few realised more than he the poignant truth, that no greater calamity can ever befall a people than subjection to alien

rule or that for a people, political freedom is the parent and precursor of every other freedom known to man or that a people's supreme efforts can be directed to no higher or worthier end than the achievement and enjoyment of that freedom.

Nothing is farther from the truth than the belief commonly held by many that Arunachalam's passion for political freedom was a development of his later life. It was rather an inherited faculty. It asserted itself while yet he was an undergraduate at Cambridge in his late teens, and as the years rolled by, it burned within him like a scorching flame that could not by any means be quenched. Happily for him there was another circumstance that served to intensify that passion; his days at Cambridge were a period of great political and social ferment and upheaval in Europe, where subject peoples were making heroic efforts to shake off foreign yokes and princely despotisms, when the Irishman's bid for national freedom rocked British politics and split the nation into two warring camps. And Cambridge dons were not slow to catch the infection and in turn transmit it to the youth in their charge. Nor was the eager and susceptible undergraduate slow to catch the contagion. Arunachalam returned home with a mind too full of those novel and subversive thoughts to remain content with the humdrum, routine work of a bureaucrat.

It was his good fortune at this early period of his life to attract the notice of William Digby, a great Englishman and friend of subject peoples, then in the service of the *Ceylon Observer*. The two men of like minds, though of various callings, met frequently and held intimate discourse on matters political and libertarian. And there emanated from the pen of the Englishman a historic contribution to the *Calcutta Review* entitled: "An Oriental Colony Ripe for Self-Government," wherein he made a reasoned and forceful plea for the

introduction of self-governing institutions into Ceylon. Finding little response either from the Government or from the people, Digby left the Island in sheer frustration and joined the *Madras Times* where he hoped to find a freer or a more congenial atmosphere. He invited Arunachalam to work with him in India. Writing to him in 1878, he said, "I wish with all my heart you were in India and shall not forget your longing for a larger sphere and a wider field than you occupy now. You will never make full use of your brilliant qualities of head and heart until you brave the obstacles that confound you and cease to lead the exclusive life you do now. We don't find your counterpart here".

For a time Arunachalam interested himself in Indian affairs and did not mince words in his denunciation of British rule. Writing to Carpenter, he said, "It is impossible to see and not to express one's opinion on the horrible injustice perpetrated by the English in and out of India towards the people. We cannot be expected to be always singing Hallelujahs in praise of English rule." He even took up the cudgels in defence of the great Indian patriot and freedom-fighter Gangadhar Tilak, when he was incarcerated for his political activities, and referred to the "priceless services" of the "saintly Gandhi, the noblest personality in the public life of India."

In 1893, he wrote to Digby requesting him to interview the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Ripon, who was known to Digby, and urge on him "the need for an immediate extension of local self-Government in Ceylon." In 1902, Arunachalam had discussions with the editor of the *Ceylon Observer* on the subject of reforms; this resulted in his writing a letter himself for publication in the *Observer* on 7th June, 1902 requesting the editor to use his influence to secure the reform of the Constitution as a Coronation gift to

Ceylon, the occasion being the crowning of King Edward VII. Arunachalam followed this letter with another wherein he elaborated his arguments. It is impossible to do sufficient justice within the compass of a brief sketch to all that Arunachalam did while yet in the Government service and subject to its disciplinary regulations, to advance the cause of national freedom and sovereignty. The Government was not slow to sense what he was about nor was it slow to retaliate. It blocked his path to high preferment in its service, to which his merits entitled him. But Arunachalam was not to be overawed by these set-backs, for he belonged to that select band of men with whom public good outweighed private advantage.

In retirement he launched an Island-wide crusade for national freedom, made freedom the burning question of the day, roped in the best talents of the age, imparted to the movement a new energy and a new dynamism, which led up to a quick succession of constitutional reforms.

His first speech addressed to the Ceylon National Association on 2nd April, 1917, was entitled: "Our Political Needs." Contemporary opinion acclaimed it a classic on the subject and the Bible of the freedom-fighters. It was a bold and forthright statement of the manifold disabilities, that confound a subject people, a catalogue of the multitudinous wrongs and injustices a foreign ruler heaps on the ruled, an impassioned appeal to the ruling power for justice and fair-play and a trumpet-call to the nation for prompt and vigorous action. Inter alia, he said, "The inherent evils of a Crown Colony administration remain. We are deprived of all power and responsibility, our powers and capacities are dwarfed and stunted, we live in an atmosphere of inferiority, and we can never rise to the full height to which our manhood is capable of rising. We have hypnotized ourselves into thinking that we are weak and inferior...

"We are thus practically under a benevolent despotism wielded by a Governor who is responsible only to Downing Street; and he exercises his powers through a bureaucracy predominantly European...

"Colombo, one of the world's greatest ports, is ill-provided with means to help ships in distress and has seen large steamers sink in sight of her harbour. The city is a nest of foul slums and misery, and the abode of plague and tuberculosis. Malaria, which modern science has shown can be mastered, claims its victims throughout the Island by tens of thousands. The conditions of labour are a scandal. While every civilized state is grappling boldly with drink, and putting it down, here its clutch is growing tighter...

"We are exploited by European nations, and now also by Japan and America. We have become their milch-cow. Much of our wealth goes abroad. What is left imparts an air of prosperity to the professional and commercial classes. The real makers of the country's wealth—the peasant and the labourer—are steeped in poverty...

"The Legislative Council, as it is at present constituted, hardly answers a useful purpose. It provides, no doubt, seats of honour to a few Unofficials and an arena for their eloquence or for their silence. But they are little more than advisory members, and their presence in the Council serves to conceal the autocracy under which we live.

"The swaddling-clothes of a Crown Colony administration are strangling us. They have begun even to disturb the equanimity of our European fellow subjects. None are safe until all are safe...

"There has been no real attempt to train the people in self-government.....

"We ask to be in our own country what other self-respecting people are in theirs—self-governing, strong, respected at home and abroad; and we ask for the grant at once of a definite

measure of progressive advance towards that goal. Ceylon is no pauper begging for alms. She is claiming her heritage."

His words of exhortation were coupled with words of caution and wisdom. To a generation which was repudiating all spiritual and moral values and sinking deeper and deeper in the mire of sensualism and selfish materialism, he proclaimed the contrary gospel that life, whether of individuals or nations, finds fulfilment in service and self-denial, that the governance of human society is essentially and fundamentally a spiritual and moral activity, and that whoever transgress that creed come to grief as surely as the night follows the day. In a famous "Message to the Country" which appeared in the very first issue of the *Ceylon Daily News* published on 3rd January, 1918, he declared: "In our zeal for political reform, we must be on our guard against making it an end. We seek it not to win rights but to fulfil duties—duties to ourselves and our country... People like individuals have each a divinely appointed end, a distinct task to perform... I look to our youth to spiritualise public life and I believe they will do it. They will each seek his own well-being in the well-being of all, will identify his own life with the life of all, and his own interest with the interest of all. They will lay at the feet of our dear Motherland the love-offerings of passionate service. They will work in unity that, in the words of Dante, all the intellectual and spiritual forces diffused among men may obtain the highest possible development in the sphere of thought and action. With our youth inspired by such ideals, I look to see our country rise with renewed splendour paling the glory of Parakramabahu the Great and be a beacon-light to all lands."

Sir James Peiris, referring to Arunachalam's epoch-making Address on "Our Political Needs" said: "Although there were several agitators for

political reform in Ceylon from time to time, the people woke to the necessity of persistent and organized agitation only after Sir P. Arunachalam delivered his address on 'Our Political Needs'..... I would ask especially those young men who are studying politics to read that lecture and cognate publications of Sir P. Arunachalam and treat them as a sort of political Bible."

The words of D. R. Wijewardene on the occasion of Ceylon's attainment of Independence in 1948 are worth recalling: "In those days, the national consciousness was dormant and there was nothing in the spirit of the times to stir it to life and activity. That was to come later, when largely as a result of Sir P. Arunachalam's work, the fire of the national soul was quickened. When he delivered himself of that epoch-making address on 'Our Political Needs' at the Masonic Hall, that leader of imperishable memory set in motion influences that were to change the history of his beloved country. The immediate outcome of that meeting was the formation of the Reform League. The National Association was anterior to the League and they held a joint national conference which gave birth to the Ceylon National Congress. It was then that the national movement which has brought Ceylon to the threshold of Independence received its stimulus; public opinion began to speak for the first time with a firm tone."

In another place Wijewardene called that speech an epoch-making address and added that "it was both a starting-point and a blue-print for the important constitutional changes which followed, and was listened to by a large audience at the Victoria Masonic Hall."

Action followed close on the heels of words and the Ceylon Reform League sprang into existence with Arunachalam at the helm. A loyal and devoted band of forward-looking, freedom-loving youth rallied round him, and the League office

hummed with incessant and vigorous activity, the leader toiling at his desk every day for eight to ten hours. Memorials, one behind the other, drawn by the leader himself with superb skill and mastery of detail, poured into Whitehall; the Secretary of State for the Colonies was interviewed, Members of Parliament, many of whom were his friends from his Cambridge days, were prevailed upon to intercede; and everything humanly possible was done to liberate the country from the thralldom of alien domination. His memorial entitled: "The Case for Constitutional Reform in Ceylon", submitted to the Imperial Parliament was a remarkable document, wherein he made out an unanswerable case for Home Rule. At his request the Marquis of Crewe, his good friend and former Secretary of State for the Colonies, exercised his influence with Lord Milner, who was at the time Secretary of State. Even Arunachalam's son, Padmanabha, then in England, was directed to meet Lord Milner as often as necessary and furnish him with whatever information he might require.

Arunachalam's appeal for action was directed not merely to the educated elite but more to the common man. He it was who first made the freedom movement a truly national one, who first realised and acted upon the truth that any movement, to gain strength and vitality, must be popular and broad-based, must sink deep into the national consciousness. In an age in which political meetings were rare, when questions of government and national freedom were regarded as mysteries appertaining to a few political families and to well-born civil servants, the League lecturers discussed politics, criticised the administration, scrutinized the year's budget, and held up national freedom as the sole solvent of national ills, before vast audiences of merchants and clerks, artisans and farm-labourers. The League invented modern techniques of political education to canvass and

consolidate national support and coerce the alien ruler into submission to the national will. Addressing the Sinhalese Conference convened by him and F. R. Senanayake on September 20th, 1919, he said, "We have met here today to organize a movement in the Sinhalese Districts of the Island (a movement for the Tamil Districts will follow) to form People's Associations throughout the Island for political, social and economic improvement... We wish to reach the great masses of the people. They have shown in the Temperance Campaign of the last few years an amount of enthusiasm, energy and public spirit which has not been equalled by the English-educated classes. We wish to revive in the people the interest they took of old in matters of public concern and to recover for them the power to shape and manage their affairs.

"There is no need for you to be treated as children. It is not as if the Sinhalese and the Tamils were a race of ignorant savages to whom the first glimpses of civilization came with the arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch or the British. Your civilization goes back at least 2000 years.

"Long before the modern great nations of the West emerged from barbarism or even came into existence, you had a well-organized social and political life. You had a beautiful literature, highly-developed arts, great irrigation works and religious edifices that vie with the greatest in the world, an army and navy, and everything that constitutes a civilisation of a high order."

What pride of race and religion, of culture and antiquity pulsates within him, what passion for freedom vibrates in him, what patriotic fire burns through the marrow of his being!

To render the movement truly national and all-embracing, to bring the diverse and discordant political forces and factions of the country into focus, to rally them round one common banner, and enable them to speak with one voice, he

conceived the idea of merging the principal political organs in the country—the Ceylon Reform League, the Ceylon National Association and the Jaffna Association—into a single national organization and naming it the Ceylon National Congress. But how was this consummation so devoutly to be wished, to be brought about? Sinhalese leaders had made an impossible demand in asking for territorial representation as the grand cure for the country's political and social maladies. The Tamil leaders would have none of it, for they knew they would be completely engulfed by it. Matters had come to a deadlock. A Gordian knot had been tied. Unless a remedy were found and the leaders of the two peoples brought together under a common roof and an agreed programme of Reform wrung from them, the Imperial government at Whitehall would not come to terms. If there was one man who could accomplish that miracle, it was Arunachalam. By reason of his intellectual and moral stature, by his lifelong advocacy of the cause of national freedom and sovereignty, by his untiring labours in behalf of the under-dog, he exercised a peculiar fascination on the minds and imaginations not merely of the elite of the country but of common men. Sinhalese leaders knew that and promptly set to work. To allay the fears of the Tamil leaders, to reassure them, James Peiris and E. J. Samarawickreme addressed the following letter to Arunachalam:

Ceylon Reform League
12, De Soysa Buildings,
Slave Island,
Colombo.

7th December, 1918.

Dear Sir Ponnambalam,

With reference to the suggestion of Mr. Sabapathy that the words "on the basis of a territorial electorate" be omitted from the Resolution No: 4, we shall be obliged if you will point out to him

that their omission will seriously affect our case for reform as a whole. We beg to remind him of all that the promoters of the Reform Movement *have said of the baneful effect of the present system of racial representation.*

We have made the territorial electorate a fundamental part of our demands. The omission of the words especially after the publication of the draft resolutions will be construed as a surrender of an important principle.

It must be borne in mind that the resolutions contain only the essential principles which we desire to assert. They do not constitute a complete scheme, and while we desire to avoid the introduction of details into the resolutions, we are anxious to do all that could be done to secure as large a representation as possible to the Tamils, when exceptional provisions consistent with the principles referred to come to be considered.

As Presidents of the Ceylon National Association and the Ceylon Reform League, we pledge ourselves to accept any scheme, which the Jaffna Association may put forward as long as it is not inconsistent with the various principles contained in the resolutions. We feel sure that nothing obviously unreasonable will be insisted on by the Jaffna Association. *We are prepared to pledge ourselves to actively support a provision for the reservation of a seat to the Tamils in the Western Province so long as the electorate remains territorial.*

We suggest that the resolution should be accepted by the Jaffna Association without any alteration and that they should leave it to us to negotiate with the Indians, Europeans, and Burghers on the subject of special representation for them.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) James Peiris,

President, Ceylon National Association.

(Sgd.) E. J. Samarawickreme,

President, Ceylon Reform League.

It was on the strength of this pledge that Arunachalam pressurized the leaders of the Jaffna Association into coming within the Congress fold and making common cause with the Sinhalese leaders. On the same day he wrote to the chief spokesman for the Tamils of Jaffna, the Hon. Mr. A. Sabapathy, as follows:

Ponklar,
Horton Place,
Colombo.

7th December, 1918.

Hon. Mr. A. Sabapathy,
Jaffna.

Dear Sir,

Referring to your conversation with me of Thursday afternoon, I enclose a letter from Messrs. James Peiris and E. J. Samarawickreme, Presidents of the Ceylon National Association and the Ceylon Reform League respectively, giving assurances which should satisfy your Association as to the bona fide desire of the Sinhalese leaders to do all that can be done to secure as large a representation as possible to the Tamils, consistent with the principles of the resolutions adopted by the Committee with the concurrence of delegates from Provincial Associations.

The assurance means that you have three seats for the Northern Province and two for the Eastern Province (or more if you can get it), and that there will be one seat reserved for a Tamil Member in the Western Province on the basis of the Territorial Electorate, in addition to the chances of Tamils in other Provinces and in the Colombo Municipality. No doubt, also, the Government will nominate a Tamil to represent the Indian Tamils. Our Sinhalese friends are also willing to support the claim for a Mohammedan Member in the Western Province on the same footing, should the Mohammedans make such a claim. The Conference is deliberately restricted to essential

principles only, there being a conflict of opinion among the Sinhalese themselves on matters of details. Such details should be hereafter submitted to the Government by the various interested parties.

I trust that nothing will now stand in the way of a large number of delegates from Jaffna (including yourself and Sir A. Kanagasabai) from attending the Conference and making common cause with the rest of the Island. I understand that the Governor is coming to Jaffna on the 15th. You and Sir A. Kanagasabai could return by the evening train on the 14th or perhaps on the 13th by which time we hope to pass at least half the resolutions.

Yours very truly,
(Sgd. P. Arunachalam)

With Arunachalam playing the honest broker, the deal was put through. No man of less intellectual or moral calibre could have accomplished the miracle of bringing the two divergent groups into the Congress fold or prevailing on them to subscribe to a common programme of political action. The upshot of it all was the birth of the Ceylon National Congress on 11th December, 1919. Arunachalam was acclaimed its Father and first President. Professor K. M. de Silva writes: "To Arunachalam, the inauguration of the Ceylon National Congress was 'the fulfilment of dreams cherished from the time he was an undergraduate at Cambridge'. It was also the culmination of a purposeful campaign conducted by him, if not single-handed, at most with very little support from the bulk of the leadership of the constitutionalist elite, Sinhalese and Tamil alike. The task of overcoming the political myopia of his colleagues in the constitutionalist leadership, of reconciling the conflicting claims of advocates of territorial representation and those who stood in defence of sectional interests, would have been beyond the capacity of anyone who did not have Arunachalam's personal prestige and political vision... The *Ceylon Daily*

News claimed in an editorial... that the birth of the Congress marks 'the first great advance in the growth of democratic institutions in Ceylon. The Congress takes up the position of the only accredited mouthpiece of all classes. Those who have worked to bring it into existence have reason to be proud of their achievement. The first President of the Congress has been the great pioneer'."

Mr. C. E. Corea makes the following reference to Arunachalam's part in the founding of the Congress, in his Presidential Address to the Congress in December, 1924: "In later years, in this centre of energy (Colombo) a great man possessed of a keen and observant eye looked and saw in the distance the glow of the scattered sparks of individual enthusiasms, smouldering in isolation towards extinguishment, and the great man arose and made haste, and he went forth and gathered up those farflung embers, energised them with his own burning patriotism and brought them together in one great life-giving furnace of national endeavour, the crucible in which was shaped and formed the Ceylon National Congress. The Congress is the off-spring of the late Sir Ponnambalam's noble enthusiasm. And the Congress had dutifully and in love and affection acknowledged him 'Father'."

Arunachalam was all his life a protagonist of territorial representation as opposed to communal. In his Presidential Address to the All-Ceylon Reform Conference held on 13-12-1918, he said, "I trust special representation for the minorities is only a temporary expedient and that the working of the new system will convince the minorities that it is to the general interest of the whole Island as of themselves that special representation should in the end give way to one common electorate for the whole Island."

Heaven knows by what process of reasoning, by what canons of constitutional law and practice this scion of an ancient house, this fine flower of

Cambridge culture, this bright ornament of the Public Service and, above all, this wise counsellor in the great councils of State arrived at the startling conclusion, that human nature being what it is, unitary mathematical democracy, at best an instrument of government for a homogeneous society, could sustain the destinies of a multi-racial, multi-lingual and in many ways a disparate society thrown together by the historic accident of foreign conquest and subjugation.

Arunachalam was, at this eventful period of his history, a race-horse in blinkers, which sees only the winning-post and naught else. In his obsession for national freedom, his single-minded resolve to end foreign domination for all time, he suffered himself to be blinded to all things else, to truths that could not have escaped the ken of a First Form school-boy. Not that he was so utterly naive, so abjectly obtuse, so completely ignorant of the inner workings of the human mind and heart, so hopelessly out of joint with the changing trends of the times as not to be alive to the perils and pit-falls inherent in a territorially elected unitary democracy, but that his over-sanguine temperament, his unshakable faith in man's good sense, in man's fundamental honesty and reasonableness led him to believe that, once the foreigner had quitted our shores, all domestic differences and squabbles could be settled over a conference table.

Even as the minor luminaries in the firmament pale before the all-pervading splendour of the sun, so do the minor passions in man, his fears and anxieties, his doubts and uncertainties pale before one master-passion, one over-riding purpose. Arunachalam's master-passion was the expulsion of the foreigner from the realm and the resurrection of national sovereignty entombed during four centuries of Western domination. Before it, all his concern for the good governance of the country after the

foreigner had quitted, all his zeal for even-handed justice to all the constituent partners in his commonwealth paled into insignificance. Once strike Cæsar dead, and Rome will be a land fit for angels. The deed was done, but Rome, far from being the abode of angels, became a cockpit of warring peoples. He looked around and to his great horror and anguish, saw before him a yawning gulf ever widening, its headlands ever receding. The two major communities of the Island, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, who had under his leadership worked shoulder to shoulder for the achievement of national freedom, had, when freedom was in sight, come to the parting of the ways. It now dawned on him that he had reckoned without the host, that he had been taken for a cosy ride. He had all his life bargained for a free and united Lanka, but alas saw a free and divided one. He had toiled indefatigably all his life for the creation of a national state in which all the elements of its population would get an even deal, enjoy equal rights and liberties, share equitably the fruits of their common motherland and live in mutual amity, goodwill and fellowship. He had set out to fashion a deity, but alas, there stood before him a hideous monster, a veritable demon. He felt as did Silas Marner, the mammon-worshipping weaver of Raveloe, when one fine morning he woke up to find that all the gold he had hoarded and fondled over a lifetime of endless toil had vanished. Arunachalam's hour of victory was his hour of defeat; his hour of glory was his hour of repulse, his hour of triumph was his hour of humiliation. Such alas are the curious paradoxes of history, such the strange ironies of human destiny.

Arunachalam believed in the unity and brotherhood of man, in the fellowship of peoples and nations, in the integration of all racial, religious and linguistic groups into one organic whole. He believed with a faith that may well be called

apostolic, that the Sinhalese, the Tamils and every other people who have made this Island their common home could co-exist as equal partners in a common polity, unhampered by any trace or taint of racism, that in Ceylon's green and pleasant land, every people would get a square deal, pull its legitimate weight, live a free, full, untrammelled life, believed that the two principal races were but the two eyes of Mother Lanka that together see the same object. He was an incorrigible cosmopolitan, while remaining a hard-grained nationalist. He was at home in any human society and demonstrated to us in his own life and person that loyalty to world-society is not incompatible with loyalty to one's own race and tradition. The ultimate end and aim of all his labours was plain and unmistakable, the unification of the diverse peoples and races of the Island into one compact and coherent whole, binding them all together in one common loyalty, one common patriotism, while each remained true and loyal to its own heritage and tradition. A high and rarefied soul that he eminently was, living habitually in the regions above, the regions of high thought and noble endeavour and looking down on the plains below, he could hardly discern the parochial passions and prejudices, the jealousies and hatreds that have from the beginnings of time, disfigured and deformed God's world, His noble handiwork, into an arena of selfish and warring factions. Therein lay his fatal flaw, the supreme tragedy of his great life. Despite all that was high, noble and unselfish in purpose, endeavour and achievement, he lost his hold on reality and could not escape the chagrin, the disappointment and disillusionment that have through the ages been the portion of men whose idealism has out-run their hold on reality.

The reason is not far to seek. Through all his long and illustrious career, his thoughts and actions ran along national lines, while those of

some majority leaders ran consistently and resolutely along racial and communal lines. Arunachalam was one of the staunchest champions of territorial representation, while Ramanathan who had himself dedicated the best part of his life to the self-same ideology, had perforce to end up as a convinced and uncompromising advocate of communal representation.

With Arunachalam at the helm, the ship of freedom had steered clear of the many shoals and rocks that beset its path and was now in safe waters. The land was already in sight and to reach the port, all that was necessary was a little time and patience. A substantial measure of reform was granted coupled with a promise of more to follow at no distant future. The Official majority in the legislature which from the beginnings of British rule had held oppressive sway for well nigh a century had now been superseded by the Unofficial majority; henceforth, the Unofficials were to preponderate and predominate in the councils of State; the century-old practice of the Governor nominating the members of the legislature was virtually replaced by the principle of popular election; communal representation which, from the inception of British rule, had been the sole safeguard of minority rights but now denounced as the parent and precursor of all national ills, was dethroned and in its place, was enthroned territorial representation, widely canvassed by majority leaders as the sure prelude to the emergence of a united and well-integrated Ceylonese nation free of all taint of racialism or communalism; the Governor who had, hitherto, presided over the deliberations of the legislature had now to give place to an elected member. The Governor's government was virtually ended for all time. The new Constitution had in it the germ, the pith and marrow of responsible government. The people had secured for all time the whip-hand of power; the Congress had become

the chief spokesman of the nation and the most formidable political force in the country. And now the moment was not inopportune for the old pilot to be safely dispensed with; and dispensed with, he was, with little ceremony and less compunction.

The Congress disowned him. It voted him down from the office of President and voted up James Peiris. He took it in good part and on the occasion paid his successor one of the most glittering tributes ever paid by man to man. He said, "There has been no public movement, which has not benefited by his ripe culture, trained and sober judgement, his high character and public spirit. His opinions are formed with deliberation; they are based on reason and principle and guided by zeal for the public welfare and loyal attachment to the Throne. Everybody feels that he has nothing up his sleeve; he is proof against official blandishments and knows not how to trim his sails to every wind. No wonder that he enjoys the unstinted confidence of the people of Ceylon without difference of race or creed and even of the Government. It is however not very creditable to the Government that a man such as he, who would be an honour to any legislative assembly in the world and an acquisition to any Cabinet, has not been utilized all these years in the service of the Crown or even in the Legislative Council."

The Constitution of 1921 of which Arunachalam was the principal architect marked, as has been observed, a striking departure from the traditional pattern of Colonial rule and constituted a spectacular advance on the road to Independence. It set up a legislature comprising 37 members, of whom 16 were to be elected on a territorial franchise. One of these electoral seats was allocated to the city of Colombo. The elections were duly announced and all discerning eyes were pitched upon Arunachalam as the candidate most worthy of the

metropolis. Moreover, there was hardly any other Seat where he could have a comparable chance in view of the residential qualification, stipulated by the Constitution. But some influential majority leaders, notably the Senanayake brothers, thought otherwise. F. R. Senanayake branded him "an egoist who had an exaggerated notion of his importance and an extremist in politics." They put forward James Peiris, who readily announced his candidature, despite the fact that he could have passed muster in many other constituencies, especially the Low-Country Products Association of which he was then President. Arunachalam gracefully withdrew. Nor was he in the smallest degree perturbed over it, inasmuch as he had for many long and memorable years sat in both the Legislative and Executive Councils and served his country with uncommon distinction.

But the bee that stung him most was this. In the days of his hectic struggle for reforms, Sinhalese leaders, notably Sir James Peiris, President of the Ceylon National Association and E. J. Samarawickreme, President of the Ceylon Reform League, had given him certain solemn and specific pledges, one of which was that they would support the demand for a Tamil Seat for the city of Colombo; and he had taken it for granted. But in the hour of victory, Sinhalese leaders with the exception of C. E. Corea and his brother Victor S. Corea, repudiated the pledge and would have none of it. James Peiris repudiated the pledge on the good ground that he gave the pledge as President of the Ceylon National Association and now that he was President of the Ceylon National Congress, he was no longer bound by it, while H. J. C. Pereira took his stand on the debatable ground that the new leadership was not bound to honour the commitments of aforetime leaders. He protested: "It may be that for political reasons, individual members with perfectly honest intensions, with the idea

of maintaining unity, have entered into certain compromises and bargains with individuals of the North; the Congress knows nothing of all this." Whatever the ground, the pledge was repudiated. Nay, they went further; finding their objections lodged with the Governor unavailing, they went on a crusade to Whitehall to protest against its grant. They went yet further. They directed the Sinhalese electorates to nominate only Sinhalese candidates for election. They would not halt at that; they objected to the provision of any safeguards for the Tamils on the good ground that the Tamils, like the Sinhalese and unlike any other people of the Island, were in themselves a majority community, and as such had reason neither to be classed with the minorities nor to stand in need of any safeguards. In saying so, Sinhalese leaders gave utterance to a solemn and stupendous truth, long since forgotten, that the Tamils, far from being a minority, have from remote ages been and continue to be a full-blooded majority in their ancient homelands, where their own kings and potentates had held unquestioned sway. It was when the evil genius of a foreign conqueror subdued the whole Island with its separate and sovereign peoples, pulled down age-old national frontiers and for no other reason than his own "supervisory convenience" made the Island a single political and administrative unit, that the Tamils became a minority in the conglomerate mass of the Island's population.

Nor could the Tamils look for asylum or succour from the ruling power, inasmuch as they had through the decades been the pioneers and forerunners of the freedom struggle, the focus and spearhead of the national resistance, the fire-brands that set the country ablaze with an unwonted passion for national sovereignty. Their foul exposures of the wrongs and injustices, the failures and shortcomings of British rule, their fulminations

against foreign rule in general, had rudely shaken the fabric of British prestige and supremacy. No wonder, the Tamils had at this hour none to befriend them. No wonder, the British could with no compunction whatsoever, see these minority freedom-fighters consigned to the limbo of political extinction.

C. E. Corea in his Presidential Address to the Congress made a mild reference to this breach between the majority and the minority leaders. He said, "It is true that, later, an estrangement occurred over a most trifling cause and a misunderstanding in which, I must say at the risk of your displeasure, we were not wholly without blame. At any rate, I have it on sure information that on one or two occasions, prominent members of Congress slighted him (Arunachalam) and failed to accord to him the respect and deference they owed him. On account of the undutifulness of these few, the Congress as a whole stands under the reproach of base ingratitude." E. T. de Silva ruefully remarked, "I regret the insinuations made against Sir P. Arunachalam. Twelve months ago, when the Mahajana Saba was started, the people acclaimed him their President and set him up on a pedestal. What has he done or how has he deserved the wrath of the people within these twelve months?"

C. E. Corea made a forceful plea on behalf of the Tamils. He said, "The Tamils only asked for equal treatment in that common family of equal brotherhood. They said that, though their territory was small and their numbers few, they should not be rated below their brothers. They were absolutely and indisputably right. They also said that, if there were to be given safeguards to minorities, the Tamil minority in Colombo, which was (in the words of the Despatch) a community considerable in numbers, which played an important part in the political, economic and social life in Colombo, should be safeguarded.

If Europeans in many towns needed to be safeguarded, they said, so did the Tamils in Colombo. Again, they were absolutely and indisputably right. There was a lot of talk about principles. No principle was involved. To give extra members to the North no more violated any principle than did allotting to the Parliament of the United Kingdom more Irish Members than the proportion of their population to the English justified, and the Colombo Tamil Seat was beyond all doubt a minority safeguard."

The cumulative effect of it all on the sensitive mind of a great patriot and humanist may well be imagined. He now emerged from his dreamland wherein he had dwelt for many a year. Disillusionment, despair, embitterment, the sense of labours lost, the purpose of a lifetime defeated, bowed him low. All his dearly cherished hopes of building up a free and united Lanka were dashed to the ground. It now dawned on him that all the fierce protestations of national unity and solidarity, of equality and fraternity and liberty for all were mere claptrap, a ruse to beguile the unwary minorities into accepting a majority dictatorship. He who, as an ardent protagonist of territorial representation, had crossed swords with his brother Ramanathan, he who would not pay heed to the elder's oft-repeated admonitions, realized in horror and anguish the absolute correctness of the latter's position. Had not the brother warned him time and again: "Aruni, Aruni, you are playing with fire. You little know what you are about; you are cutting the earth from underneath your own feet."

In an interview with the *Times of Ceylon* on 14th December, 1921, Arunachalam said, "My feeling is one of profound distress. Not with regard to the Legislative Council's resolutions or the reforms debate, which are of transitory interest, but with regard to the position of the Ceylon National

Congress and Ceylon's goal of responsible government. Everyone must see that this goal cannot be reached unless there is mutual trust, harmony and co-operation between the various sections of our Island population. Only those who have been in the inner councils of the reform movement can know how supremely difficult it was to bring the various communities together on a common political platform aiming at responsible government in the future, what ceaseless toil and tact were needed to educate the people in their rights and duties, to remove ancient prejudices and jealousies, harmonize dissensions and to create the indispensable basis of mutual trust and co-operation.

"This almost impossible task was, however, fulfilled and out of the discipline, intelligence, energy, public spirit and the enthusiasm of a practically united people, there arose the stately structure of the Ceylon National Congress, which achieved a position of power and prestige that could not be ignored by its foes and made its influence felt both by the local government and the Secretary of State. The Government was compelled to negotiate with the Congress and to promise a speedy amendment of the illiberal scheme of the Order-in-Council of last year. Everything was progressing satisfactorily and pointed to a successful issue at an early date. The final attainment of success depended entirely on the continuance of mutual trust and co-operation.

"This was rudely shattered by the conduct of a clique who got hold of the Congress machine... The clique imposed its will on a weak President of the Congress, Mr. James Peiris, and his colleague, Mr. E. J. Samarawickreme, and compelled them to repudiate solemn pledges given by them in writing in regard to a seat in the City of Colombo. A blow was thus dealt to the trust of the Tamils in the Congress and its leaders and spread to every other minority who realised that

they would be dealt with in the same way, if like the Tamils they joined the Congress. ...Mr. Peiris and his friends have by their blunders wrecked the Congress, destroyed its power and prestige, reduced it from a National Congress, to one representing mainly a section of the Sinhalese, destroyed the feelings of mutual confidence and co-operation between the various communities and put back the attainment of the goal of Swaraj indefinitely."

It was the tragedy of Arunachalam's political career that he was caught between two fires; on the one hand was an alien raj which hung like a millstone round the nation's neck and which he abhorred with an abhorrence rare in the annals of leadership; and on the other, were two peoples, speaking two great languages and heirs to two great cultures, who had for long centuries existed as two separate, sovereign entities, each with an ancient history and a clearly defined geography, whom a historic accident, that of foreign conquest and subjugation, had saddled together under a common yoke and who on the eve of the foreigner's departure were desperately endeavouring to evolve a common principle of co-existence.

While he heroically subdued the one (fire), he could not escape being scorched by the other. While he made a successful bid for national freedom, he left the whole question of communal co-existence more complicated, more involved than ever. The day the Ceylon Reform League and then its successor, the Ceylon National Congress, pitched upon unitary mathematical democracy based on the British pattern, on that day were laid the foundations of a divided Sri Lanka. The acceptance of co-existence under an untrammelled unitary mathematical democracy was the first great betrayal of the Tamils by men who posed as their leaders and saviours at this critical period of their history, men who had neither the wisdom nor the statesmanship to understand that unitary mathematical

democracy for a multiple society such as Ceylon is a contradiction in terms, that it runs counter to all the accepted canons of constitutional law and practice, that the majority, if it chooses, would make mince-meat of the minority.

The realisation left a deep scar on one of the most sensitive minds of all time. He now set out to retrace his footsteps, to discover a way out of this impasse, out of the maze into which he had inadvertently led the Tamils. He felt that if the Tamils were to survive as a people with their great and distinctive heritage intact, pull their legitimate weight in national life, their leaders should spare no pains to retrieve lost ground, dam the flood that would otherwise engulf the whole race. Pious resolutions! Grandiose schemes! But who was to implement them? He was already a spent force, an extinct volcano. However, he made a feeble attempt. He founded the Ceylon Tamil League, changed his key and played a new note, the communal note, having all his life played the national anthem with exuberant enthusiasm. No wonder, Tamil audiences heckled him mercilessly at many meetings he addressed them thereafter. But was not all this too late? Was he not locking the stable door after the horse had fled? Was he not becoming wise after the event? What had been done was final and irremediable. Territorial representation had come to stay and was accepted by the ruling power as the main principle of parliamentary representation. Communal representation, which had from the beginnings of foreign rule been the sole safeguard of minority rights, was now given a severe beating. Moreover, will the cry for communal representation as the sole refuge of the minorities ring true, when it emanates from a man who had nearly all his life been a protagonist of territorial representation? Before anything tangible or palpable could be achieved, death claimed him. He died a sadder but wiser man.

But he left us one great legacy; he furnished us with a blue-print for salvaging the Tamils out of the Slough of Despond into which they had fallen. Had succeeding generations of Tamil leaders shed their littlenesses and instead of scrambling for little pittances, for little crumbs that fell from the master's table, looked the question full in the face, as became true leaders, taken a bold and realistic view of it, had they asked themselves the question if the Tamils would, as indeed they must under the existing dispensation, submit themselves as a subservient minority to the dictates of a democratically elected neighbours of another race or religion, submit to the oppression and humiliation that, they knew, would inevitably be their lot for all time, had they trod the path the great leader had chalked out for them, they would have little cause to weep or wail. The speedy creation of a Tamil Eelam was Arunachalam's sole answer.

In his prefatory address to the Tamil League, he said, "The League was brought into existence by a political necessity. But politics is not the *raison d'être* of its existence. Its aim is much higher. The Committee and those responsible for the League consider that our aims should be to keep alive and propagate the Tamil ideals which have through the ages past made the Tamils what they are. We should keep alive and propagate those ideals throughout Ceylon and promote the union and solidarity of what we have been proud to call Tamil Eelam. We desire to preserve our individuality as a people, to make ourselves worthy of our inheritance. We are not enamoured of the cosmopolitanism which would make of us 'neither fish, flesh, fowl nor red-herring'. That does not mean that we are to be selfish and work only for the Tamil community. *We have done more for the welfare of all-Ceylon than for the Tamils... We do object, however, strongly to being under-*

dogs. We mean to make ourselves strong to defend ourselves and strong also to work for the common good."

One very vital need for the Tamils which he stressed but did not live to see fulfilled was a free and virile press. It was one of the sorest sorrows of his life. He said, "Various wants we have. A press that may not degenerate into a 'hireling' is a great want for the country. Shall we aim at a press for the Tamils, if only to combat calumny and vile misrepresentation? For days, weeks and months and well-nigh two years we have suffered at the hands of an unscrupulous press. How long are we to submit to this without a word in protest, reply or defence?"

It is the language of an embittered but disillusioned soul which, having groped for many a long year in a dark and unreal world, has suddenly emerged into a region of light and reality; it is the jubilant cry of a puissant spirit, which, having lost its moorings and drifted for long years in the slimy waters of untruth, has at long last found safe harbourage in the haven of truth. But then the occasion gave rise to much obloquy, much gratuitous slander which he was powerless to parry for want of a free press. The many who had once adored him but a little this side of idolatry now turned scoffers and maligners, inasmuch as he who had all his life thought and spoken of all things in terms of Ceylon and the Ceylonese now spoke of Tamil Eelam and the Tamils; he who had in all his long and illustrious career striven incessantly and inexorably to unify and consolidate Ceylon and the Ceylonese, now spoke of unifying and consolidating Tamil Eelam and the Tamils. It now dawned on him that the only road to salvation for the Tamils lay in a return to the pre-Western order of things in which the Tamils had for ages enjoyed separate nationhood and a separate sovereignty.

Ramanathan in his vehement plea against territorial representation as promulgated by the Donoughmore Commissioners, bemoaned the utter failure of his brother Arunachalam in his ardent advocacy of territorial representation. He said: "Then, Sir Arunachalam conceived the idea of forming a National Congress for Ceylon. The work was started in 1917, I believe, but what happened in the end about three years afterwards? Sir Arunachalam was obliged to sever connection with the Ceylon National Congress. He resigned the Presidency, many other members also seceded, because of a handful of men who had seized the machinery of the Ceylon National Congress, and were working it for racial and personal aggrandizement. Sir Arunachalam publicly avowed that he retired from the Congress because it was not working for the benefit of all the communities of Ceylon and because the leaders of the Ceylon National Congress were fighting for their own ends and were deliberately misleading the public and the Government alike. Had they played fair, had they continued to be just, had they been appreciative of all the interests of the different communities, so that they could live together in amity and flourish in this glorious land, we would have still advocated territorial representation. But no chance was given to us; good English education tested by public examinations and high property qualifications have been abolished, freedom of opinion has been gagged, racial and class distinctions are stalking the land cloaked under the high-sounding names of political freedom and territorial representation."

Ramanathan had the same thing in mind when in welcoming Governor Sir William Manning, he said, "If the government of the people by the chosen representatives of the people for promoting the welfare of the people is to be fully achieved, we are convinced that all the constituent parts of the community should, for this purpose, forget

all consideration of race, rank and sect and willingly work together at all times without fear or favour or ill-will; we are certain that this co-operation will readily secure for us a rich harvest of moral and material blessing."

It was the tragedy as it was also the paradox of Arunachalam's life that with all his immense learning, his wide knowledge of men and matters and his varied experience, there ran in him a vein of idealism, deep, strong and clear, a streak of the visionary. He was at bottom an idealist and dreamer out of touch with reality, unacquainted with the hidden springs of human thought and action. Of man in the mass, a creature of impulse, of likes and dislikes, incorrigibly selfish, insatiably ambitious, with the rough-and-tumble of political life, Arunachalam, unlike his great brother Ramanathan, had little or no knowledge. What strikes one who reads his speeches is the vein of Platonic idealism that runs through them all. In his address to the Ceylon Reform League, he said, "I have an unquenchable faith in the youth of Ceylon. Youth is the time of noble impulses and generous aspirations and our youths have behind them centuries of inherited culture and traditions. I believe they will soon find their souls and leaving mere money-making and wallowing in ease to the baser sort, will revert to the ideals of their forefathers and establish an Aristocracy of Intellect, Character and self-sacrificing Service. Until this is achieved, political reforms and power are of little use. Suppose Ceylon won even such a place in the world as Japan has. What would it profit us with the canker of materialism gnawing at our vitals? I look to our youth to spiritualize our public life, and I believe they will do it. They will each seek his own well-being in the well-being of all, will identify his own life with the life of all and his own interest with the interest of all. They will lay at the feet of our dear

Motherland the love offerings of passionate service. They will work in unity that, in the words of Dante, all the intellectual and spiritual forces diffused among men may obtain the highest possible development in the sphere of thought and action. With our youth inspired by such a spirit and such ideals, I look to see our country rise with renewed splendour, paling the glory of Parakrama Bahu, the Great, and be a beacon light to all lands."

This is idealism in its purest form, undiluted, quintessential, transcending the idealism of its greatest practitioners through the ages, the idealism of one who had lived all his life in that rarefied realm. No wonder in one who passed his boyhood in the sheltered isolation of an upper class household; his youth, in the cultured refinements of an ancient seat of learning and his manhood, in the sanctum of a pampered bureaucracy. This ivory-tower existence, this divorce from reality, unfitted him for the role of carving out a just and equitable way of life for two ancient peoples, with little to bind them together, two peoples speaking two different languages, professing two different religions, heirs to two different cultures, having two different histories and occupying two different and clearly-marked territories, who had lived under two separate governments until the strong hand of a foreign conqueror saddled them together against their will under a unified dispensation for no other reason than that it suited his own administrative convenience. Subject peoples are helpless pawns on a foreigners chessboard. It cannot, however, be gainsaid that posterity will treasure as a jewelled page in the history of our freedom struggle Arunachalam's incomparable service to the cause of emancipating his Motherland from the thralldom of foreign rule.

To proceed, the scope of Arunachalam's activity was not limited to questions political or sociological. The cause of Hinduism claimed a good deal of

his time and energy. Religion was with him, as with his brother Ramanathan, the central fact of his history, the chief motive force of his mind and heart, the true secret of his all-round greatness and achievement. His faith in the governance of the universe and of man's destiny by an Almighty, All-pervading Being was simple, childlike, absolute. Amidst the many vicissitudes of a very crowded and agitated life, he yet found solace and sustenance in secret and loving communion with that Transcendent Reality. Arulparananda Swamigal was his religious "Guru", as of his brother Ramanathan, and his writings abound in rapturous and ecstatic references to the great Master. Arunachalam's mastery of the Hindu 'Shastras', as of the scriptures of other faiths, was profound. His translations and his illuminating commentaries containing a wealth of comparative material have enriched the study and practice of Hinduism. In an age in which the strong influx of Western thought and the materialist way of life had all but engulfed much that was distinctively and traditionally ours, it is surprising that the sons of Ponnambalam not merely resisted them but rose superior to them all. They exemplified in their life and person all the finest characteristics of the race from which they were sprung and demonstrated to the world that Tamil culture and the Tamil way of life at their best surpassed much else known to man before or after. Following worthily the noble example of his father who dedicated a good part of his life and all his worldly wealth to the cause of combating irreligion and saving Hinduism and the Hindu way of life from being trodden under-foot by foreign influences, he reformed the Colombo Saiva Paripalana Sabai, became its President and gave it a new lease of beneficent life.

Shadows, of course, there were in that great picture—errors, miscalculations, disappointments,

disillusionments; such things are unavoidable in a life filled for over half-a-century with great national issues, some among the greatest in the annals of this country and in an age of great political and social unrest and upheaval. The picture, nevertheless, portrays a noble figure full of noble achievement, genius, self-command, an untiring sense of public duty and an ever-deepening love of human freedom.

His end was as glorious as was his beginning. He died of pneumonia on 9th January, 1924, in the ancient temple city of Madura, in South India, where he had gone on his customary pilgrimage. It was in the fitness of things that he who had all his life been a passionate devotee of the One, in Whose light he had toiled all his life to bring succour and solace to stricken humanity, should lay down his life at His feet in that hallowed shrine. His remains were brought to Colombo and cremated according to orthodox Hindu rites in the presence of a vast gathering. Friends and political opponents alike vied with one another in paying tributes to a departed leader, whom the *Ceylon Daily News* described in an editorial the day after his death as "the most powerful personality in Ceylon of the last decade" and *The Times* of London described as "a founder of modern Ceylon."

A short time after Arunachalam's death a grateful people honoured his memory by erecting his statue in the grounds of Parliament House. It was unveiled by the Governor Sir Herbert Stanley on 3rd April, 1930. It was the first statue to adorn these premises and stood in solitary splendour till the statue of his brother Ramanathan was erected in 1953. A postage stamp to commemorate Arunachalam was issued by the Government on 10th March, 1977, eighteen months after the issue of a stamp to commemorate Ramanathan.

The inscription on the statue reads as follows:—

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam

Scholar, Statesman, Administrator, Patriot
Erected by a Grateful People in
Testimony of a life nobly spent
in the service of his country and in
recognition of his pre-eminent and
signal services as the champion of
a reformed legislature and of
his matchless devotion and
steadfastness in the cause
of the Ceylon University.

1853 — 1924.

But statue or no statue, his memory will live enshrined in the hearts of a people whom he served with a sincere and selfless devotion rare in political or social history.

It is impossible to compress within the compass of half-a-hundred pages, even in bare outline, the life history of a brilliant and versatile personality, the beau ideal of public servant, a freedom-fighter par excellence, a renowned scholar, a jurist and historian, a philosopher and man of religion, an indefatigable social reformer, an indomitable champion of the under-dog in an age in which under-doggery evoked little response from the rich and affluent, and far more than all these, a gentleman of great personal charm and refinement, of integrity and disinterested patriotism.

We may fittingly close the sketch of Arunachalam's life and work with the words of one who was a shrewd judge of men and matters, and knew him at close range. Sir Josiah Wedgwood, M. P., wrote in his Foreword to "Speeches and Writings of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam" (1936): "Sir Ponnambalam had India in his blood, Ceylon as his field and workshop; but in his mind I like to think that he was the perfect, cultured, liberal-minded English gentleman of the 19th century. There is a good deal to be said for Cambridge which could produce an Arunachalam and a J. C. Smuts. The type is rare enough today, and we may justly

salute it and hope for its resurgence. For them life was a duty, career so little respected that they secured respect, money so unimportant that no one doubted their probity.

"There was some conceit, but it was a good conceit; they were bad 'mixers', but why should they mix? They were linked all over the world by a common love of fair-play and justice, a common hatred of slavery and cruelty, a common contempt for the vulgarity of the demagogue and the 'science' of the planner. A little inhuman, but the salt of the world.. He was one of the three who had most to do with making the Ceylon Constitution. I helped too, so I ought to know. But the triumph and the sacrifice were Arunachalam's. He was a Tamil and everyone knows how the Tamils feel.. The way is not yet smooth in Ceylon, but that it can be travelled at all is due to Arunachalam... Especially to my colleagues in liberty, the Low-Country Sinhalese, the team with which Arunachalam rode abreast, to them I would say, 'Take care to preserve the liberties you won. For this sacrifice and unselfishness is still needed, and the understanding that liberty and justice are for all.'"

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

A few Hymns of Manikka Vachaka and Tayumanavar by P. A. (P. Arunachalam) and G. U. Pope, Madras, 1897.

Studies and Translations from the Tamil by P. A., Madras, 1898.

Report on Ceylon Vital Statistics 1898, Colombo, 1898.

The Census of Ceylon, 1901, 4 vols., Colombo, 1902.

"Luminous Sleep", Westminster Review, November 1902, London, 1902 (reprinted Colombo, 1903)

Papers relating to the Education of the Rodiyas of Ceylon (Sessional Paper III of 1905), Colombo, 1906.

"Sketches of Ceylon History", Ceylon National Review, vol. 1 no. 1, Colombo, 1906 (later published in book form 1st edn., Colombo, 1906 and 2nd revised edn., Colombo, 1906.)

"A Plea for a Ceylon University", Journal of the Ceylon University Association, vol. 1 no. 2, Colombo, 1906.

"Population: The Island's Races, Religions, Literature, Caste and Customs" (in Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon, edit. by A. Wright, London, 1907).

"Ancient Bronzes in the Colombo Museum, with descriptions of some Polonnaruwa Bronzes by the Hon. Mr. P. Arunachalam, Registrar-General, and remarks on inscriptions by D. M. de Z. Wickremasinghe, Govt. Epigraphist", Spolia Zeylanica, vol. vi part xxii, Colombo, 1909.

A Digest of the Civil Law of Ceylon, vol. 1, London, 1910.

"Jnana Vasistham or the Dialogues of Vasistha on Wisdom", Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. xxii no. 63, 1910.

"Kandyan Provinces", Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. xxii No. 63, 1910.

Presidential Address of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam to the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Journal of the Society vol. xxiii no. 67, 1914 (reprinted Colombo, 1914). [The most important part of the address dealt with the political relations of Ceylon with China during the Middle Ages.]

"Polonnaruwa Bronzes and Saiva Worship and symbolism: an account of the Nataraja and other Saiva Bronzes found at Polonnaruwa and now in the Colombo Museum, with an explanation of their symbolism and their relation to the Saiva Siddhanta system of philosophy", Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. xxiv no. 68, 1915—1916.

Our Political Needs: Address of Sir P. Arunachalam before the Ceylon National Association, April, 1917 (Colombo, 1917).

Constitutional Reforms: Presidential Address of Sir P. Arunachalam at the Ceylon National Conference, December 1918 (Colombo, 1919).

Case for Constitutional Reform in Ceylon by Sir P. Arunachalam, published by the joint committee of the Ceylon Reform League and the Ceylon National Association, September 1919 (Colombo, 1919).

Sinhalese Conference for Organising People's Associations: Address (in Sinhalese and English) of Sir P. Arunachalam, 20 September 1919 (Colombo, 1919).

The Present Political Situation, Address of Sir P. Arunachalam, 24 September 1919 (Colombo, 1919.)

Presidential Address of Sir Arunachalam at the Ceylon National Congress, 11 December 1919 (Colombo, 1919).

Swaraj: Message from the King—The Present Political Situation, Address of Sir P. Arunachalam, 15 March 1921 (Colombo, 1921.)

"The Worship of Muruka or Skanda (the Kataragama God)", Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. xxix no. 77, 1924.

Light from the East: being letters on Gnanam, the Divine Knowledge by the Hon. P. Arunachalam, edit. by Edward Carpenter, London, 1927.

"Eastern Ideals in Education and their Bearing on Modern Problems", an Address delivered by Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam at the Calcutta University Institute on 24 January 1916, Educational Society of Ceylon, Bulletin no. 4, 1936, (Colombo, 1935)

Speeches and Writings of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, vol. 1, Colombo, 1936.

Studies and Translations (Philosophical and Religious) by Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Colombo, 1937.

Old Diary Leaves, Second Series, 1878—1883, by H. S. Olcott, Adyar, 3rd edn., 1954.

From Adam's Peak to Elephanta by Edward Carpenter, London, 1892, 2nd edn. 1903; 3rd edn. 1910.

A Visit to a Gnani (being four chapters from the above book in a separate volume), Chicago, 1900; London, 1911.

My Pilgrimage to the Wise Men of the East by Moncure Daniel Conway, New York, 1906.

My Days and Dreams by Edward Carpenter, 1st edn., 1916; 2nd end., 1916, 3rd end., 1921.

Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Scholar and Statesman: a Brief Account of his Life and Career (by J. T. Rutnam), Colombo, 1953.

Portraits of Ten Patriots of Sri Lanka by W. Thalagodapitiya, Colombo, 1966.

"The Formation and Character of the Ceylon National Congress 1917 — 1919" by K. M. de Silva, Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies, vol 10, nos. 1 & 2, 1967, (Colombo, 1970).

"The Ceylon National Congress in Disarray 1920—1: Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam leaves the Congress" by K. M. de Silva, Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies, New Series, Vol. ii July—December 1972, (Colombo, 1973).

"The Ceylon National Congress in Disarray II: The Triumph of Sir William Manning 1921—1924", Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies, New Series vol. iii no 1, 1973 (Colombo, 1974).

The Life of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan by M. Vythilingam, vol. 1, Colombo, 1971; Vol. 2, 1977.

V. Kumari Jayawardene, The Rise of the Labor Movement in Ceylon, Durham, N. Carolina, 1972.

The University of Ceylon History of Ceylon, vol. 3,, edit. by K. M. de Silva, Colombo, 1973.

The Life and Writings of Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy by S. Durai Raja Singham, Kuala Lumpur, 1973.

Ananda Coomaraswamy: Remembering and Remembering Again and Again by S. Durai Raja Singham, Kuala Lumpur, 1974.

