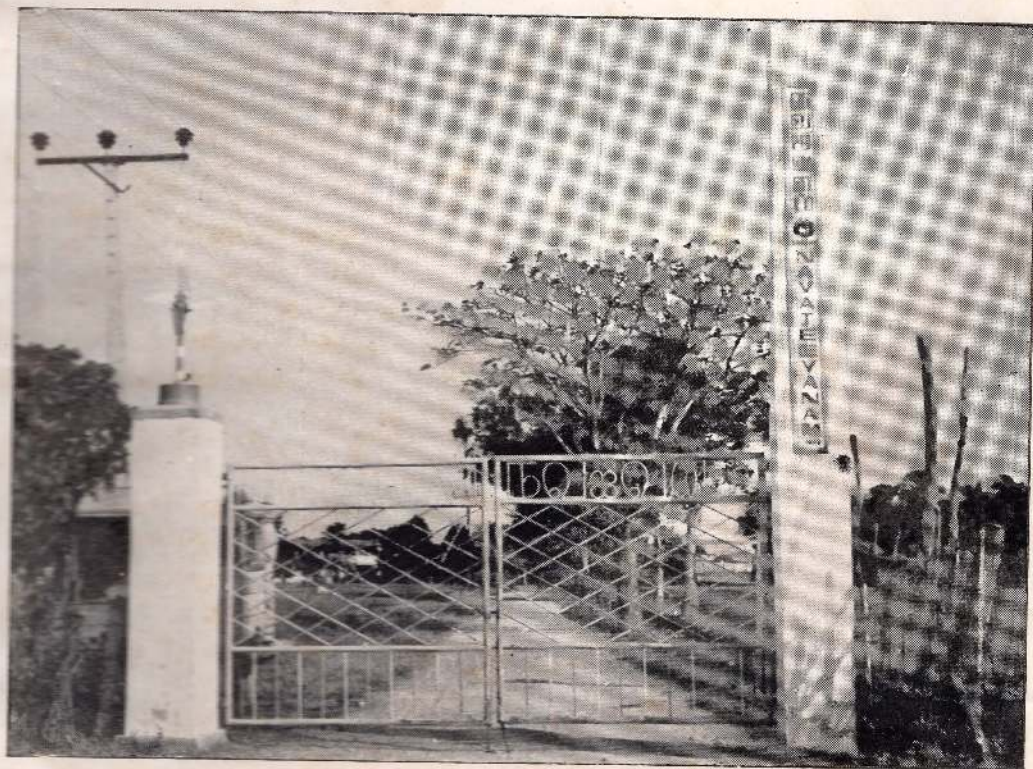


A
HISTORICAL ESSAY
ON
"NAVAJEEVANAM"
(1959-1984)



BY
A FRIEND

1984



GATES TO NEW LIFE

PREFACE

The primary requisite for the writing of history is material; so that Byron makes Robert Southey, the English Poet and Biographer, against whom he had a deep animus, when he went to the other world demand material of Satan, the story of whose life he was anxious to write. History written without material is fiction; but now-a-days even writers of fiction do extensive research and have interviews and make tape records, when they embark on a serious novel. Material for writing of history must be clear, accurate and relevant.

In writing this, I was told I could rely on Thambyrajah's Annual Reports and a bulk of newspaper cuttings. On looking into the Annual Reports, I found that they were a continuous magnificat, thanking God for his blessing the work during that year and all the previous years so that every Report was a general review of the whole period preceding. Except for the first two years, the historical element contained in these was slender. When it existed, it was vague and took much knowledge for granted on the part of the readers. They were really translations of the addresses he gave at his Anniversary meetings year by year. He was not addressing posterity but the immediate audience in front of him.

The news paper cuttings were consistently extracts from appreciations. While one understands the motive with which a pioneer venture preserves these appreciations, one has to acknowledge that from a historical point of view they are not of great value.

There was only one little pamphlet which had any historical value, that was on his trip to the West. The brochure on Sister Baker, while extremely attractive had little of historic importance.

In the circumstances, I set the Rev. Chandran Arnold to analyse the Annual Reports and set down what he could get out of these year by year and I myself made two preliminary visits to Navajeevanam to tap the memory of members of the family. On the strength of all this, I wrote up a tentative account, fairly coherent and continuous. On my third visit to Navajeevanam, I discovered that there was an impeccable source of reference, which had not attracted too much attention from me earlier. These were the personal and private diaries of Sister Baker. On a comparison with these my tentative account, on many points, seemed far wide of correct chronology and therefore seemed to require complete re-writing.

Here I was up against the other major difficulty in my writing: I had to "beat a dead-line", i. e. do my writing within a certain very limited period. I was expected to finish my writing, so that it could be printed and released at the beginning of May on the 25th Anniversary of the Institution.

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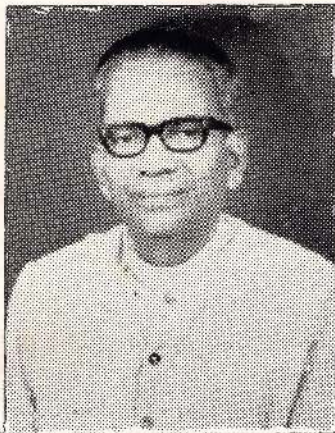
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THE FOUNDERS



Sister Elizabeth Baker M.B.E.



Rev. A. C. Thambyrajah



Mrs. Arul Thambyrajah

PERSONALITIES

A. C. THAMBYRAJAH

Alfred Thambyajah, the son of Sinnathamby Chelliah and his wife Margaret was born on 12th November 1911 at, Atchuvely. As usually happens in our villages, except for little pockets here and there, all families in the area would be connected with one another by blood or marriage. The father was Headmaster in one of our Vernacular Schools in the area.

Thambyrajah must have had his primary education in the Station School, i.e. the School attached to the church and his elementary education in what is now known as the "Atchuvely Christian College."

For his secondary education he went to Jaffna Central College, the driving force behind which for decades was Mr. J.K. Chamugam. By the time that Thambyrajah went there he was almost reaching the end of his teaching career and during the last two years (1926-1928) he had to share his Vice-Principalship with Mr. O.L. Gibbon.

The Principal was the Rev. P.T. Cash who was an Honours Graduate in Philosophy of the London University. During one of his furloughs he got his M.A. degree also from the same University in the same subject. But he was a person with a wide range of interests; and in Jaffna in those days was chiefly known as an authority on Botany. He was also a Science graduate of the London University. Between Thambyrajah and Mr. Cash there sprang up a close and

intimate relationship which lasted long after Mr. Cash had retired and gone back home.

From Central College Thambyrajah went to Colombo to give the finishing touches to his education and joined St. Peter's College, where he seems to have matriculated. After this, he put in a spell of two years teaching at the School attached to the Wellawatte Industrial Home.

From here, he went for Theological studies to India. At that time there were two principal Christian Theological Institutions in India—Bangalore and Serampore. The difference between them was that one going to Bangalore had to be sponsored by a Mission or Church organisation, whereas to Serampore one went on a College scholarship. In the second place, only Serampore had a Charter, so that, wherever you went it was a Serampore Certificate you got.

The Principal of Serampore at that time was the Rev. G.H.C. Angus who taught the New Testament. The Registrar was the Rev. C.E. Abraham who, taught Ethics and Church History. Rev. W.W. Winfield handled Theology and the Rev. R.A. Barclay the Old Testament; and the Rev. Leslie Wengel Philosophy of Religion. For some reason, Thambyrajah was content to work for a Diploma in Theology and not for the B.D. degree.

Thambyrajah left Serampore in 1937 and joined the service of the Jaffna Council of the South India United Church (S.I.U.C.) and was posted to Usan; and when there married Louisa Arulammah, daughter of the Rev. & Mrs. S.R.

Hitchcock. He left Usan to assist the Rev. R.C.P. Welch at Vaddukoddai, because the latter had been appointed Executive Officer of the Church Council, in addition to his pastoral duties. On Mr. Welch's death early in 1942, he was posted to Araly. It was when he was at Araly, that he received his Ordination in 1943, in one of the most picturesque ceremonies that we have witnessed. In May 1943, he was appointed to the Vaddukoddai Church and served there for four years with great acceptance. From 1947 to 1950 he served at Karainagar; and while there tried to do what he was later to do at Navajeevanam: but neither the attitude of the people around nor the nature of the soil allowed scope for his adventures. He was under the Council and not his own master; and the Council frowned upon unsuccessful undertakings.

From Karainagar, he went in 1950 to Chavakachcheri where he gave the finishing touches to the Church building which had been going on for some time. With his gift for showmanship, he made a great function of it and published a brochure to celebrate the event. From Chavakachcheri he went to Uduvil in 1955 and served there till the end of April 1959.

Few people had reason to believe that by the time he began his work at Uduvil he had entered into a pact with certain others, which involved his leaving the regular ministry of the Church and set up independently a new kind of activity. During the latter years of his Ministry at Uduvil, it had become an open secret that he and his friends had bought some land at Paranthan and that he was trying to cultivate it. Those who heard how he

had been completely defrauded of his first harvest by an unscrupulous agent were able to have a laugh.

What made Thambyrajah to deviate from the beaten track and to take up a new venture? Had he given sufficient thought to what was involved? Where did he expect to find the money to keep such a venture going? His venture could not certainly be justified by ordinary business standards. But he believed in a world behind and beyond the business world. He could leave the regular Ministry of the Church and get out on a track of his own, because he believed that sometimes God had his plans, which are not always embodied in the patterns of the Ministry laid down by the Church. Thambyrajah wanted a deal with God himself without any intermediate agency. He certainly believed that the Church was performing an important function, but he also believed that at times God expected certain of his devotees to go beyond the patterns of the Church.

It was only in February 1959 that he applied for release by the Diocese, which had in 1947 taken the place of the S.I.U.C. We find the Executive Committee of the Diocese laying down certain stipulations for his release. They were as follows:

- (1) That he be considered as continuing in canonical obedience to the Bishop of the Diocese.
- (2) That the Diocese give him a monthly allowance of Rs. 100/- for 4 years.
- (3) That he contribute to the Workers' Pension Fund.
- (4) That this arrangement be continued to hold good for 4 years.

- (5) That the Executive had no objection to other means of support being found by Mr. Thambyrajah or the Bishop for the purpose that Thambyrajah had in hand.

At the Farewell accorded to him about the latter part of 1959, Mr. L. S. Kulathungam, then an invariable speaker at most public functions (besides being a member of the Uduvil Church) preached on the text "Cast thy bread upon the waters"—surely a most appropriate text. Thambyrajah in his reply said his purpose was to befriend the forsaken and find work for the workless.

When it came to his actual leaving, I am told, that his children uttered vociferous objection to the new venture by squeals and screams and had to be forcibly bundled into the waiting van.

ELIZABETH BAKER

Elizabeth, the daughter of Samuel Baker, and his wife Sarah Anne, the youngest of a family of three girls and one boy, was born on 22nd February 1902 at Thornton Dale, in Yorkshire. The family was of substantial Middle Class status; and the father was a prosperous merchant; as shown by the fact that the son was able to study both at Oxford and at Cambridge; and that, when he died, after providing for his second wife, he was able to leave each of his children a considerable cash bequest.

Elizabeth was educated at Pickering Grammar School and later at the Harrow Gate Boarding School. The family possessed extensive farming property to

which she and her sisters retired after their schooling; and it was, when she was there, she decided to join Missionary Service.

The family was Methodist; and so it was to the Methodist Mission Board that she applied. There was one hitch however; she was ignorant of any foreign language. This was got over by the discovery that she has not cared to study any and therefore, there was nothing to prevent her from picking up the language of the country to which she was sent.

She was sent out to Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) in 1931 and was posted to a station called Kalmunai, in the Eastern Province, inhabited by the Tamils. Kalmunai was 24 miles south of Batticaloa, the capital of the Province. She was there for two years. In 1935 she was transferred to Puttur in the Northern Province, lying half way between Jaffna and the coastal town of Pt. Pedro. It is a considerable station which took in two churches, a number of vernacular schools and a medical centre. She was there till her furlough.

When she came back she was sent back to the Eastern Province, but this time she was stationed at Batticaloa itself, where she worked continuously for twenty years. At the end of this continued service, she was sent again to Puttur, where she worked for four years before her furlough was due; but before the furlough she was to serve at Kalmunai for another year.

Sister Baker had served in the Mission now for some time and her retirement would soon have to come. She,

therefore, had to make up her mind as to whether she would go back home and lead the life of a retired Missionary or stay on in Ceylon and work here in some useful manner. She felt herself physically quite fit; neither her work nor the climate, which usually "takes a toll" on many Missionary women, had affected her. After retirement she could not continue the type of work she had hitherto been doing here. Why not strike out on her own? The world was large enough; why not get out and express her ideals to the community at large?

Fortunately for her, there were other people also thinking along the same lines. This group happened to meet and consisted of the Rev. & Mrs. A. C. Thambyrajah, the Rev. & Mrs. J. J. Ratnarajah and Mr. & Mrs. K. P. Muthiah. After prayer it was settled that such a venture should be launched.

In 1955, the Government with a view to bringing a better class of people in the new Colonisation areas it was opening up south of the Elephant Pass, gave 10 acres free to every middle class family that would take advantage of the offer. Under this offer the group obtained a plot of land at Kandawalai, some miles from Paranthan. On 10th September 1956 it bought for cash 141/2 acres of land at Murasumoddai off the Paranthan-Mullaitivu road for Rs.27,500. It might be asked where it got so much money. It may, however, be remembered that Sister Baker came of a family of substance. The money that went for the purchase of this land came out of what Sister Baker got from the father's bequest.

How Sister Baker has contributed to the work that grew up as a result of that purchase belongs to the history of that venture and will be seen as we go along.

LOUISA ARULAMMAH THAMBY-RAJAH

Hensley Hanson, the famous Bishop of Durham, about fifty or sixty years ago, once said that half his clergy had been made by their wives and the other half ruined by them. Perhaps, the Bishop was not making a considered analysis, but merely making a passing remark partly humorous and only partly serious. However, it is certainly true, the world over, that not merely among Ministers' wives but other wives also, that some women do "make" their husbands while others ruin them. But the defect about the Bishop's verdict is that it leaves out of account the far more overwhelmingly numerous class of wives who, neither make nor ruin their husbands but co-operate with them.

Those who "make" their husbands are those who actively inspire, correct, guide and drive their husbands forward and make them what they otherwise would not have been. Those who ruin or unmake their husbands are those who discourage and obstruct their husbands by constant nagging. The far more numerous class is the one that co-operates with their husbands, encourage them, sustains and supports them. The women of this class do not "make" their husbands to be what they otherwise would not have been; they help them in what they want to do, support and stand by them and supplement them.

Those who particularly want the last class of wives mentioned above are the clergy. What clergymen should do is prescribed for them. What they can be and do will be possible, only if the wives will sustain and support them. Much is expected of a clergyman; much is not humanly given them. Their life is one of straitened means, requiring much self-denial, discipline and labour. The writer knows of a distinguished American clergyman who was coming out here on a Deputation, while his wife stayed behind in Europe, unwilling to face a few months stay in the East in a tropical climate and, among a people whom she probably considered half-savage. She said "I married a man, not a Minister". She should have known that the man was also a Minister and kept out of the business altogether right at the outset. She did not ruin or unmake her husband; but she certainly did not sustain or support him.

It is always a difficult task to choose a wife but it does not matter how careful you are in the choice, because it is difficult to know beforehand what an unmarried girl will be, once she is married. Nevertheless, it is incumbent on a clergyman to take whatever steps he can in the matter, that are possible

In Jaffna, however, neither a clergyman or any other intending husband is allowed to make the choice. It is made for them by their parents, guardians or relations. In the case of Thambyrajah, whoever made the choice made the best that could have been made.

Louisa Arulammah came of very "churchy" family. Her father was a Minister; one of her brother is a Minister a sister has married a Minister; a cousin was studying for the Ministry; one of her neices subsequently married a clergyman, who is now the Diocesan Bishop; and her various relatives are members of the Church Committees. Though Thambyrajah did not take all this into account when he married, he was presented with a ready made advantage.

The wife was accustomed to a life of poverty and the trials and hardships that beset a Minister. She knew they had to be borne without any complaint. With an increasing number of children to look after, she went from station to station, as a matter of course. Having known the husband and the wife right through their life, I can testify that she never felt that there was anything wanting in what they were going through. The co-operation of a wife with the husband could not have been higher.

THE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF A PLACE

Under the British, the Island of Ceylon had been divided into 9 Provinces and each Province placed under a Government Agent for purposes of administration. Each Province was divided into Districts, under Assistant Government Agents; these Districts were again subdivided into Divisions, each under a Maniagar.

After independence, with the desire to cut down the powers of the Government Agents, who had been more or less Provincial Governors and centralise power in Colombo, each District was put under a Government Agent and each Division under an Assistant Government Agent. Till the beginning of February this year, the Kilinochchi-Paranthan area belonged to the District of Jaffna, though it is not in the mainland of Jaffna Peninsula. Now it has been made into a new District and along with its neighbouring Divisions put under a Government Agent of its own.

Till the thirties of this century, the whole of the Northern Province, South of Elephant Pass up to the northern boundary of the North Central Province was called "Vanni". This territory ever since the coming of the Tamils into Ceylon, centuries ago had been continuously under the rule of petty chieftains or princelings called the "Vanniars". These owed nominal obedience to the King of Jaffna and paid him an annual tribute; but they were virtually left alone and probably inter-married into the King's family.

When the Portuguese came they were not willing to put up with this kind of nominal arrangement and wanted

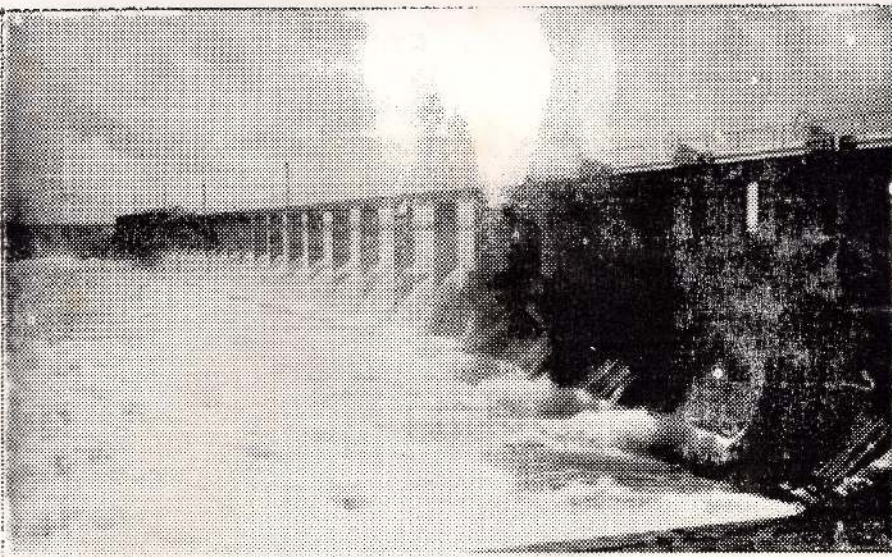
to exercise real control over the Vanniars. But they found the task difficult and also their rule did not last long.

The Dutch repeatedly tried to put these in to order; but the task of penetrating into their strongholds proved difficult. For a hundred years they put up with the impertinence of the Vanniars but by the middle of the 18th century managed to inflict a heavy defeat on them. Thereupon, the majority of people in the region, finding their future bleak, migrated into the Peninsula. But, of course, a sparse population remained, who could not agriculturally master the land, which began to be overgrown with jungle.

In this condition it remained till the end of the twenties of this century. Paranthan was just a watering station for the Railway trains, then run on steam, and Kilinochchi merely a name.

From the point of view of Christian Missionary work, the National Christian Council, set up in 1912, which was in charge of allotting spheres to the various Christian Missionary Societies gave the area to the Church Missionary Society which was Anglican. This arrangement was called the "Comity of Missions". The Society had a Minister at Vavuniya and stationed a Catechist of two also there. From 1918, it tried to put in a real effort but gave it up in 1932; so the National Christian Council declared it "open" or anyone to develop.

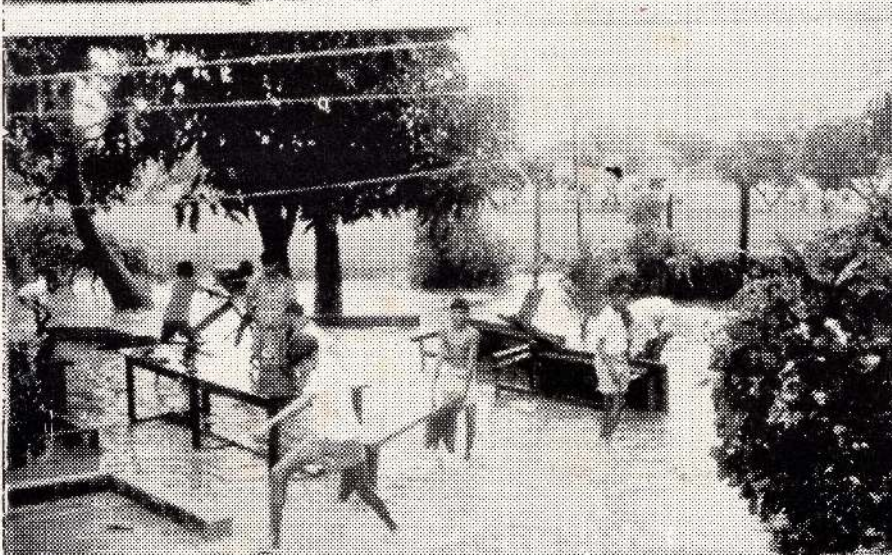
Agriculturally, the whole area presented an open invitation to a people with a rising national consciousness.



**The Iranamadu Water
gushing out**



Floods December 1969



**Floods 1983 The boys
washing the tables in
the running flood waters**

There were, however, two great difficulties; the presence of massive trees and the absence of water. Then somebody thought of building a large-scale tank into which water could be emptied from a substantial water canal, called Kanagarayan Aru, which rises nowhere but merely holds rain water. The tank was called "Iranamadu" and was opened in 1922.

In the late twenties and thirties "Paranthan cultivation" became a favourite outlet for the endeavour of retired Government servants and the aspiration of young men who did not want to do "quill-driving" for Government.

But those who really took to it seriously either died or became "bankrupt" or both. What were the reasons?

- (1) Though there was a large water tank the conduit system obviously did not cover the whole area.
- (2) Most, if not all, of those who set their hearts on Paranthan cultivation wanted to live in Jaffna and merely pay occasional visits to Paranthan. The farms did not flourish and they themselves caught fever.
- (3) The widespread prevalence of Malaria, not yet brought under control.

- (4) In the absence of modern facilities large tracts of untractable land could not be tamed by primitive methods used 2000 years ago for small plots of land. No doubt the "frontier men" of America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even the nineteenth were able to subdue forests without such facilities; but they used horses which our people did not, and did not have to struggle with malaria as our people had to.

However, the pressure of population began to draw colonists from various parts of the Tamil country into the area. They knew that efforts were being really made to tame the land. The Iranamadu Tank had begun to operate and could irrigate all the surrounding area. The tank covers 106,050 acre feet and has a spill level of 32 feet (i.e. it could hold water over its whole area for 32 feet above the ground level). It became the key to the new situation. Sites and spots were denominated according to the nearest conduit of the tank. Artificial manure and tractors were making a good deal of difference and malaria had been controlled.

"Paranthan cultivation" now ceased to be a joke or a reckless adventure.

THE BEGINNING

So on the 29th April 1959, the Rev. & Mrs. Thambyrajah, with their eight sons (one of them very sick) and Sister Elizabeth Baker (with a little boy hanging to her saree and his mother) arrived about 4 p.m. at the village of Murasumooddai, three miles from the Paranthan junction, in a place adjoining the Third Conduit from the great Tank. Miss Muriel Hutchins a dedicated C.M.S. Missionary, who had started a Home in Kilinochchi, five miles away in 1957, was there to welcome them.

The spot they had bought was half a mile from the main road and to it they proceeded. Though there was no regular path by which they could go; but they still "made it". They decided to call the place "Navajeevanam" (New Life). Here, they had built a little house and kitchen which had been burnt down the previous year and rebuilt. The house was too small to accommodate the whole company, and a tent was erected to hold the overflow.

When we look at any venture, there are three questions which we ask, and they are; What? Why? and How?: What did the group want to do? Why did it want to do it? and how did it propose to do it?

What did the group want to do? Primarily, it wanted to set up a home for the homeless. Had there been a large-scale fire or flood? Why then should there be anybody homeless? Of course, it must be realised that when new lands are opened up on a wide

scale, it was inevitable that colonists should troop in from various places and particularly owing to the communal trouble in the South in 1958, there had been a pretty big movement of the population to the North. But could they not be depended on to find their own homes? Why should a small group undertake to find them homes?

But it must be realised that when colonisation of a new land takes place by people drawn from different parts of the country, ethical standards already low, would totally disappear. Husbands change their wives and wives change their husbands at whim and fancy. The children of these temporary unions are left in the lurch and become homeless. To provide a home for these became the primary task of the group. There were other tasks which the group wanted to undertake: caring for young men ill-adjusted to their homes and for the mentally and physically handicapped. They had a home in one sense and not in another.

Why should Navajeevanam undertake all these? Because nobody else would. To deal with wives who change their husbands at frequent intervals and dump their children here, to deal with the turbulent who would not live in their own homes and to deal with the physically and mentally handicapped (of varying degrees) requires infinite patience tact and kindness. Watching the scene I had often wondered whether Thambyrajah's patience and kindness would never dry up. In spite of a sure instinct

for seeing through the humbug of unwed mothers, for mothers wedded too often and putting up with the turbulent, his qualities of kindness and tact never dried up.

And how did the group expect it to carry out its task? What were its resources? On Sister Baker's pension and the paltry allowance given to Thambyrajah by the Diocese they might have existed, but the group had not come here merely to exist. In one of the Annual Reports Thambyrajah quotes a verse from "Thirukural", a well-known Tamil work, in which Mother Earth, supposed to be speaking to a depressed man says, "Why should you be depressed when I am here?" This was the doctrine of the old School of Economists called "Physiocrats", who held land to be the ultimate source of wealth. But harvests may fail; and the land of course must be your own, if you are going to profit from it. In any case, it is necessary that income from the land should be supplemented by such sidelines as poultry and dairy, which in western countries are considered part of farming.

It is obvious that the conviction of the group was that the enterprise should earn its keep. i.e. the people who come here must work. School-going children in their spare time should work. The turbulent young men should work and get tamed in the process, the mentally unbalanced should work (if they could) and incidentally get cured by the process, called work-therapy. It was not ex-

pected to exploit them. They were given standard wages, which were entered in their Pass Books. We shall see later why the Pass Book system was given up. All these, however, will be amateur work. A certain amount of professional work was, therefore, also expected to be hired.

Work was a source from which Navajeevanam expected to drive its income; But all such income is subject to the chances and changes of life. As has been said, harvests may fail; and there are such things as droughts, floods and cyclones. Even if all goes well the income may not be enough to meet the demands of the population in hand nor meet the expenses of cultivation.

But if we stop here, we shall be leaving out of account absolutely the most important source that the group depended on; and that source never fails. The God who called them to this service never fails to keep His promise. "My treasurers are in heaven" said St. Bernard of Clairvaux. These "the moth doth not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal".

On the 2nd of May, Archdeacon J. A. R. Navaratnam conducted a Retreat for the group and after this an Advisory Council was formed. On the 3rd the Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah conducted a Communion Service for the group. With this the Navajeevanam Project may be said to have been well and truly launched.

THE STORY

PART 1

We have said that the story of Navajeevanam deserves to be written. But we must be aware why for more than one reason it cannot be written; because most of it escapes portrayal which is the business of history. It is on that understanding that the writer can proceed.

In the first place the real history of Navajeevanam is the history of the faith, the courage, the patience and the resolution which defy misfortune, reversals failures and ingratitude. These cannot be captured and set down in writing, for they dwell in the hearts of those who conduct the institution. These alone make the history of Navajeevanam possible, but they escape history.

In the second place, the results of the service which the institution is meant to render are so gradual and defy computation. Gradualness and history do not go together easily. It is impossible at any time to say how the minds of school boys are growing and how exactly the mentally unbalanced are improving. Also no one can give an account of the rate of growth of our yield of paddy or of the size of our livestock possession year by year.

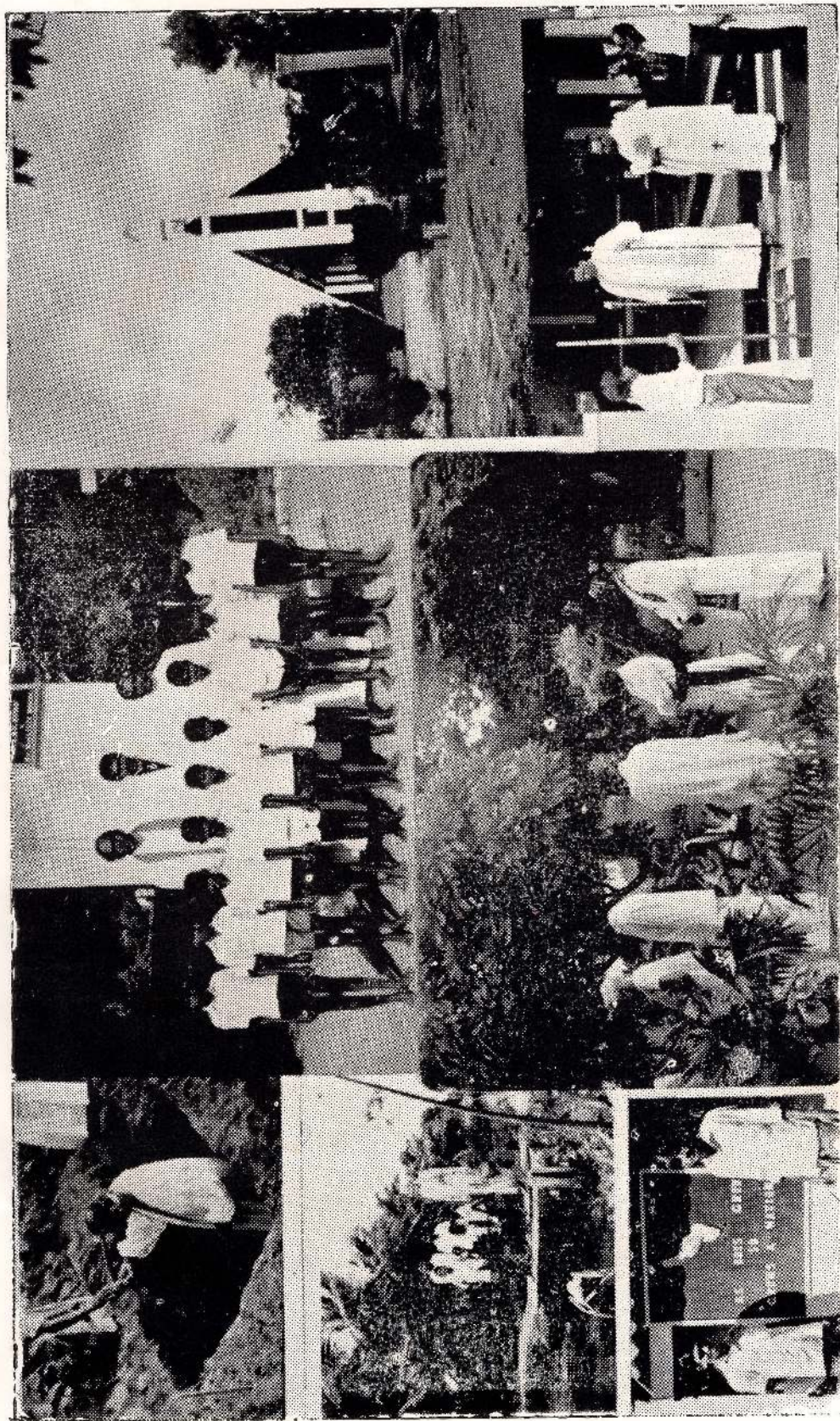
We can only keep track of external events which could be observed and recorded, but with these we must be content. But no one can deny that these events do have a bearing on the inner faith of those who conduct the institution and on the gradual growth

taking place in the minds and hearts of the beneficiaries. The surface may influence the depth; but we shall be dealing only with the surface.

Once it got started the Navajeevanam Fellowship did not believe in letting the grass grow under its feet. They arrived in the evening of 29th April; on the 5th of May we find them sowing paddy (after saying grace) and on the 13th and 14th a beginning was made with planting a garden. It was only five days later that any mention is made of water. It was only by the 25th May a steady flow of irrigation water became available.

By the 11th and 12th May a meoosary piece of work was begun to be done, that of visiting neighbours and establishing friendly relations with them. Soon after this, the need of supplementing the staple crop was felt and gardening was proceeded with in real earnest. Naturally the need for a place wherein the results of our agricultural and horticultural labours could be consumed was seen. By the 20th of May work was started on a dining hall where eating and drinking could be carried on.

While Navajeevanam could attend to its labours all right, the approach to it was extremely difficult. An open ribbon of land waited to become a traversable path; but just then was covered with shrubs and full of "ups and downs". During our first week here the Wellawatte Youth Fellowship



From bottom left clockwise:

Mahen and Gagen, Sister with inmates in 1960,

Bishop Lakshman laying the foundation stone for the Community Hall,

Baptised boys with Rev. Isaac Selvaratnam, Rev. A. R. Mahendran and Rev. S. Jeyanesan, The Holy Carpenter Church,

Dedication of the Church by The Rt. Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar,

Before a Service, The Rt. Rev. Swithin Fernando, Ven. Horshington and others.

led by the Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah put some hard work on it; but Rome could not be built in a day, and a half-mile road could not be built in a week. A continual labour for five or six years was necessary before anything like a decent road could be evolved.

It was certainly legitimate to sow and plant; but what was happening to the spiritual side of the place? Why was not the erection of a place of worship the first task which engaged the attention of the group? The answer is that cultivation had to be done in certain definite places, whereas worship could be done anywhere. Actually, however, the Fellowship was giving attention to the erection of a distinctive place of worship. By the 10th of May we find a service being held on the site chosen for the Chapel. But it had to wait till the 17th of June for work to be begun on it.

The Chapel was to be 18' x 12': far too small it might be said: but the congregation was also small. The building was to be of wood and the roof of asbestos: the roof was put up on the 9th of July and the Chapel was able to be dedicated on the 27th of the month. This served as our Chapel for fifteen years. As our congregation became bigger and bigger, it became more and more obvious that a new church would be necessary. But for some time we were not ready for it. The Chapel of that day is now the office. St. Augustine in the fifth century is said to have held the opinion that what was once a church is always a church; but he lived at a time when humanity had not begun to be on the march. Now in New York

it is common for old churches to disappear, because the area has ceased to be residential.

We were beginning now to be an attraction; for we find the Bishop of Colombo. The Rt. Rev. Rollo Craham-Campbell, coming here accompanied by the Archdeacon, Ven. J. A. R. Navaratnam on June 22nd, and the Secretary to the National Christian Council, Rev. C. H. Ratnaïke, coming here on the 27th June.

It has already been said in our chapter on "the History and Geography of a Place" how the National Christian Council finding that no Christian Mission was doing any serious work in the Vanni area had declared it open. The Christian Missions were waiting for somebody to take the initiative and the Jaffna Diocese thought there was no reason why it should not move in, at least medically. So it decided that a Doctor from Manipay or Inuvil should hold a Clinic here every week. The first such clinic was held on the 13th of July and 18 patients turned up for treatment.

For those coming from Jaffna the sowing and reaping time at Paranthan seems somewhat curious. The reason is simple. In Jaffna there is only one main season for the main crop. During the rest of the year the farmer sows either small cereal or cultivates vegetables. Here we have two seasons for a crop called in Sinhalese the "Maha" and the "Yala". The Fellowship had sown in May and reaped its yala crop in August and sowed for its main crop in November.

We were beginning to get more and more recognised. There was a Ministers' Retreat here for two or three days from the 22nd of July, the Vadukoddai Ladies Guild came on October 10th and the Inuvil nurses some time later. In November a party of boys from Jaffna Central College thought that they should not tax us too much and put up a tent at Kantawala some miles away and stayed there. During the same month a party of Sinhalese Methodists arrived here for lunch. Of course, we are making no mention of many individuals and families who came.

Neither was the Government itself slow in giving us recognition. Every one familiar with the procedure of Magistrates' Courts is aware how the Magistrate unwilling to jail first offenders and other such redeemable culprits put them in charge of responsible bodies for their improvement. We were recognised for this purpose almost immediately and continued to be so for some time. The practice had to be dropped when Government started demanding that the boys sent here should be taught their own religion. We did not consider that our conception of Social Service included such action. Thambyrajah was sorry that the practice was dropped, because everyone who came here under the scheme had made good.

In the meantime, we were arranging for a hen to hatch a few chicken; it is not that we were laying the foundation for a poultry farm, but providing an amusement for a sick child. We considered that the sight of a few little chicken would amuse Packie, who had

not much longer to live. On the 28th of November Packie's birthday was celebrated with much assumed heartiness. When Christmas came Navajeevanam felt that the celebrations should not be for its enjoyment but should be made an occasion for witnessing to the faith. For two days a party of our children went singing carols through the villages; on the 20th there was a Christmas Tree for the colonists; on the 24th a festive lunch for all and sundry. On Christmas day itself there were religious services and another festive lunch. In the evening there were more programmes for children and a nativity play staged by fifteen small children. Since our first Christmas it has been assumed all round that there will be an afternoon tea party to which any and everyone could come and there will be presents for them all.

At the end of the year like all societies we also had to close our accounts.

Income for the previous 8 months was
Rs. 8,786/-

Expenditure - do - Ws. 10,025/-

It may be seen that there was a deficit balance but such things do not daunt Thambyrajah.

The year 1960 was begun in the most appropriate manner possible. Navajeevanam already had a chapel. A chapel without a bell is usually considered highly inadequate. However Dr. & Mrs. A. B. C. Doray came to our rescue. The bell which they donated was dedicated and its joyous peals rung out by Mrs. Doray to the joy and satisfaction of all on the 1st of January,

In the meantime, a cold was overshadowing the life of the Fellowship. Packiarajah (Packie) who had been working through the valley of the shadow of death was reaching the end of the trail. on the 12th January he became seriously ill and was taken to hospital where he passed away on the 14th. A Minister who was present said, "It was an inspiration to see him die". He was 17 years of age and had not yet been drawn into the wiles and enticements of the world and died in perfect innocence. He died saying, "Thou art my Lord, I am Thy child and my trust is in Thee". Thambyrajah almost reached the level of the sublime when he records the event with the words, "Packie enters his Father's mansions". He was buried at Chavakachcheri; and a big white cross in front of our new church and near the present belfry commemorates his memory.

On March 2nd Dr. Telfer Mook, India Secretary of the United Church Board for World Missions (the old American Board of Commissioners for Foreign missions) which is associated with the Jaffna Diocese) paid us his first visit after we had settled down and records "Surely God has blessed this place". He has been a faithful friend of ours and a reliable benefactor through the years.

On March 29th a party from Christ Church, Dehiwela, visited us. It consisted of 15 members. On April 24th the Jaffna Teachers Camp held its sessions here for about two or three days.

It was now getting to be a year since Navajeevanam was founded. Some

forget their Foundation days, others just remember it and do nothing particular about it. In the case of Thambyrajah, it was different. Apart from his natural flair for showmanship, every year the Foundation day came around, it was a case of profound thankfulness to him when he realised that the institution has been spared for one more year. So he would celebrate it with might and main inviting the whole public of Jaffna. This practice went on till quite recently when it had become too expensive for him to celebrate it and too expensive and difficult for the public to attend it. In 1960, however, it was celebrated all right and the Rev. Fredde Silva, Chairman Methodist Church, was the preacher at the Thanksgiving service in the morning.

We have already given the accounts for the calendar year ending December 1959. The accounts for the financial year ending April 1960 leaves us rather puzzled.

The income is	Rs. 34,250/-
Expenditure	Rs. 35,223/-

Either there has been a leap on either side by about Rs. 20,000/- or a different system of accounting had been adopted. Comments are impossible since we are not sure.

In July, the Women's Fellowship of St. Peter's Church, Jaffna, had a session here. Besides that we had some memorable visits. The Rev. & Mrs. Christie Arangadan of Bangalore and Miss Grace Lee Vanniasingham, the former Principal of Udupiddy Girls School, were among our visitors. The Rev. Christie Arangadan was General Translation Secretary of the Bible

Society of India. About this time the Salvation Army sent us some useful presents consisting of a sewing machine, some dispensary equipment and drugs.

We have already seen evidence of the name of Navajeevanam beginning to spread in India. Evidence was further strengthened by the fact that Bishop A. G. Jebaraj of Tinnevely came here in October to spend a few days with us. Tinnevely is one of the largest Dioceses in India and most Christians from South India who may be found working in Ceylon are from this Diocese. The opportunity was too good for us to miss, so Thambyrajah got him to dedicate the Altar Table which was a gift of Mr. & Mrs. G. M. Kandiah and the Lectern which was a gift of Miss Grace Lee Vanniasingham.

In December 1960 we had a visit from Rev. W. J. T. Small of the Peradeniya Training College. He had for long been Principal of Richmond College Galle, where he had arrived from England in the early years of this century. He had passed out as a Wrangler from Cambridge in 1904, with Arthur Eddington, who later rose to great fame and was knighted. Mr. Small was one of the greatest missionaries who ever came to Ceylon and died in his nineties only about two years ago.

On January 14th 1961 the first anniversary of Packie's death was observed. This meant a short service in church. The anniversary of a death does not involve other formalities among us, though the Hindus have an almsgiving ceremony also on such an occasion.

On the 22nd of February Mr. M. M. Biswas, Principal of Serampore College, where Thambyrajah had received his Theological education visited us. His heart must have been warmed at the sight of one of the old students of his College making good so far away from where he came; but what he records in the Visitors' Book is a sense of tranquillity that prevailed here (as against the tremendous roar and din that prevailed in the mighty city of Calcutta).

Early in March Navajeevanam started its reaping. This was a reaping of the harvest produced in the big season. We may consider two seasons a little too many for a rice crop but I have been told of five seasons in certain parts of India but of course the paddy used must be different and the last crop mere productive of fodder for the cattle.

In April 1961 there was a high powered "Bible School" held under the leadership of the Rev. P. B. Rajasingham (Present Secretary of the Bible Society), the Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar (Present Bishop of the Jaffna Diocese) and the Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah (Present Prebyster of the Colombo Church). It must have been attended mostly by Ministers.

Many people came to Navajeevanam either individually or in company. To record all their names it would look a if we were running a health resort or a hotel. But some of these persons are either too important or their entires so interesting that they cannot be ignored. The person belonging to the latter class was Mr. Richard A. Benett of Cambridge who came here on the 31st of July. He says he found it hard to leave.

It is not merely that people came here, some of us also went out occasionally. On August 25th we find Sister Baker visiting Women's Fellowship of Dickoya in the hill country and doing propaganda for us. We hope the Fellowship was duly impressed.

Though Thambyrajah can make a Jubilee out of any year his calling 1962 "the Jubilee year" has good reason behind it: because during this year Sister Elizabeth Baker attained her sixtieth year and the Thambyrajahs the 25th year of their marriage. To attain the sixtieth year of one's life is not an achievement. In the modern age it is not very different from attaining one's 45th year. A Silver Jubilee of a wedding however, is a different matter. It actually is an achievement. To have lived in close and intimate harmony with another person for 25 years is certainly worthy of credit.

Sister Baker's Birthday was celebrated in the usual manner with a thanksgiving service, a special lunch and a Party in the afternoon. Characteristically Thambyrajah took not the slightest notice of his own wedding anniversary. But the year was a Jubilee year and had to be observed as such. And Thambyrajah's method was to put up an ambitious building to commemorate the fact.

But a building is more easily conceived than erected. It was estimated that it would cost Rs. 60,000/- and, of course, consist of two storeys. Thambyrajah did not have the money and in any case recreation of a building required time. It was expected to lay the found-

ation in connection with Sister Baker's birthday but this could not be done as she was leaving for England to be with her dying sister. So the laying of the foundation was postponed to August. The completed building is that which now stands east of the present church.

In April this year we had the honour of a visit from the Rt. Rev. I.R.H. Gnana-dasan, the brilliant young Bishop of Nagarcoil and his family. This was, of course, not his only visit.

The Navajeevanam anniversary of 1962 was celebrated on the 28th of April and like every other anniversary was a great occasion for Thambyrajah. It was for him a miracle that the institution had lasted so long. The Holy Communion Service was celebrated by the Bishop of the Diocese (Rt. Rev. S. Kulondran). At this service Mr. A. V. Jesuthasan received adult baptism. At 10 a.m. a Praise Service was led by Mrs. K. P. Muthiah. Of course, there was a public lunch and an afternoon public meeting.

We have seen how the Jaffna Diocese had begun to reach out its hand into this area. In 1961 it had sent out a Trained English Nurse, Miss Dorothy Appleby here; but she took her residence first some miles away; however, in 1962, she moved into Murasumooddai a mile away from here. A Dispensary and a Bungalow were soon put up for her. Since then the work has been further strengthened.

We are in the midst of paddy fields i.e. on low-lying lands; so the talk of floods and cyclones is common here. Sometimes the floods and cyclones themselves are real. One such cyclone took

place on the 22nd of December 1962 and practically razed the "Boys Town", commenced a little earlier which, however, had not begun to operate as yet. Men great and small came to see the devastation and repairs were soon effected.

In 1963 our own medical work was going on with vigour. Our own medical work was in the hands of Sister Baker and was carried out in her own way. In the first place, Sister Baker seems to have engaged herself rather vigourously in antipolio work and health clinics in the neighbourhood. But, of course, medically her first love was the C.N.A.P.T. her involvement in which was unreserved and her efforts unflagging. Once attending a Committee meeting, she found she was the only member present at the Jaffna Kachcheri along with the Government Agent, Mr. Neville Jeyaweera, on whom the experience of an English woman dedicated to work in Ceylon, after retirement, made a great impression. We shall hear more of this matter later.

Though we were gaining recognition as has been remarked already, means of access to us were difficult, so we spent our time off and on in amateur civil engineering by laying a road to Navajeevanam ourselves. In this matter, we received no assistance whatever either from the Government or from the local public; alone we did it. We used to dump loads of earth and level it down with a tractor. Not even an old-time bull roller was available for the purpose. Though it was some time before we reached the present stage, we had made considerable progress.

We have said that Navajeevanam wanted to earn its keep. The way in which it was doing it is scarcely history; but it was making history possible. We had 60 acres under paddy cultivation; and on 3 acres we were growing vegetables. We already had a good nucleus for the development of poultry, both in the way of "layers" and "broilers", 15 head of cattle, 4 of them actually yielding milk. We had developed our carpentry to a high degree and aimed at producing good furniture for the middle classes; for the upper classes would scarcely buy their furniture from us and those below the middle classes could not buy furniture from anyone. The previous year we had sold our goods for Rs. 3,000/-.

We had been an object for sight seeing because of the wonder that we continue to exist. People had not expected us to do so. We were now working hard to earn the right to be a spectacle not because we had continued to exist but because we are worthy to exist. It is because we wanted to be worthy to exist that we existed at all.

Development when it takes place will be in all directions. We have spoken of our paddy cultivation. By 1964 we acquired 10 acres of land at Dharmapuram taking advantage of the offer of Government of free land and cleared 10 more acres adjoining it which had belonged to Mr. S. J. Ratnasingham. In regard to buildings also we were making considerable progress. To Augustus Caesar Rome graduating from bricks to marble was a cause of great rejoicing. To us that we could graduate

from huts to brick and mortar was a great thrill. By this year the Jubilee block had come up to the level of "damp proof course" i.e. about 2 ft. above the ground level.

Sister Baker was not confining herself to medical activities but let her energies flow into educational sphere also. She went about the neighbourhood organising classes in English. She selected certain houses and would go from one to another holding them. So the children of these labourers were getting a privilege which the children of much more well to do parents in Jaffna do not get.

There were a number of important visitors in 1964. Rev. Cyril Abeyanaiké, the future Bishop of Colombo, and his wife came to us in April. Mr. Neville Jeyaweera, Government Agent of Jaffna, wanted to see for himself the base of operations of Sister Baker and visited us in June. But of all the entries in 1964 in the Visitors' Book two may be considered to stand out. One by George Taylor who visited us in April and called the place a "Revelation". The other is that of an important official of the East Asia Christian Conference, Mr. Allan Brash. He says, "All the world over Christians feel the urge for work and sacrifice in the service of man. But they are often so incompetent. We lack the will, the love and the patience to carry on. Here I find them all".

In May we and the entire Christian community of Jaffna suffered a severe blow in the death of Mr. K. P. Muthiah. It may be remembered that he was one of the original group that met and formed the plans that resulted in Navajeevanam and had always belonged to

the Fellowship that directed the affairs of the institution. The beautiful well (which merely hold rain water in front of the present church now perpetuates his memory. He was also one of the greatest Tamil Christian lyricists. I believe he produced a book of Tamil poems. There are no less than fifteen of his compositions included in the Hymn Book of the Jaffna Diocese. Most of these are of the kind, where one person sings a line and the others repeat it immediately after.

On 29th November we had a stone-laying ceremony at Boys Town in which Roman Catholic children also participated. This was followed nearly a month later by an event which was to undo all that we were attempting. Rev. S. K. Bunker of Jaffna College once said that he had noticed that about once in four years there was usually a cyclone in Jaffna and that we had scarcely any provision of facing these. These cyclones arise in the Bay of Bengal hit the east coast of Ceylon, turn north, taking Jaffna in its stride and winds up on the south eastern coast of India.

To analyse the cyclone scientifically is one thing to be hit by it is another thing altogether; and we were hit badly by one on the 22nd of December 1964. The temporary buildings we had erected at Boys Town were laid flat and at Navajeevanam itself, except for two rooms of the Mother House, all roofs were carried off and a lot of the other buildings were in ruins. Everything was flooded. The two rooms in the Mother House were our only refuge. The devastation was estimated to be in the region of Rs. 6,000/- which was big money then and certainly big money for us.

The Navajeevanam authorities, however, were not daunted. If the cyclone had done its worst, we would do our best. Thambyrajah says that his attitude was not one of depression, but of wonder and gratitude (that we had been spared greater damage.) The Navajeevanam Fellowship was not going to take the situation lying down. The word "abandoned" is not in vocabulary said Thambyrajah.

By now Navajeevanam had definitely made a place for itself in the Christian community, so that everybody rallied to our rescue. The World University Service (functioning through Jaffna College), the Colombo Y.M.C.A. the

Salvation Army, Girls Guides Associations and even a Grammar School in England sent contributions.

On 25th January 1965 Herr Hans Zeller of Germany, who had been working in the Colombo Y.M.C.A., came and saw the damage done to us and determined that he should not merely help to rebuild the damaged buildings but assist the whole project itself. So he not merely got the German Y.M.C.A. (C.V.J.M.) to help in the rebuilding but also arranged for support of a few orphans at Navajeevanam. The orphans thus helped kept increasing in number through the years, till now about 45 come under the scheme, mostly at Dharmapuram. The aid given last year amounted to more than Rs. 168,000/- It will be seen later how we showed him our gratitude.

On the 10th of February 1965 the new Bishop of Colombo, The Rt. Rev. Harold de Zoysa, visited us and has recorded that this is a happy and blessed place and that he had received much joy

and inspiration from his visit. Later in the year we had visits from Mr. E. W. W. Kannangara, who had been Police Magistrate in Jaffna in the twenties and was now the President of the National Council of Y.M.C.A.s, and Mr. R. O. Buell, Secretary of the National Council of Y.M.C.As.

This year Miss Grace Paul, whose father Rev. Isaac Paul had been a Minister in Jaffna for many years, presented us with a considerable sum of money for putting up a Workshop in "Boys Town", in memory of her parents. Later when we handed over Boys Town to the Y.M.C.A., we appropriated the Workshop for ourselves. This is now used for training apprentices in a variety of skills, as will be mentioned later.

In March 1965 a boy from our community called Anselm was bitten by a snake. In spite of the difficulty of travel, because our path was not yet quite traversable, we rushed the boy for medical attention to Jaffna and did our best to save him. But snake-bites are deadly if not attended to immediately and the boy died. In this area the colonists, busy about finding their means of livelihood had failed to make provision for the disposal of the dead. So Anselm was buried in a place a mile away from here, which was then practically a jungle. It was after this event that through the efforts of Thambyrajah that a large plot of land was cleared and now serves as a crematorium for Hindus and burial ground for Roman Catholics and Protestants.

In the meantime, Navajeevanam was trying its best to earn its keep by adopting the latest methods of agriculture, developing its poultry and dairy farming, its piggery, vegetable garden

and its carpentry. While we were helped by donations local and abroad, we never relaxed our own efforts.

And we came to the conclusion that we need not confine ourselves to the land at Murasumoddai lying by the third conduit. We have said earlier that we had partly acquired and partly by some other processes come into possession of 20 acres of land at Dharmapuram. There was now a Government offer of further land for the middle classes. Under this scheme we got another 20 acres; so altogether we had 40 acres there at our disposal. On this land we planted chiefly cocoanuts; but the land is low-lying and subject to floods and cyclones; so our original efforts were largely foiled and now we have only 100 trees standing.

At this point it may be desirable to draw attention to a stimulus that we were employing at Navajeevanam to help both ourselves and our visitors. Anyone coming to Navajeevanam will notice a large number of little painted Boards which seem to hang anywhere and from anything. The writer had a count made of the number of these boards and found that the total came to 100; some of these have gone into retirement, but most of them still hang where they cannot be ignored.

I hear the first board painted said "Think of me and forget thyself". One cannot help admiring the uniform aptness of these pithy sayings or quotations. The following are some samples: "It is easier to build a Boy than to mend a Man", "To live much is to love much," "When we bow we become taller", "As the boys grow so grows the Nation", "The dogs bark the Caravan passes on" "The clouds pass the stars remain", "Try

New-clear Energy", "When evil is disowned it becomes monstrous", "Live simply so that all may simply live". The religious mottoes are equally pithy and expressive: "Except the Lord build the house"; "Life is fragile Handle with Prayer;" "Build with care", "Prayer is power", etc.

That these mottoes do certainly inspire will be admitted. They keep up the spirit of those who live at Navajeevanam as they go about their work from day to day; visitors who come here are also helped in their own tasks as they go out from here into the world.

Boys Town which had been razed to the ground before it had taken shape had now been completed and was dedicated on March 12th 1966. It was hoped to train apprentices here in various trades and skills; we had great hopes of its future; In taking on this task we were going out of our way but with a purpose.

On the next day we had a Confirmation Service in our Chapel. A Confirmation Service at Navajeevanam is a rare event and is a notable event when it occurs. The reason for its rarity is that the little boys here are not of an age to be confirmed; and many of the adults we have are not fit for confirmation. During our whole career we have, I understand, had only four Confirmation Services.

Later in 1966 we find that Miss Beth Beaumont, who had been a fellow missionary of Sister Baker paid us a visit. We shall hear more of her later. On this occasion, on having heard of our recent cyclone, she says in our Visitors' Book that all set-backs should

be made stepping-stones for further progress.

At the end of 1966 Thambyrajah was able to report that 150 boys had left our portals, most of them, I hope, duly benefitted. The income and expenditure account for the year stood as follows:

Income	Rs. 93,609.94
Expenditure	Rs. 85,000.06

Our attention must dwell not on the fact that we have made a balance on the credit side but on the figures we are dealing with on either side with the realisation that an advance was definitely taking place at Navajeevanam.

Perhaps one of the reasons for our own development was that we were ceasing to live in a clearance of jungle land but in the midst of a rapidly developing community. Though we need not be too concerned with the matter, it may be of interest to readers to know that it was Kilinochchi that was becoming more important than Paranthan. We live three miles from Paranthan. Paranthan itself is 5 miles north of Kilinochchi. Either because of the intrinsic fertility of its soil or its nearness to the great tank it was almost developing into a major town. In January 1967 we find that a Public Library being opened there on the 30th, a sure sign that the whole area was emerging into the light of a new day.

By the end of April it was 8 years since Navajeevanam had been founded. But according to Thambyrajah's peculiar calculation it was 9; so his Annual Report is entitled "A Boy of Nine Years". Though his calculation of the age of the institution is wrong, the document itself consists valuable information. The total community of Navajeevanam is

said to be 44. "Earn and Learn group"

19. Others seem to be of various sorts. There were 7 boys in Boys Town. The total production of paddy was 3,000 bushels. Vegetables were produced for our own needs. Only the products of carpentry came to more than our needs and would be put on the market.

Among the notable visitors for the year were Mr. A. B. C. Pullenayagam, Secretary of the National Christian Council; (August) Rev. & Mrs. Oliver Black of Mount Holy Oak Church, Mass, U.S.A. (September); and Herr Hans Zeller (November).

In the first part of September the workers of the C.S.I. had a Conference or Retreat here for two or three days.

In 1968 Bishop I. R. H. Gnanadasan paid us his second visit. The Bishop of course, had no opportunity here to demonstrate his special gift; which was his choice Tamil diction. This gift made him a great favourite on platforms in South India. But here at Navajeevanam that gift was of little use; for he had come to see and not to be seen or heard.

The pathway to Navajeevanam had by now become quite traversable. Though it was legally a public highway Government had no hand in making it a road. We had done it on our own. But it still needed metalling. And our constant cry was for some one to help us to metal it.

By the beginning of 1968 Thambyrajah was making up his mind that it was highly important for him to go and see how other institutions in the Third World were handling the work that he was doing here. So in June, accompanied

by his wife he left on a tour to various Eastern countries. They first went to South India and spent about two months there looking up similar institutions and there were many. They then proceeded to the Philippines, Indonesia, Hongkong, Malaysia and Singapore. They returned here in February next year having made many contacts and learnt much about how others in other countries were meeting the problems that arise here in this kind of work.

The year 1969 is an important one in our history. Sister Baker, however, was away from us during most of the time. She left us late in March, arriving in London on the 26th of the month. When she was there her only brother died. He had been a Lecturer first in Cambridge and then at the Leeds University. He had retired and was expecting to devote his time to writing. While in England Sister Baker seems to have travelled widely and seen many people. She arrived back here on October 16th.

Why did we call the year 1969 important in our history? In the first place, it was because we were involved in an expansion that is worthy of note. What we have so far termed "Navajeevanam" was hitherto confined to the eastern side of the considerable water canal that carries the overflow from Iranamadu and is not one of its many irrigation conduits. In 1967 we had already begun to cultivate our vegetables on the western side of the canal. In 1969 we bought 8 acres outright on that side from Mr. Kandasamy of the Jaffna Kachcheri. Thence onward we kept on increasing our holdings on that side till now, I understand, we have 31 acres on that side, some held by purchases

and some by permits. Later we would in course of time be putting up buildings on that side for our industrial work and for our poultry. The piggery has for some reason been always confined to this side.

On the western side immediately adjoining the water canal is our vegetable garden. Beyond that is our playground. On the further side of the playground is our present Industrial section. Beyond the industrial section itself there are more paddy lands. So that now Navajeevanam may be said to exist on either side of the big canal.

The second reason why we called this year important is that during this period we got a special well. We have seven wells at Navajeevanam. What is then special about this particular one. While we have many wells, except this one all of them go dry exactly when water is needed most; this one never does. It is the one situated to the north east of the present church. The well has a story behind it. The beginnings on it had started in 1967 and had gone down 8 feet, out since no water was forthcoming, the digging had been abandoned. In 1969 Mr. A. V. Jesuthasan in his spare time thought he would try his hand at it, and started boring in the abandoned pit. He had bored 3 feet when water spurted forth and has not ceased since then. When systematically dug the pit was found to contain an abundance of water. The well, had, of course, to be appropriately built, and the U.C.B.W.M. furnished the money. There was only one contribution called upon from Thambyrajah; and that was to name it. He named it "Jacob's Well" (since it is the only well in the Bible that has a name).

There were many visitors during the year; some were foreigners whose names mean nothing to our readers; there were others who felt themselves so important that they did not care to sign their names legibly. Among those known to us whose names are legible are Bishop Lakshman Wickremasinghe and Dr. Victor Benjamin, the latter of whom discovered two cases needing surgical treatment. Their names are always legible, the one because of its extreme slant to the left and the other because the writing is that of a copy book. The strength of the community which during the previous year had stood at 44 according to Thambyrajah, in another book shows such a tremendous increase this year, that the writer is unwilling to take the risk of commenting on the discrepancy. An increase on a big scale could have been possible, because foreign help was coming and both the authorities at Navajeevanam and the colonists round about might have felt that the institution could take in more people.

As we approached the end of the first decade of Navajeevanam, it is good for us to have a look at the routine work here and at the chief members of the administration responsible for it. The daily routine started at 6 o'clock with morning prayers; at 7.45 there would be breakfast; then those who attended school went there, while those who worked in the fields betook themselves there. Those who learnt at the training centres went there. At 12 noon a bell is rung. In the old days this was a bell calling everyone for prayers in church. But it was found that at that time various people were at various places and attendance at noon prayers was so sparse that noon prayers had

to be abandoned; but the bell is still rung, but how many look upon it as a call to prayer is not known. Between 4 and 5 p.m. tea would be served. At 6 p.m. there are regular prayers in church and the singing of the little boys is distinguished more by its lustiness than by its melody. On Sundays there will be a regular service at church at 7 a.m. and a Communion Service once a month. On Sunday afternoon there are Sunday School classes the ladies being the chief teachers.

And how were the chief personnel carrying on their business? Unbelievable as it may seem, the day with Thambyrajah during the latter years began at 2.30 a.m. before the cock crew and the birds began to chirp. On inquiry, however, I find that during earlier days it usually began round 4 a.m. After devotions, he would start work in the green cabin, which was then the office and lies south of the present office across the irrigation conduit. Here he would work, typing his own letters. By breakfast the main part of his work would lie behind him. During the rest of the morning he would tackle what remained and a girl used to come and help him in his accounts. His letters would be posted in the little red box hanging outside his office and serving the whole community. From here they would be taken to the Govt. pillar box at the junction of the main road. After some years, it was discovered that letters posted in the Govt. box took a long time to reach their destination. The secret was that the Postman often left the box alone and cleared it at discretion. Now although the small box remains suspended outside the office, the letters posted in it are not deposited in the Govt. pillar box but are taken straight to the Paranthan Post Office.

It was in the afternoon that Thambyrajah would be in his element. Sitting in a small deck chair on the verandah of the Mother House, he would be dealing with women bringing children whose fathers had changed wives and with men who professed to be stranded. With instinctive shrewdness he would see through humbug and false pretensions. But his first question would always be "Have you had your lunch or dinner (according to the time of the day)?" "Go and have it first", he would say. However, worthless the person concerned might be, for Thambyrajah they were all God's children. If he found that he should help he would; if not, he would handle the matter with great tact. Thambyrajah did not think he was merely doing philanthropic work; he was exercising the work of a Christian Minister in the field of social service. Anyway, everyone coming here would have felt that here was a house, the head of which was a man who could be relied upon. Helpless mothers and really stranded men never came to him in vain.

Thambyrajah was of course Chaplain of the institution and for two decades of the life of Navajeevanam was Pastor of the whole area round about and the Christians from among them would come here for their Sunday Service. He would take the normal Sunday Service and Communion Service once a month or on special occasion. He would pray with those who come to him for his prayers and hold special short services for those who wanted them.

What would Sister Baker be doing? It may not be generally realised that she is Treasurer of the whole institution

and for long years was in charge of all sides of its finances. She exercised her responsibility with care and efficiency. She not merely was in charge of spending our money but was also responsible for getting us money. She used to write to a large number of her friends and relatives and keep steadily supplementing our income.

While locally she supervised our children's classes and took the Sunday School once a week, it will be true to say that most of her work was carried on outside Navajeevanam itself. She was mostly on her bicycle, riding down the lane from cottage to cottage so that she was called "Cycle Ammah" by the village. What was she doing? She was doing everything she could: medical work of sorts, running errands for the villagers and holding classes in English in various centres.

Apart from this, she was helping to fight certain well-known and widely spread diseases like polio, leprosy and tuberculosis. Her chief interest was in the Anti-tuberculosis campaign. She was the external symbol of the ideals that Navajeevanam stood for. Her grit, endurance and determination kept the Thambyrajahs themselves going when they felt depressed or discouraged.

What was Mrs. Thambyrajah's part? She would, of course, take Sunday School and often accompany Sister Baker in her outings in the neighbourhood. At Navajeevanam she was a mother to the whole community, seeing that everybody was properly fed and clothed and had their bodily needs attended to. To all the women living round about she was a friend and confidant to whom they resorted when they were in need of advice.

PART II

As the second decade of our life opens, we had ceased to be a pioneer project about the future of which people were uncertain. We were no longer in process of evolution; we had become an accomplished fact. The community at Navajeevanam had grown greatly. The Christians of Jaffna had come to look upon Navajeevanam as a suitable venue for their various meetings. The commercial community at Paranthan had come to recognize us as worthy of credit and confidence. Travellers to Colombo by car (and there were many in those days) often thought us worthy of a call; and we were attracting not merely visitors from our own Island but visitors from abroad. Visitors from Germany particularly were appreciable.

In 1970 the most notable event in our spiritual history was a visit from Mr. Neville Jeyaweera, formerly Government Agent of Jaffna, who had held other responsible positions in Government since then. He had met Sister Elizabeth first in 1963 at a C.N.A.P.T. meeting in the Jaffna Kachcheri when she was the only other person present besides himself. The phenomenon of an English woman who had been prepared to remain in Ceylon after retirement and dedicated her life to the people of this land had made a deep impression on him. He had made a subsequent visit to Navajeevanam and met Sister Baker frequently at meetings of the C.N.A.P.T. He was a Buddhist (and therefore not a believer in God) but the phenomenon of Sister Baker had kept haunting him. Why should she do this? Finally he had made up his mind. In September 1970 he came to Navajeevanam, met Sister Baker and asked "How does one pray "

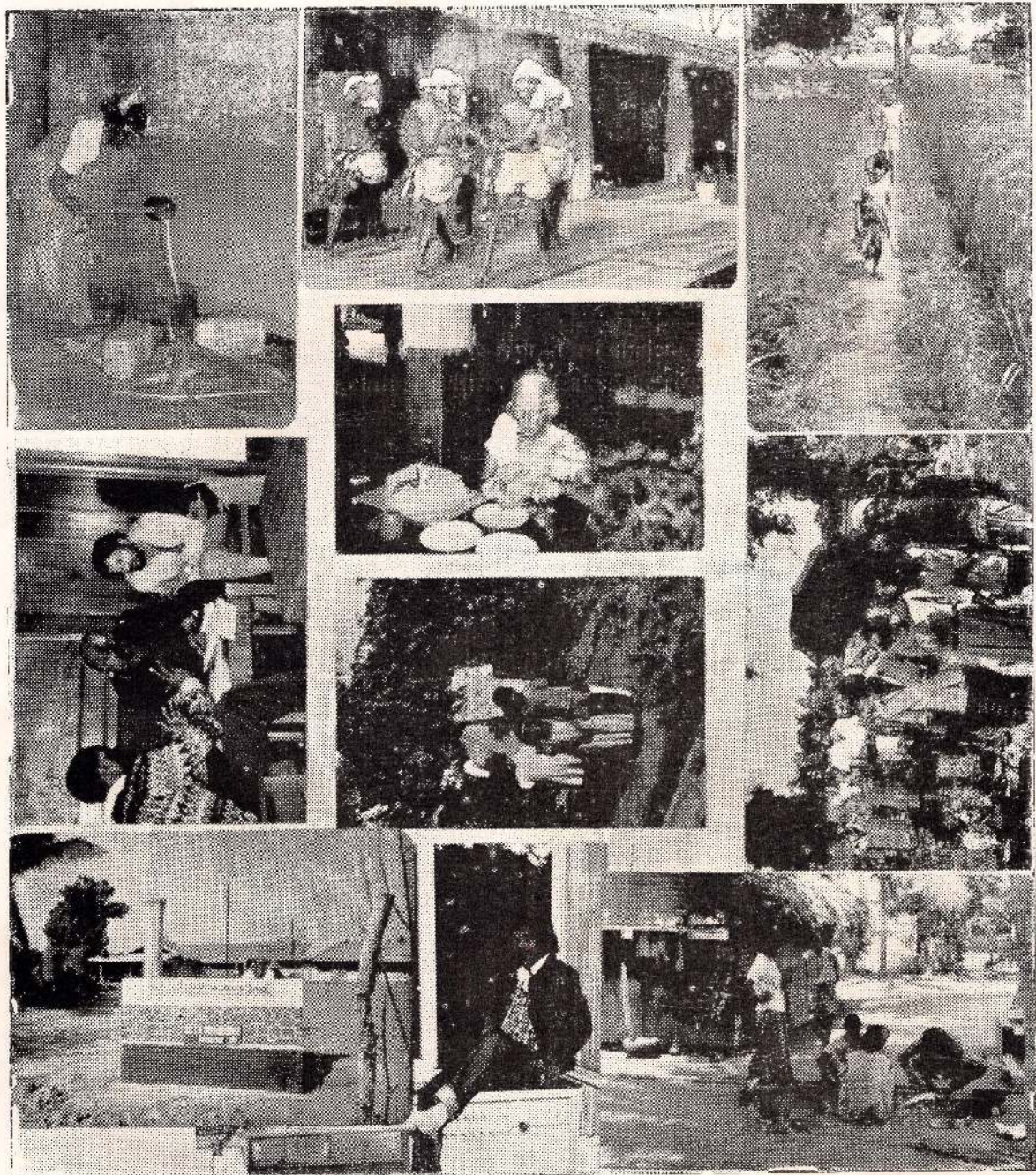
He has remained a strong Christian ever since.

It might have been noticed that we were still continuing to use the small make-shift building we had put up in 1959 as our place of worship, though the community had grown much bigger and we had put up buildings for other purposes. Perhaps, the reason why we waited so long was because when we put up a new church, we wanted it to be in consonance with our growing importance, and needs. Finally we decided that the time had come for action. So on the 14th of September 1970 Bishop Kulandran laid down the foundation for the new church. A blue print was drawn up by Mr. David. The task of making the building take shape was given to Mr. S. C. Rajaratnam. The ground plan was 80' x 40'; the estimated cost was Rs. 35,000!-

The Jubilee Block which stands close to the present church, which it may be remembered had been started in 1962 had been gradually rising. How? Because Mr. Telfer Mook who had visited us in those days had lost his heart to us and supplied the money. But it still remained a one storeyed building. As we have said already Dr. Mook had remained our consistent friend.

Among our visitors during the year were the Rev. John Timmins, Secretary of the Colombo Diocese (Feb), the Netherlands Ambassador (May) and a group of members from the German Y.M.C.A. and somebody from the German Embassy.

A more permanent resident was Mr. L. F. M. Samuel who had taught at St. Thomas' College, for 15 years, at



From bottom left clockwise:-

Way to the Pilgrim's Rest, the present Director in Japan,

Mrs. Thambyrajah boiling milk after the Mother House opening,

Christmas Day Kolladdam by children, Children amidst paddy fields, Rev. Thambyrajah at Ulavon Oor,

Work is earning—Present Director cutting fish, Past student in Germany.

Centre Top: Sister Elizabeth cutting a Birthday Cake, the first family settlers, John Soranes.

Royal College for 20 years, two of the best schools in the Island. Having spent so much of his life outside, he decided to spend the retirement in Jaffna and thought Navajeevanam the most suitable place for him. He had his quarters in the Jubilee Block and spent his evenings teaching our boys of the higher classes. His speciality was Mathematics (and probably Physics); but he taught other subjects as well. His rigid habits and his asectic manner of life made him stand out from the rest of the community with its easy going ways. Altogether he was with us for nearly 13 years.

In 1971 another source of external help comes within our range. A West German organization called Kinder Not Hilfe (K.N.H.) had for some time been helping to run Homes for needy children in the Third World. It was already helping two such in Ceylon, one at Badulla and one at Kalmunai in the Eastern Province. We heard about it and applied to become one and were accepted. At first, the help was modest, but has kept growing, till now it supports 145 children. It has now extended its help to a number of similar institutions throughout Ceylon, amounting to about 20. There is a K.N.H. Committee in Colombo which supervises the allotment and expenditure of these funds. The method adopted by the K.N.H. in Germany to secure its funds is somewhat ingenious. It does not ask for large sums from particular individuals; but arranged for foster-parents for each child, to whom the child concerned should write at least twice a year.

At the beginning of this Essay it was said that it was the intention of the Fellowship to pay each working boy a wage (making a deduction for his board)

and keeping a Pass Book for the balance we owed, from which he could draw for his out-of-pocket expenses. Since the K.N.H. was now paying for the boys, it advised that this practice be dropped; and so it was. Now there is no special fund in this respect but boys are paid from our general funds for their legitimate out-of-pocket expenses and on occasions are given special treats.

The lower storey of the Jubilee block had now been completed and needed only an upper storey. This was also put up and the main section of it was called the Hans Hostel after Herr Hans Zeller who had been responsible for stirring up an interest in us in Germany. Though the German Y.M.C.A. was only one of the contributors to our funds, we still felt that Herr Hans Zeller deserved our special recognition for having been a source of ferment in his country in creating an interest in us.

During this year Mr. A.V.Jesuthasan, who had received adult baptism earlier decided to go in for theological studies and went to Pilimatalawa in South Ceylon. He later moved to the Tamil and Theological Seminary, Madurai. Having completed his studies he joined the Ministry of the Jaffna Diocese and is a valued member in its ministry.

When I undertook the task of writing this Essay of the things handed to me as a possible source of data was a file of newspaper cuttings. As I have said in my preface, I found little of historical value in them as they all sang the same song of praise. Nevertheless, it has another source of value. Future generations will know how our efforts were appreciated by the people of our time.

Though I do not want to reproduce these appreciations, there is one which

because of its sheer outburst of lyrical feeling cries out for notice. In the "Observer" of 3rd September 1971 Mr. Bertram Jayatilleke after a visit to Navajeevanam writes (or the editor suggests it for him) as follows:

"There is a little bit of paradise in the Northern Province of Ceylon. It is a vast grown field called 'Navajeevanam'. It means New Life. It is a place too beautiful to describe. Perhaps Matisse could have described it in colour. And when the noon day sun turns a rice field into gold, Van Gough would have gone mad and torn off his ears and run riot in colour. Paul Ganguine's pulse would have quickened and his finger itched to paint the beautiful bare bodies and the immobile features of the local peasants."

How thrilled the little Fellowship of Navajeevanam would have felt at seeing such a glow of ecstasy.

We had a line of esteemed visitors in 1971: Bishop Lakshamn Wickremasinghe (Jan), Rev. Graeme Jackson (March), Rev. Denzil de Silva (Chairman Methodist Mission, June), Bishop I.R.H. Gnanadasan (July), A Scottish Bishop (Sept), the new Bishop of Colombo (Nov), Dr. Victor Benjamin (Nov), Mr. & Mrs. Sam Wijesinghe (Nov), and Bishop D. J. Ambalavanar (Dec).

In February 1972 Dr. Telfer Mook of the U.C.B.W.M. was paying us his third visit (the first was before we have got started). We have already said how he helped us with a well and with the Jubilee Block. This time he decided that his help should be put on a permanent basis and started paying us Dollars 500 a year; which figure he

doubled after a short while; and since the value of a dollar is Rs. 25/- the amount he was giving us comes to Rs. 25,000/- a year. This forms a third of our permanent sources of income. However, he did not feel that he was bound to confine his help to a permanent grant. Off and on we shall find him giving us periodical gifts and come to our rescue when occasion arose.

Kirupanandarajah (Kirupa), the sixth son of the Thambyrajahs now decided to throw in his lot with his parents and stay permanently at Navajeevanam; he, therefore, gladly availed himself of a scholarship for studying Rural Development (of course including Agriculture) in Japan. He left us in April 1972 and spent a year abroad studying chiefly in Japan; but he also spent some months in the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia. He came back here in May of the following year. He now had a background knowledge of the kind of work done here which his father did not have and could take charge of the physical supervision of the activities here.

The Uduvil Ladies Guild paid us a visit in June 1972 and the Rev. & Mrs. Rasil Jackson in July; Mr. Neville Jayaweera came at the end of August or the beginning of September. But the entry in the Visitors' book which brings a lump into the reader's throat is one in block letters written by a child on 3rd September. It reads as follows:

"I love this place a lot. I love the pigs and the fish? I enjoyed the bunnies. I love Sister. I want her here. I was very happy to have come with Ammah and Thatha and stayed with Sister."

In 1973 a National Work Camp, sponsored by the Ecumenical Youth Services of the World Council of Churches was run at Dharmapuram. Subjects in which training was given were agriculture, handwork, animal husbandry, village survey, digging wells, constructing goat-pens, pipe line tubes and lavatories. The programme was ambitious and we trust that it was at least partially successful; it is too much to hope that at the end of a year the trainees had all become experts in such a variety of subjects.

This year while we took on some new responsibility, at least for the time being, we also divested ourselves of some responsibility. We have seen earlier how we had established a settlement called "Boys Town", a mile away from Navajeevanam, on the Paranthan-Mullaitivu road, and after some vicissitudes had it dedicated in 1968. Now we have to report how the work left our hands. In February 1973, we handed it over to the National Council of the Y.M.C.As (keeping back the Workshop). Is it because we had become disheartened about our efforts and felt ourselves unable to run it? We had become generous. Though we could run it effectively and exercise close supervision over it, the National Council of the Y.M.C.As was anxious that it should have a branch in this locality; and we readily acceded. (At the time of writing the Jaffna Y.M.C.A. has got it from the National Council of the Y.M.C.As and for the time being handed over its management to the Director of Navajeevanam.

An interesting visitor early in the year (Feb) was Mr. Carl Holedridge, Treasurer of the Board of Trustees in America of the Jaffna College Board of

Directors. He came accompanied by his wife. They had come in connection with some functions at the College and dropped in here. Since the Board was paying considerable amounts to us he must have been glad to see our work first-hand.

In 1973 we seem to have achieved much architecturally and otherwise:

1. A new Dining Hall (still being used) called "Oikumene Hall" financed by the World Council of Churches (which itself was financed for the purpose by the U.C.B.W.M) was opened.
2. A Children's Corner was declared open, by Miss Barbara Aitkens, a former Methodist missionary. Sister Baker exercised supervision over this Department.
3. A Block named "Upa Vasam" (fasting) was opened as a Retreat Home. In this respect, it has not seemed to have succeeded as it now serves the purpose of a guest house. It consists of three rooms each named, as only Thambyrajah could have named them: Shalom, Siloam and the one occupied by Thambyrajah's Roman Catholic sister "Ave Maria".

One is intrigued by the fact that one of our visitors during this year was Dr. S. Anandarajan, a famed Eye Surgeon from Colombo. He is a Hindu and a person who may not be expected to have much in common with us. The fact that he thought it worthwhile to visit us shows that not merely the Christians of America and Germany but non-Christians in this Island were also beginning to sit up and take notice of us.

The community at Navajeevanam has now reached 97. We had reaped 4000 bushels of paddy (including the yield from Dharmapuram) we were getting 3 cwts of chillies, enough for fifty inmates; we had more meat (beef, mutton and chicken) than was needed for our consumption. We are also engaged in Industrial work, like carpentry, coir work pottery and electric welding. For some time we indulged in soap-making also and were making money out of them.

In June 1974 we were able to bask on the reflected glory that came to Sister Baker. It is amazing how long are the arms, how deep is the memory and how far-seeing are the eyes of the British Government in reaching out through the world and spotting those of its citizens deserving of honour. Thus Charlie Chaplin, after a long career in America, was settled in Switzerland but the honour due to him caught up with him in his late eighties. P. G. Woodhouse the humorist, who was settled in U.S.A. after the War, found he has not been forgotten and received a Knighthood in his nineties.

These honours, except during War time, are given twice a year, once on the Sovereign's birthday and again on the New Year day. Sister Baker found herself a recipient of an M.B.E. award on the Queen's Birthday in June this year. She had thought of herself as an obscure missionary in a far off land, lost to sight; but the Government had not forgotten. However, the High Commissioner, who had to pin the award was going to Britain and the actual ceremony had to take place early the next year.

The next event at Navajeevanam itself was the opening and dedication of

the new church. We have seen how the foundation for it had been laid on 14th September 1970. The opening of the church took place on exactly the same date four years later. Thambyrajah says the building is unique in that it is the only one of this type in the whole Island. No doubt it is so, because it is a mixture of various standard types. The roof is Gothic in its steepness but is not supported by walls but by pillars about 8 feet in height; but the pillars themselves are buttressed, as walls are buttressed in Gothic buildings. The pillars stand on a wall rising 1 ft from floor level. The congregation sits on the floor in the Eastern fashion. The roof overhangs the whole building till it reaches about 10 ft from ground level. Thambyrajah derived no small satisfaction in making the building peculiar. He named it the church of the "Holy Carpenter".

The background wall in the chancel is overlaid with little granite stones interlaced and held together by irregular lines of glaring white cement. The pulpit is shaped like a boat (because Jesus sometimes preached from boat; but he also in houses, the Temple and from mountain tops); Embedded in the centre of the big white cross in the background wall is a little chip of rock from the Mount of the Beatitudes. The figure of our Lord carved by a carpenter in Nazareth out of Nazareth wood stands on the altar just below the cross.

A bell is necessary for a habitual place of worship; but we had a bell which had probably been hanging from the branch of a tree. What we now needed was a belfry to be in consonance with the new church we had built. This was supplied by our friends Dr. & Mrs. A. B. C. Doray, who had originally donated the bell.

Thambyrajah could have been depended upon to make any service picturesque and impressive and at this service he was in his element. There were about a 1000 people present. The Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar dedicated the church and conducted the service; Bishop Lakshman preached the sermon from Romans 12-1 and 11 Timothy 1-12. He said that the pulpit was shaped like a boat. A boat he said may be anchored but it must also sail.

During this year Sathy, the second son of the Thambyrajah's was ordained to the Ministry. This is recorded here as a family event and not as a part of the history of Navajeevanam.

On 27th January 1975 Mr. Harold Smedley, the British High Commissioner came down to perform the postponed ceremony of pinning the M.B.E. Medal on Sister Baker. He was accompanied by his wife. The ceremony took place at 2 p.m. and the boys had gathered in force under the mango trees and sang with a gusto that must have been an experience to Mr. Smedley. After the ceremony there was tea for everyone and the crowd adjourned to the new church for a short service. Only the Navajeevanam community was present.

In April of the year Kirupa, the present Director, got married to Manoranjini Ariaratnam, his cousin. The wedding took place at the Holy Carpenter Church. It must have given great pleasure to the Thambyrajahs that their son was marrying Mrs. Thambyrajah's brother's daughter. The custom of marrying cross-cousins is looked upon in our country as a normal thing to do,

while marriage of cousins-german are looked upon with horror.

At the beginning of the year Thambyrajah had already got permission from the Fellowship for a trip to the West. On the 17th of August he set out with his wife on this tour; he travelled by the Russian Aerofloat as the cheapest mode of travel. When he arrived at the London Customs, the authorities were completely astonished that he did not have a single penny in his pocket. It was only when he explained that he had many friends in the country who would support him that they let him go through. Nobody need raise his eyebrow at the situation, because while it would be unusual with a businessman or a high Government official travelling at his country's expense, it will not surprise many lowly ecclesiastics who travel to foreign countries for conferences.

While in England Thambyrajah made the house of Dr. & Mrs. Peter Kulanayagam their headquarters. During his sojourn in England, Thambyrajah was able to meet his old Serampore Professor, Rev. Leslie Wenger. He also visited various historic sites, as all tourists do, and went to and probably preached at the Methodist church at Putney, the commonest place of worship of Jaffna Christians in London. However, the occasion most fraught with emotion for him was his meeting once again Mrs. Percy Cash, the wife of his old Principal at Central College. She was in a Nursing Home and was 96 years of age at that time. He had first met her in 1924; but she remembered everything and everybody and even produced a picture she had painted of the environments of Central College with the outstanding landmark of the Clock Tower. He also met many other old friends.

From England he proceeded to Holy land. Here he met Ben Bavinck, who had been at Jaffna College for 18 years and had left only three years previously. Naturally he did not miss Switzerland. But his real destination was Germany, where he could meet the authorities of the K.N.H. and the C.V.J.M.

(Y.M.C.A.) who were helping Navajeevanam generously.

In November he left for the states, where of course, were to be found our greatest friends, viz. the old-time missionaries in Ceylon the Lockwoods, the Holmeses, the Gilbergs, the Williamses and Dr. Telfer Mook himself, the Manager of missionaries. He also met Preman Niles, the eldest son of Dr. D. T. Niles, who was doing his Doctorate at Princeton. Having gone to the U.S.A. crossing over to Canada is a natural step. They came back home in June 1976.

Why did Thambyrajah go to the West? And what had he achieved? He has written a pamphlet on the subject which does not deal with his aim but only with the events during the trip. Many people go to Western countries because they have a good deal of money and do not know of any other way of spending it. He does not deal with his aim because he expects it to be assumed. He had gone to popularise the aspirations, ideals and achievements of Navajeevanam; and we have every reason to believe that he was successful in his purpose.

In October 1975 Sister Baker was given a recognition that should have come very much earlier. She was now appointed the Regional Representative in the North in the Central Committee of the C.N.A.P.T. This meant that in addition to her cycle trips down our lane and bus trips to the Jaffna Kachcheri, she was given further scope for movement by having to travel by train to Colombo regularly.

In 1976 we had to part with two people, with the one permanently and the other temporarily, viz. Mr. A.V. Jesuthasan and Mr. T. Kirupanandarajah. Mr. Jesuthasan as we have mentioned earlier, is now a member of the Ministry in the Diocese. This was the year in which he left us.

The temporary parting was with Mr. Kirupanandarajah who was going to Europe to continue the study he had done in Japan earlier; the studies were conducted chiefly in Germany and his time he could go with his newly acquired wife. He spent most of his time in a German township, called Benzheim. Language of course was a barrier, from one point of view, to deriving the fullest benefit from his studies, as he was studying a technical subject. People going to foreign countries for academic studies often acquire a knowledge of the language of those countries, before they go; but from another point of view, however, ignorance of the language is no barrier, because the student already has a good acquaintance with the subject. Therefore, inspite of the linguistic difference he could easily follow the subject. Besides this, a working knowledge of the spoken language of any country is easily mastered in a short time. However, the chief benefit derived by Kirupa from his stay in Europe was greater self-confidence, maturity and the art of handling men and matters. Having done with Germany he went to England in January of the following year and returned to us in March. Once he returned, he could be entrusted with most of the office routine.

In 1976 we had some important and interesting visitors: Mrs. Daisy Gopal Ratnam, Rev. & Mrs. Swithin Fernando and Dr. Peter Kulanayagam. Mrs. Gopal Ratnam was Secretary of the Synod of the Church of South India. Those who knew the time when she was in charge of the Secretaryship will recall the effortless

ease with which things went through at meetings. The Rev. Swithin Fernando was then Archdeacon of Colombo and Vicar of St. Michaels Polwatte. He was soon to become Bishop and a Patron of ours. But the entry in the Visitors' Book, which touches the heart is that by Dr. Peter Kulanayagam who is in charge of in the Medical Department of the Prisons Brixton, England, and had married Rance Welch. His entry runs into nearly two pages. He had come on an unscheduled visit and stayed for just two days; his previous visit had been in 1960, and he found great change here. He winds up his entry with the words of St. Paul, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain." Tributes like those of Dr. Kulanayagam will make the Navajeevanam Fellowship feel that indeed their labour has been worthwhile.

In September 1976 we had a Sick Room completed to which Thambyrajah gave the high-sounding name "Arokia-vasa" (Skt: a roga - free from disease). It was blessed by Bishop D.J. Ambalavanar and got into operation at once. Sick Room was donated by Mrs. Saras Vimalachandran from England in memory of to elder son who died in his young age. In a growing community consisting mostly of little boys a considerable occupation of it can always be depended upon from those suffering from real or imaginary diseases.

In December of the year Thambyrajah had a severe heart attack. The cause of a heart attack is always difficult to pronounce. He had undergone a major surgical operation some time earlier; had that weakened the system? He had just returned from a tour to the Western countries; had the strain been too much for him? It is difficult to say.

Anyway the attack did occur and he had to be in hospital for one month, and for some days in the "Intensive Care Unit". After his stay in hospital he was for two weeks with his brother-in-law, Mr. I.P. Thurairatnam, at Tellippallai. Then he came home for rest. Altogether he had to be out of circulation for three months.

On the 31st January 1977 we had a visit from an almost mythical figure: Mr. Theodore Oppenheim had been at Jaffna College, when the Rev. John Bicknell died in 1936. He was visiting Jaffna after 40 years, and came accompanied by his wife. Though it was a long time since he had been here, he was remembered by many of his old students and erstwhile colleagues. He wrote in the Visitors' Book that "Navajeevanam was close to the land and close to the Bible". A high compliment indeed.

In March this year Dr. Telfer Mook was paying us his fourth visit. He came to us first in October 1958 before the Fellowship had actually come into occupation at Navajeevanam. His last visit had been in February 1972. The most prominent change he noticed was the new church. He thanked God for the continuing growth and development of the institution. And knowingly or unknowingly, he used one of the headlines of one of Thambyrajah's "Annual Reports", saying, "What a miracle".

On the 25th of June we performed an act of gratitude. Miss Beth Beaumont, an old friend of Sister Baker had called on her here more than once and given us various gifts of money. This time she wanted to donate a bigger sum to be used for a Home for Retired people. From this amount we bought three acres of land north of the playground. Naturally we could not put up the building immediately; but we wanted something that would

notify the gift to all and sundry. So we built a little but massive bit of wall with in inscription of her name on the other side of the "Irish Culvert" on the way to our Industrial section. This was opened on this day by Dr. Seivaratnam and Mr. N. Nadarajah of the Farm Board.

Mahendran, the long-time ward of Sister Baker, who had accompanied her as a child, when the party arrived here in April 1959, this year decided to do theology. He first went to Pillmatalawa for two years and when The Tamil stream there ran into difficulties shifted to Madurai and was on his studies altogether for five years, as is the practice now of theological students.

The event of the year, however, was the celebration of the 40th anniversary of Thambyrajah's wedding. While Thambyrajah was very good in celebrating anniversaries and generally at all show and pomp he was particular not to have any celebrations around himself; and the 40th anniversary is not a Jubilee that is generally celebrated. It may be remembered that when he could have celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his wedding in 1962. He carefully avoided doing so but Celebrated the 60th Birth day of Sister Baker which fell that year.

But in 1977 a number of his children were here and insisted on a ceremony and a group photograph of the whole family, which had never been taken before. Accordingly the ceremony took place on the 3rd of September; his son Sathy of the Methodist Church officiated; and the long delayed group photograph was duly taken. A fellowship lunch and tea in the afternoon followed as a matter of routine.

In January 1978 we almost got into the margin of world history, when on Monday the 9th Bishop J. A. T. Robinson paid us a visit. From 1962 or so for

about 10 years he was the most Prominent person before the foot-lights of the English speaking theological world. When he was Bishop of Woolwich (London) he had published a book entitled "Honest to God", putting forward pentheistic views (contrary to Christian belief in a personal God) and followed it up with four or five other books of the same sort. Coming from a Bishop of the Church of England the books had caused a furore and provoked an overwhelming volume of replies, though some were in his favour. All these books together could by themselves constitute a small library. Finding his Bishopric scarcely tenable now, he quietly moved to a teaching position in Cambridge and proceeded to become a pillar of orthodoxy; but a reputation once made died hard and his old reputation for hetrodoxy continued to cling to him. When he came to us he was hyper-orthodox. Otherwise, we wonder whether he would have cared to take notice of us. We were glad to have the name of such a world renowned figure in our Visitors' Book.

The most invigourating experience during the year was the landing of two helicopters in our playground on March 14th. The Canadian Government had decided to present us with a tractor; this was coming by train. The Canadian High Commissioner, however, thought that a helicopter was a better form of transport for himself and the tractor could come by train, and landed here out of his aerial vehicle and his party from another. All our boys must have seen aeroplanes flying high in the air but had never gone near one nor touched any. So when the helicopters were before them and they could see them at close quarters and touch them they were thrilled. We are grateful to the Canadian

Government for their useful gift (of the tractor). The High Commissioner promised to visit us again but unfortunately High Commissioners and Ambassadors got transferred.

Another sort of representation of another country paid us a visit in May. The Director of "Alliance Francaise de Jaffna" with his Assistant came here with a group. Some countries, besides their official embassies, have also unofficial agencies in foreign countries to popularise their culture and civilisation. Though these agencies receive Government aid, they are purely voluntary organisations. In practice their main work is to teach the language of their country. They also show films; and provide magazines portraying life in their countries. The Director of Alliance Francaise and his students were impressed with the peace and tranquility of the place and the hospitality and friendship which they have experienced here. Of all the entries for the year in our Visitors' Book the most interesting is the one by Mr. & Mrs. S. Rodriguse from Ibiza, an island in Spain. Few visitors from Spain come to Ceylon, and certainly no one else had come here. Were these visitors Catholics or Protestants? There are a few Protestants in Spain; but till the Vatican Council of 1961 they were not even allowed to meet openly. What made them come here?

In the meantime, Gurukularajah (Kulam) the seventh son of the Thambyrajahs had got engaged to Chitra Christine, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. A. C. Muthurajah of Nunavil. The wedding took place on 9th June. This was not merely an event in the family of the Thambyrajahs, but as we shall see, an event in the history of Navajeevanam itself.

The "Call of Dharmapuram" is a cry sounding through all the reports of Thambyrajah from 1962 onwards. Dharmapuram lies 5 miles east of Navajeevanam on the Mullaitivu road and had been chosen for a programme of community development. It has been worked upon more or less through the years; we have 40 acres of land here. There were many coconut trees and the land in general was under cultivation. Both the "Bread for the World" organisation and Government itself had helped; a tank holding 80,000 gallons of water had been built and Thambyrajah, as may be expected, had named it "Galilee" (not after the province of Galilee belonging to Herod Antipas in the time of Christ but after the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias). Some families had been settled here and a night school had been set up which was being attended by 125 children. The Government Agent himself had laid the foundation stone for the project, and from April 1967 a Seed Store was functioning and goats, cows and calves had been distributed free. A few families had been given two acres of land in the vicinity and an ex gratia allowance of Rs. 125/- per month for six months to each family; lavatories have been built for them and a "fair price" shop set up.

All that was needed now was for somebody to take charge of it, as a station. Kulam had been teaching in the adjoining Government school and had now acquired a Kundasale trained wife. Our hunt for a man to be in charge of the station had ended. A bungalow for Kulam and his wife was soon put up. The business of Kulam was not to exercise supervision over the lives of the families settled down in the neighbourhood but to set up a centre of

which should be a steady influence? in the area and carry on the kind of work that was not being tackled by anyone else. So he set up a Hostel catering to more than 40 students, a dairy farm and a vegetable garden. A sewing centre for girls was also established. This centre of which Kulam was in direct charge was called "Canaan" (it gave Thambyrajah much satisfaction when he gave a biblical name for anything).

After the establishment of Canaan, Dharmapuram our legitimate work in the area came into closer contact with us and Dharmapuram became an extension of Navajeevanam. In September we got some more land to form an ordinary community settlement it was called "Ulavar Ur" (farmers village). This was just a settlement to open up the area and is not regarded as integral to Canaan.

We had for some years past been having a taste of one of the major benefits of modern civilisation but had not been able to drink of it deeply or continuously. We had an electric plant of our own for some time which functioned for four hours a day. Naturally we desired to be connected to the main line and have a supply that would last us all the 24 hours of the day, to aid us in our various activities. But the cost of installation was extremely high. However, either because our credit was fairly high or Government itself was anxious to promote the advancement of a colonisation area, we were able to pay our due on an instalment basis, on a guarantee provided by the Bank.

Mr. Leslie Middleton-Weaver, son of Rev. Middleton-Weaver, a former Methodist missionary in Ceylon, switched on the lights on 29th August 1978. So a visitor to Navajeevanam after dusk

will see our lights gleaming from our many scattered cottages, as the young man in Tennyson's Locksley Hall" say the lights of London gleaming in the distance at dawn.

The main house at Navajeevanam, named the "Mother House", where the Thambyrajahs, their son and daughter-in-law and Sister Baker had been living, had been badly needing repairs and extension for some time past now. It had, therefore, been more or less radically dealt with and the family was "making do" in the rooms of an adjoining building. The repairs were now over and the house was ready for occupation. It was opened by Sister Baker on 23rd of December.

During the year 1979 we had visits from a number of friends and the occurrence of a number of interesting events.

From 8th to 12th January Dr. Russell Chandran, Principal of Bangalore Theological College stayed with us. Bangalore was a place to which most of our students went when the medium of instruction here was English; but we still continue to send the better class of our students there. Dr. Chandran appreciated our programme and wished us well. On the 21st of the month we had a visit from Dr. Gnana Robinson, Principal, Tamilnad Theological College, Madurai, an institution with which we have very close and intimate contact now, because most of our students desiring to do theology now go to Madurai. He considered our work to be an inspiration to Churches.

In February we had a visit from the eminent Colombo Physician, Dr. John Wilson, and his wife. Dr. Wilson was the friend of everyone, so praise from him was natural. But Sister Baker was

particularly glad that Mrs. Wilson had accompanied him because when Dr. Wilson had been in Batticaloa many years previously Mrs. Wilson had become her particular friend.

On the 24th of March Dr. Telfer Mook, our ever loyal friend, once again paid us a visit. It would appear that this extremely busy official with wide commitments, hardly ever came to Ceylon without visiting us; and every time he came his attachment to us became deeper and his wonder at our continuing growth never left him. This time he recorded, "I am sure there is no end to the miracles that would keep happening here without the least motive of self-interest". We are thankful to have secured the interest and the abiding love of such a high official whose duty it was to promote Christian work over a large area of the world's surface.

On April 4th the Rt Rev Swithin Fernando visited us. The last time he came he was merely Archdeacon of Colombo; now he had stepped into the place voluntarily vacated by Bishop Cyril Abeynaïke and had become Bishop of Colombo. Partly because of the nature of his work, but chiefly because of his liking for us, he has been a constant visitor to Navajeevanam.

There was another event in April of a more permanent character. Though it happened to one person we consider it an event that happened to all of us. In June, Kirupa's name was gazetted among the new J.P.s that Government was appointing. The position is given to persons with a sense of responsibility and character; their duty is to sign various legal documents which have to be produced before Governmental agencies; and it is their signature which

makes such documents legally valid. He was sworn in only in September. We believe that the established importance of Navajeevanam was a factor in such a recognition being granted to one of us.

On 5th June Dr. S. Selvachendran of Manipay Hospital brought a Cricket team to play with our boys. The writer was present at this match and was highly amused, as the others were, that one member of his team was considered qualified to play for Manipay, because he had once been a patient at the hospital.

Many people seeing a vacant plot of land west of the canal and our vegetable garden might have wondered what purpose it served. But is a real playground (not merely meant for the landing of helicopters) where games are played, though not very regularly but still played. Cricket is played occasionally and sometimes basket ball; and field and track events in athletics also takes place; but I understand football is the favourite game, as it used to be in our villages at one time. On September 18th Selvachandran and his wife came as chief guests to our Sports Meet.

Our matches were purely Home and Home affairs; when we have to do anything in sports, it seems to have been chiefly against Manipay we play, and for some reason cricket seems to have been the chief sport in which we engaged. Many matches seemed to have been played between the sides during the course of the year. The results, of course were a matter of indifference.

A sure indication that this whole area had definitely been opened up was that the Jaffna Diocese which had been tentatively thrusting its hands into the field, chiefly through medical work, now

felt sure of its ground and decided that the area had become ripe enough for ecclesiastical work. In May of 1979 it established two ecclesiastical stations, one at Kilinochchi in our neighbourhood and the other at Vavuniya. It stationed full Prebysters here. A church was built at Kilinochchi and a Parsonage put up. The station at Vavuniya was later shifted to Chetikulam.

On 29th June two other friends of ours paid us a visit, Mr. & Mrs. Sam Wijesinghe. They were, as is well known, brother-in-law and sister of Lakshman Wickremasinghe. They belong to a group that keeps alive our faith in human nature. In our Visitors' Book Mr. Wijesinghe has said "that the visit has rejuvenated them".

Officially, Mr. Wijesinghe now holds a very important place in Government. After a long tenure of the post of Clerk to Parliament, he is now the "Ombudsman". This term is, I think borrowed from Sweden and applies to one who has official authority to walk into any Department and settle disputes and clear inter-departmental blocks. We thought the opportunity of having such an important person among us too good to miss. So we made him lay the foundation for the new workshop we were building on the far side of the playground.

In August this year, Mr. John Gibb of the British High Commission who had grown fond of Navajeevanam and was to pay us many further visits dropped in on us. We are glad that he did not suffer the usual fate of Embassy officials and got transferred and hence was able to visit us frequently.

Those who have read the foregoing pages will be aware how the West Ger-

man organization, called Kinder Not Hilfe had been helping us massively for some years past; that help was given to needy children. The organization, however, thought it should not leave it at that but gave us something permanent and tangible. This they decided should take the form of a community hall. The foundation for the building was laid by Miss Helga Christine and was 81' x 41' in extent. It stands on the southern side of the path leading to our Industrial section. It was opened on the 7th of September this year and can accommodate a 1000 people; it is called "Kinder Hall".

There were many foreign visitors during the year but I trust they will pardon me if I leave out their names since, however important they might be, they are not known to my readers. Another difficulty is that it is not always possible to make out the spelling of their names. They might, however, be assured that we treasure their tributes.

The year 1979 had been declared the International Year for Children and we thought we owed it ourselves to do something about it. So we put up a small building over which are inscribed the letters "I.Y.C." It accommodates 30 children who belong to the youngest age group and are called "Bubbles" here.

In October this year on the 29th we had the honour of a visit from the Hon. S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development. He must have been happy to see such a well organised, elaborate and efficiently run centre like ours, doing exactly the kind of work that it was his business to promote. He presented us with a he-goat to propagate the species. Since, however,

(unlike Mahatma Gandhi) we were not interested in goats, we presented it to Dharmapuram.

At the end of the year 1919 we reached the end of the second decade of Navajeevanam. Therefore an over-all assessment is not merely in order but is something to be expected from us.

Here was a band of dedicated people, who felt they had been called upon to do a particular kind of work and had been doing it now for twenty years. They had gained experience and confidence in themselves. They knew what they could do because of their experience and by doing it well had gained confidence in themselves. They had also gained judgement and realised what they could not do. Because of their commitment to their work they had gained the regard of the local community. People throughout the whole Island also had come to look upon them with great esteem for doing the kind of work which they felt ought to be done and which nobody else had attempted. As they had gone from year to year carrying on their task with sincerity and integrity their credit stand high even internationally. We found that not merely from Germany But from Italy and Spain people had come to see their work.

Those who were running the institution were carrying on as they had done during the previous decade. Thambyrajah would be in his small deck chair giving directions occasionally but all the while shedding general benignity over as much of the world as came within his scope. He was more relaxed now and the son was shouldering most of the routine. To him no problem was insoluble provided he was given a chance to

attempt the task. To him the world was a good place; of course, there were many villains but villains could be redeemed if handled in the proper way he was always sure of himself; perhaps a little surer than he had been in the first decade. Sister Baker still went about using her accustomed modes of transport fighting her campaigns against deep-rooted diseases and spreading goodwill to the community roundabout.

Only in one respect I believe there had been a decline. The number of unscheduled visitors on their way from Colombo to Jaffna or from Jaffna to Colombo had fallen, because the price of petrol had increased tenfold and communal disturbances in the South had discouraged people from undertaking long trips by car between Jaffna and Colombo.

There were 17 buildings in all and except for the Mother House, the Jubilee Block, the Kinder Hall and the Church they were either cottages or long low-roofed structures. There were 27 professional labourers, working either in the field or the kitchen or in the industrial section or looking after our birds and animals. They were all in receipt of standard wages. The apprentices in the industrial section were considered learners.

When I enter into a financial survey, I enter a world which I understand only dimly; but one thing I know about it, is that finances can be looked upon from different points of view and profits and losses can be deceptive, for reasons which are seldom given in reports; but I shall attempt to give a rough idea about the situation.

In 1979 we made or earned Rs. 487,363/- from our work. This gives the gross amount earned but does not take into account what we spent on earning it. e.g. the cost of seed paddy, cost of labour cost of manure etc. In regard to animals, the figure does not take into account the cost of looking after them and feeding them. The sum we have given above is exclusive of donations and money especially donated for capital expenses. If such amounts are included our total figure for 1979 comes to Rs. 823,298!-

I am also excluding the K.N.H. grant of Rs. 197,279/- and the German Y.M.C.A. grant of Rs. 143,283/-, as these are written on both sides of the accounts book as both received and spent. I was only giving the amount we earned through our own efforts. I had better also point out that I was giving the amounts only for Navajeevanam and not of Dharmapuram, because while Dharmapuram forms part of the concept of Navajeevanam, its accounts are kept separately; and I am not acting the part of a Chartered Accountant and drawing up a Balance Sheet. I am merely giving a general survey of the outcome of the efforts of the Navajeevanam Fellowship.

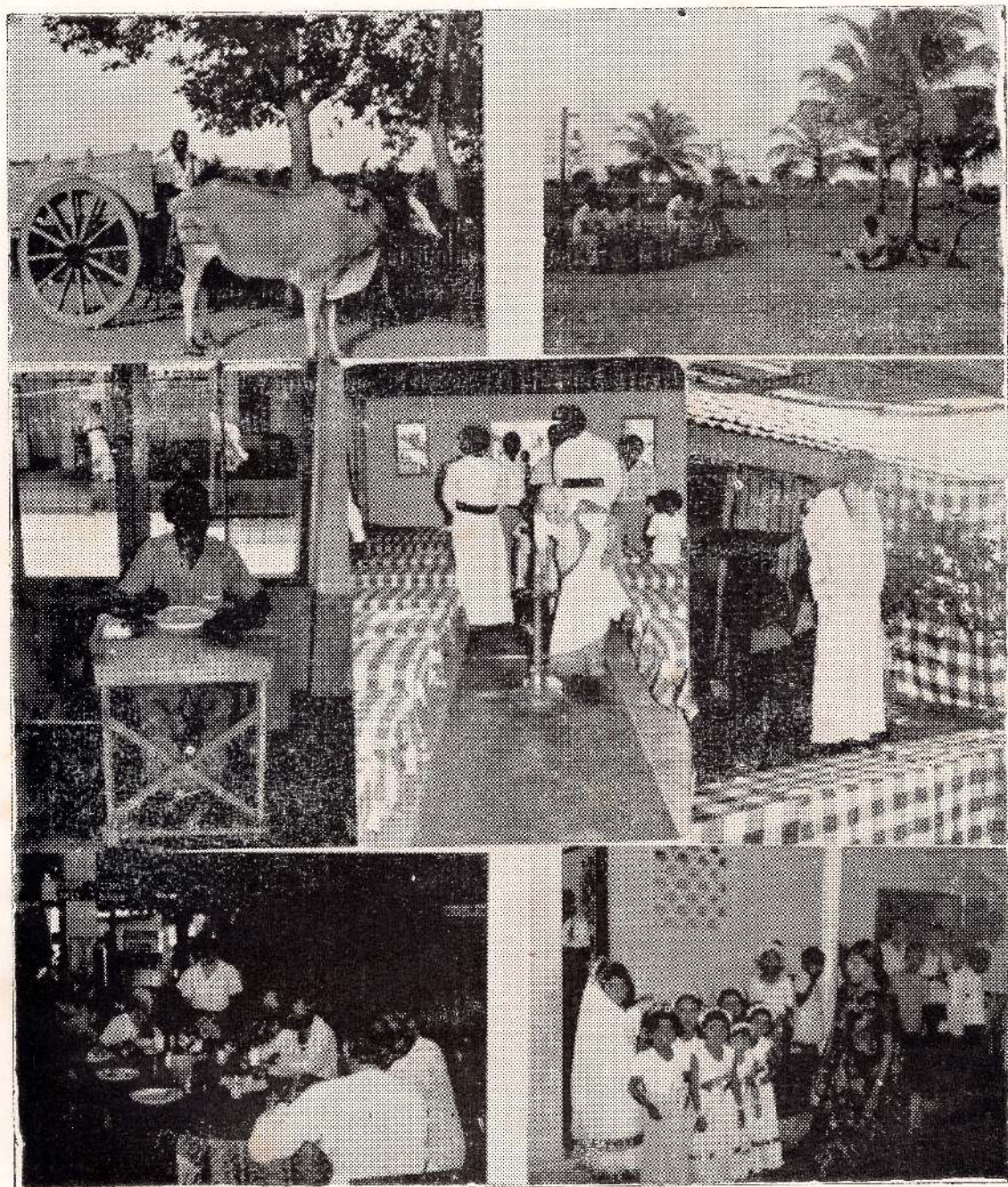
Actually considering that amount we have a deficit balance; but whether the balance is credit or deficit, money here is earned to be spent. We do not attempt to make a profit. We are here to serve, and this we try to do, in spite of the ups and downs of profit and loss. As the decade grows to a close we had to part with one who though not a member of the Fellowship had been with us quite some time. Mr. L. F. M. Samuel having been a resident here for 13 years was moving out.

The end of the decade saw another change which to some extent marked the end of an era. The general office was shifted from the green cabin to its present quarters which had formerly been our chapel. The word "General Office" was used purposely for the reason that Mr. Thambyrajah, the Director, shifted his own private office to one of the rooms in the Mother House, and the old chapel was used for dealing with general correspondence and accounts. There were, therefore, now two offices. Kirupa was more or less in charge of the General Office though the father occasionally dropped in.

PART III

It may be remembered that in 1979 Mr. Sam Wijesinghe had laid the foundation for our Industrial section on the further side of the playground. The Industrial section was a complex of three long low-roofed buildings. The building of the complex was financed by the British High Commission, which not being satisfied with this gave us money also for a Bakery which is now attached to the kitchen on this side of the canal. The new buildings gave us the opportunity of shifting our Industrial section to them from the temporary sheds east of the Jubilee Block.

In the complex the northern-most building houses coir works and pottery (the dairy and piggery are housed on this side of the canal). The middle building houses electronics, motor mechanics and oddly enough poultry. The southern-most building is 'L' shaped and houses carpentry and smithy activities. The whole complex was now ready for occupation. It was opened on the 10th of February 1980 by our good friend Mr. John Gibbs of the British Embassy.



From bottom left clockwise

The British V. S. O. Mr. & Mrs. Newby, Rt. Rev. Kulendran, Rev. Soma Perera and Bishop Lakshman at breakfast time.

Keerthi going steady from 1971,—loved by everyone, the late Visvar Appu with the first trained bulls at Canaan, the first batch of students at Extension Canaan Prayer time, Founder of Gurukulam, Kathiravel Appu speaking on the 20th Anniversary Day, Miss Indra Kanapathipillai on the Nursery Graduation Day, Lighting the Oil Lamp on September 14th 1984 at Canaan Hostel named 'Stacy Marks'.

There is no doubt whatever that the British High Commission's interest in us was due to the fact that Sister Baker was here, and was a British citizen who could not be ignored, because she held an award. But our gratitude to the High Commission is certainly very deep. Their generosity will continue to help our boys for years to come in becoming useful citizens.

Only two things were lacking now. One was name for the whole outfit and secondly a person to be in charge of the sophisticated subject of electronics and other mechanical matters. As for a name Thambyrajah was never at a loss and called it 'Nazareth', because of the workshop of the Holy Family was there. To find a man for the technical work was another matter.

This need was supplied by the Voluntary Service Organization (V.S.O). It gave us Mr. David Newby, a highly qualified Engineer who had been at the Atomic Plant in Britain for 22 years. Fortunately for us he had wanted a change and the V.S.O. gladly availed itself of his services and sent him here. He and his wife, Joyce, stayed with us for nearly a year and a half. He taught not merely electronics but other forms of mechanical science like welding, motor mechanics, etc. His wife, Joyce, taught little children in our Nursery School. Unfortunately, the V.S.O. does not allow a person to stay too long in the same place, since it has many places like ours to help.

During the year 1980 a number of Visitors visited us both from Ceylon and abroad. In March Justice Vincent Thamotheram of the Supreme Court, visited us; Miss Beth Beaumont whose generosity we have already recorded

herself came down in April; Bishop Lakshman came in October; some from England; some from Germany, one from Denmark and one from Switzerland. We are glad that our fame had travelled so far.

However, the impression we created on one person and which he expressed both by word of mouth and in writing cannot but be recorded because he is not a person easily moved to give vent to his feelings. Dr. Milroy Paul had, like his father Dr. S. C. Paul, been Senior Surgeon in the General Hospital, Colombo, and later had for long held the post of Professor of Surgery in Ceylon. He had the highest Surgical & Medical degrees that London could offer and had delivered Hunterian Lecture twice. To deliver it once is the highest Distinction that the British speaking medical world can offer to a surgeon. To deliver it twice was a unique honour indeed. As a person, however, he was shy, reserved and taciturn.

In September 1980 he had come to receive a Doctorate from the University of Jaffna. He was probably visiting Jaffna for the first time after he had been House Surgeon here in the early thirties fresh from his University studies in Britain. He had now retired and the Jaffna University thought it would honour itself by honouring him.

When he was going back to Colombo he was asked what had impressed him most in Jaffna. "Navajeevanam", he said. In our Visitors' Book he has recorded: "Navajeevanam has to be seen to be believed. I have never in my long life (he was 80 then) seen such a centre with such practical high ideals of service and sacrifice". Coming from such a source it was praise indeed.

The day on which Dr. Milroy Paul visited us was a Sunday. At the Service Bishop Ambalavanar confirmed twenty candidates. As we have said, Confirmations here for good reasons are rather rare; and when they do occur, the number of candidates seemed to correspond with the importance of the occasion.

Another visitor to us during the year, whom we almost missed mentioning because he came with a party of Americans, was Mr. C. Loganathan, financial wizard, who had been the General Manager of the Bank of Ceylon during the prime of its life. At the time he came to us, he was working in the United Nations, New York, which was the proper place for him.

On the 7th of January 1981 the Rev. & Mrs. Arnold Cooper Methodist friends of Sister Baker visited us. Mr. Cooper when he had been last in Ceylon had been in charge of the Colpetty Methodist Church, which is considered the blue ribband of Ceylon Methodist preachers. Though he pays a tribute to Sister Baker for the activities going on here what took him completely by surprise was the ingenuity of the motor mechanic here who had done 'marvels' with the engine of his car, which had gone out of order. He had probably expected that Navajeevanam was a place pervaded by a general spiritual atmosphere and was not prepared for the presence of so much technical ability which he now saw.

During the year, as usual, we had a number of visitors from here and abroad; among foreign visitors, as was customary those from West Germany predominated. What is surprising is that there was a visitor from Italy. It is generally supposed that Italy is 100% Roman

Catholic; it is not generally known that there has been a Protestant sect there from the time of the Reformation; but they were severely treated and persecuted till they gained legal status under a Treaty made between the Pope and William 111 of England early in the eighteenth century. There was also a visitor from Cyprus which is in the sphere of the Orthodox Church. This is not surprising since the Orthodox Church has never been as exclusive as the Roman Catholic Church; and also Cyprus was a British possession from 1878 till the grant of independence after the World War 11.

The event of the year, however, was the celebration on 6th September of Sister Baker's missionary service. Every event has an anniversary in that the date of the occurrence will recur year after year once it has occurred; but everything depends on its importance. Sister Baker had come out as a missionary in 1931; many missionaries who had gone out of their homes about that or even subsequently would have returned to their own land after putting in a stipulated period of service. Sister Baker had continued as a missionary in the same country right through.

In fact, she has been probably more active since her retirement than she had been during her official tenure. As years go by, even the few who stay back and do some work slow down and take on less responsibility than when they were young. This was not so with Sister Baker. No one can be interested in everything that goes on in the world; but in the things in which she has been interested her zest has not slackened though her activity has been slightly curbed by her being forbidden to use her cycle after this celebration.

The Navajeevanam Fellowship put out a beautiful brochure, (which she saw for the time only when it was put into her hands on that day) to mark the occasion. It is full of clear pictures and contains tributes from various highly-placed persons. Bishop Ambalavanar quoted the saying of Jesus about Mary's act of anointing the feet of Jesus with a cruise of alabaster ointment. "She has done a beautiful thing" (the rendering is not in the older versions now in the new English Bible). She had poured out her life in the service of the Lord. The Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah whom one never suspected of poetical proclivities seems to have been unable to confine himself to the language of prose and bursts into song.

At Navajeevanam there was a Praise Service in the morning in the church and then a Public Meeting in the Kinder Hall where speeches were made. At noon there was the usual large-scale lunch and in the afternoon tea and entertainment.

In the latter part of October the Queen and Duke paid a visit to Ceylon. They must have performed many acts at a high political level; but on the 22nd of the month the High Commissioner gave a Party to all the Britishers in Ceylon; there were about 500 present. Not all of them could be presented to the Royal pair but Sister Baker was one of those selected.

Sister Baker came back from Colombo not merely with happy memories

of the function but Dr. John Wilson's appreciation which she had noted in her diary-

"For me it was not the truth you taught
To you so clear to me so dim,
But how you lived that brought to me
An overpowering sense of Him."

In 1982 April a course in Rural Training was held at Navajeevanam. The leader was the Rev. W. P. Rossow from South Africa. Navajeevanam had now a special place in this kind of thing and this year finds us actively involved in many of their activities.

May 3rd was a festive occasion not for Navajeevanam only but for the whole area. The new buildings of the Law Courts were being opened. It may be noticed that in many places of Ceylon, particularly in the North many official buildings put up during the last century still keep functioning and trying to cope with the conditions which had not then been envisaged. Government saw the need for a change at Kili-nochchi and had put up new buildings for the administration of Justice. For such an official function only distinguished residents are invited; but by now we had quite a few who belonged to that rank.

In June the Newbys were leaving since their contract with their Organization had ended. It was obvious that we had to find another man to his place. By this time Sister Baker's ward, Mahendran, had finished his theological studies in Madurai and was coming back.

On 12th June there was a trip to Delft for the week-end. It is obvious that they must have left on Friday. It is not known how the party stood this maritime trip. Some people are good sailors and others bad; but from Dutch times it had been noted that the trip between Delft and Jaffna is a difficult piece of sailing, because Delft is a Coral Island, waves go and hit it and coming back meet the waves going towards it, causing a very choppy sea.

On Saturday the party saw the wild horses in Delft west, as all visitors did. Indeed they are the peculiar sight in the world; for nowhere do we find so many horses not reared or owned by anyone. They are descended from the horses that Captain Nolan had been rearing for the British Cavalry round about 1810 and lead a wild life. On Sunday Thambyrajah preached at the local church; for the American Mission has had a church in Delft from early times (though the present building was put up only in 1920). However, it was only in recent years after the Diocese had come into being that serious attention has been devoted to the island.

In July a party from Navajeevanam attended a Sports Meet at the Nuffield School for the Deaf and Blind situated at Kaithady. It is to be hoped that the party from here was duly impressed; but there is no doubt that its presence at Kaithady would have been a source of encouragement and inspiration to the children there and the administration.

In August it gave great gratification to Sister Baker to see Mahendran being inducted into the service of the Methodist Church. It was the end of a long trail, for it may be remembered that

Mahendran had come here in 1959 as a child clinging to sister Baker's sarcee. Now the destination had been reached and Sister Baker must have felt the glow of satisfaction that she had discharged her responsibility.

In September the Government issued a special stamp to commemorate the services of the C. N. A. P. T. Thambyrajah was President of the local Branch of the Association and Sister Baker an all Island figure in the movement. It is not recorded in the papers at my disposal as to who bought the first stamp; nor do I feel like asking for the information, for reasons which we shall soon see.

In October an organization in the U. S. A. sent Miss Lorie Sollenburger, under an exchange group programme. She was an expert in dairy-farming and came for six months. Thambyrajah went to Colombo to meet her and along with her brought Mr. Nimal Perera for the work that Mr. Newby had been doing. Mr. Perera had been trained at the famous institute of Fr. Ignatius Perera in Kothahena. Though he did not have the overwhelming qualifications of a person who had worked at the chief Atomic Factory in Britain, he could tackle some of the things that Mr. Newby had been doing, at the level that was necessary here.

Most of my readers would know that the Jaffna Christian Union held an Annual Convention in which all the Churches of Jaffna participated. This had gone on from 1915. The venue for many years had been the Jaffna Fort Church and it used to be the custom to get down the chief speakers from India. The speeches were highly eloquent and the meetings always stirring. In the old days special convention hymn books used to be printed

and sold for 10cts each. In recent years owing to the restraint imposed by travel formalities, the Christian Union had fallen back on local preachers and the venue is often shifted from the Fort Church. When the Ashram found that the Conventions of the Christian Union had lost their former vigour, it started its Whitsuntide Convention; but the Christian Union developed a new enthusiasm and was for some time carrying on the Convention with the old time vigour; and it was expected that it would so do this year. But suddenly at the last moment the arrangement was cancelled and the Convention was dropped.

Thambyrajah was highly incensed. "Then I shall have a convention of my own", he said. And from the 27th of October to the 31st he ran a Convention at the Holy Carpenter Church. The speakers were good, the music was good and the congregations every day was good. The Convention was over on Sunday the 31st and everybody pronounced it a great success. There was only one hitch that was lurking behind the whole thing.

On the night of Monday, the 1st of November, he experienced a slight difficulty in breathing and was rushed to Dr. Rajan's Private Hospital at Kilinochchi and, I understand, that he was alive when he reached the hospital; but as the Doctor was giving him an injection he passed away. A body weakened by disease and strain had ceased to function. The news was flashed across the Island.

The Funeral Service was held on the 3rd in the Church which he had built. Bishop D. J. Ambalavanar officiated. Many Heads of Churches were present and of course many Pastors. The prayer

of Rev. Soma Perera, Chairman of the Methodist Church, was considered so good that it was printed and copies sent to many. The attendance was almost beyond count. The cremation took place on the spot which Thambyrajah himself had obtained from Government for the purpose many years earlier. The ground was a mile away from Navajeevanam, and the funeral procession was almost as long. Ever since Navajeevanam had been started Thambyrajah had loomed large in the eyes of the Jaffna Christian world, and perhaps of the Island. Therefore, an assessment of him is quite proper here.

The basic fact that must be remembered about him was that he was a Christian Minister. There are and have been hundreds of thousands Christian Ministers in the world; and various qualities have been associated with them and they are usually valued in the light of these qualities.

Many Christian Ministers have been great scholars. Was Thambyrajah a scholar? Even his dearest friends will hesitate to apply the term to him. At the Theological College, he had deliberately gone in for a Diploma not a Degree. He had studied Sanskrit, which is a valuable acquisition for a Minister working in India or Ceylon; but I never found him making any use of it later. He had studied New Testament Greek; but I do not remember his making any use of it later either. This also may not matter, since it has been said that Education is what remains after you have forgotten all that you studied.

But did he make any effort after leaving Serampore to acquaint himself with the writings of important contemporary

theologians, like Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr, or G. H. Dodd. Did he make any attempt to know some thing of the latest theological movements, like the "God is Dead" school? It must definitely be said that he did not.

All Christian Ministers must preach. Was Thambyrajah a great preacher? It depends on what you mean by a "great preacher". There are great preachers who stir up deep emotion with their powerful eloquence and are at their best in Conventions and such large gatherings. In this sense, Thambyrajah was not a great preacher.

But in another sense he was. He made a great impression on his congregation. Why and how? I have also maintained that what matters in a Preacher's sermon is not his learning or eloquence but whether he believes in what he says. Thambyrajah certainly believed. He believed not merely in Christian doctrines but far more than that, he believed in the Christian God. He took God seriously almost literally. "God has said" and that was enough for him. When God makes a promise he keeps it. This is what David Livingstone said when he was confronted one night in the heart of Africa by the sight of warriors with spears in their hands dancing and uttering war cries on the opposite side of the river he had to cross. Livingstone opened his Bible and found the words "Lo, I am with you until the end of the world". "These are words of one who never breaks his word" he said. The next morning there was nobody on the opposite side of the river. He would not have been put on the Committee that revised the Authorised Version of the

Bible in the last century, but he opened up Africa to the world.

And this why Thambyrajah, though a Christian Minister, took to a career which many Ministers usually do not take up, and took it up without any resources nor any qualification for it; he depended not on him self but on God and God responded correspondingly. Once a soldier of Alexander the Great had done him some service with which the King was highly pleased. So he said, "Go and ask my Treasurer for what you want and he will give it to you". He made such an exorbitant demand that the Treasurer came to Alexander the great and complained. "Give it to him", said the great King, "he took me at my word". But God does not throw about his promises recklessly; He makes them to his servants. That is why Abraham Lincoln said, "the question is not whether God is on our side, but whether we are on God's side". Thambyrajah firmly believed he was on God's side and was doing what God had called up on him to do. Though he depended on God, and not on himself, and was sure of God's support, he also knew that God expected him to justify himself. When a railway engine gets stuck midway or a motor car going on urgent business has gone out of order, or the pilot of an aeroplane (that has only one pilot) has fainted any and everybody cannot rush in and try to get the thing going, just because he believes in God. In the case of the train, he reaches the nearest phone booth and phones the nearest Railway Station for help; in the case of a car he calls for assistance from the nearest bystander who may know something of the matter; in the case of a plane, he locks the steering gear and calls for instructions from the nearest control

tower. What did Thambyrajah know of agriculture, or poultry or dairy-farming or psychiatry. He used commonsense no doubt; but commonsense is not enough in these matters. He never became an expert but acquired enough knowledge from whomsoever he could get hold of and kept things going. Later he was able to send his son abroad to acquire the kind of knowledge he lacked. And so he carried on and the thing began to move on its own momentum. Navajeevanam was his conception; the fact that it took shape at all was due to his effort; and that it has grown to its present strength is due to his faith which never flagged. One cannot take a step at Navajeevanam without calling to mind the memory of the man who had founded it, toiled for it and brought it to its present position.

However, the Governing Body of Navajeevanam had to fill the gap caused by his sudden parting. So on the 18th of November it met and appointed Kirupanandarajah the new Director and Chairman. It will be admitted that the appointment was most appropriate. Kirupanandarajah had grown with the institution, was still young and possessed of an abundance of physical energy and stamina; he also possessed the technical knowledge for running an institution of this sort. His brother Gurukularajah was also with equal appropriateness appointed secretary, a position held by the elder brother earlier.

On the 31st day of his death, which according to Tamil custom concludes the period of formal mourning for a dead person and is treated more or less as a festive occasion, a short service of thanksgiving was conducted in church followed by a lunch at which 200 people sat at table.

In conducting the affairs of the institution it was realised that Kirupa could not be left alone; when Thambyrajah was in charge, Kirupa helped him. When Kirupa was to be in charge who was to help? So urgent summons were sent to Mr. A. H. Ariaratnam, who for long had held a high position in the Co-operative Department in Colombo and later held an equally high appointment in the private sector, to come over immediately. He was well qualified for the task, being used to office procedure and having dealt with high-ranking officials. Besides his experience, he was a person of high intrinsic efficiency and foresight. He could not well refuse since, as we have seen earlier, Kirupa, the new Director, had married his daughter; he had however to settle his commitments in Colombo and could arrive only in February. Once he arrived it was obvious that the office would be run with high-grade efficiency.

On the 16th of March 1983 our dear friend Telfer Mook arrived. He had come frequently when Thambyrajah was Director. Now he came to a Navajeevanam without Thambyrajah. Navajeevanam to him was Thambyrajah's institution and he wrote in the Visitors' Book, "There is no question that he is present in our midst. His spirit is here and we thank God for it. My God continue to bless all that is being done here". We shall always remain thankful for Dr. Mook's unfailing interest in us.

John Walter Bicknell, son of the Rev. John Bicknell, who had been principal of Jaffna college, and had last been in Jaffna in 1936 had come to Jaffna at the invitation of the Board of Directors of the College. He visited Navajeevanam on the 31st of March. He came practically as a stranger, because he knew

hardly anything of what had happened after he had left 50 years ago; it is some thing to our credit that he was told that Navajeevanam was certainly a place that should be seen before he left the country. He never knew Thambyrajah and so could not realise the difference that his passing away had made to the place. He recorded in the Visitors' Book that his father used to say, "We must take care of the last, the least and the lost" and adds, "that is what you are trying to do here".

On 5th June we had the honour of a another visit from S, Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development. It may be recalled that he had come here earlier more a less on an official visit; this time he did not come to us on an official visit but had come for the purpose of inspecting certain other places in the area; but he seems to have expressed the wish that his breakfast should be arranged for at Navajeevanam. We were duly informed. He and his party arrived in the morning and were attended to. He recorded in our Visitor's Book that our institution was an asset to this area.

The Jaffna Diocese usually holds a Memorial Service for its departed Presbyters. But it takes its own time about the matter. It held its Memorial Service for Thambyrajah at Uduvil on the 11th June; the service was conducted by the Bishop and the speakers were Mrs. S. J. Somasunderam who paid the tribute and Bishop Kulendran who preached the sermon. Mrs. Somasunderam compared Thambyrajah to such figures as Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Schweitzer. She said he repaired broken souls and also broken chairs. Bishop Kulendran said

that when he was Bishop of the Diocese, on big occasions he had always got Thambyrajah to preach, because he raised the standard of the service.

Mr. & Mrs. Hans Zeller who had done much for us through the German Y M C A felt that they should do something of their own and donated money for building a Hostel for children, named after his wife "Dorothy". The ceremony of opening was to be performed by her; but on the 1st of July a train had been burnt in Jaffna and that dislocated all traffic between Colombo and here and so Mrs. Zeller could not come. But Sister Baker could always be depended upon to open buildings and duly performed the ceremony on 3rd July. The Hostel is situated to the north of the dining hall and is a fairly long building, gleaming white.

In the meantime, riots of a serious nature had broken out in South Ceylon; many people had been killed and whole sale acts of incendiarism had been raging in many cities. In the midst of all these, there arrived here on the 25th of July six British Methodist boys and girls, headed by the Rev. John Stacy-Marks. Everybody is welcome at Navajeevanam; but they had no means of getting out

During their stay a mentally handicapped boy who had been with us for some years passed away, and the Rev. John Stacy-Marks conducted the funeral service. Our British friends, however, could not stay here indefinitely stranded. So we gave information to the Police about their plight and they were escorted to Colombo in wind and rain in an open van but well guarded. The incident, however, did not end here. On his return to Britain, Rev. Stacy-Marks was able to interest his friends on our institution,

with the result that we received a substantial gift from Cardiff. With this money we intend to put up a Hostel at Dharmapuram called "The Stacy-Marks Hostel".

The first anniversary of Thambyrajah's death was observed with a service conducted by the Rev. Isaac Selvaratnam. The Rev. L. N. Hitchcock, Thambyrajah's brother-in-law, preached the sermon.

In November there was an event of particular significance. As we have seen, it was long since Sister Baker herself had been to her home in Britain, though she kept in close and constant correspondence with her relatives there. From the 16th to the 18th of the month there came to us Mr. David Buxton and his wife Christine; Christine Buxton was a daughter of Sister Baker's brother, who had died some years earlier. Mr. Buxton is Chief Organiser of the Classical Music programme of the B. B. C. and Christine a teacher of five years standing. They had taken leave from their respective employers to go round the world.

It was to Sister Baker a time fraught with much nostalgia as she listened to news from England. To the Visitors it was a thrilling experience to realise that their Aunt was playing an important part in an institution of such scale doing so much service.

At the time of writing, we are still in the early part of 1984; and the main event we have to record so far was our practical transportation to the days of Noah. The rains during the latter months of 1983 had been disappointing. Finally when all hope has been given up, it be-

gan to rain at the wrong time in January, but that was to be the beginning. On the 3rd, 4th & 5th February this year the skies opened up for all their worth. We understand that this was not due to the usual "depression in the Bay of Bengal" but to unusually big cloud formations in China and Siberia.

As is well known, our whole area depends for its irrigation on the Iranamadu tank; all tanks are built with protective bunds and these bunds have a spill level raised well above sea-level. The spill level of Iranamadu is 32 ft. Usually the complaint is that the water is well below this spill-level; but the usual assumes the possibility of the unusual.

If the water threatened to rise above the spill-level there is a likelihood of the bunds being breached; so when there is such a fear the authorities open the sluice gates; and since on this occasion there was such a fear, the authorities opened up the sluice gates; I understand they were opened only on one side and we happened to be on that side. So the impact on that side of the outgoing water would be heavy. The tank covers a vast area and the water stored corresponds.

On came the rushing torrent. Fortunately most of us live in houses raised well above the ground level; but once we stepped out of our house we stepped into knee-deep water. Even in the time of Noah there came a time when the floods ceased. And so it was with us. Once the sluice gates were closed it was dry land and the situation became normal.

Though the situation was normal as far as we were concerned, it must be realised that once there has been such an event, certain consequences were inevitable. In

the first place the Jaffna-Colombo road had suffered badly; the traffic upon it is always heavy and the road is not kept in good repair; in about three places between here and Jaffna the roads were impassable and unfit for any kind of traffic. So that our good friends Telfer Mook, who was on a short visit to Jaffna but still insisted on seeing Navajeevanam could only come as far as Kodikamam 20 miles from here and had to cancel his intended visit to us.

In the second place, the damage and devastation caused to the crops were terrific and irreparable. Practically the entire Northern part of Ceylon was affected and, I believe, farmers would be happy if they reaped 30 percent of their expected crop. Farming in these areas is not a hobby but the source of livelihood for most people so the results of the flood are better inferred than described.

On the whole, we must count ourselves fortunate in that the disaster was not greater. When the floods were at their highest it was feared that bigger tanks than Iranamadu in the dry zone would breach. Prakrama Samudhura the biggest tank in Ceylon whose spill level is a 100ft might also breach; the water stopped short by a few inches. If they had risen a little higher and the walls breached the catastrophe to the whole country will defy both description and imagination.

It is now time to deal with two points that may attract some attention; the first is the statement that Navajeevanam has always been a family concern and secondly if it has been so, whether there is any justification for its maintenance.

In dealing with this statement that it has been a family enterprise, it must be remembered that the concept of such an enterprise as Navajeevanam arose when Mr & Mrs Thambyrajah, Sister Baker, Mr & Mrs K. P. Muthiah and the Rev. & Mrs. J. J. Ratnarajah met together in 1955. Of these K. P. Muthiah & his wife remained at Chundikuli. The Rev. J. J. Ratnarajah never left the Parish Ministry and, in fact, served as a Pastor in Malaya for some years. Only the Thambyrajahs (and their children) and Sister Baker came and settled at Navajeevanam. Of these, Sister Baker is an elderly English spinster, who knew nothing of the problems involved in farming and other industrial undertaking. She could not actively and intelligently establish communications with the local community, nor could she supervise and handle the conduct of such a pioneering venture. It was therefore inevitable that the practical handling and conduct of affairs should devolve on Thambyrajah. Later when his sons began to grow it was in the very nature of things that they should help the father.

The statement that Navajeevanam is a family concern is made by people living comfortably in Jaffna. By them it can be easily made. But if they want to turn it into a charge involving guilt, it will be another matter. It will be like saying that Anunsden, the Norwegian explorer, who discovered the South Pole in 1911, was conducting a private enterprise from which he had excluded the public. He did not exclude the public, the public simply was not there. Thambyrajah ran Navajeevanam because there was no one else to do it. He had thrown up a settled career to take up a pioneering venture the future of which, was uncertain and to live in the place with his family and stake his

whole future on it. Anunsden discovered the South Pole, because no body else would undertake the hazards of the task.

Is there, however, a justification for perpetuating the situation? There are two kinds of undertakings: the one with the profit-motive and the other meant to put into effect certain ideals in regard to which profit and loss have no place. To the first kind belong to all commercial enterprises. At the end of the year the Directors meet and declare dividends (profits). Though many commercial undertakings are run by Directors elected periodically by the share-holders still there are many in the hands of single families. The "New York Times" is still a family concern; so were the Fords and Rockefellers till recently; so are many other family-controlled concerns even now. But generally, Joint Stock Companies with a profit-motive can be conducted by elected Directors and Managers. The profit-motive is something that is easily understood and any reasonable honest man can be entrusted with the task of being the Managing Director helped by an elected Board of Directors.

The second kind of undertakings are meant to carry out certain ideals. Behind such undertakings there are sometimes age-long organizations like the Church; or more often there are undertakings which, though not immemorial, are still well - established and well - organized like the Red Cross or the various agencies under the United Nations. They can appoint, supervise and remove officers; because whoever comes and goes, there is a great organization behind the undertakings which will see to it that their ideals are really put into operation and carried out in the proper manner. The ultimate responsibility rests with the organizations themselves.

Navajeevanam is a venture to carry out certain ideals with no well organized Society behind it. Who then can be entrusted with the task of seeing that the ideals for which it was established are carried on day by day and year by year. No doubt there is a body of twelve worthy gentlemen called the "Advisory Council" who are supposed to meet twice a year. It is doubtful whether they meet so regularly; but when they do, they meet in Jaffna Town and not here. Can this body be asked to carry on the project of Navajeevanam. They will be the first to decline any such proposition. They have no objection to being consulted on important problems but they will disavow any intention of administering the place and its activities. It is not casting any reflection on them that they should take up such an attitude, because they are high-placed persons in the life of Jaffna and cannot possibly surrender their present responsibilities.

Who then is left? And what is more natural than that his family which was with Thambyrajah from the beginning of the institution, has grown with it, is steeped in its atmosphere and to which his ideals are the breath of their lives should continue the responsibility. Not merely has the family moved in the atmosphere and ideals for which Navajeevanam was founded it has moved in and out of the community round about and earned its esteem. Once in the early days Thambyrajah went and asked a man for a loan of Rs. 5000/-. "It is improper for me to give money to a Minister; Go home and send your son for it", he said. When the money was returned he refused to accept any interest.

It is not merely the community around Navajeevanam that has got used to the family but the commercial community at

Paranthan (and Kilinochchi also) give practically unlimited credit and Banks give overdrafts on demand. And to-day the son enjoys the same trust as the father did. It is practically impossible for them to extend the same confidence to an appointed officer who might come here for five years and then disappear.

Also it is important to bear in mind that this form of continuity is the best method of ensuring succession in cases like this. Ashrams and similar institutions started by childless people are faced with great problem as far as succession is concerned, when the person or group that founded them die. Here the son can be depended upon to step into his father's shoes, and things proceed naturally and normally.

One fundamental question has now got to be asked. What are we up to in Navajeevanam? Many visitors through the years have paid glowing tributes to the scenery that surrounds us, its greenery and the rich vegetation in the background. This is a tribute to Nature. No doubt we have cultivated the fields; but there are times when the ground is bare. The fact that the fields are green when the rice plants are growing is because they always do so, whether the paddy is sown by good men or bad men.

Quite a few have expressed admiration of the peace and tranquility that pervades this place. This is particularly a consideration for appreciation to those coming from large cities. But this is a tribute to our location. Many other visitors pay a tribute to the various activities carried on here: agriculture, carpentry, poultry, piggery, dairy, electronics, etc. No doubt in some of these cases we are training apprentices. But agriculture, poultry and

dairy are not the things we came to do. We do them to support ourselves. What did we come to do and what are we trying to do?

Oddly enough, it is John Walter Bicknell who knew little of us and dropped in here only on a casual visit who caught the point and paid us a tribute which only can justify our existence: "To care for the last, the least and the lost. This is what you are doing", he said. whether we are fulfilling this ideal or not, this is what we have been trying to do, within our resources and in the circumstances which have been allowed us. This is what Thambyrajah and Sister Baker set out to do and which is being done now.

What about the future of Navajeevanam? It is customary in concluding the history of an institution to indulge in some speculation about its future. But fundamentally such an attempt is a vain attempt because the essence of history is unpredictability. What did Thambyrajah and Sister Baker know of the future of Navajeevanam when they came here in 1959? what did they know of the needs that would arise? By what stretch of imagination could they think that K.N.H. the C.V.J.M. and the U.B.C.W.M. would come to their rescue?

But if history is unpredictable, there is something that has no unpredictability about it—the faithfulness of God. So as we go into the unknown, though we have no means of knowing what changes there would be, what new needs may arise, what new burdens we may have to shoulder, there is one thing that we can depend upon "He that has called you is faithful", says the Apostle Paul. that was enough for him and it is enough for us.

NAVAJEEVANAM FELLOWSHIP PARANTHAN

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Medical Consultant

Dr. K. Sri Ranjan, M. B. B. S. (Ceylon)

Auditors

Messrs. Ratnam & Company, Jaffna

APPRECIATION

We will be failing in our duty if we do not say a big 'Thank You' to our Friend. His task was an uphill one in the absence of ready-made records. He could not depend purely on the memories of men and women, which are 'too frail a thread to hang History on'. He had, therefore, to make a thorough search for records and even dive into the personal diaries of Sister Baker to connect events with dates and vice versa. His long association with Navajeevanam-actually from its inception - spending annual holidays for so many years had made him remember the geography of the place the buildings that came up from time to time and to remember major events in most of which he himself took part. We are grateful to him for this very worthwhile contribution to Navajeevanam.

NAVAJEEVANAM FELLOWSHIP

