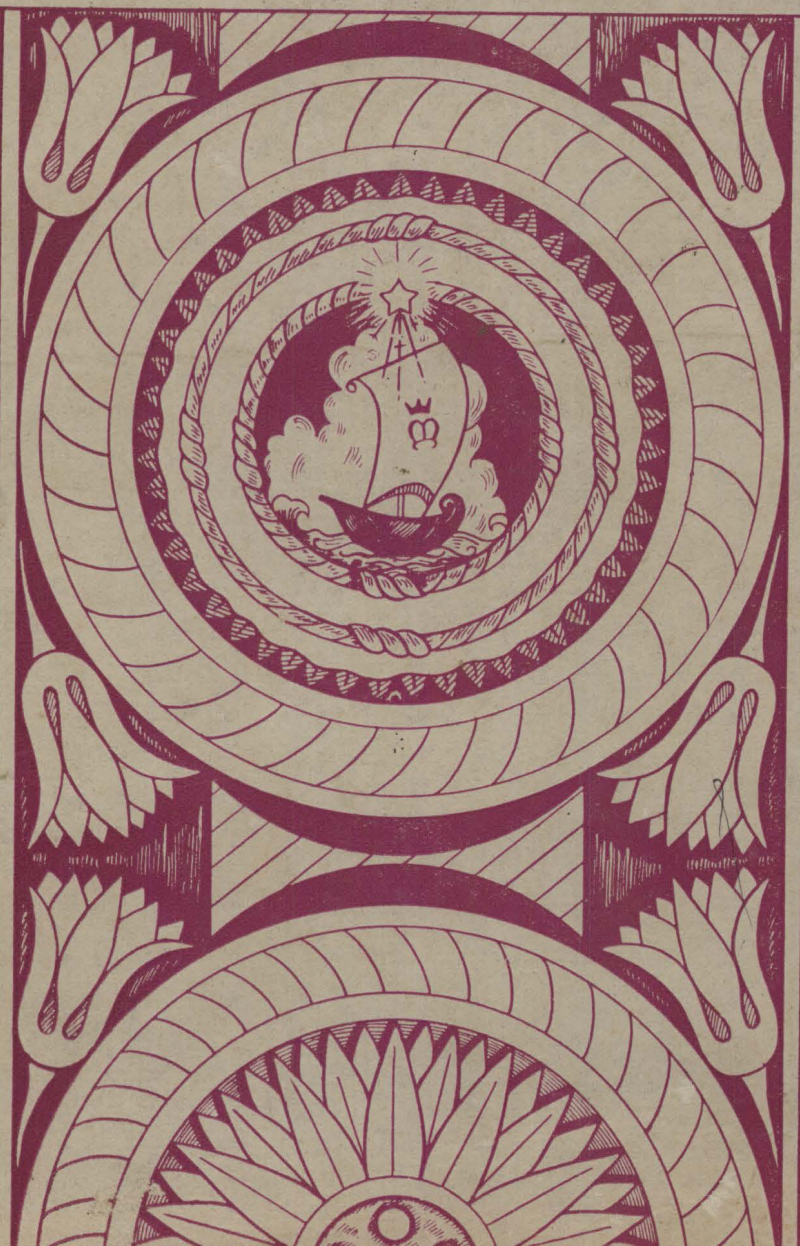


STELLA MARIS COLLEGE



Madras 1954

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

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tella Maris College
Magazine

1954

dedicated to the

Immaculate Conception of
The Ever Blessed Virgin Mary
Mother of God

In whose Honour we celebrate this

Marian Centenary

December 1854 - December 1954

*"Mother! whose virgin bosom was uncroft
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast."*

(Wordsworth)

The design of the cover is taken from a bas-relief on a pillar in the "Gautamiputra" Cave at Nasik
(1st Century B.C. approx.)

Vestiges of Marian Devotion Around Old Mylapore.

Devotion to Our Lady, the Virgin Mother of God, is in all countries as old as Christianity itself. Existing Marian Churches around Mylapore, however, date only from the sixteenth or seventeenth century when they were constructed by the Portuguese who are renowned for their love of the Blessed Virgin. Franciscans, Jesuits, Augustinians and Dominicans all played their part in spreading devotion to Mary. This article gives a brief historical account of some of the Marian Churches around Mylapore, together with an explanation and art appreciation of the statue or picture of Our Lady held in veneration there.

Our Lady of Mylapore.—

In the Cathedral of St. Thomas, Mylapore, close to the Apostle's Tomb is the statue of Our Lady of Mylapore. It has been the object of veneration since the sixteenth century when it already had a place of honour in the Church of St. Thomas, reconstructed by the Portuguese in 1523.

The first historical mention of the statue is in connection with the visit of St. Francis Xavier, Apostle of India, in 1545, when he spent a few months with Fr. Gaspat Coelho, Vicar of Mylapore. It was before this image, which has for more than four hundred years been near the Apostle's tomb, that the Saint used to spend his nights in prayer, being often subjected to temptations and even to physical onslaughts from the devil. One night the Saint was so beaten and ill-treated that he could be heard calling, "Our Lady, will you not come to my help?" It was actually while praying to the Mother of God before this statue that the great Missionary received the Divine inspiration to go farther East to the lands which were to be the scene of his greatest labours and his death.¹

The original sixteenth century Portuguese Church of St. Thomas no longer exists. Becoming too small for the needs of the Christians, it was replaced in 1896 by the present beautiful Gothic Cathedral, the statue being placed on a temporary altar opposite the Chapel of Our Lady of Pompeii. Finally, after several changes, it was restored at the time of the Centenary celebrations of 1952 to its original place of honour near the Tomb of St. Thomas.

¹ Monumenta Xaveriana Tome II pp. 488, 946-948.



The statue is of wood three feet high, and represents Our Lady seated, her hands joined in prayer and her eyes piously cast down. She wears a long-sleeved robe ; a veil covers her head falling upon her shoulders in the form of a long mantle. Below the veil the edge of a second head-covering is to be seen, passing around the neck and continuing almost to the waist. Both mantle and veil are gilded ; the second head-covering is white, constituting a delicate frame for the beautifully carved features. Mouth, nose and eyes are finely fashioned and of exquisite beauty. The whole statue reveals Western workmanship, and can safely be assumed to have been brought by the Portuguese. It is not only the oldest, but also by far the most beautiful statue of Our Lady of the Coromandel Coast.

Our Lady of Light.—

The Church of Nossa Senhora da Luz (Our Lady of Light), Mylapore, was built in the sixteenth century by Portuguese of the Order of Friars Minor. The first connection of the Franciscans with Mylapore dates from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when several of the Friars en route for China, halted there to obtain passage on boats journeying between India and China. Of these John de Monte Corvino, later to become the first Bishop and Archbishop of Peking, was the earliest. He remained in Mylapore for thirteen months, 1292-93.¹

In 1500 Fr. Louis da Salvador, another Franciscan, visited Mylapore,² after which date the Friars established themselves permanently along the South-east coast from Negapatam to Mylapore where they achieved much good. A Portuguese inscription in the outer wall of the nave of Luz Church gives the date of its construction as 1516. The following is a translation :

“ Friar Pedro da Atongia, an Observantine Religious of St. Francis built the Church of Our Lady of Light in 1516 ”. In spite of the clarity of the inscription the date remains a matter of controversy among historians.³

The Church remained in the hands of the Franciscans until the middle of the nineteenth century. The last date on record is that of the death of Fr. Francis das Dores in 1847, as is commemorated in a tablet before the altar in the sacristy of the Church.

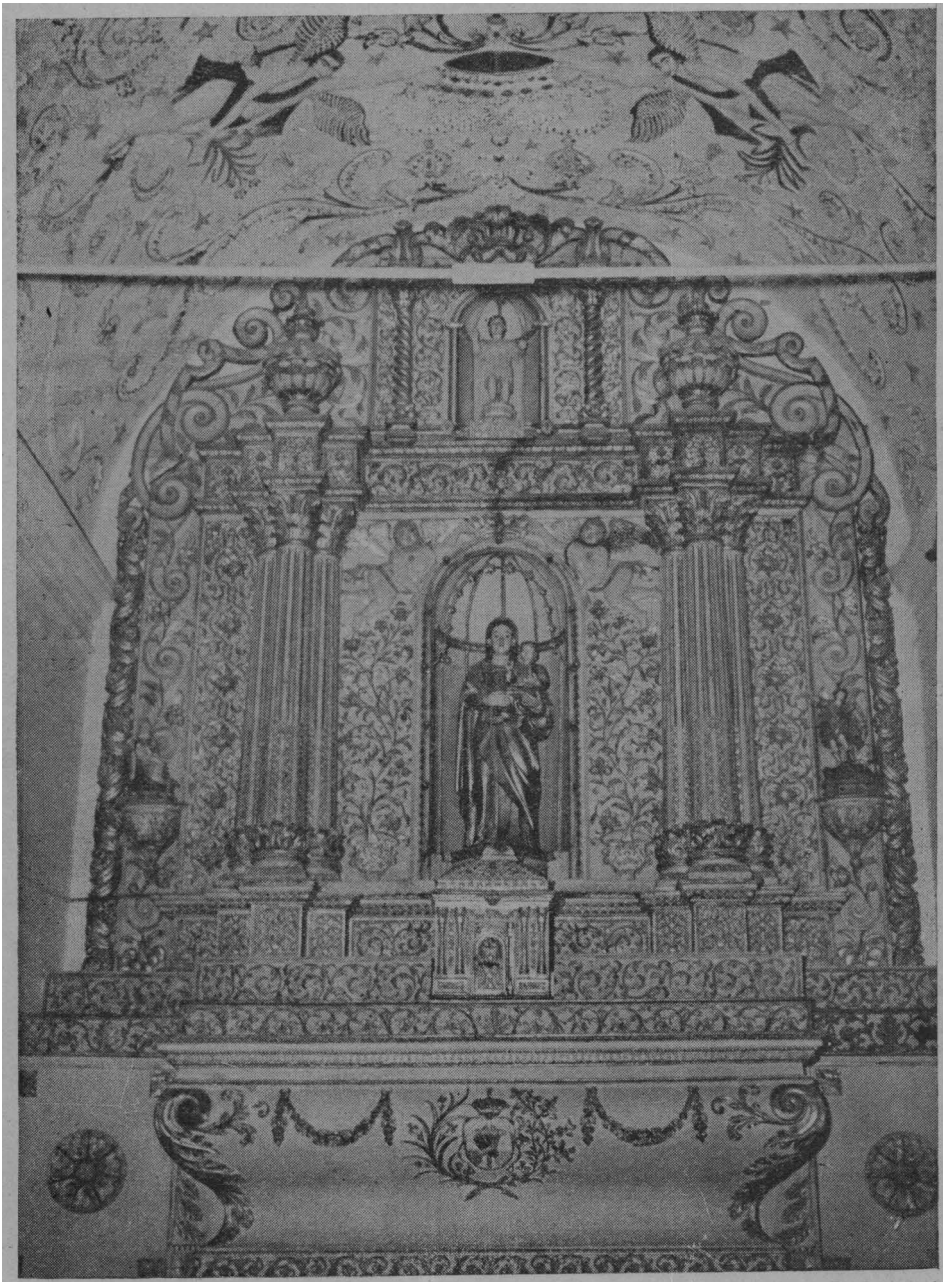
The title of the Church seems to have originated in the tradition that mariners in danger of shipwreck were attracted to the place by a mysterious light (Luz), and so attained safe Harbour. The story is commemorated in stucco-work in the vaulted ceiling of the church which represents the sun encircled by six stars.

The statue of Our Lady of Light stands above the main altar in the central niche of a very ornate wooden reredos (altar screen), and represents the Madonna with the Divine Child. The statue may be attributed to a local artist. Above the niche are two cherubs holding a crown. In a smaller, upper niche is a clothed statue of the Infant with an Armenian inscription mentioning the name of Petrus Usca, the great eighteenth century benefactor of religious institutions.

¹ Colonel Yule : “Cathay and the Way Thither ” Vol. I ; see also Medlycott : “ India and the Apostle Thomas ”, pp. 87-88.

² M. Mullbauer : “ Geschichte der Katholischen Missionen in Ostindien ”, 1852, p. 44.

³ Love : “ Vestiges of Old Madras ”, Vol. I, pp. 289-290.



OUR LADY OF LIGHT

The altar-table bears the Franciscan emblem—the arms of St. Francis of Assisi and of Christ intertwined. The surrounding decoration is an inferior imitation of that found on the altar of the Rosary Church, Mylapore. The whole reredos is of a much later date than the actual church, as is borne out by the style of the decoration and by local tradition. The statue, like the surrounding decorations, is gilded, in contrast to the white background.

Mother of God.—

Not far from the Cathedral of St. Thomas is the old Portuguese Church of Mae de Deus (Mother of God), another shrine of Marian devotion in Mylapore. The Jesuit connection with Mylapore dates back to 1545 when St. Francis Xavier visited the district. Before leaving, he was begged by the people to send them Fathers of the Society. Accordingly, two years later, in 1547, Fr. Alphonso Cypriano of the University of Coimbra arrived in Mylapore and took up residence in San Thome, next to the church of St. John which was situated within the Portuguese fortress.¹

The growing Christian population necessitated the construction of an additional church, so it was that a stone church was erected by the Portuguese, outside the fortress. This is the present church of Mae de Deus, which was solemnly blessed on September 8th 1576.²

The first historical mention of the statue of Mae de Deus is contained in a letter of Rev. Andrea Lopez, S. J., Provincial of Malabar, who visited Mylapore in 1644.

“The church is much resorted to both by the Portuguese and the natives of the land There is a beautiful statue of Our Lady of a goodly size. The number of Christians exceeds 1700”. The statue was revered even by non-Christians, one of whom “by his will left to his heirs the obligation of paying certain rent, in order that every Saturday they should send rushes to strew the church of Our Lady : a custom which is kept up even to this day”.³

In the year 1646-1647 the district suffered much from famine. In five months 4,000 persons, out of a population estimated at 19,000, died in Madras Town. However, many Christians, who emigrated “could not live away from their dear church, and preferred to live in want rather than stay away from the shrine of Our Lady. Her statue was the object of great veneration, not only among the Christians of the place, who were called the Christians of Mae de Deus, but also among the Portuguese elsewhere. Thus the church was much frequented by pilgrims, who came to present their offerings and their prayers”.⁴

The church was served by the Jesuits until the late eighteenth century and is now in the hands of the Diocesan clergy. The building retains the original form, except that the nave has been extended from the old façade to the gateway (Peria Palli Street), which now serves as the façade of the church.

¹ Oriente Conquistado, Vol. II.

² Oriente Conquistado, Vol. II, p. 156.

³ “A short account of the Missions of the Malabar Province” 1644. The original manuscript is preserved in the Jesuit archives in Rome: Love : “Vestiges of Old Madras”, Vol. I, p. 302.

⁴ Love : “Vestiges of Old Madras”, Vol. III, p. 558 ; Fr. D. Ferroli, S. J. “The Jesuits in Malabar”, Vol. I, p. 402.



MOTHER OF GOD

The main altar has the usual reredos, which is here completely white, with a central niche, in which stands the wooden statue of Mae de Deus with the Child Jesus in her arms. About five feet in height, the statue, although heavy and clumsy, is of a charming naivety, most probably the work of a local artist.

The reredos shows a certain connection with the Rosary Church, to be described later, especially in the double row of twisted columns and in the similarity of decorative motifs. But here we feel there is a further Indianisation, in that the lower part of the twisted columns is replaced by a floral design and the outer vertical border, on either side, swells out into a splendid floral pattern, far more naturalistic than in the case of the Rosary Church.

Our Lady of the Rosary.—

Rosary Church, another Marian shrine, was built by Portuguese Dominicans in 1635, as the old figures on the portal signify. Situated near the church was the monastery of the friars, demolished only a few years ago. From 1662-72, when the town of San Thome was in the hands of Golconda, it was forbidden to use the Church, as also the Cathedral, for divine worship. In the eighteenth century a new misfortune occurred when the church was used as a barracks. In 1789 its Vicar complained to the British Government that the church was in "a very ruinous state" on account of its being twice occupied by troops during the Hyder Ali invasions.¹

Mylapore's connection with the Rosary and the Order of St. Dominic, which spread this devotion, dates from the thirteenth century. John of Monte Corvino, a Franciscan Friar, visited Mylapore in 1292-93 and resided close to the church of St. Thomas for thirteen months. The companion of his journey was Friar Nicholas of Pistoia, of the Order of St. Dominic, who died in Mylapore and was buried in the church of St. Thomas. It was this Dominican Friar who first recited the Rosary in Mylapore almost at the very beginning of its institution by St. Dominic.²

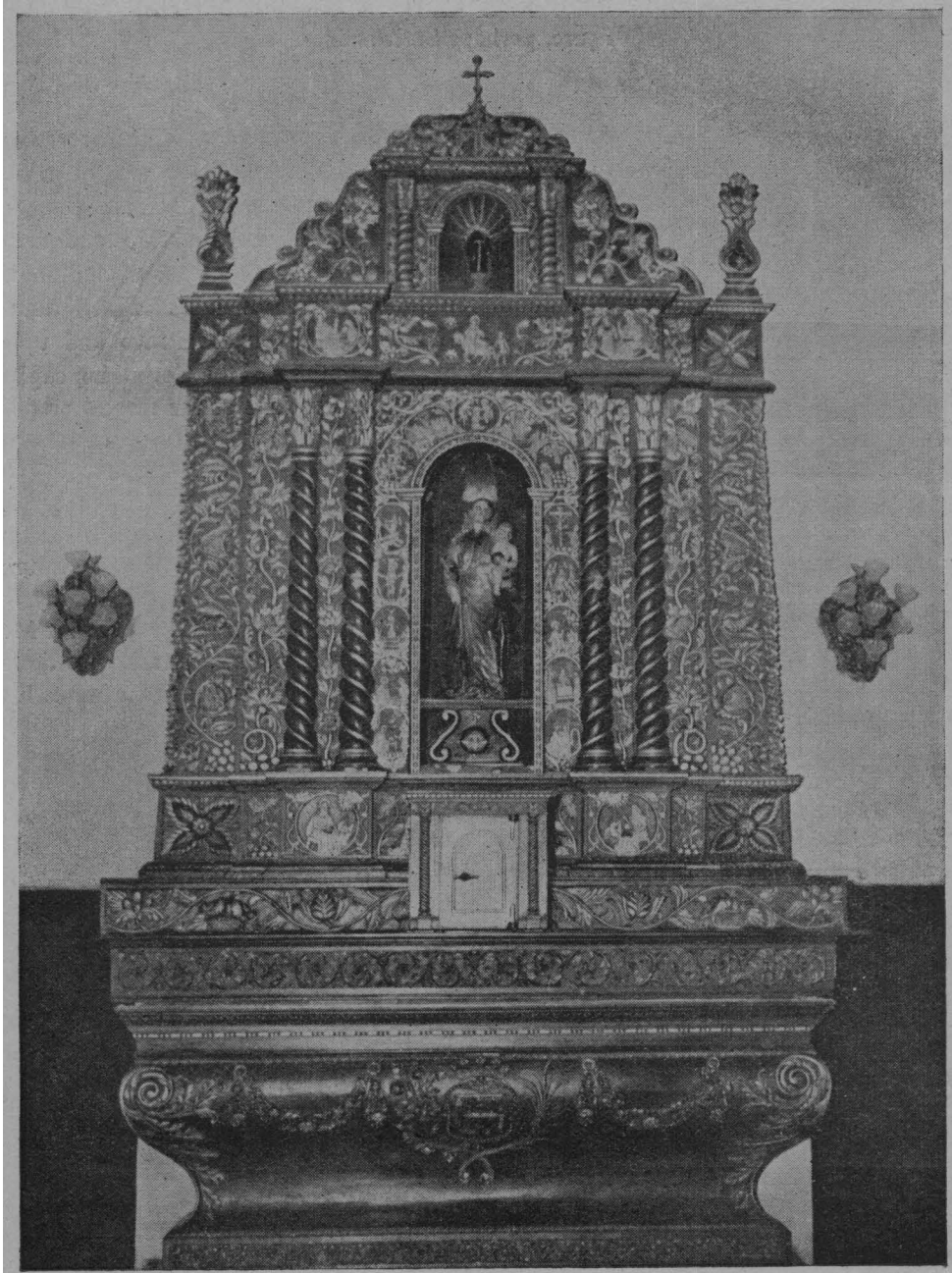
The popularity of the Rosary and of the Dominicans can be adduced from the titles of several of the roads in the vicinity of Rosary Church, e.g. Rosary Church Road (or, in Tamil, Jebamale Madha Road), on which the church stands, and Doming Lane and Doming Street, both named after St. Dominic (San Domingo in Portuguese).

Behind the altar is a high wooden reredos with the usual niche in the centre containing a wooden statue of Our Lady with the Child Jesus. In her right hand she holds a sceptre. The Child bears in His left hand an Orb, whilst with His right He tenderly fondles the neck of His Mother, upon Whom He gazes with affection. The physiognomies, drapery and general execution of the figures point definitely to Portuguese craftsmanship of a good quality. The style is the so-called rococo, as is especially revealed in the treatment of the drapery. In an upper, smaller niche stands a statue of St. Dominic, now overpainted in brown, like the reredos itself.

A very interesting feature is the beautiful set of oval carvings representing the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary which enframe the central niche. Other figure carvings above

¹ Love : " Vestiges of Old Madras ", Vol. III, p. 395.

² Yule : " Cathay and the Way Thither ", 1866, Vol. I.



ROSARY CHURCH



OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

and below the double columns represent the four Evangelists (Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Immediately above the Madonna there is an equestrian figure, perhaps St. Martin.

In general, the carving of the altar and reredos reveals two different styles : the altar and first predella (or raised shelf for the candlesticks) are of a fine Portuguese workmanship ; the second predella and reredos proper reveal local craftsmanship and are a hybrid work i.e. a combination of Western and Indian Art. The architectural frame with its twisted double columns on either side, broken architrave and upper columns are misinterpretations of the Corinthian capital. The undulating floral decorations of the second predella and side panels are, on the contrary, of real Indian inspiration. They manifest both imagination and decorative ability. As already mentioned, there appears to be a certain similarity between this reredos and that of the Church of Mae de Deus. At Rosary Church the artist's liberty seems to have been curtailed by the

classical rigidity which obliged him to confine his pattern within straight lines. At Mae de Deus, on the other hand, the artist's imagination overflows and sweeps aside restricting principles, never completely assimilated by him, to give free expression to his innate love of nature and decorative sense, so typical of Indian art.

Our Lady of the Mount.—

At a distance of nearly seven miles from Mylapore in a south-westerly direction, stands an isolated granite hill, commonly known as St. Thomas' Mount, held in great veneration by the local population not only as being the scene of St. Thomas' martyrdom, but also as an ancient centre of Marian devotion.

Today a hard climb of one hundred and thirty-four granite steps leads to the summit of the Mount where stands the Church of Our Lady of the Expectation.¹ Historians are of the opinion that St. Thomas erected, or caused to be erected, the first church on this spot. Fr. John de Marignolli, writing about 1349, says :

“ The third province (of India) is called Maabar² and the church of St. Thomas, which he built with his own hands is there³ besides another which he built by the agency of workmen. These he paid with certain very great stones⁴ which I have seen there . . .”⁵

After the Apostle's death (December 21st, 68 A.D.) the place became a centre of pious pilgrimage. As centuries passed a small oratory and later a larger church were

¹ A feast celebrated annually on December 18th.

² Maabar is Coromandel coast, not Malabar.

³ Near the Tomb at Mylapore.

⁴ St. Thomas' Mount is strewn with huge boulders.

⁵ Yule : “ Cathay and the Way Thither ”, p. 374.



OUR LADY OF THE MOUNT

erected and disappeared until the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. We have an interesting account of conditions on their arrival : "When the Portuguese arrived at this place there existed no edifice on that Mount ; there were, however, some foundation-walls only, that were above the level ground nearly one cubit,¹ laid from East to West, which appeared to be those of a very small oratory ; on these foundations (as Nuno a Luis da Faria says in his writings) Diogo Fernandez—who resided there and was one of the first Portuguese that came here—erected an oratory in the year 1523 . . . This oratory was vaulted and was dedicated to the Mother of God and it was so small that it could hardly contain eight persons.

"Later on, as pilgrimages and devotion to the Holy Mount and the Chapel of the Mother of God increased, the residents of this place resolved to build another larger Chapel"².

Thus the present church was erected in 1547 and the title : "Nossa Senhora da Expectacao" (Our Lady of the Expectation) written in Portuguese around an arch before the sanctuary, as can be seen today. The church was extended by the Armenians in the eighteenth century, as is proved by a tablet in the outer wall : "Coja Safar Zacharias had this porch in the door of the church made in the year 1707".

The church is the depository of two precious relics—namely the Cross of St. Thomas and a painting on wood of the Madonna and Child. It is generally accepted that the Cross was carved by St. Thomas himself. It was while kneeling in prayer before it that he was speared by four soldiers of Mazdai. The Stone which was discovered when digging the foundations of the church in 1547, is now embedded in the wall behind the altar. It is sometimes referred to as the "Bleeding Cross", due to the fact that from 1558 to 1704 a remarkable phenomenon occurred almost annually on December 18th, the titular feast of the church, when a miraculous liquid exuded from the stone.

The coloured painting of the Madonna and Child, also an object of great devotion, is undeniably one of the oldest and most venerated Christian paintings in India, around which many traditions have sprung. It is said to have been painted by St. Luke, brought to India by the Apostle and discovered in his tomb. The first authentic mention of the picture however is in 1559. "When Dom Constantino was Viceroy of India, the three Brothers who at the time were the Kings of Bisnaga,³ came to this town⁴ and owing to some offences, they had received from the inhabitants of the said town, took prisoners thirty-one of the leading persons of the place and placed them at Chandagiri the chief town of their kingdom ;⁵ and although they did not meddle with the belongings of the inhabitants of the town, yet the Kings took with them the coffer of the Relics and bones of the Apostle St. Thomas, and also a Painting of Our Lady three spans long and two

¹ One cubit = $\frac{1}{2}$ yard.

² Report by Bishop of Cochin, Dom Frei Andre, who visited Mylapore for the fourth time in 1600. The original document is in the archives of the Jesuits in Rome.

³ Vijayanagar.

⁴ San Thome.

⁵ The Kings were incited to this act, as well as to the imposition of a heavy fine and the taking of hostages by a renegade Portuguese. Refer "Conquista de Ceylao" by Fr. de Queyros, S. J., who lived for fifty-three years in India and died April 10th, 1688.

spans broad, which until this day is in the House of Our Lady of the Mount distant one league from this town.

“ There is a general belief and tradition that when the Painting arrived at the Court along with the coffer of the Saint’s bones, the queen, wife of the chief of the Brothers, Rama Raju, was so frightened in a dream with the apparition of the Virgin that she compelled the King to send back to their place both the Relics and the Painting he had taken with him. So the Painting was brought to this town¹ by order of the King in a palanquin and the Coffers of the Relics of St. Thomas was handed over to one of the principal men from among those that were detained there, Gil Vaz Palha, married and living there ; and there is a person at this place who remembered well that the said Gil Vaz Palha entered the town riding a bullock when he was bringing with him the said Relics ”.²

By 1601, the date of the above extract, the picture was already in the Church of the Expectation at St. Thomas’ Mount. Writing in 1726, Desideri says, “ In addition to the said Cross there is in that Church another lovely monument, that is, a most impressive representation of the Holy Virgin.”

The picture shows Our Lady and the Child Jesus in half-portrait. She is tenderly embracing the Child who, half-swathed, raises the right hand in a gracious pose. The Virgin wears a long-sleeved red robe with a gilded border. A blue veil, also with gilded border, covers her head and falls down in graceful, undulating folds on either side of the face. The features of both the Madonna and Child are refined and pleasing. The expression of the Child is charming ; that of the Madonna is one of sorrowful beauty. However, defects in proportion throughout the picture somewhat detract from its artistic effect. The colours remain fresh and clear although the paint is peeling away and damaging the face of the Madonna. In style it is Western and seems to date to the Post-Renaissance period.

At the present time, as in the sixteenth century, the Mount remains a sacred place of pilgrimage. Visitors climb its steps continuously throughout the year. December 18th, the Feast of the Expectation, is annually celebrated with great splendour, all the inhabitants of the district uniting in the expression of their loving devotion to Our Lady of the Mount.

The Immaculate Conception venerated in Mylapore.—

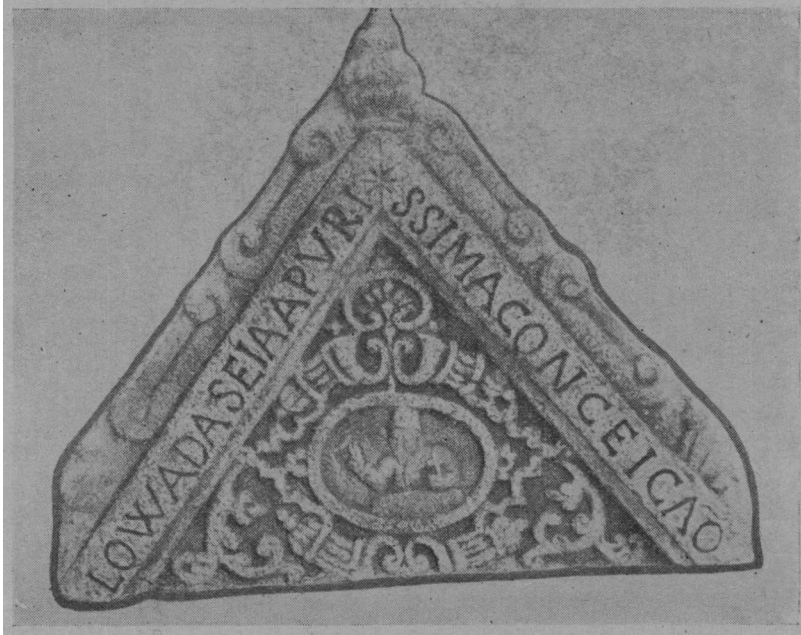
In the archaeological collection of the Arch-diocese of Madras-Mylapore exists a white triangular stone, bearing a Portuguese inscription and carving in bas-relief, which proves that Mylapore had the glorious privilege of being dedicated to the Immaculate Conception as early as the seventeenth century, almost two hundred years before the official proclamation of the dogma by Pope Pius IX in 1854.

The stone, which was unearthed in 1916, bears an inscription in Portuguese reading : “ LOWADA SEIA A PVRISSIMA CONCEICAO ”—Praised be the most pure Conception. In the centre of the stone is an oval médallion, representing a bearded man.

¹ San Thome.

² Report by Bishop of Cochin quoted above.

On his head he appears to wear a cap or a low crown. His hair is long and flowing, and in his left hand he holds a small cross. His right hand is raised in benediction. The



STONE DEDICATING MYLAPORE TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION 17TH CENTURY

Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore and formerly of the Diocese of Mylapore is of the opinion that the figure represents either Pope Paul V or Pope Clement X, for the reasons explained below.

For the origin of the stone, we must go back to the history of Portugal in the seventeenth century. At the request of Philip II, King of Portugal, the Diocese of Mylapore was erected by Pope Paul V on January 9th, 1606. The same king also petitioned the Pope to decide the question of the Immaculate Conception. By a Constitution of 1617 the Pope forbade the assertion, or even the contention, in sermons, lectures and theses, that the Blessed Virgin had been conceived in sin.¹ The Bull (Papal decree) arrived in India in 1618 and was received with great manifestations of joy.² In the year 1640 Dom Joao IV (John IV), a monarch with a fervent devotion to the Blessed Virgin, ascended the throne of Portugal and regained its independence. On March 24th, 1646, he publicly dedicated Portugal and her foreign possessions to the Blessed Virgin, under the title of the Immaculate Conception. Two days later the King and the "three estates of the realm" (i.e. the Council of Lords, Clergy and people) solemnly swore in a full assembly of parliament, to defend with their lives, if necessary, their belief in the Immaculate Conception. Twenty-five years later, May 8th, 1671, Pope Clement X officially approved the royal dedication and oath in a Brief "Eximia dilectissimi".³

¹ "The Immaculate Conception" approved by Bishop of Trichinopoly on April 15th 1904.

² Mitras Lusitanas, Vol. I, p. 120.

³ Mitras Lusitanas, Vol. I, p. 148.

In the meantime the oath spread to the Portuguese possessions overseas. Archbishop Mârteres of Goa ordered it to be taken by the Cathedral Chapter and all parishes under his jurisdiction in 1647.¹ This included Mylapore. By a Royal Warrant of 20th June 1654 it was ordered that an inscription declaring the Immaculate Conception should be placed at the entrance of all cities and towns in Portugal and her dominions.² Two years later such inscriptions were erected in Goa, Diu and Chaul.³

In the same year 1656, or perhaps 1657 at the latest, the triangular stone of Mylapore was installed, most probably in the Southern Gate of the citadel of San Thome, close to the spot where twentieth century excavation discovered it.

F. M. M.

(Acknowledgements to the Right Reverend Monsignor Alberto Pereira de Andrade, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore, for his kind assistance in supplying valuable documentary material.)



From nature up to law, from law to love :
This is the ascendant path in which we move
Impelled by God in ways that lighten still,
Till all things meet in one eternal thrill.

“ The brief precept is given there once for all. Love and do what thou wilt. If thou art silent, be silent for love. If thou speakest, speak for love. If thou correctest, correct for love. If thou sparest, spare for love. The root of love is within, and from it only good can come.”

St. Augustine.

¹ Fr. Goncalo de S. Jose : “ Relacao das Festas quando se Juroù a Conceicao na India, 1647, 4

² Boletim do Governo, 1865 No. 75.

³ Oriente Portugese, Vol. I, 1904, p. 618.

Extracts from the Principal's Report, College Day, March 6th, 1954.

Your Lordship, Reverend Clergy, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A little lad just six, enjoying his birthday cake, was asked how old he was. He looked up proudly and answered, "Going on seven".

Growth—

Stella Maris College is also "going on". A tangible proof lies in the March Examinations of 1953, when compared with the number of candidates presented in previous years, as also in the results obtained especially in the Intermediate groups. As to the B.A. classes, we find satisfaction in the fact that the first batch presented in Mathematics and allied subjects succeeded in obtaining three First Classes and one Second Class out of a total of nine students.

Another consoling feature was the completion of the Drawing and Painting Course, when four artists took their degrees, scoring two First Classes, and two Second Classes. For the first time we also brought the Indian Music syllabus to completion when the four candidates appearing secured one First Class, two Second Classes and one Pass. Talent in music, painting and drawing are all gifts from God. The College rejoices at the success of the students just as a window receives light, simply to reflect back to God His own favours.

This brings events up to July '53 when, like the little lad the College was "going on seven". Now that its number of courses has increased there is a greater demand for admission with a consequent rush for seats. The entrants of this year are of an enterprising kind, bent on making College life well worth living. There is no place in their lives for boredom, which generates revolution. If it is true of the Intermediates, it is also true of the College as a whole, where moral teaching is in honour.

Diploma in Social Service.—

The same atmosphere exists among the students of the newly established Diploma Course. The College is an institution for the general diffusion of knowledge. Knowledge creates love and love in turn generates knowledge. We see how these two processes perfected each other in Stella Maris. In the first years, our students knew little or nothing of Social Service. Knowledge grew, so did love. More love craved for better knowledge of slum dwellers. A Junior League sprang up, diffusing more knowledge and calling for more love which blossomed forth into a private one-year course in 1952. This in turn gave way to the present Diploma Course of the University of Madras and bids well to satisfy women's yearning for service on a more scientific basis. The course includes the study of the fundamental principles and methods in Social Work: Psychology, Child Welfare, Indian Social and Economic problems, together with practical training in field work. The students are given the opportunity of applying theory to practical experience in Social Welfare agencies. The fortnightly visits are intended to give them

orientation in the field of Social Work, while more detailed studies, observations, and active participation in welfare agencies are made during the vacation, when groups go out for training in Rural Uplift, Medical Social Work, Child Welfare, and Labour Relations.

With the kind assistance of the Corporation of Madras, the Rural Uplift group had the joy of seeing their labours crowned by the opening of an elementary school in Lalitha Nagar cheri, in January of this year. Their next ambition is the establishment of a medical centre to care for nearby cheris.

Other groups go to different local hospitals to study the emotional and social problems of the patients. They have so far succeeded in securing homes for destitute cases, and permanent medical care for lepers and paralytics.

The students of the child welfare group study the administration of the Welfare Institutions, the behaviour of the inmates in relation to their needs, and act as intermediaries between the children of these institutions and their respective homes ; four others are training as labour officers in factories.

We wish to express our gratitude to Dr. Vaz for his series of lectures on communicable diseases, and to the Health Department for sending a Doctor to complete the syllabus.

Hostel Impressions.—

Visit the Hostel at study time, when all is silent and still, and you would never suspect the gaiety its 150 members are ready to emit at the first stroke of the clock, or when perchance a harmless lizard happens to descend uninvited upon a group of non-zoologists. And then

Friendliness and good-will are the outstanding characteristics in our 1954 Hostelites. Social life has been a full one. Shyness vanished in a strong solution of weekly socials, forums and talent programmes. Budding artists revealing a touch of talent were not allowed to vegetate, but whisked promptly into the Hostel Choral or Dramatic Society, a decision they never regretted. Evening games have been another popular feature. Bleeding toes sometimes far outnumber the goals, but this proves no deterrent to sporting enthusiasts. A picnic, whether by day or night, is always welcome and there have been several of both varieties.

But Hostelites are just as eager to give as to get. Off to the cheris they go with a ready smile, to organise games, make a survey or deliver a speech. Monthly trips up to the creche at St. Thomas' Mount with gifts of food, clothing, sweets and toys are red-letter days in their diaries. "Ready for anything", a fire in the Chemistry Lab. transformed them into fire-fighters, springing from nowhere with pails, kettles and pans of sand.

As the year draws to a close, warm friends find it hard to face goodbyes, for "We've lived together like one big family and have shared each other's difficulties and pleasures. You have co-operated with us in every way and we've felt like big sisters to you." May God shower His choicest blessings on all of you.

* * * * *

Deterioration of the standard of education is a frequent topic of discussion today. None can deny the fact that it is low. Is there anything Stella Maris College can do about it ? Very little, yet that little has been attempted.

Last June an appeal went out challenging Parents, Students and Lecturers to form a united front for the advancement of studies. Should either of these fail, the whole system would lack co-ordination and unity.

I. Long experience has convinced us that absences are detrimental to progress : a lecture once lost is lost for ever. To remedy this we appealed to the Parents to see that their daughters put in full attendance the whole year through. This request has not fallen on deaf ears ; the attendance has improved beyond all expectation ; so also has the standard of studies.

II. The second point in the appeal had reference to the daily home preparation of assignments. Here again there has been marked improvement.

III. A third request had reference to seasonal reports which do not always carry out their mission of conveying to Parents the actual standing of the students. This also has had some effect.

A more personal contact of Parents and College Authorities must lead to a better understanding of students' problems. The interest of all must converge on each Student taken individually. Acting on these presumptions deterioration must cede the way to progress.

In Conclusion.—

The life of a College is a perpetual "going on," a striving after that inaccessible peak of perfection. In this upward climb we are encouraged to find ourselves in such distinguished company as that of the Director of Public Instruction, Srimathi O. C. Srinivasan, who laid aside very important official business to cheer the College on its way to full maturity. They say that education is bad or good ; the best makes the best citizens, and they will be none too good for this land of India. In our efforts to give of the best, we have been encouraged by the ever paternal interest of His Grace the Archbishop, our venerated Bishop, the clergy, Professors and a host of devoted friends. It is their hope that Stella Maris while "going on" in age may also increase "in wisdom and grace before God and man."



Address of the Director of Public Instruction, Srimathi O. C. Srinivasan, College Day.

Reverend Mother Principal, Your Grace, the Archbishop, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must first of all thank Rev. Mother Principal for having given me the opportunity of sharing the celebrations of this evening. We understand that this is the seventh year of the existence of this College, and from the report that has been read it is evident that the academic activities have been dismissed in a few words—all the rest of the story is about the extra-curricular activities that are going on side by side with the academic activities. We all know that the day when colleges confined themselves to academic distinction solely, are gone. All other activities are now considered pro-curricular and what is particularly characteristic of this college is that they are undertaking social service and have introduced a diploma course. Now this, I feel, is a very special feature, and in treating it the College is really following the great need of today. We know that India, with the rest of the other countries, is entering on a period of reconstruction, wherein social service is actually a most desired need. The whole of civilisation and the basis on which it rests is being remodelled and we know that today the desire of all countries is to see their people live in freedom from fear and freedom from want. This College has exhibited today a replica of all its activities. They have indeed taken a lot of trouble to show us exactly what practical things they have been doing and what practical training they have been giving to their students, and it has been a very great pleasure and a great privilege for me to see this exhibition and to go through every single activity. It is not as though they have attempted a few things here and a few things there. They have been doing very systematic work and the whole is shown in an integrated plan of welfare for elders and welfare for children. In taking up social work, they have not only helped women and children who were under-privileged and required their help, but they also saw to it that they taught them how to work for themselves and earn for themselves. If we simply go round helping people on every side we leave them helpless.

I was very much struck by the plans made and the way this social service is being done. We look to the women who come out from our Universities to give their best for the service of the country. I have no doubt that the training that has been given in this College will stand its students in very good stead when they go out to take their place in society.

It is generally known that fundamental humility, complete abnegation of self, a capacity for self-sacrifice and sympathy with others in their suffering is true greatness, and if we come across a person who possesses these characteristics, we can say that we have come near to true greatness. I am sure all those young women who come out of this College have learned the spirit of service and the value of this true greatness. As the Prime Minister of Canada is said to have mentioned when he visited this institution, there may be differences in the lives of people, but there is nothing like "superiority" and "inferiority". We do not go about social service in the spirit of superior people, we go about it in the sense that here are we possessing certain privileges by mere accident, and there are underprivileged people who have not received such gifts nor been given

such facilities. Our duty is to share what we have with others. We no longer live in a world where the privileged can stand aside and look down on the underprivileged. The very basis of happiness is lost in such a society, and this is a world in which, as I remarked before, we are trying to make our people free from fear and free from want. This is our aim, and it is in that spirit, I am sure, that this College has been working. I wish it every success and I hope that it will be able to do more and more in the same spirit of service in which it has begun.

Another characteristic feature that has been noted is the completion of the degree classes in music and drawing. As Rev. Mother Principal remarked, ability in aesthetic subjects is a gift, and the fact that numbers were very small shows that only those with aptitude have presented themselves. It is always so with aesthetic subjects. In these also I believe the College has a proud record, a very good achievement. I should also like to point out that I am very happy to renew my acquaintance with this Institution where I have previously had the happiness of staying for a few days and mingling with the girls of the College when first I came to Madras. I stayed in the Hostel and everything that has been said about the student's capacity for playing and for working I can fully endorse.

We have noticed amongst the students a great interest in sports as was proved by the loud cheering when the girls came up to receive their sports prizes. I did not notice so much enthusiasm when they won prizes for academic subjects. This shows how well the College appreciates play, and I hope it will keep up this spirit. Let the students keep their spirit of youth all their life and it will carry them a long way in the future.

I once again thank Reverend Mother Principal for the opportunity given me to be here this evening and I think I should not delay you further, because we know there is an entertainment to follow which everyone is anxious to see.



THOUGHTS OF TAGORE

“ The world is waiting for a country that loves God more than itself.”

“ Universities should never be made into mechanical organisations for collecting and distributing knowledge.”

“ The deepest source of all calamities in history is misunderstanding. For where we do not understand, we can never be just.”

A Memorable Event—

the welcome of Eugene Cardinal Tisserant.

On the occasion of the visit to Madras of His Eminence, Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, Dean of the College of Cardinals and Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Oriental Rites, on December 13th 1953, students of the College had the privilege of meeting him personally and of presenting him with an address containing their filial and respectful good wishes.

Your Eminence,

We, the Religious, staff, pupils and personnel of the various institutions of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in the diocese of Madras-Mylapore, assemble with great joy to greet you on the occasion of your visit to the Tomb of St. Thomas. To have had the honour of assisting together with the faithful, at the Mass of Your Eminence in the San Thome Cathedral, would have been to us an unprecedented delight. But what shall we say of the privilege which is now ours, of welcoming Your Eminence in our Convent compound and of presenting to you in person our greetings and good wishes.

Your numerous travels in the East, your vast knowledge of Oriental languages and rites, acquired by long years of intensive study, endear you to us as a true sympathiser and friend. We have followed with care the long and tiring journeys you have made in the diocese of Malabar, to which you brought not only the holy relics of St. Thomas the Apostle, but also your own paternal blessing and kindly interest. India has made heavy demands upon you since your arrival in Delhi on November 7th, but your joyous compli-ance on every occasion has somewhat encouraged and emboldened us. Hence it is that we enjoy the rare privilege of your presence here today.

In the shadow of the Cathedral of St. Thomas we already enjoy many blessings, in the person of His Excellency, our Auxiliary Bishop, and of His Grace, the Archbishop, who is soon to make his permanent home amongst us.

With the clergy and faithful of Mylapore, we have long rejoiced in the possession of the Tomb of the Apostle, empty though the tomb was. Now, however, like Magdalen, we experience a new joy in the precious relic Your Eminence has deposited in our cathedral. Its veneration will be for us a constant souvenir of the memorable visit of Your Eminence into our midst.

Your tour of our country signifies, we know, the paternal affection and solicitude of our beloved Holy Father for his children in far distant India. The past twelve months have given us several proofs of his special predilection for our land. December 1952 saw the visit of His Eminence Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, as Papal Legate to the Malabar Centenary Celebration of St. Thomas and St. Francis Xavier, whilst 1953 opened with the signal grace of the creation of the first Indian Cardinal, His Eminence Cardinal Gracias.

Whilst assuring you of our fervent prayers for safety at each stage of the journey, may we request you, on returning to Rome, to please place before the Holy Father the assurance of the grateful and loving homage of his children of Mylapore.

Kneeling for the blessing of Your Eminence, we humbly request your prayers for

Your respectful children, the Religious and personnel of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary of Madras-Mylapore.



THE CARDINAL ACCEPTING THE ILLUMINATED ADDRESS FROM MISS MURIEL COLACO, SENIOR B.A. STUDENT.

His Grace, the Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore, at Stella Maris College.

December 1952 saw the happy return to India of His Grace, the Most Rev. L. Mathias, as Archbishop of the newly combined diocese of Madras-Mylapore. Nine busy months went by before His Grace was able to spare time to visit the College. Finally in August 1953 the students had the joy of welcoming him to Stella Maris and of expressing their respectful good wishes in a joyous song and address of greetings.

His Grace, in answer spoke a few words of paternal advice and encouragement We quote :

“ Youth is a state of mind and not a time of life ”, said His Grace. “ You will certainly lose your youth—as I have done ; but if you keep your youthful spirit of mind and heart, you will be young even at 90.

“ This is only an introduction. I see you here gathered, and I take the opportunity of saying just a few words to you. Well, there is one thing which unfortunately we cannot leave behind us, and that is our experience. You will leave your money, your clothes, you will leave your saris—but you cannot leave your experience. We cannot leave to others what is most precious in our lives—years and years of joy, of sadness sometimes, of experience. We have the possibility in our lives to accumulate experience, even if we do not leave it to others, and it will be a treasure which will help us in the course of our existence—to go with courage in the midst of trials. When we are young, we do not think sufficiently of acquiring experience—for one reason, we do not think enough. We must reflect. We usually associate thinking with older people, but this is not necessarily so.

“ If you wish to succeed in life, I recommend to you to be thinking girls, reflecting girls, meditating girls. You will say, ‘An Archbishop, a religious man by vocation, will think it necessary to talk on a religious subject’. No. Even philosophers of olden times, with no faith or religion, used to say that meditation was important in life. Meditation helps you to understand and to foresee results, and prudently to avoid sad consequences.

“ It is difficult for you to have the thinking brain of Rajaji, of Ghandiji, of our President. They meditate, and that is why they are the men they are. How many of you hope to do for the nation the good they have done ? If I were speaking to girls in High School, it would be useless to speak of meditation, because they would tell me that they get their work done better by a good game in the middle of the day ; but I am speaking to girls who will soon go out to take their place in the world. I am sure that you will do much more than many others have done in the past. You will do marvels. You will keep young and fresh and happy. This I wish you with all my heart, and bless you at the same time !! ”

Visit of the Prime Minister of Canada.

The close proximity of the College to the Cathedral of St. Thomas, Mylapore, raised our hopes that when the Prime Minister of Canada paid his scheduled visit to the Cathedral he might perchance be persuaded to make a small detour and so spend a few minutes at Stella Maris. Such was our hope, but we hardly dared express it. When, wonder of wonders, February 28th saw our cherished dream realised :—

Without a minute to prepare, without the least intimation of his arrival, into the compound drove the Governor's car bearing none other than the Prime Minister of Canada ! Helter-skelter down rushed the Hostellites to present themselves to Mr. Louis St. Laurent and party, to hear him and to admire the gentle friendliness of the Prime Minister and his daughter. His message was "I bring to India the best good wishes of the Canadian people. Although the time allotted is very short, we are extremely pleased with our trip. I really learned more of your customs in a week than from all that I read during the whole course of my life. There are great differences between the people of the East and those of the West. We may speak of differences but we cannot speak or even think of superiority or inferiority—we are all human beings with the same rights, responsibilities and origin, all children of a common Father".

One Canadian citizen of the Staff remarked "I had to come to India to meet the Premier of Canada !".



WORDS OF MR. L. S. ST. LAURENT DURING HIS VISIT TO INDIA

Canada, like India, believes that one of her most priceless possessions is the youth of her country. Men of my age may perhaps think that they are important but we are not important for very long. Children everywhere in the world are important, and the children of the villages and cities of India are important. They will pass on from generation to generation the things they have learned from working and living together.

I am hopeful that we shall learn to live as one family. I was brought up to say in my prayers, "Our Father"—not "My father" or "Your Father", but the Father of us all. We should all be happy to work together as the children of the one great holy family of mankind.

It is with regret that I leave India. I wish I could have stayed here longer. I go back to Canada with my admiration, respect and affection for the people of India strengthened and deepened. I take back to my people in Canada a very blessed memory. Long Live India and long live the friendship between India and Canada. Jai Hind !

Compliments of the Office of the
High Commissioner for Canada,
28th February 1954.

“Price of Perfection”.

(A dramatic item from the College Day Entertainment).

“Unless the bell contains the heart of a maiden, it can never be perfect,” was the secret disclosed by the Spirit of the Willow Tree, to fair Hsi Shih, the daughter of Tien Sin, the maker of bells.


Bidden by the mighty Emperor to cast a perfect bell to adorn the shrine of his illustrious ancestors, Tien Sin's first effort had been rejected by the exacting monarch and the unfortunate Tien condemned to death should the second effort fail. Beside herself with grief, Hsi Shih sought counsel from the Willow Tree.

Dismayed, she listened to its mysterious message “Unless the bell contains the heart of a maiden” Slowly and painfully she grasped its meaning. Broken-hearted she bade goodbye to her lover, the friends of her childhood, “her happy little world” and plunged into the molten metal to save her beloved father from disgrace.

Little knowing her motives, the affectionate Tien Sin was inconsolable at the loss of his lovely child. Once more the fateful bell was cast. A clear rich note rang out, satisfying even the exigencies of the mighty “Son of Heaven”.

But from the depths of the bell, Tien Sin heard a sweeter note by far—the voice of his beloved daughter calling to him. Twin torrents of joy and grief overwhelmed him and he fell dead at the proud monarch's feet.

Hsi Shih's sacrifice was rewarded—with a maiden's heart she paid the Price of Perfection.



“THE HAPPY HSI SHIH AND HER LOVER BEFORE SORROW DESCENDED UPON THE HOUSE OF TIEN SIN.”

“THE MIGHTY EMPEROR DELIVERS HIS COMMAND TO TIEN SIN, THE MAKER OF BELLS AND FATHER OF THE BEAUTIFUL HSI SHIH.”



Musical Therapy.

Yes, that's a new way of looking at it, music as a medicine ! Next time you're suffering from an overdose of the blues, don't be surprised if your doctor prescribes several lively marches or scherzos to drive them away !

Music is said to be the language of the emotions, for all classical music, be it lilting waltzes, soothing symphonies or pulse-raising marches, has some emotional effect on the listener. Psychologists and psychiatrists have realized the vast potentialities of music as an emotion-healer and more and more of them are turning to music these days as a means of curing so called diseases of the mind.

Music has so powerful an effect on its listeners that even in your saddest moment, you cannot fail to catch something of the contagion of a joyous piece of music. Try listening to Handel's Largo or a similar piece when you are dispirited and listless. Unless you are an abnormal person you cannot fail to catch something of the calm, soothing peace which flows from the music. Bach is recommended to people when they are in a bad temper. In most cases it is found to banish feelings of resentment and restore peace to the mind once more.

In America doctors have tested the mood reactions of people on hearing various types of music, and having gathered statistics have built up a musical library, where special recordings are prescribed for special moods of individuals. In the majority of cases, people's reactions have been what were desired and this "Musical Therapy" is becoming more and more famous for its remarkable results.

Here is an idea of the classification of records in a musical library.

(a) Stimulating types : Happy ; gay ; joyous ; triumphant ; restless ; eerie ; weird.

(b) Relaxing types : Nostalgic ; sentimental ; soothing ; meditative ; prayerful ; sad.

Depending on your mood, you would select suitable records for your listening pleasure.

There is an instance of a student facing a major operation who was becoming more and more nervous as the dread hour approached. Her doctor suggested that she should listen to a recording of the Bach-Gounod Ave Maria, a prayerful piece. She played it over and over. Finally her fears began to abate, her nervous tension to subside, and she was able to face the operation quite bravely.

A soldier with part of his brain shot away paced endlessly back and forth in his room, clawing at the walls as though trying to escape. The doctors were at their wits' end. Then came an idea—a radio was brought to his room, these following pieces were played : Rhapsody in Blue, Liebestraum, Schubert's Serenade and others. No effect at first. Then he stopped his restless pacing for a minute only. His face muscles relaxed and he listened as though trying desperately to recapture something of the past. Finally

he sat on his bed and listened for fifteen minutes. Of course, this man was not completely cured, but the soothing music accomplished well-nigh a miracle in easing his maniacal tensions.

It is essential, however, that the particular music suggested should be of the right type. Some people are allergic to one type of music and some to another, and what cures one may be disastrous to the other, as in the story of the hospitalized Scot who was cured by bagpipe music, but which proved fatal to two Englishmen in the next ward.

Hence day by day, psychiatrists and specialists are realizing that music is not merely an art, but a great moral force, that its great works are a source of strength and courage for a man in his dealings with life's problems ; music is becoming more and more something to live by !

MURIEL COLACO,
IV U.C.

(This article is based on "Music to Live By", by Doron K. Antrim in 'Etude', June 1953).

The Todas.

One of the places in the Nilgiris worth seeing is the Toda settlement near Ooty Gardens. These Todas are the oldest inhabitants of the Nilgiris and therefore attract a large number of tourists. Unlike the Badagas, the Todas are tall, fair and handsome. Their traditional costume resembles a dhoti, but is very beautifully embroidered. In fact, this embroidery is a special art of the tribe. Red and black are the usual colours chosen, and they are blended into a most intricate design, typical of old Indian craftsmanship.

The Toda huts are very quaint, being built of wood, and rounded off at the top with a thatched roof. Two tiny holes through which a hand can just pass are burnt out at the top of the walls to serve as windows. To enter the hut you must crawl through a door about two feet high. Once inside, all is dark except for a few brass vessels which gleam in one corner of the room.

If ever you visit the Todas do not forget to ask them to sing. This they do for a few annas, the length of the song depending upon the amount of money you give them. The women, their ringletted hair greased with ghee, sit in a circle and it is usually the grandmother who starts the song. They clench their teeth tightly while singing and there is very little variation in their tunes.

Unfortunately this tribe is fast dying out although the Government is trying hard to preserve it, so that today there exist only a handful of Toda villages situated mainly in the vicinity of Ootacamund.

VIOLET STEPHENS,
I. U.C.

The Aradhana of Thyagaraja.

January 1954 was a month of fulfilment. The dream of the Senior B.A. Music Students came true when we went on an excursion to Thiruvaiyar and visited places of musical interest in Tanjore. We joined the party of students headed by Professor P. Sambamurthi, Head of the Music Department, Madras University—a happy party of eighteen.

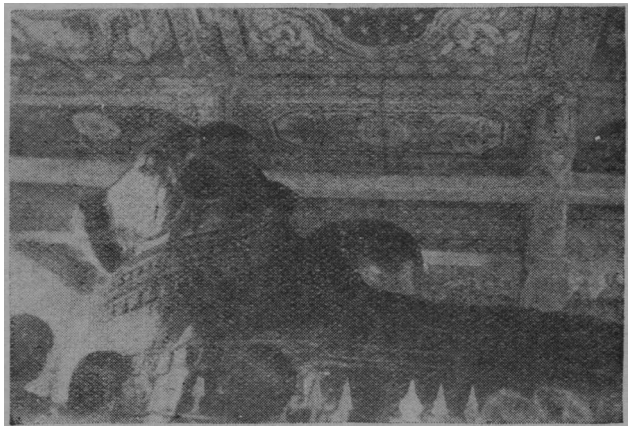
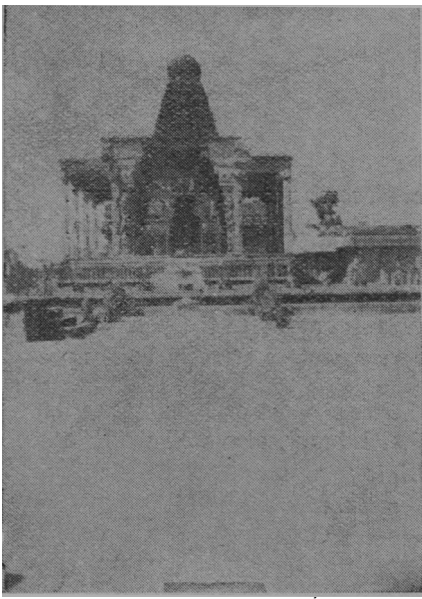
Tanjore.—

In the evening of the 21st, we left Madras for Tanjore by the Boat Mail. Our first visit was to the house of the late Mr. Ponniah Pillai, which is now transformed into a music school. We were shown some very old manuscripts and examined the ivory curios, including a violin (dated 1834) presented to Vadivelu, the earliest Indian violinist, by the Travancore Maharaja Svathi Thirunal. The original bow is lost; the violin, now yellow with age, emits a strange tone, due perhaps to the fact that it is made of ivory.

Next we visited the Kamakshi Temple, built by the Mahratta rulers to install “Bangaru Kamakshi” which was brought all the way from Kanjeevaram near Madras for security and protection. The image is of pure gold and stands 4 feet high. It was in this temple that the great musician, Syama Sastri, composed his famous pieces. The building has been renovated and so lost its pristine beauty.

We now proceeded to the Temple of Brihadiswara (Tanjore); this is composed of several structures, a Nandi (Sacred Bull) pavilion, a pillared portico and a large assembly hall, all in the centre of a spacious wall enclosure. The most striking feature, however, is the grand tower of the vimana which dominates everything in its vicinity. This pyramidal tower is composed of three parts, a square vertical base, a tall, tapering body and, over all, the graceful domical finial. The vertical base covers a square of 82 feet side and rises perpendicularly to a height of 50 feet. From this the pyramidal body mounts up in 13 diminishing zones, until the width of its apex equals one third of its base. On the square platform thus formed stands the cupola, the inward curve of its neck producing a pleasing break in the otherwise rigid outlines of the composition, while the bulbous dome, poised like a light, but substantial, globe is a fitting finish to its soaring character. The gigantic Nandi, 12 feet high and 16 feet long is sculptured out of a solid block of granite and is daily anointed with oil which makes it shine like the finest bronze. There was so much to see and admire in this solid, but beautiful example of Chola architecture, for with its qualities of powerfully adjusted volume there is at the same time a sense of graceful balance, so that whether seen from close by or from afar its upward sweep is such that it appears to hang in the air. We were proud to have seen what is generally considered to be the finest creation of the Dravidian craftsmen, for the Tanjore Vimana is also a touchstone of Indian architecture as a whole.

Behind the Temple are a number of sculptured figures, commonly known as “resonating stones”, due to the fact that when struck they produce a clear, musical note.



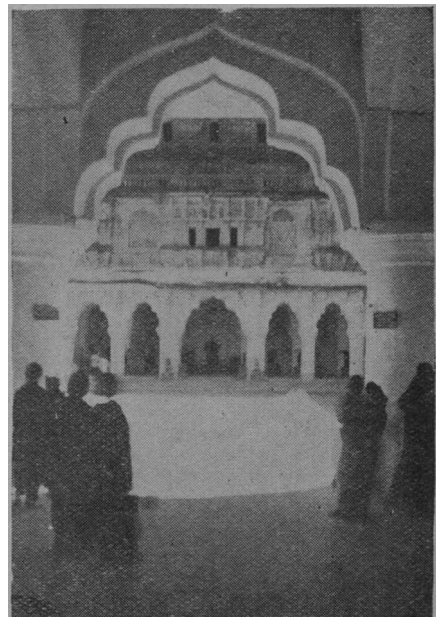
THE NANDI SHRINE.



**THE STUDENT SEATED IN THE CENTRE HOLDS
THE IVORY VIOLIN OF VADIVELU.**



RESONATING STONES BEHIND THE BRIHADISWARA TEMPLE.



THE ART GALLERY, TANJORE PALACE.

Tanjore Fort, which contains the famous Saraswathi Mahal, came next on our itinerary. This Mahal, long used as a concert hall, is reputed to be one of the best of its kind in India, and is one of the priceless buildings bequeathed to us by the rulers of Tanjore. Its acoustics are so good that every note of the performers can be heard throughout the hall, without a "mike". It was in this Hall that the great musical contests of the past were held. The Tanjore vidwans (musicians) who were usually the victors steadily built up for Tanjore its tradition as a famous seat of music.

In another section of the Fort is the Saraswathi Mahal Library, also well worth a visit. It contains many very ancient palm-leaf manuscripts; numbers of these are unread, thus providing abundant material for the establishment of a profitable research centre. The curator, himself a musician, has invented several new types of instruments. One of these, the "subra-veena", was particularly interesting. Resembling a "bulbul-tara" it had additional contrivances to capture the delicate variations of South Indian music. It was fitted with piano keys instead of the usual typewriter keys.

A second ancient hall within the Fort is the Sangitha Mahal, a large rectangular structure with accommodation for over a thousand persons. It is provided with balconies on either side which enabled the princesses and ladies of State to have a clear view of a concert taking place in the hall below, without themselves being seen.

Tanjore Palace, also contained within the walls of the Fort, is now falling into ruin and is largely used as a store-house for Government documents. A small part has, however, been renovated and converted into an Art Gallery, which we visited.

Between our visits to famous Temples and Monuments we peeped into the houses of several of the descendants of our great Karnatic composers; Thyagaraja, the greatest, has no direct descendants, but we found his daughter's family busily preparing for the "Aradhana" (death anniversary celebration), which was to take place the following day, when all who attended the annual ceremony would be fed by the descendants of the great man. Thyagaraja during his life-time often went without food; today in his memory thousands are fed!

Of interest to us, as music students, was our visit to the Tanjore Veena Manufacturers, where we saw thamburas, flutes and other instruments in the process of manufacture.

Thiruvaiyar.—

Bidding goodbye to Tanjore we set off for Thiruvaiyar, the land of the five sacred rivers Thiru (sacred), ai (five), yar (river), at the delta of the River Kaveri. There was an atmosphere of festivity everywhere; gay, bustling crowds thronged the streets, all wending their way towards the Kalyana Mandapam where the annual Music Festival to commemorate the death of Thyagaraja, the famous composer, was to be conducted. Music of the Nadaswara filled the air. After the official inauguration by the Governor, the Festival began. All the "giants" of Karnatic music were present and it is no exaggeration to say that there was non-stop music by day and by night.

The following day, the 23rd, was the Festival proper. Overnight, more and more crowds had flocked into Thiruvaiyar by bus, cart or on foot. Congregational singing

commenced the proceedings which were relayed by the All India Radio, Trichy. Then each visiting musician sang two pieces of the great composer. Much as we would have liked to have been included, so great were the numbers that this was impossible.

Before leaving Thiruvaiyar we paid a visit to Thyagaraja's house, a portion of which is occupied by his brother's descendants. We found them occupied in distributing food and clothing to poor Brahmins, an ancient Indian custom which is still preserved in this memorable spot.

In the afternoon we made a short trip to Thirupunthurithi near Varahur in the Tanjore District, to see the Samadhi (last resting-place of Narayana Thirtha, another famous South Indian composer). Grouped around this spot we sang his well known "Tharangas" (compositions). The great mango-tree under which he wrote his works is still to be seen.

By nightfall we were back at Thiruvaiyar to rest for a few hours before setting out for Thiruvarur which was to bring our tour to an end. Here, as the guests of the Mirasidar (important landlords), we were able, thanks to their kind hospitality, to visit all the places of importance, most famous of which is the Temple of Sri Thyagaraja, the deity after whom the great composer was named.

The following morning we paid a visit to Vedaranyam. In the Temple there we saw a beautiful emerald "lingam" over 9 inches high. Here, as elsewhere, we sang. In fact, our tour was one long recital of song and music, interrupted only by the interesting anecdotes of our Professor and guide.

In other local temples we were permitted to inspect the Temple instruments. One especially we found interesting, the "Pancha mukha vadya" a very rare 5 faced drum.

A night in the train, and the early morning of January 26th found us back in Madras in time to participate in the College Republic Day celebrations. Our 5-day tour had deepened our pride in India's past traditions, now we received a challenge to do our part in creating for her new and lasting glories. May we not be found wanting in our task. Jai Hind.

Miss V. LEELA,
Lecturer in Indian Music.



THOUGHTS FROM MAHATMA GANDHI.

"God can never be realised by one who is not pure of heart."

"The world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me."

HAIR STYLES AT AJANTA—(PLATE I)



Cave XVI:—(1) Woman with Pankha (from the Dying Princess); (2) Standing Lady (Palace Scene); (3) A Lady in the Palace (from Sujata Offering Food to the Buddha); (4) One of the listeners (from Buddha Preaching to the Congregation); (5) Lady Offering Flowers (from the Descent of the Buddha from the Heaven of the Tushitas); (6) Seated Lady (Palace Scene).

Cave XVII:—(7) Flying Apsara (from Apsarases); (8) A Musician (from Griffith's "Ajanta" Vol. I); (9) A Musician (from Griffith's "Ajanta" Vol. I); (10) Lady with a Child (from Raja Distributing Alms); (11) The Mother (from Mother and Child before the Buddha); (12) A Lady (from a Palace Scene); (13), (14) and (15) An Apsara (from Indira and Apsarases); (16) A Lady on the Balcony (from Story of the Furious Elephant, first episode).

Hair-styles at Ajanta.

Beautiful hair is a woman's crowning glory. Long gleaming tresses give an added charm to the most beautiful face. Indian women are especially proud of their black, silky hair, and "Veniguttan", the plaiting and dressing of the hair in various artistic styles, is an art studied by all Indian girls. The antiquity of this art is proved by the beautiful and often elaborate hair-styles depicted in the Ajanta caves.

The walls of these caves, situated fifty miles from Aurangabad, in Western India, are covered with frescoes which constitute the glory of Indian painting. These paintings were executed between approximately the first or second century B.C. and the sixth century A.D. The hair-styles in Caves 9 and 11 are very simple. A veil covers the head in the modern Marwari style, the hair being neatly parted on the side, while the forehead is adorned with a "tika", which to this day forms part of the toilet of an Indian lady.

The fifth century frescoes in Caves 16 and 17 reveal a high standard of art, both in painting and in hair-dressing, for here the ladies have very elaborate coiffures, some modern hair-styles being exact copies of these. The dominant feature is the chignon or "kondae". In the fresco of "Indira and the Apsarases", for example, the flute-player's hair is caught up in a chignon, and divided into four with ribbons. In the same fresco we find a very modern-looking, almost Parisian style, the turban-like head-dress and the hair being richly adorned with strings of pearls, flowers and ribbons.

Cave 1 is considered to be the finest among the rock-cut caves of India. It contains sculptures and paintings of exquisite beauty. Here, too, the coiffures are elaborate. Flowers are twined among the tresses, which fall in a rich mass on the shoulders, making a beautiful picture. Some of the figures have pearls and jewels in their hair, and small crowns on their heads. Locks fall on the forehead in simple, yet artistic designs. Chignons are common, sometimes worn on one side, sometimes raised up high, and sometimes falling on the neck.

In Cave 2 the hair-styles are similar. Here the long hair is intertwined with gems and flowers, and embroidered scarves are worn, tied around the head in the style of Palestinian women. This may be an independent local fashion, or it may have been borrowed from Western Asia through the Yavanas, who lived in the Deccan in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Today the Indian woman still considers her long, black silken tresses as one of her most precious possessions. From the frescoes at Ajanta she may derive suggestions for dressing it in many different ways, in styles suitable to all ages, moods and occasions.

SULOCHANA SHARMA
RANI POOVIAH
III.—U.C.



Cave I :—(1) Dancing Girl (from Mahajanaka Jataka); (2) Dancing Girl (from a Palace Scene); (3) Seated Lady (from Sankhapalu Jataka); (4) Lady with a Snake in her Hair (from Griffith's "Ajanta" Vol. I); (5) A Lady (from Four Heads on a Salver); (6) Servant (from Bikshu at the Palace Door); (7) Lady Gazing Upward (Mahajanaka Jataka); (8) Young Girl (Sibijataka).

Cave II :—(9) The first votary (from Votaries Bringing Offerings); (10) The second votary (from Votaries Bringing Offerings); (11) Lady Talking to the Naga King (from Vidhura-Pandita Jataka); (12) Standing Princess (from Birth of the Buddha); (13) Princess with her Consort (from Birth of the Buddha); (14) Maya Holding a Branch of a Sal Tree (from Birth of the Buddha); (15) Lady Holding Offerings (from Votaries Bringing Offerings); (16) Girl Blowing the Conch (from Griffith's "Ajanta" Vol. I).

SULOCHANA SHARMA
EMMA DEVAPRIAM—III U.C.

Sixth Tamil Festival, New Delhi.

Students of the College Art Department were permitted to exhibit their masterpieces at the Sixth Tamil Festival held at New Delhi in August 1953. Their work was displayed in the cultural section of the Exhibition and evoked appreciation from several distinguished visitors, notably from Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister, and Mrs. Indira Gandhi who were delighted to find the College teaching Dravidian architecture and Indian culture.

The Sixth Tamil Festival Delhi Session Reception Committee.

Delhi Tamil Sangham
MC 1/3038, Parliament
New Delhi-1.

The Principal,
Stella Maris College,
Mylapore, Madras.

Dear Principal,

SIXTH TAMIL FESTIVAL, NEW DELHI.

I am extremely delighted to write to you that the eight exhibits viz : one Chart—Modern Dravidian Order, one plywood map of India, Architectural Monuments and six small charts of P. Rama Devi of Stella Maris College, sent for the Sixth Tamil Festival held at New Delhi were placed in the Cultural alcove of the exhibition with a placard in front of them indicating that they were the work of your College students. Several visitors very much appreciated the charts and even expressed much surprise to see that a Missionary Institution like yours is taking a bold lead in advancing our Tamil Culture. Mrs. Devadas Gandhi, daughter of our Chief Minister and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, daughter of our beloved Prime Minister also expressed much appreciation of the exhibits apart from other distinguished visitors like our Union Finance Minister, our Deputy Minister for Railways.

2. Kindly allow me to offer my sincere congratulations for the good work done. Please convey my appreciation to the students concerned.

With kind regards.

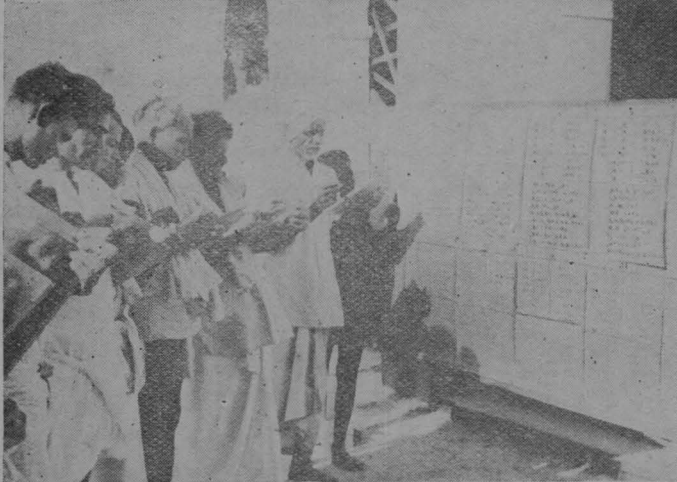
Yours sincerely,
V. M. NARASIMHAN,
*Organiser, Cultural Exhibition, and
Consulting Architect and Chartered Engineer.*

Social Service Demonstration.

I. A Social Service Demonstration formed a novel and interesting item in this year's College Day programme. In a miniature cheri erected in the College compound the principal activities of the Social Service League and Diploma students were displayed and explained. Among the most interested visitors were the Director of Public Instruction who kindly opened the Exhibition and His Grace the Most Rev. L. Matthias, Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore.



II. Adult Education is a crying need today and Social Service students are doing their bit to supply it. In the Nochi Kuppam cheri regular evening classes for men are conducted by a qualified teacher employed and paid by the Social Service League. This effort is well rewarded as the picture shows.



III. Nutrition Lectures are another form of Adult Education—perhaps more informal but no less important and interesting. Mothers are genuinely anxious to learn what foods are most nutritious for their children and families. These talks teach them how to provide the family with a well-balanced economical diet.



IV. Social Workers aim at safeguarding family life.—Financial assistance is rendered without taking the young wife out of the home by the introduction of such crafts as mat-weaving. The proceeds from the sale of the articles help to implement the scanty and precarious wage of the coolie husband.



V. **Food Distribution** forms part of the regular programme of the Social Service League. "Our duty is to share what we have with others. We no longer live in a world where the privileged can stand aside and look down on the under-privileged". (Director of Public Instruction in her College Day address).



VI. **To help others to earn and work** is the aim of every true Social Worker. Social Service Leaguers have achieved this in several ways including the system of Co-operative Loans by means of which numerous families have raised themselves from destitution and become respectable vendors of firewood, vegetables and bedi.



VII. **A healthy mind in a healthy body** is a sound social principle. In their weekly visits to the local cheris students care for the minor ailments of children and adults. A report is kept of the patient's ailment, treatment and progress. More serious ailments are referred to local dispensaries and hospitals, and adequate care assured.



VIII. Students join in the universal drive to establish a society free from fear and free from want. The formation of a Co-operative Milk Supply Society in two local cheris has provided six families with the means of livelihood. Buffaloes supplied by the Corporation of Madras are cared for by the members; the milk is sold, and the families remunerated for their services.



“Something Attempted, Something Done.”

The opening of an elementary school for the children of Lalitha Nagar in January this year was largely due to the great efforts made by four students of the Stella Maris Social Service Diploma Course, who are specialising in Rural Uplift. The students contacted one official after another of the Corporation of Madras and worked untiringly to accomplish their aim. In a very short time plans were drawn up and, thanks to the financial assistance of Sri P. L. M. Nathan, Engineer, a building erected. The school, with an enrolment of fifty children, was opened on January 18th 1954, by the Commissioner of the Corporation, Sri V. N. Subbarayan.

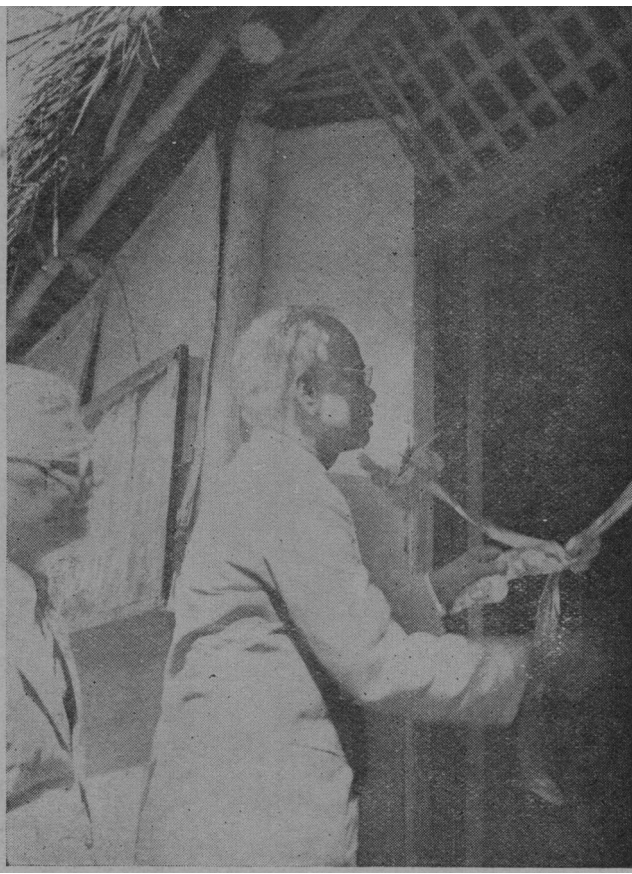
1954 is a momentous year for the League and Diploma students of Stella Maris College, for it brought us the joy and excitement of seeing one of our many dreams come true. For years with unflinching courage, patience and optimism, undaunted by criticism, the League workers had carried on their labours in the nearby slum areas. At last on January 18th with the help of the Corporation of Madras, an elementary school was opened, bringing with it the hope of educating the children in the true sense of the word.

The morning of 18th January remains so vivid in my mind. Here was the day of days, to which every Stella Marian had long looked forward. Everyone was busy. The new school, the avenues and the dais were all colourfully decorated with flags, festoons, flowers and ferns. Enthusiastic faces shone on all sides : everything struck a note of joy. For who could witness such a happy spectacle without imbibing the same spirit of joy, excitement and happiness ? Crowds of students in their gaily coloured sarees thronged the festooned avenues and eagerly assembled to await the opening of the school. Finally the Commissioner arrived and took his place on the dais, the happy crowds cheering him as he rose to make his speech.

Then followed the most important item, the official opening of the school. Accompanied by the Education Officer, local Councillor and the Principal of the College, the Commissioner advanced towards our proud new building and slowly undid the brocaded bow. Thousands of onlookers cheered him, their faces beaming with joy. His Honour next entered the school and was delighted to see the solid structure, the spick and span classroom with its walls decorated with charts and a new black board. On leaving the school he was greeted by the future pupils who had been literally transformed in the past few days : in the place of “angels with dirty faces” they were now clean, well-groomed and neatly clad little scholars. They had already been enrolled and were eagerly awaiting the thrill of possessing their own slates, pencils and books.

As the Education Officer remarked in his speech, we had broken all records, and for the first time in history a school had been opened within the space of a fortnight and that too in January instead of the customary July. This is in itself proof of the enthusiasm of our students who firmly trust that the school will fulfil the purpose for which it was intended, namely the educational uplift of the cheri, and will, in the course of a few years, be extended into an efficient High School.

Miss P. RAMMA DEVI,
Diploma of Social Service.



OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SCHOOL.

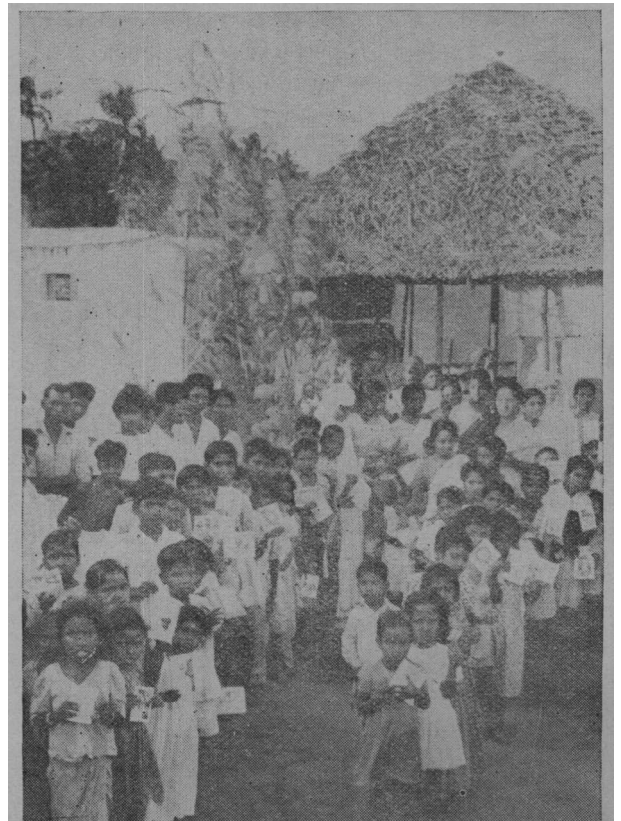


STUDENTS ON THEIR WAY TO THE CHURCH.

PUPILS



THE SCHOOL.



Christmas Party at Mangalapuram Creche.

December 19th for a group of socially-minded students was a day of special activity—a Christmas party for their adopted family of some 50 children in the Creche at Mangalapuram, where they go weekly to wash, comb, instruct and generally assist these little heirs of some of the poorest coolies of Madras.

The little ones were astonished to see a tree sprouting inside a room, bearing the strangest fruits, balloons, tinsel, brightly coloured Christmas cards, not to mention various savoury—smelling packets

Decked out in their green cotton uniforms, scrubbed and combed they sat in a solemn circle on the floor. They relaxed slightly when Leela taught them “Come all ye faithful” in Tamil and, once started, they insisted on running steadily through their whole programme of action songs, Baa-Baa Black Sheep, etc. evidently instilled into them as an uninterruptible party-piece. Then they were taken outside to play in the fresh air while the whole neighbourhood gathered round to behold the spectacle of college students romping happily with the babies. “Oranges and lemons” was no mere game, for they clamoured for **real** oranges. When a good appetite—seldom lacking in this district—was acquired, young India needed no second invitation to the good solid meal of rice, “hot stuff” and creamy cocoa served by their fairy godmothers. Good meals are of weekly rather than daily occurrence at Mangalapuram ! The many older children who pressed their faces against the windows had to be sadly turned away. Then came the distribution of the packages of oranges, bananas, sweets and toys, all plucked from the magic tree.

If any of the students of the College doubted the destination of the 4 annas they had contributed to a certain Raffle they would find a permanent receipt written in the hearts of those 50 little children, “whose angels stand always before the face of God.” The helpers of the day had sacrificed holiday-time, reunion with their family, valuable study-time to prepare this happy day, but received so much happiness that they resolved this should be only the beginning of a lasting link with the Mangalapuramites.

“Crynant,” Chetput,
Madras-10.
20th December 1953.

Dear Girls,

Nalini Mascarenhas.
Rita Miranda.
Betty Xavier.
Avril Fernandez.

E. Visalam.
P. J. Leela.
Muriel Colaco.

My Committee, the children and I thank you most sincerely for a Christmas party that we will long remember. The efficient and cheerful way you worked the whole day is greatly appreciated by us all.

You have started life in the right direction by helping those who need your help and I hope you will continue to be helpful.

I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year. I take this opportunity to thank you all for the friendly help you give to the teachers every Saturday. Do keep up your good work.

Yours sincerely,
RUTHY RAJAMANNAR,
Hon. Secretary.

“Crynant,” Chetput,
20th December 1953.

Dear Mother,

On behalf of the Mangalapuram Nursery School and Creche Committee, children and myself, I thank you most sincerely for the most enjoyable X'mas party you and your pupils arranged yesterday. It was a tremendous success and we fully realise how much hard work and expense has gone into it. For the children, it was a day they will remember for long.

Thank you once again for bringing so much happiness to them.

I take this opportunity to thank you for the good work your pupils give to our school every Saturday.

Yours sincerely,
RUTHY RAJAMANNAR,
Hon. Secretary.

மலை.

நிலப் பாகுபாட்டில், மலையையும், மலையைச் சார்ந்த இடத்தையும் பண்டைத் தமிழ் மக்கள் குறிஞ்சி நிலம் என்னும் பெயரால் வழங்கி வந்தனர். இக் குறிஞ்சி நிலத்தேதான் ஆதி மக்கள் வாழ்வும், நாகரிகமும் தோன்றின. அங்கு வாழ்ந்து வந்தவர் குறவர் எனப் படுவர். மலைவாணராகிய குறவர் முருகனை வழிபட்டு வந்தனர். அவர்கள் மலைச்சாரல்களில் தினை முதலியவற்றைப் பயிரிடுவர். மலைகளில் கிடைக்கும் கிழங்குகளையும், தேனையும் உணவாகக் கொள்வர். அங்குத் திரியும் மிருகங்களை வேட்டையாடிக் கொண்டு தின்பதும் உண்டு.

இயற்கைச் செல்வத்தில மலை முதலிடம் பெறுவதாகும். இலக்கியங்களில் மலை வருணனை ஒரு சிறந்த அங்கமாக விளங்கியது என்பது மிகையாகாது. இயற்கை வாழ்வு வாழ்ந்து, இயற்கையுடன் ஒன்றிய நம் பண்டைத் தமிழ்ப் புலவர்கள் இயற்றிய இலக்கியங்களில் எல்லாம் ஆங்காங்கே மலைகளின் வானுயர் தோற்றங்களையும், மலை வாழ்நரின் இனிய வாழ்வினையும் பற்றி சொல்லழகும், பொருளழகும், தொடையழகும், நடையழகும் பொருந்தப் பலவாறு வருணித்துப் பாடியுள்ளனர். அவர்கள் மலைகளைப் பற்றி கூறும் கற்பனைத் திறன் இலக்கிய விருந்து என்றே கூறலாம். தமிழ் தோன்றியதே பொதிய மலை யெனின் மலையின் பெருமை கூறுவத் தெளிதோ ?

அமிழ்தினும் இனிய நந்தமிழ் மொழியில் அந்தாதி, உலா, கலம்பகம், தூது, பிள்ளைத் தமிழ், கோவை, மலை முதலிய தொண்ணூற்றாறு வகை பிரபந்தங்கள் உண்டு. இவைகளில் மலைகளைப் பற்றிய செய்திகளைப் பரக்கக் காணலாம். பதினேராம் திருமுறையில், 'சங்கோய் மலை எழுபது' என்றொரு லக்கிய முண்டு. அதில், அம்மலைகளைப் பற்றிய அழகிய வருணனைகளைக் காணலாம். இது நக்கீர தேவ நாயனரால் எழுதப் பெற்றது. மற்றும், அழகிய மணவாள தாசரென்னும் பிள்ளைப்பெருமாள் அய்யங்கார் இயற்றிய அஷ்டப் பிரபந்தங்களிலும், திருக் குற்றலக் குறவஞ்சி முதலிய இலக்கியங்களிலும் மலைகளைப் பற்றிய உள்ளங்கவர் காட்சிகளைக் காணலாம். ஞான சம்பந்தப் பெருமான் பாடிய தேவாரத்திலும் மலையைப் பற்றிய குறிப்பு காணப்படுகின்றது.

சரபேந்திர பூபாலக் குறவஞ்சி நாடகம் என்னும் நூலில் மலைவளம் கூறப் புகுந்த குறத்தி, மேரு, பொதியில், நேரி, கயிலை, காளத்தி, குற்றலம், திருவேங்கடம், பழனி, ஆனைமலை, கொல்லிமலை, விராலி மலை, சோலை மலை, சுவாமி மலை, திரிசிரா மலை, ஆகிய பல மலைகளைக் குறிக்கின்றார்.

தென்னை மரத்தின் வெண்மைநிறம் பொருந்திய இளம் பாளை மலர, அதைக் கண்ட சனை நீரிலுள்ள மீன் கூட்டங்கள் தங்களை உண்ண வரும். கொக்குக் கூட்டம் என நினைந்து அஞ்சி, தண்ணீரில் மூழ்கி மறைந்து கொள்ளுதற்கு ஏற்ற இடமாம் திருவேங்கடமலை. சந்திரன் ஆகாய வீதியில் நிறைந்த கலைகளோடு மிக்க களிப்புடன் உலவா நிற்க, அதை இனிய பாலோடுங் கலந்த சோற்றுருண்டை எனக் கருதி, வன்மையும், கொடுமையும் வாய்ந்த மதயானை அதனை உண்ணும் பொருட்டு தன் துதிக்கையை நீட்டுதற்கு இடமான திருவேங்கடமலை பிறவிப் பிணியினையும், வியாதினியினையும், நோய் வருதற்குக் காரணமான வினைகளையும், மரணத்தினையும் தீர்க்க வல்லதாம்.

குமரகுருபரர் இயற்றிய மீனாட்சியம்மை குறம், பிள்ளைத் தமிழ் ஆகிய இலக்கியங்களில் மலைகளைப் பற்றிய செய்திகளைக் காண்போம். குறத்தி எத்துனை பெருமிதத்தோடு

“ திங்கள் முடி சூடுமலை, தென்றல் விளையாடுமலை
தங்குபுயல் சூழுமலை தமிழ் முனிவன் வாழுமலை
அங்கயற் கண்ணமை திருவருள் சுரந்து பொழிவதென
பொங்கருவி தூங்கு மலை பொதிய மலை யென்மலையே ”

என்று போற்றுகின்றாள்.

அவள் தன் மலையைக் குறித்து தீட்டிய சித்திரத்தைப் பார்ப்போம். அவளது பொதிய மலையில் கன்னத்தின் வழியே மதநீர் பெருகும் கொல்லுந் தன்மை வாய்ந்த ஆண் யானை கிடந்து பிளிரும் ; தென்னந் தமிழும், இளங் குழவி போன்ற தென்றலும் திளைக்கும் ; கருமலைகளில் வெள்ளிய அருவி ஓசையுடன் வழிந்து இறங்கும் ; புதுத்தினை முற்றத்தில் காணப்படும் கல்லுரல்களில் உணங்கும் ; சிறிய வலையும், பெரிய வாரும் வீட்டுக் கூரைகளிவின்னும் தொங்கும் ; எல்லாத் திசைகளிலும் சிறுதுடி பெருமுரசும் ஆகிய வாத்தியங்களின் ஒலி முழங்கும். அன்னங்கள் சோலைகளில் பயில, பொன்னிறமாக விளங்கும் சிகரங்களோடு விசாலமான சாரல்களையும் கொண்டது அவளது மலை.

இம்மட்டோடு நிறுத்தவில்லை குறத்தி,

“ மந்தமாருதம் வளரும் மலையெங்கள் மலையே
வடகலை தென்கலை பயிலும் மலையெங்கள் மலையே
கந்தவேள் விளையாடு மலையெங்கள் மலையே
கனக நவமணி விளையு மலையெங்கள் மலையே
இந்த மாநிலம் புரக்கும் அங்கயற் கண்ணம்மை
இன்பமுறுந் தென் பொதிய மலையெங்கள் மலையே ”

என்று செப்புகின்றாள்.

ஆறறிவு பெற்ற மக்கள் மன வேறுபாட்டினால் பூசல் விளைத்து அழிவு தேடிக்கொள்ள, அக் குறத்தி மலையில் நிலவிய சமாதானத்தை நோக்குவோம். ஜன்ம விரோதிகளான விலங்குகளே வேற்றுமையறியாது ஒற்றுமையுடன் விளங்கின என்பது,

“ சிங்கமும் வெங்களிறுமுடன் விளையாடுமொருபால்
சினப்புலியு மடப்பிணையுந் திளைத்திடுமங் கொருபால்
வெங்கரடி மரையினொடும் விளையாடு மொருபால்
விடவரவு மடமயிலும் விருந்தயரு மொருபால்
அங்கண் மா நிலங் கவிக்கும் வெண் கவிகை நிழற்கீழ்
அம்பொன் சூடு மெங்கள் அபிஷேகவல்லி
செங்கமலாப் பதம் பரவும் கும்பமுனி பயிலும்
தென் பொதிய மலைகாண் மற்றெங்கள் மலையே ”

என்ற பாட்டால் விளங்குகிறது. கொல்லையில் மான் பிணையும் இளம் பிடியும் விளையாடும் ; அற்பப் பிராணியாகிய பெண்மானுடன் பெண் புலி கூடியிருக்க, கற்குகையில் வரி வேங்கை கடமாளுகு உறங்கும்.

இனி மலை வாணராகிய குறவர்தம் குடிக்கடுத்த இயல்பை ஆராய்வோம். கொழுவிய கொடியில் விழுந்த வள்ளிக் கிழங்கைக் கல்லி எடுப்பர் ; குறிஞ்சி மலரைத் தேடி முல்லை யோடு வைத்துத் தொடுப்பர் ; மலையிலுண்டான பழங்களைப் பிழிந்த சாற்றுடன் தேறலைக் கலந்து மடுப்பர் ; பசுந் தழைகளாலான ஆடைகளையும் மரவுரியினையும் பொருத்தமாக அணிவர் ; செழுமையாக விளைந்த தினையினையும், நல்ல தேனையும் வரும் விருந்தினருக்குக் கொடுத்து உபசரிப்பர் ; மிக்க கோபத்தோடு கூடிய வேங்கைப் புலியினைக் கொன்று அதன்

தோலைப் படுக்கம் பாயாகக் கொள்வர் ; விழித்தெழிந்து அழகிய கயல் போன்ற கண்களை யுடைய மீனாட்சியம்மையை வணங்கி வினைகளை நீக்கிக் கொள்வர்.

மணம் வீசும் உயர்ந்த மலைச் சாரல்களில் காணப்படும் வேங்கை மரங்கள் நிறைந்த சோலைகளில் அழகிய வண்டினங்கள் யாழைப் போன்று ஒலி செய்து நிர்ப, வாழையும், இனிய மாங்களியும் தொங்க, அவைகளை மகவுடன் வந்த மடமந்தி சாய்த்து அருந்த, கிளிகள் திளையினைக் கவர்ந்து செல்ல, நெய்தல் மலர்கள் நிறைந்த குளிர்ந்த சுளைகளால் சூழப்பெற்ற சோலைகளில் கோல மஞ்சை தன் பெடையோடு ஆட, அழகே உருவாக விளங்கியது குற்றல மலையென ஞானசம்பந்தர் வருணிக்கின்றார்.

மலைச் சோலைகளில், தேனின் பெருக்கைக் கண்டு அஞ்சிய குழிந்த பசிய கண்களை யுடைய ஆண் குரங்கு, சிறு காம்பில் தொங்கும் பெரும் பாரத்தையுடைய பலாப்பழத்தைப் பிடித்துத் தொங்க, அச்சிறு காம்பு அறுபட்டு தேன் பெருக்கில் வீழ, அப் பலாப்பழத்தையே தெப்பமாக வைத்து நீந்தியதாம் ஆண் குரங்கு. கரிய கூரிய நகங்களையுடைய பெண் குரங்குகள் கிளையினின்றும் குதித்த விசையில் கிளைகள் வானத்திற் சென்று சந்திரனது வயிற்றைக் கிழித்து அமுதைப் பெருகச் செய்தனவாம்.

திரிகூட ராசப்ப கவிராயர் இயற்றிய குற்றலக் குறவஞ்சியில், வானரங்கள் கனி கொடுத்து, மந்தியோடு கொஞ்சம் ; மந்தி சிந்தும் கனிகளுக்கு வானுலகிலுள்ள குரங்குகள் கெஞ்சும் ; திரை யோடு தேனருவி எழும்பி வானின் வழியே ஒழுகுவதனால் சிவந்த கிரணங்களையுடையானது குதிரைகளின் கால்களும், தேரின் கால்களும் வழக்கும் ; கானவர் விழி நோக்கினால் வானவரை அவழப்ப, கவன சித்தர் வந்து வந்து காயசித்தி விளைப்பர் என்று கூறப்படுகிறது.

ஆடுகின்ற பாம்பு ஈனும் நவரத்தினம் கோடிசூர்யர் என்று சொல்லும்படியாக ஒளி செய்து நிற்க, அம்புலியைச் சோற்றுக் கவளம் என்று எண்ணி யானை வழி மறிக்க, வேடுவர் திளையினை விதைப்ப, புனங்கள் தோறும் அகில், குங்குமம், சந்தனம் ஆகியவைகளின் மணம் வீச, காடுகள்தோறும் ஓடியாடும் ஆடு குதிக்க, காகமும் அணுக முடியாத உயர்ந்த மலைகளில் மேக வரிசை சாயுமாம் திருக் குற்றல மலையில்.

ஒலிக்கின்ற திரைகளோடு கூடிய புனல் அருவி முத்தினைக் கழங்கென வீசி, ஆடி, குறவர் குடில்களில் முன் வாயிலில் சிறு பெண்கள் இழைத்த சிற்றலை அழிக்கும். குறவர் கிழங்கினை அகழ்ந்தெடுத்து தேனைச் சேகரிப்பர். யானையின் கொம்பினை உடைத்து திளையினை இடிப்பர். செழும் குரங்குகள் மாம்பழங்களைக் கொண்டு பந்து விளையாடும். தேன் நிறைந்த சண்பக மலரின் மணம் வானுலகில் சென்று வீசும்.

“ முடிவாகக் குறத்தி தன் சொந்த மலையை,
கையிலே எனும் வடமலைக்குத் தெற்கு மலை அம்மே
கனக மகா மேரு என நிற்கும் மலை அம்மே.
சயில் முனி தென் மலைக்கு வடக்கு மலை அம்மே
சகல மலையும் தனக்குள் அடக்கும் மலை அம்மே.
வயிர்முடன் மாணிக்கம் விளையும் மலை அம்மே.
வானிரவி முழைகள்தொடும் நுழையுமலை அம்மே
துயிலும்வன் விழிப்பாகி அகிலமெங்கும் தேடும்
துங்கர், திரிகூடம் எங்கள் சொந்த மலை அம்மே ”

எனப் பெருமிதத்தோடு கூறுகின்றார்.

இங்ஙனம், புலவர் மணிகளால் புனைந்து பாடப்பெற்ற கற்பனைகள் யாவும் இலக்கிய பூங்காவில் பூத்துக் குலுங்கும் என்றென்றும் வாடா மா மலர்களாகும்.

ఆంధ్రులు - ఆంధ్రరాష్ట్రము

ఆంధ్ర దేశము సుమారు మూడువేల సంవత్సరములకుఁ బూర్వము హెరకరాజావృతదండ కారణ్య మయ్యె. చీమలుదూరని చిట్టడవిగాను, కాకులుదూరని కారడవిగాను ఉండెనని మన పెద్దలు గ్రంథములందు వ్రాసియున్నారు. ఇటువంటి అంధకారబంధురమగు ప్రదేశమునుండి వచ్చినవారే ఆంధ్రులని చరిత్రకారు లాహించుచున్నారు. మరియు వీరికి త్రిలింగులని తెనుఁగు, తెలుఁగు జాతివారని కూడ భిన్న భిన్న నామాంతరములు గలవు. కనుక ఆంధ్రదేశము పురాణకాలము నుండియే పేరెన్నికగన్న ప్రదేశమని చెప్పవచ్చును. ఐతరేయ బ్రాహ్మణమున ఆంధ్రులను గురించి, ఆంధ్రదేశమును గురించియుఁ దెల్పబడియున్నది. మౌర్యుల కాలమునాడు ఆంధ్రులు దక్షిణదేశ వాసస్థులు. వీరు ఒక స్వతంత్ర రాజ్యము నేర్పరచుకొని యతి వైభవముగా నున్నటుల మెగస్తానీసు వ్రాతలబట్టిఁ దెలియుచున్నది. ఆళోకుని కాలమున ఆంధ్రులు కృష్ణా గోదావరీ మధ్య ప్రదేశమును స్వతంత్రులైన ఒక ప్రజాస్వామిక గణముగాఁ బాలించినట్లు దెలియుచున్నది. ఆళోకునియనంతరము మగధసామ్రాజ్యము ఆంధ్ర రాజులకు వశపడినది. చరిత్రలో నూతనాధ్యాయము ప్రారంభమయ్యెను, ఆకాలపు ముఖ్యపట్టణములు వైజయంతి, శ్రీకాకులము, వైటను, దాన్యకటకము. శాతవాహనుల సామ్రాజ్యము నెలకొనినది. వీరు సుమారు 450 సం॥ లు దేశమును బాలించిరి. వీరికాలము శాలివాహన శతాబ్దమును గుర్తించుచున్నది. శాకులతో ఆంధ్రులకు వియ్యకయ్య సంబంధము లుండెడివి.

చాళుక్యులు వాశాసిన ప్రధాన పట్టణముగ పాలించినవారు. వారిలో రెండవ పులికేశిహర్షుని జయించి. తూర్పు చాళుక్య రాజ్యమును వేంగి ప్రధానపట్టణముగ తనతమ్ముడగు కుబ్జ విష్ణువర్ధనుని ఆధిక్యమున స్థాపించిన మహావీరుడు. తూర్పు చాళుక్యులలో రాజరాజనరేంద్రుడు ఆదికవియగు నన్నయభట్టు సహాయమున ఆంధ్ర మహా భారత రచనకు దారణజూపినవారు.

కాకతీయులు ఓరుగల్లు రాజ్యమును పాలించి శౌర్యవ్రతాపములను, విద్యానైపుణ్యమును కళాపోషణమును గనఁబరచిన మహాత్ములు. కాకతి గణపతి, రుద్రమ్మదేవి, ప్రతాపరుద్రుడు, యుగంధరుడు వీరు చరిత్రలో ప్రసిద్ధి జెందినవారు. వీరాధిపీరుడని ఆంధ్ర భోజుడని పేరెన్నికగన్న కవిరాజు విశాలాంధ్ర రాజ్యమునకు పునాదివేసిన మహానీయుఁడు కృష్ణదేవరాయలు. నెల్లూరు మండలమును నేలిన మనుమసిద్ధి, చాళుక్య చోళవంశములకు వారసుడైన కుళోత్తుంగుడు, దక్షిణమున తంజావూరు మధురను బాలించిన తిరుమల చొక్కలింగ రఘునాథరాయలు మొదలగు రాజులు ఆంధ్రదేశ చరిత్రలో భాసిల్లిరి.

సాహిత్యము

దక్షిణ హిందూస్థాన భాషలలో తెలుగు మిక్కిలి మృదు మధురమగు భాష. “దేశ భాషలందు తెలుఁగు లెస్స” అని రాయల చేతను “The Italian of the East” అని సాళ్వాత్య శబ్దవేత్తల చేతను ప్రశంస వీయమైనది. ఆదికవి వాగనుశాసను డనబడు నన్నయభట్టు ఆంధ్రభాషకు అక్షరామ్యాయమును స్థిర రూపమును గల్పించి కాళ్యత నివర్తన రూపముగా ఆంధ్ర మహాభారత రచనను దొడంగెను. కవి బ్రహ్మాయుగు తిక్కన అద్వైత పురుషుడై, బాజ్ఞయమునందే కాక చరిత్రయందు గూడ నొక స్థానము నేర్పరచుకొని చిరసాయి యయ్యెను. ప్రబంధ సరమేశ్వరు డనదగు ఎఱ్ఱాపెగ్గడ భారత రచన పూర్తిజేసెను. కవి సార్వభౌముడగు శ్రీనాథుడు బాజ్ఞయ ప్రపంచమునందు ప్రత్యేకతైలివి తనపేర వెలయించుటయేకాక కనకాభిషక్తుడు, సహజకవియగు పోతనామాత్యుడు భాగవతమును బండితులకేకాక సామాన్యులకుగూడ నండుబాటుగా నుండునట్లు రచించెను. ఆంధ్రభోజుడనదగు కృష్ణ

దేవరాయలు ఆంధ్రకవితా విశామహూడగు పెద్దన, సూతన కల్ప రచయితయగు పింగళిసూరన, హాస్యకవి తెనాలి రామలింగు మొదలగు అష్టదిగ్గజ కవులు సంస్కృత పురాణములోని భాగములను ప్రబంధరూపమున వ్రాసిరి.

రామభద్రమ్మ, రంగాజమ్మ, మధురవాణి మోహనాంగి, మొల్ల, ముద్దుపళిని మొదలగు కవియిత్రులు కూడ పూర్వకాలమునుండి ఆంధ్ర సారస్వతమున ఇప్పటివరకు గుండు అచ్చమాంబ, పులుగుర్త లక్ష్మీనరసమ్మ జయంతి సూరమ్మగారు, ఎస్ స్వర్ణమ్మ ఇందిర మొదలగువారు కలరు.

సింహాచలము అమరావతి, నాగార్జునకొండ, హంపి తంజావూరులోని సరస్వతీ మహాలు మొదలగునవి ఆంధ్ర కళాపోషణకు నిదర్శనములు. క్షేత్రయ్య తనపదములచేతను, సంగీతలోలుడగు శ్రీత్యాగయ్య తన కీర్తనల చేతను పాశ్చాత్యుల నలరింప జేయుటయేకాక వారిచేత పలుకునట్లును జేసి ఆంధ్ర భాషకు ఆంధ్రులకు, విశేషకీర్తి నార్జింపిరి. శతాధిక గ్రంథ నిర్ణేతయగు శ్రీ కంచుకూరి వీరేశలింగము పంతులుగారు సంఘ సంస్కరణలతో సంఘనేప యొనర్చిన దేశభక్తుడు.

కృష్ణా తుంగభద్రా గోదావరీ పుణ్యనదులతో ఆంధ్ర దేశము తులతూగు చున్నది. ఉత్తరమున ఉత్కళ దేశము, తూర్పున ఆంధ్ర సముద్ర మనదగిన బంగాళాఖాతము, దక్షిణమున తమిళనాడు, నైర్ఋతిని మైసూరు, పడమట బొంబాయి రాజధాని, వాయవ్యమున హైదరాబాదు, బస్తరు ఉత్కళ రాష్ట్రములోని మన్యప్రదేశములు, మధ్య రాష్ట్రములును గలవు. ఇందు సస్యవంతములైన వీరభూములు మెండుగా గలవు. ఆంధ్ర రాష్ట్రముకొరకు తొలిరోజులలో ఋత్విజులు, శ్రీకొండా వెంటిటప్పయ్య పంతులు, బయ్యా నరసింహేశ్వర శర్మ న్యాయతి సుబ్బారావు పంతులు, కాశీనాథుని నాగేశ్వరరావు మొదలగు వారు తమతమ పాత్రలను నిర్వహించి ఫలితము ననుభవింపకయే నేడు కాలధర్మము నొందిరి. చిట్ట జీవరకు ఆమరణీవియు, యజ్ఞకుండికకు నాభుడనడగు శ్రీ పొట్టి శ్రీరాముల వారి యాభై ఎనిమిది రోజులు ప్రాయోపవేశముతో (క్రి. శ. 1953) వ సంవత్సరము ఆక్టోబరు రెండవతేదినాడు స్వతంత్ర ఆంధ్ర రాష్ట్రముద్భవించినది. చిరంజీవియగు శ్రీ పొట్టి శ్రీరాములవారికి జోహారులు! ఈ రాజ్యము సర్వతో ముఖాభివృద్ధి గల్గినట్లు సర్వేశ్వరు డాశీర్వ దించు గాత!

నమస్తే! నమస్తే!! నమస్తే!!!

మ. శౌరదాంబ, బి. ఏ ఆనర్పు
ఆంధ్రోపన్యాసకురాలు

കഥകളിയെപ്പറ്റി

ഭാരതത്തിന്റെ ഇതരഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ താമസിക്കുന്ന ജനങ്ങൾ ഒരുപക്ഷേ കേരളത്തെ പറ്റിയോ കൈരളിയെപ്പറ്റിയോ കേൾക്കില്ലെന്നു വരാം. എങ്കിലും കഥകളിയെപ്പറ്റി കേൾക്കാത്തവർ ചുരുക്കമാണ്. കേരളത്തിന്റെ മാത്രം സ്വന്തമാണ് കഥകളി! അഭിമാനിക്കത്തക്ക സ്വത്താണ്.

പുത്തൻ കഥകളിയിലെ വണ്ണപ്പകിട്ടിൽ മതിമയങ്ങിയ കേരളീയർ ആട്ടക്കഥകളെ പഴഞ്ചെന്നെ പറഞ്ഞു തള്ളിക്കളഞ്ഞു; കൊട്ടാരക്കൊട്ടുകൾക്കുള്ളിൽനിന്നു കഥകളി പുറത്തു പുറപ്പെട്ടു ആ കാലഘട്ടത്തെ കഥകളിയുടെ ശനിദശയായി കണക്കാക്കാം. പക്ഷെ ഈ അരിഷ്ടതകൾ എല്ലാം സഹിച്ചിട്ടും കഥകളി പ്രസ്ഥാനം വലിയ കോട്ടംതടിക്കാതെ ജീവിച്ചുപോന്നു.

സംഭവബഹുലങ്ങളായ വർഷങ്ങൾ പലതും കടന്നുപോയി. രാഷ്ട്രത്തിലും സാഹിത്യത്തിലും മാറ്റങ്ങൾ പലതും സംഭവിച്ചു. നവീനപരിഷ്കാരത്തിന്റെ ലഹരിയിൽനിന്നും ഉണർന്ന മലയാളികൾ ചിന്തിക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങി; തങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും തങ്ങൾക്കു നഷ്ടപ്പെടുമ്പോഴുപലതീനേക്കുറിച്ചും. ജീർണ്ണാവസ്ഥയിൽ കിടന്നിരുന്ന പല അമൂല്യനിധികളെയും വെളിച്ചത്തെടുക്കുവാൻ അവർ ആവേശംകൊണ്ടു. അങ്ങിങ്ങിനെ കഥകളിയും അവരുടെ കണ്ണിൽ പെട്ടു. ശ്രീ. വള്ളത്തോൾ നാരായണമേനോനും, ശ്രീ വി. കൃഷ്ണൻതമ്പിപ്പിള്ളിമാണ് കഥകളി പരിഷ്കരണശ്രമത്തിനായി മുന്നോട്ടു വന്നത്. ആസ്ഥാനകവി വള്ളത്തോളിന്റെ പരിചരണത്തിൽ കഥകളിക്കു ഒരു നവജീവൻ ലഭിച്ചു. ആട്ടക്കഥകൾ, ക്ഷേത്രപരിവേഷങ്ങളെ വിട്ടു പൊതുജനമദ്ധ്യത്തിലേക്കു കടന്നുവന്നു. ധീരമായ ആ കാൽപെട്ടു കഥകളിയുടെ ഒരു വിജയമായിരുന്നു. അടുത്തകാലത്തു, റഷ്യ, ജർമ്മനി മുതലായ വിദേശങ്ങളിൽ പോലും വള്ളത്തോളിന്റെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ ചില കലാപ്രകടനങ്ങൾ നടത്തുകയുണ്ടായി. അവിടെയെല്ലാം അസൂയാർഹമായ ഒരു സ്മരണമാണു കഥകളിക്കു ലഭിച്ചത്.

കാലം

ആദ്യത്തെ കഥകളി കർത്താവ് കൊട്ടാരക്കരത്തമ്പുരാണാണെന്നാണു വിശ്വസിച്ചു പോരുന്നതു്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കാലം കൊല്ലവർഷം 350 നോടടുത്താണെന്നാണു കണക്കാക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതു്. എങ്കിലും കഥകളിക്കു ഇത്രയും പഴക്കം കല്പിച്ചാൽ പോരാ. നൂറ്റാണ്ടുകളായി കേരളത്തിൽ വളർന്നുവന്ന പലവിധ അഭിനയസമ്പ്രദായങ്ങളുടെ ഒരു പരിണാമമാണ് കഥകളി. ഭാരതന്റെ നാട്യശാസ്ത്രം ഭാരതീയ നാട്യകലയ്ക്കു ആകമാനം അടിസ്ഥാനമായിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു കൃതിയാണു്. എങ്കിലും ആ നാട്യശാസ്ത്രത്തിലെ നിയമങ്ങൾ അന്വസരിച്ചു ഇത്രയും സമ്പൂർണ്ണമായ ഒരു കലാസമ്പ്രദായം മററൊരാൾക്കുതന്നെ സംഭവിക്കുകയായിട്ടില്ല. ആംഗിക്, വാചികം, സാത്വികം, ആഹാര്യം എന്നിങ്ങനെ നാലുതരം അഭിനയങ്ങളാണു് ഉള്ളതു്. അതിൽ വാചികത്തെ അപ്രധാനമായിത്തള്ളി മറ്റു മൂന്നിനും കൊടുക്കാവുന്നിടത്തോളം പ്രാധാന്യം നൽകി നടത്തപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു കലാസമ്പ്രദായമാണു കഥകളി. തഞ്ചാവൂരിൽ പ്രചരിച്ചിരുന്ന ഭഗവതമേളവും ഏതുപ്രധാനമായിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ അവയിലും ആഹാര്യം

സാമൂഹികം മുതലായ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കു കഥകളിയിലെപ്പോലെ സ്ഥാനം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. ഈ നാലു അഭിനയ സമ്പ്രദായങ്ങളും ചേർന്നൊന്നിലേ രസാഭിനയമാവുകയുള്ളുവെന്നു ഭാവ പ്രകാശനത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നു. ഇതിൽ ഏതെങ്കിലുമൊന്നു കറന്താൽ അതു ഭാവാഭിനയമേ ആവുകയുള്ളു. ഈ സ്ഥിതിക്കു ആട്ടക്കഥയെ സാങ്കേതികമായി ഭാവാഭിനയമെന്നേ വ്യവഹരിക്കാവൂ.

കൈമുദ്ര

ഭരതന്റെ നാട്യശാസ്ത്രത്തിൽ വിവരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള പ്രകാരമെന്നയാണു കഥകളിയിലും കൈമുദ്രകൾ മിക്കവാറും കാണിക്കാറുള്ളതു്. കഥകളിക്കാർ പ്രമാണമായി അംഗീകരിക്കുന്ന 'ഹസ്തലക്ഷണ ദീപിക' യിൽ ഭരതനിൽനിന്നു് അല്ലമായ ചില വ്യതിയാനങ്ങൾ കാണാം. പത്മകോശമാടിയായ മുദ്രകൾ ഭരതനിൽ മാത്രമേ കാണുകയുള്ളു. 'അഭിനയ ദർപ്പണ'ത്തോടാണു് ഭരതന്റെ നാട്യശാസ്ത്രത്തേക്കാൾ കഥകളി മുദ്രകൾ കൂടുതൽ അടുത്തുനില്ക്കുന്നതു്. അതിൽ മുപ്പത്തിരണ്ടു അസംയുതഹസ്തങ്ങളുണ്ടു്. 'ഹസ്തലക്ഷണദീപിക'യിൽ ഇരുപത്തിനാലേ ഉള്ളു.

ആശരം

സാമൂഹികവും കൊട്ടാരക്കര തമ്പുരാന്മാരായുണ്ടായ ഒരു കിടമത്സരത്തിന്റെ ഫലമാണു് കഥകളിയെന്നു ഒരു ഐതിഹ്യമുണ്ടു്. സാഹിത്യത്തിലെ ഇതരപ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുടെ ഉത്ഭവത്തെപ്പറ്റിയും ഇത്തരം കെട്ടുകഥകൾ ധാരാളം പ്രചാരത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടു്. ഈ ഐതിഹ്യത്തിന്നും അവയ്ക്കുള്ള പ്രാധാന്യം കൊടുത്താൽ മതി. കൊട്ടാരക്കര രാജകുടുംബം പണ്ടുമുതൽക്കേ പണ്ഡിതന്മാരുടെ ആവാസകേന്ദ്രമായിരുന്നു. ചെങ്കോടി, ചേരമാർ ദേവി, സാമ്പവർ വടകര മുതലായ തമിഴു നാടുകൾ കൊട്ടാരക്കര രാജ്യത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ആ നാടുകളിൽനിന്നും ബ്രാഹ്മണപണ്ഡിതന്മാർ ഇവിടെ വന്നിരുന്നതായി വിചാരിക്കാം. അവരിൽനിന്നും തഞ്ചാവൂരിലും മറ്റും പ്രചാരത്തിലിരുന്ന അഭിനയ സമ്പ്രദായങ്ങളുടെ വിവരം ലഭിച്ചു 'പടയണി' മുതലായ നാടൻ കഥകളും കലത്തി നിമ്മിക്കപ്പെട്ട ഒരു കലയാണു് കഥകളിയെന്നു വിചാരിക്കാം. കഥകളിയുടെ സാഹിത്യം ഉണ്ടാവുന്നതിനു മുൻപു് മരമോന്തകളും കുരുത്തോലകളും അവലംബിച്ചു പടയണി, കോലംതുളുൽ മുതലായ പ്രാകൃതാഭിനയങ്ങൾ നേരത്തേതന്നെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. വേഷങ്ങൾ പരിഷ്കരിച്ചു, പാടാൻ തക്കവണ്ണം ഒരു സാഹിത്യമുണ്ടാക്കി കഥകളിയെ അഭിവൃദ്ധിപ്പെടുത്തിയതു ഏതായാലും കൊട്ടാരക്കര തമ്പുരാൻ തന്നെ.

കഥകളിയുടെ ചടങ്ങുകൾ

മറെറല്ലാ നാട്യസമ്പ്രദായങ്ങൾക്കും എന്നപോലെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയോടുകൂടിത്തന്നെ കഥകളിയും ആരംഭിക്കുന്നു. തിരശ്ശീലക്കകത്തുവെച്ചുതന്നെ ഈ കൃിയ നടത്തുന്നു. അതു കഴിഞ്ഞാൽ തിരനോട്ടം എന്നു പറയുന്ന ഒരു ചടങ്ങുണ്ടു്. തിരശ്ശീലയിൽ വിരലുകൾ ചലിപ്പിച്ചു കൊണ്ടു രംഗസംമീക്ഷണം നടത്തുകയാണു ഇതിന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശം. ഈ ചടങ്ങു കഴിഞ്ഞു വീണ്ടും രംഗത്തിനുള്ളിൽ നടന്മാർ മുറയുന്നു.

നാടകത്തിലെ നാനദിപോലെയാണു കഥകളിയിലെ തോടയം. തോടയം എന്ന വാക്കിന്റെ ഉല്പത്തിയെപ്പറ്റി പല അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളും പറഞ്ഞുകേട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. ആരംഭത്തിലുള്ള ചടങ്ങു എന്ന നിലയ്ക്കു തുടങ്ങും തുടക്കം എന്നിത്യാദി വാക്കുകളിൽനിന്നാണു തോടയത്തിന്റെ ഉൽഭവം എന്നൊരു പക്ഷമുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ശബ്ദശാസ്ത്രത്തെ അവലംബിച്ചു ഈ വാക്കിന്റെ പരിണാമത്തെ ന്യായീകരിപ്പാൻ പ്രയാസമാണു്. തോഷകം എന്ന സന്ധ്യതപസത്തിൽനിന്നും ഈ വാക്കിനെ എഴുപ്പം നിഷ്ഠാഭിപ്രിക്കാമെന്നു ഡോ. ശ്രീഗോപവർമ്മ അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു. നാനദിപ്പിക്കുന്നതു നാനദി എന്നർത്ഥം കിട്ടുന്നതുപോലെ തോഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നതു തോഷകം. ദേവന്മാരെ സന്തോഷിപ്പിക്കുകയായിരിക്കും ഇതിന്റെ ഉദ്ദേശം. പുറപ്പാടു കഴിഞ്ഞാണു മേളപ്പടം എന്ന ചടങ്ങു തുടങ്ങുന്നതു്. പുറപ്പാടു എന്ന ചടങ്ങു പ്രധാന നടനും രണ്ടു സ്ത്രീ വേഷക്കാരും കൂടി രംഗത്തേക്കു പുറപ്പെടുകയാണു്. എല്ലാ കഥകൾക്കും പ്രാരംഭമായിട്ടുള്ള അഭിനയം ഈ വേഷക്കാരുടേതാണു്. കഥ തുടർച്ചയായി അഭിനയിക്കുന്നതിനിടയിൽ അനുഷ്ഠിക്കുന്ന പ്രത്യേകരീതികൾക്കും ഓരോ സാങ്കേതിക സംജ്ഞകളുണ്ടു്. കഥയിലെ പദ്യം ചൊല്ലി ആ ക്രമത്തിനു അഭിനയിക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിനു ചൊല്ലിയാട്ടം എന്നു പേരു പറയുന്നു. ഗായകൻ പാടാതെയുള്ള സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ മുന്നോടാർമ്മം പ്രയോഗിച്ചു നിശ്ചലമായി നിന്നും ഇളകിയും ആടാറുണ്ടു്. അതിനൊക്കെ പരമ്പരയായി ചില സങ്കേതങ്ങൾ തീർച്ചപ്പെടുത്തി വന്നിട്ടുണ്ടു്. സംസ്കൃത സാഹിത്യത്തിൽ പ്രസിദ്ധങ്ങളായ ചില ശ്ലോകങ്ങൾ മനസ്സിൽ സങ്കൽപിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു് അതിന്റെ അന്വയക്രമത്തിൽ അഭിനയിക്കുകയാണു പതിവു്. ശ്രംഗാരരസാവിഷ്കരണത്തിനു ചില കേശാഭിപാദവർണ്ണനകൾ അവർ നിയമമനു ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തും. അതുപോലെ ഉചിതങ്ങളായ മരണാശയ രസങ്ങൾക്കും ചില നടന്മാർ സന്ദർഭം അനുസരിച്ചു അഷ്ടകലാശം പഠിപ്പുക എന്നൊരു ചടങ്ങു അനുഷ്ഠിക്കാറുണ്ടു്. ചമ്പതാളം വരുന്നിടത്താണു് ഇതിനു പ്രസക്തി. ഇതു കാലക്രമമനുസരിച്ചു എട്ടു താളത്തിലും പഠിപ്പിത്തീർക്കാൻ വളരെ പഠിച്ചു നടന്മാർക്കു സാധിക്കുകയുള്ളു. 'നിണമണിപ്പിൽ എന്നൊരു ചടങ്ങു ചില കഥകളികളിൽ ഉണ്ടു്. ഖരവധം, കീർമ്മീരവധം, നൗകാസുരവധം മുതലായ കഥകളിലാണു നിണമണിപ്പിൽ നടത്താറുള്ളതു്.

കഥകളിയിൽ ഇന്നു കാണുന്ന വേഷവിധാനം കല്പടിക്കോട്ടു് കല്പിങ്ങോട്ടു് എന്ന രണ്ടു നമ്പൂതിരിമാരുടെ പരിഷ്കാരങ്ങൾ അനുസരിച്ചു വന്നുപേർന്നവയാണു്. സാത്വികന്മാരായ ആളുകളുടേയും രാജാക്കന്മാരുടേയും വേഷത്തിനു പച്ഛയെന്നു പറയുന്നു. പച്ഛ മിക്കവാറും പച്ചനിറം തന്നെയാണെങ്കിലും ആ ഒരു ധീരമേ ആകാവൂ എന്നു നിർബന്ധമില്ല. മഞ്ഞ, ചുവപ്പു്, നീലം ഈ നിറങ്ങളുമാവാം. മുഷ്പാത്രങ്ങളുടെ വേഷം കത്തിയാണു്. അതിൽ കടുംകത്തി, നെടുംകത്തി എന്നീ രണ്ടു വിധമുണ്ടു്. ഹനുമാൻ, ബാലി മുതലായ വാനരന്മാർ താടിക്കാരാണു്. കാടാളന്മാരുടെ വേഷം കരി. സ്ത്രീവേഷവും ഗൃഷ്ണികളുടെ വേഷവും മീനക്കാണു്. ഇത്രയുമാണു് പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട വേഷസമ്പ്രദായങ്ങൾ.

ആട്ടക്കഥാകർത്താക്കൾ

കൊട്ടാരക്കരത്തമ്പുരാൻ

കഥകളി സാഹിത്യത്തിന്റെ ഉപജ്ഞാതാവു് കൊട്ടാരക്കര തമ്പുരാനാണെന്നു കാര്യത്തിൽ വലിയ അഭിപ്രായവ്യത്യാസമാർക്കുമില്ല. കഥകളിയുടെ കലാസമ്പ്രദായങ്ങൾക്കു്

മുഴുവൻ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വവും കൊടാരക്കരത്തമ്പുരാൻതന്നെയാണെന്നു വിചാരിക്കാൻ നിവ്വാഹമില്ല. പക്ഷെ, ആദ്യത്തെ കഥകളി സാഹിത്യകാരൻ അദ്ദേഹംതന്നെ. രാമായണത്തെ എട്ടു ഭാഗങ്ങളായി വിഭജിച്ചു എട്ടു കൃതികൾ എഴുതുകയാണ് അദ്ദേഹം ചെയ്തത്. സാഹിത്യപരമായ വലിയ മേന്മയാണെന്നും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൃതികൾക്കുണ്ടെന്നു പറയാനും പാടില്ല. അവിടവിടെ മനോഹരങ്ങളായ ഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഉയർന്ന ഭാവനയോ വിചാരമധുരമായ അലങ്കാരപ്രയോഗങ്ങളോ ആ കൃതികളിൽ അധികമില്ല. ഇദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കാലം കൊല്ലം 850 ന് ഇടയ്ക്കാണെന്നു മിക്കവാറും തീർച്ചപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.

കോടിയം തമ്പുരാൻ

ചൊട്ടാരക്കര തമ്പുരാൻ ശേഷമുള്ള കഥകളി കർത്താക്കന്മാരിൽ കാലക്രമംകൊണ്ടു ആദ്യമായി പരിഗണിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതു കോടിയം തമ്പുരാനാണ്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൃതികൾ ബകവധം, കല്യാണസൗഗന്ധികം, കീർത്തിരവധം, കാലകേയവധം എന്നു നാലു ആട്ടകഥകളാണ്. ബകവധം തീരെ ലളിതമാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ടായിരിക്കണം അതു കൈകൊട്ടിക്കളിക്കുകൊള്ളാമെന്നു കവിയുടെ ഗുരനാഥൻ അഭിപ്രായപ്പെട്ടതായി ഐതിഹ്യമുള്ളതു്. കീർത്തിരവധം വളരെ പ്രൗഢമാണ്. അർത്ഥവൈചിത്ര്യത്തേക്കാൾ ശബ്ദവൈചിത്ര്യത്തിലാണ് കവി അധികം ശ്രദ്ധവെച്ചതു എന്നു തോന്നുന്നു. കോടിയം തമ്പുരാന്റെ കഥകളിൽ കല്യാണസൗഗന്ധികവും കാലകേയവധവുമാണ് സാധാരണയായി അഭിനയിക്കപ്പെടാറുള്ളതു്.

കോടിയത്തു തമ്പുരാനെപ്പറ്റി സാഹിത്യപഞ്ചാനനൻ പറയുന്നതിപ്രകാരമാണ്. “കോടിയം രാജാവിന്റെ ആട്ടകഥകൾ അഭിനയത്തിനു കൊള്ളാവുന്നിടത്തോളം കവിത്വത്തിനു കൊള്ളാമെന്നു പറയാനില്ല. അവിടവിടെ ചമൽക്കാരമുള്ള ചില അലങ്കാര പ്രയോഗങ്ങൾ കാണാനുണ്ടെങ്കിലും വണ്ണനകൾ മുതലായവ വളരെ വിശേഷങ്ങളാണെന്നു പറയേണ്ടതായി തോന്നുന്നില്ല.”

ഉണ്ണായിവാരിയർ

ഉണ്ണായിവാരിയരുടെ പേരിനേയും കാലത്തേയും പറ്റി വിവിധ അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളാണ് നിലവിലിരിക്കുന്നതു്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കാലം 880നു ഇടയ്ക്കാണെന്നു കണക്കാക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. നളചരിതമാണു ഉണ്ണായിവാരിയരുടെ കൃതി. പുരാണപ്രസിദ്ധമായ ഒരു ഇതിവൃത്തത്തെ സ്വീകരിച്ചു ഓരോ കഥാപാത്രത്തിനും തികഞ്ഞ വ്യക്തിത്വം നൽകാൻ അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു സാധിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നുതാണു ഒരു വലിയ വിജയം. “ഇതിവൃത്തഗതിക്കും കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളുടെ സ്വഭാവത്തിനും തമ്മിൽ ഏകാന്തമായ പൊരുത്തം വാരിയർ വരുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്”. കുട്ടികൃഷ്ണമാരാർ തന്നെ രാജാക്കണത്തിലെ ഒരു ഉപന്യാസത്തിൽ ഭാഷയിലെ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട നൈഷധീയ കാവ്യങ്ങളെ (ചന്ദ്ര, കിളിപ്പാട്ടു്, ആട്ടകഥ) താരതമ്യപ്പെടുത്തി ഉണ്ണായിവാരിയരുടെ കൃതിക്കുള്ള മെച്ചം സ്ഥാപിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്.

അശ്വതിതിരുനാൾ

അശ്വതിതിരുനാൾ തമ്പുരാൻ നരകാസുരവധത്തിന്റെ ഉത്തരഭാഗം, രാമീണീസ്വയംവരം, അംബരീഷചരിതം, പൗണ്ഡ്രകവധം, പൂതനാമോക്ഷം ഇത്രയും കഥകളുടെ കർത്താവാണ്.

അശ്വതിയുടെ കവിത പ്രായേണ കോട്ടയത്തു തമ്പുരാന്റെ കവിതയെ പിൻതുടരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ കോട്ടയത്തുതമ്പുരാന്റെ കവിതയോളം കാർക്കശ്യമില്ലാത്ത പ്രൗഢതയാണു അശ്വതിയുടെ കൃതികളിൽ കാണുന്നതെന്നു പറയേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. മഹാകവി ഉള്ളൂർ പറയുന്നത് രംഗപ്രയോഗത്തിന് ഒന്നുകൂടി പററിയ കൃതികൾ കോട്ടയം കൃതികൾതന്നെയാണെന്നാണ്. ഗ്ലോക്കങ്ങൾ പ്രത്യേകമെടുത്തു പരിശോധിക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ വിജയം അശ്വതിക്കു തന്നെയാണ്.

ഇരയിമ്മൻതമ്പി

അശ്വതിതിരുനാൾ തമ്പുരാന്റെ കാലത്തിനു ശേഷം പല ആടിക്കഥകൾ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഇരയിമ്മൻ തമ്പിയേപ്പോലെ അവരാൽ പ്രസിദ്ധി സമ്പാദിച്ചിട്ടില്ല. ബാണയുദ്ധകർത്താവായ ബാലകവി രാമശാസ്ത്രികൾ കിരാതത്തിന്റെ കർത്താവായ ഇരട്ടക്കുളങ്ങര വാരിയർ സന്താനഗോപാലം, അമാംഗലചരിതം ഇവയുടെ കർത്താവായ ഇട്ടിരാശിമേനോൻ ബാലിവിജയം കർത്താവായ കല്ലൂർ നമ്പൂരിപ്പാടു ഇവർക്കു അൽപമായ പ്രസിദ്ധിയുണ്ട്.

സ്വാതിതിരുനാളിന്റെ സദസ്യനായിരുന്ന ഇരയിമ്മൻ തമ്പി കീലകവധം, ഉത്തരാസ്വധംവരം, ദക്ഷയാഗം ഈ മൂന്നു ആടിക്കഥകളുടെ കർത്താവാണ്. സംഗീതസാഹിത്യങ്ങളുടെ ഹൃദ്യമായ സമ്മേളനംകൊണ്ടു മധുരമാണ് തമ്പിയുടെ കഥകളെല്ലാം. കോട്ടയം തമ്പുരാന്റെ കൃതികളിലുള്ളതുപോലെ യമകം, അനുപ്രാസം ഇത്യാദി ശബ്ദവൈചിത്ര്യങ്ങളെല്ലാം തമ്പിയുടെ കൃതികളിലുമുണ്ട്. ഇരയിമ്മൻ തമ്പിയുടെ ദണ്ഡകങ്ങളെല്ലാം വളരെ മനോഹരങ്ങളും പ്രസിദ്ധങ്ങളുമാണ്.

മററു കഥകൾ

ഇതുവരെ പരാമർശിക്കപ്പെട്ട കഥകൾ മാറ്റിനിർത്തിയാൽ പ്രചാരമുള്ളവ കീളിമാന്തർ കോയിത്തമ്പുരാന്റെ രാവണവിജയം, വയസ്സൂര മുസ്സൂതിന്റെ ഭൃത്യോധനവധം ഇവയാണ്. ആധുനികന്മാരായ ചില കവികളും കഥകളിപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. അക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ മഹാകവി വള്ളത്തോൾ, വി. കൃഷ്ണൻ തമ്പി, കരയംവെട്ടിത്ത് സുകുമാരപിള്ള, പന്നിശ്ശേരി നാണുപിള്ള ഇവർ പ്രധാനികളാണ്.

കഥകളിയുടെ കലാസംബന്ധമായ പരിഷ്കരണശ്രമങ്ങളിൽ ഏർപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുള്ള രണ്ടു മഹാനുഭാവന്മാരാണ് വള്ളത്തോളും കൃഷ്ണൻ തമ്പിയും. വേഷവിധാനം അഭിനയക്രമം ഇവയിൽ പഴയസമ്പ്രദായങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു ഗണ്യമായ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ വരുത്തുതന്നെ അഭിപ്രായമുള്ള ചിലരുണ്ട്. എന്നുമാത്രമല്ല കഥകളി നിലനില്ക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ അതിന്റെ തനിരൂപത്തിൽത്തന്നെ നിലനില്ക്കണമെന്നും അവർ പറയുന്നു. എങ്കിലും കഥാസംവിധാനം മുതൽ ഇങ്ങോട്ടുള്ള പല കാര്യങ്ങളിലും മാറ്റം വരുത്തേണ്ടതു കേവലം കലാപരമായ നിലപാടിൽത്തന്നെ ആവശ്യമാണ്. പുതിയ അഭിരുചിയെ ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ കുറപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ട് ആവശ്യവുമില്ല.

MRS. M. JOSEPH, M.A.

स्त्रियों का स्थान घर ही है, बाहर नहीं।

मैंने इस कथन का विरोध किया शायद इसलिए कि मुझे यह अच्छा न लगा।

पुराने काल से स्त्रियों को बाहर स्थान दिया गया है। वह भी कबसे? - जब से कि राम हुए, कृष्ण हुए और उन के पहले से भी स्त्रियों को बाहर स्थान प्राप्त हुआ है। वर्तमान युग में जब उसकी बड़ी आवश्यकता है, तब उन्हें उस अधिकार से कैसे वंचित किया जाय?

हमारे देश में कई लोग कहते हैं कि स्त्रियाँ तो गृहिणी के पद पर ही शोभित होती हैं, बाह्य कामों में उन को स्थान देना अनुचित है। तो अच्छा ऐसा ही मान लें। पर, वर्तमान भारत की दशा से कौन भारतीय अनभिज्ञ होगा? आज क मानेवाला एक है तो खानेवाले दस हैं। इस दशा में स्त्रियों का निस्सहाय होना संभव है।

ऐसी दशा में समाज स्त्री को रक्षण तो क्या, भक्षण भी देने को तैयार नहीं होता। अब बाहरी ज्ञान से अज्ञात रखी हुई स्त्री क्या कर सकती? समाज ही इस दशा का क्या लाभ उठा सकता है?

दूसरी बात यह है कि अब कपड़े सीकर या दूसरा कुछ गृह उद्योग करके भी कुछ पूरा नहीं होता। पेट की आग बुझाने के लिए कभी कभी स्त्री को समाज की कुरीतियों का शिकार बनना पड़ता है। जो समाज उस की रक्षा करने में असमर्थ है, वही समाज उस पर दोष लगाकर उसे पदच्युत कर देता है। जब समाज स्त्री की रक्षा नहीं कर सकता तब स्त्री पर दीष लगाने का अधिकार उसे कब और कैसे मिला? तो स्त्री होने से वह भूखों मरे? क्या, वह मनुष्य नहीं है?

हर्ष की बात है कि आज कल स्त्रियों को बाहर स्थान मिल रहा है, पर बहुतों को नहीं जो लोग उन को इस स्थान से वंचित रखना चाहते हैं वे सचमुच स्वार्थी माने जाएँगे। क्यों कि शायद ये लोग अपने देश की सरकार में अकेले भाग लेना चाहते हैं, स्त्रियों को उस में स्थान देना नहीं चाहते।

किन्तु मेरा कहना यह नहीं है कि स्त्रियाँ बाहर ही फिरेँ और घर के कार्य की ओर ज़रा भी ध्यान न दें। गृहस्थी चलाना ही उसका प्रधान कार्य है। वही तो उस की शोभा है। पर जैसे पुरुषों का प्रधान स्थान बाहर रहते हुए भी वे घर में पति, पिता, पुत्र तथा भाई का स्थान लेते हैं, वैसे ही स्त्रियों को भी घर में प्रधान स्थान होते हुए भी बाहरी स्थान भी मिलना चाहिए।

(हिन्दू कलामन्दिर, त्यागराय नगर, मद्रास के पाँच वार्षिकोत्सव में नगर भर की हिन्दी वाक स्पर्धा में कुमारी के सद्गुण बेन १ यू सी, एस एम् सी द्वारा बिना पूर्व कल्पना किए दिया हुआ विशेषरूप से पुरस्कृत भाषण)

Quelques nouvelles de notre Club Français.

J'étais nouvellement arrivée à Stella Maris pour y commencer ma première année d'Intermédiaire lorsque, par un bel après-midi de septembre, j'entendis parler d'un meeting du Club Français qui devait avoir lieu le soir même. De ma vie je n'étais encore allée à un meeting ! Cependant, poussée par la curiosité, je décidai bravement de m'y rendre juste pour voir un peu de quoi il s'agissait.

Quand j'entrai dans la salle de réunion, notre Professeur, qui est vice-présidente du Club, était justement en train d'expliquer à mes camarades le but de ces meetings. C'était, disait-elle, de nous aider à acquérir une connaissance plus vivante et complète de la France et de tout ce qui est français, C'était aussi de favoriser des rapprochements, d'établir même, si possible, des contacts directs entre nous, Etudiantes de Stella Maris et Etudiantes de France. Des contacts directs ? Entre deux pays si éloignés l'un de l'autre ? Nous écoutions, très intriguées, nous demandant comment cela pourrait bien se faire. Hélas ! Il nous fallut mortifier notre curiosité car, pour ce jour-là, notre professeur n'en dit pas davantage.

Mais voici que déjà, sous nos yeux émerveillés, se déroulaient des coins pittoresques de France, sous la forme de magnifiques gravures et illustrations, offertes en présent à notre Club par le Consul de France à Madras. En même temps nous faisons connaissance avec le si intéressant Bulletin d'information française : " News from Delhi ", que l'Ambassade de France à Delhi avait eu l'amabilité de nous envoyer, et dont elle a bien voulu—à notre grande joie !—nous continuer l'envoi durant tout le cours de l'année. La partie culturelle surtout nous intéresse vivement et nous permet de prendre contact avec cette vie intellectuelle si intense de la France, qui constitue, à notre avis, son plus beau titre de gloire.

Au cours du meeting suivant, une étude détaillée du pays basque et de sa population, faite par Muriel et Myrtle, étudiantes de IV. U.C., nous transporta, comme en rêve, au pays de Ramuntcho. Tandis que Myrtle nous faisait connaître plus en détail l'histoire et les moeurs des habitants, Muriel, à l'aide de nombreuses images et photographies, nous invitait à l'accompagner au pays basque. Nous pûmes ainsi contempler les chaînes des Pyrénées, aux pentes noyées de brume, tant de fois parcourues par Itchoua et sa bande redoutable dans leurs expéditions nocturnes ; les hautes façades blanches, d'aspect austère, des maisons isolées, disséminées dans les montagnes à de si grandes distances les unes des autres. Nous pénétrâmes à l'intérieur d'une de ces grandes cuisines basques, aux murs blanchis à la chaux auxquels les hommes accrochent leur fusils ; nous vîmes la haute cheminée si pittoresque, avec son manteau garni d'un volant rouge, près de laquelle Franchita, anxieuse, passait de longues heures à attendre dans la solitude le retour du fils contrebandier. Un groupe de joueurs de pelote, réunis sur la place d'un petit village, nous permit de reconnaître le jeune Ramuntcho, le béret sur l'oreille et la veste jetée négligemment sur l'épaule, et, un peu plus loin, Itchoua, le terrible Itchoua lui-même, avec ses joues creusées, et ses yeux perçants enfouis sous une broussaille de sourcils noirs.

C'est en ayant ainsi toutes ces évocations du pays basque sous les yeux que nous apprîmes, ce même jour, notre premier chant de l'année, un chant qui s'intitule : " Je

suis un Montagnard ”. Il décrit si bien ce peuple à l’âme à la fois simple et primitive, fière et sauvage, au milieu duquel nous venions de passer quelques si bons moments ! Aussi est-ce avec enthousiasme que toute la classe s’unit au Montagnard pour entonner d’une seule voix avec lui :

“ Je suis un montagnard, un fort et noble gars,
Et de l’air des hauteurs est tout épris mon coeur ”

Le meeting suivant eut lieu en octobre. Ce jour-là, une foule d’étudiantes avait envahi la salle. Saraswathy nous donna les “ dernières nouvelles ” du Bulletin “ News from France ”. On annonçait qu’un “ Shakespeare Garden ” venait d’être inauguré à Paris. Ce jardin, merveilleusement aménagé sur une partie de l’emplacement du terrain du Bois de Boulogne, était destiné à donner des représentations de plein air du théâtre de Shakespeare. Le Bulletin relatait également le succès de l’Expédition du Nun-Kun par un groupe d’explorateurs franco-indiens ; il nous informait en outre qu’une exposition avait été organisée à Paris pour commémorer le centenaire de la publication du roman célèbre “ La Case de l’Oncle Tom ”. Dawn Last décrivit ensuite les beautés de la saison du printemps en France, comme introduction à la “ Chanson de Mai ” qu’exécutèrent pour les membres du Club les élèves de I.U.C.

Un autre meeting réunit encore une fois les étudiantes des quatre classes à la veille de Noël. Cette fois, la salle du Club se trouvait garnie de cartes géographiques de la France ; et des “ drapeaux miniatures ” des républiques indienne et française, fraternellement entrecroisés symbolisaient la bonne entente et les liens véritables qui unissent les deux peuples. Nalini, en suivant l’itinéraire sur la carte, nous donna un compte-rendu plein d’humour du séjour en France de M. Justice A.S.P. Yer, et des quiproquos auxquels donnèrent lieu ses essais de se faire comprendre des Français au cours de son voyage aux péripéties multiples.

Enfin, le Club Français tint, pour la dernière fois en cette année académique, son quatrième meeting vers la fin janvier. Il y fut surtout question de La Fontaine, qui est au programme d’études des I.U.C. Une gravure représentant le château de Vaux, résidence du surintendant Fouquet, ainsi qu’un portrait de Mme. de la Sablière nous aidèrent à nous représenter quelques-unes des étapes de la vie insouciant de ce célèbre fabuliste lequel, au contraire de la cigale, trouva toujours sur sa route des amis dévoués qui lui offrirent jusqu’ à sa mort la plus généreuse hospitalité. Puis les étudiantes passèrent quelques bons moments à feuilleter un grand album de couleurs, qui leur avait été envoyé de Paris pour leurs étrennes, et illustrait d’une façon charmante et humoristique les Fables de La Fontaine. Les animaux y sont reproduits avec des expressions et attitudes dignes des meilleurs comiques de la scène. Cela nous donna l’idée de jouer nous-mêmes quelques-unes des Fables que nous avions apprises au cours de l’année ; chacune assumait le rôle d’un personnage et la petite séance eut un grand succès !

Pour la première fois en ce dernier meeting nous fîmes connaissance avec les journaux français les plus variés—quotidiens et hebdomadaires,—envoyés de France pour le Club. L’un d’eux en particulier était très intéressant pour nous, car il était rempli de photographies prises durant l’élection et la réception à l’Elysée du Nouveau Président de la République Française, M. René Coty.

Nous avons reçu aussi pendant cette année des lettres de nos premières correspondantes françaises. Ce fut un événement inoubliable et je pus comprendre alors le sens des mots que j'avais entendus lors du premier meeting : " établir des contacts directs entre nous et les étudiantes de France ". Ce beau rêve était désormais réalisé ! Cinq jeunes filles françaises de Paris et Nantes nous ont déjà écrit et envoyé leurs photographies. Mais cela est loin de nous satisfaire, et nous leur demandons de nous trouver des amies car nous sommes encore quatorze à vouloir des correspondantes Il serait difficile de dire lesquelles sont les plus ravies : des Françaises ou des Indiennes ! L'amie de Nalini lui écrivait qu'elle était " si heureuse d'avoir enfin une correspondante aux Indes. Elle le désirait depuis si longtemps. Elle demandait à Nalini de lui envoyer vite une photographie afin qu'elle puisse l'admirer dans le beau " saree ", réputé si gracieux, des jeunes filles indiennes !

Et maintenant que j'ai passé en revue les principales activités de notre Club, je ne puis m'empêcher, après ce regard jeté en arrière, de sentir combien j'en suis venue à mieux comprendre la nation française et son peuple ardent et enthousiaste. Grâce à notre Club, j'ai appris aussi sur la France beaucoup de choses, d'une manière agréable, et aussi amusante qu' instructive, et dans une atmosphère que toutes et chacune ont su, par leur ingéniosité, leur entrain et une intelligente collaboration, rendre bien française !

MARIE MIRANDA,
I. U.C.
(Version Française)



Condolences.

The College extends sincere sympathy to Mrs. Aroul,
who on September 3rd, 1953, lost her only daughter Callista,
who had been for four years a student of Stella Maris College.
During the long months of ill-health which preceded her death, Callista
edified her lecturers and classmates by her patience and perseverance.
In her mother's words " She was such a patient, loving child that is
why I feel God has chosen her so soon. God's will be done.
This is all I can say and to this I must resign myself."

“Gubbio”.

Drenched in golden summer sunlight
Lay the town of Gubbio ;
Tall, the cypress clustered near,
Pink city walls 'gainst hillside sheer,
All peace and rest the atmosphere—
—Outside the walls 'twas so.

Once within the postern gate
Another tale was told ;
Anxious faces, heavy-eyed
With sleepless nights, and terrified
Of one huge wolf which, far and wide,
Was harrying hearth and fold.

Scarce a family in the town
But had losses to reveal ;
With some 'twas chickens by the score,
For others, sheep and goats galore,
Children snatched from their very door
Had been the monster's meal.

Desperation giving courage
Townsmen formed a valiant band ;
With swords and staves armed heavily,
Resolved to trounce the enemy
Not one day longer should he be
The terror of the land !

Now upon this scene dramatic
Walks a little, humble man,
Clad in tunic, coarse and old,
His gentle face is far from bold—
All shivered and shook with terror cold
To hear his simple plan.

Breaths were bated, tongues were hanging
Folk stood up on city wall ;
The Poor Man quietly sallied out,
From the ramparts came the shout
“ There it comes ! Look out ! Look out !
Beware the beast ! ”—they bawl.

Lo ! a sight of deepest wonder,
Francis makes a sacred sign ;
Wolfy jaws are sudden closed,
Wolfy head on paws is posed,
Wolfy pain is diagnosed—
—'Twas hunger drove him to rapine.

“ Brother Wolf,” says Francis gravely,
“ Shocking crimes thou dost commit,
Thou deservest to die in anguish,
Despised, outcast, for ever languish
Till you learn another language
For gentle folk more gently fit.”

Wolfy head in deep dejection
Drooped and dropped in hearty shame ;
Bushy tail no longer wagging,
Shaggy ears all sad and sagging,
Fearsome growl no longer bragging
Of the beast's unsavoury fame.

“ For your penance,” says the Poor Man,
“ You must swear in peace to live,
Treat with love and veneration
Every man, whate'er his station,
Eat no one but your daily ration
Which Gubbio folk will gladly give.”

Wolfy paw in full agreement
Rests on Francis' outstretched hand.
Then the Gubbio folk agree
To give Friend Wolf his dinner and tea—
A sure and solid guarantee
To keep secure their limbs and land.

And so for years, in heat or winter
(Comes the moral of this tale)
That polite, converted beast
Came to take his daily feast
Trot benignly where he pleased,
For—“ Kindness wins where force will fail.”

The Students' Year—1953-54.

June 25.—

College reopened with over 600 students. Friendliness, initiative and high spirits characterised this year's newcomers who received a royal welcome from the Seniors.

July.—

Students went to the polls. Class Representatives and Association Officers were elected with earnest enthusiasm. A new venture was tried in the Hostel. Choral and Dramatic Societies were formed which proved very popular and greatly lightened the burden of the "Entertainment Committee".

August.—

Found College life in full swing.

Reverend Gavin Martin in his inaugural address to the College Union showed how Reading for Pleasure could be made into a lucrative hobby, when used as a means of filling time, not killing it.

Associations followed his advice, and interesting, instructive debates and lectures followed.

The College Union was very much "at home" this month; the new Graduates' Reception was a happy family celebration, while the visit of a group of students from California University provided a rare opportunity of exchanging interesting experiences. The month closed with a grand response to the appeal for clothes to assist the victims of the Godavari Floods.

Hostel Day had come and gone with a full, happy programme of sports, Fancy Dress Tea and evening Entertainment.

September.—

Associations monopolised the Notice Boards this month by their inaugural addresses.

Mr. A. S. Gnanasambandam discussed with the Tamil students the close relationship between Art, Literature and Truth. The birth and history of the Telugu language was skilfully traced by Sri N. Venkata Rao, University of Madras.

For French students a very enjoyable series of imaginary tours began with a visit to the Basque Country, made all the more realistic by appropriate songs.

Music Associations were far from silent. Indian and Western Music students enjoyed recitals of "Jayadevas Ashtapadis", and Chopin respectively, while B.A. Economic students found their satisfaction in listening to Professor Velayudham trying to solve "The problem of Unemployment in India".

Inter-Collegiate activities began when V. Vijayalakshmi of I. U.C. won 2nd prize in the Bharathi Singing Competition.

October.—

Is always a festive month in Stella Maris College, the 16th being Rev. Mother Principal's Feast Day. Enjoyable entertainments in College and Hostel marked the occasion. Then followed the traditional orphans' picnic, which even a heavy morning downpour was not able to cancel, so determined were the students that the 200 little orphans should not be disappointed.

Members of the English Literary and Debating Society after a strenuous debate upon Western Civilisation, relaxed to enjoy the dramatisation of scenes from the "Merchant of Venice".

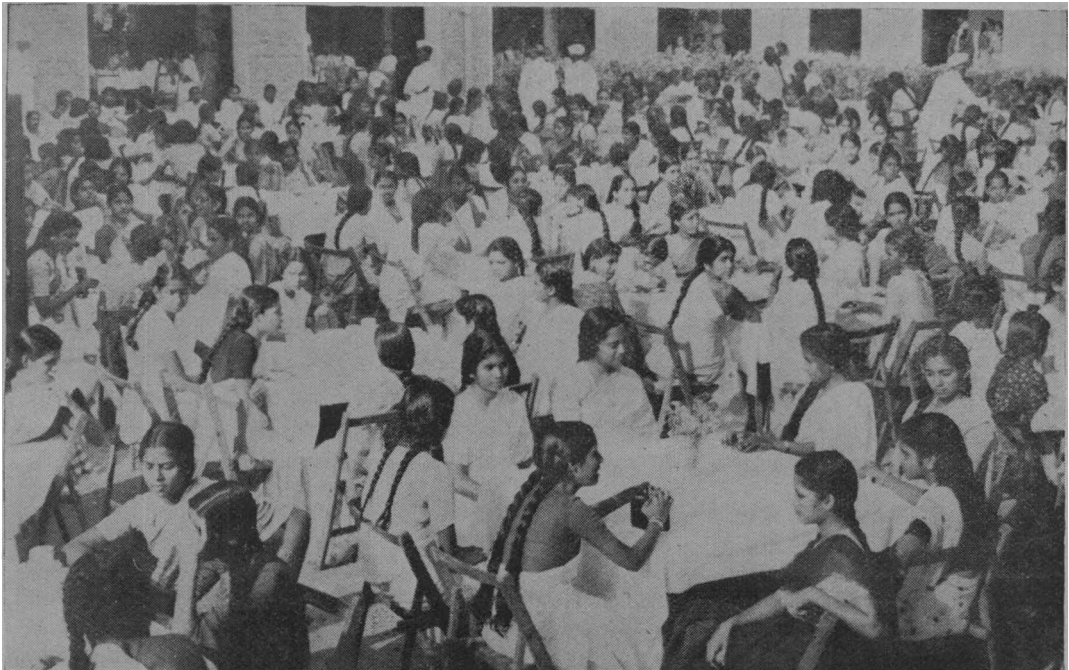
Science Groups had the privilege of a very instructive lecture by Sri V. Somasundaram, Head of the Department of Physics, Loyola College, upon "Scientific Achievements since 1895", with special reference to atomic energy and its possible applications in the future.

November 4th to 8th.—

A silent prayerful atmosphere pervaded College and Hostel during these days of the Annual Retreat.

The History Association which this year developed into a "training school" for public speaking, debated upon the practical value of history. Talks by the students and organised discussion groups were also part of its programme.

Language Associations were again busy; Malayam Literature and Culture was discussed; Sanskrit students distinguished themselves by winning the rolling cup at the Inter-Collegiate Competition.



ASSOCIATIONS COME TOGETHER AT THE PRINCIPAL'S ANNUAL TEA PARTY.

December.—

A blending of Eastern and Western Music took place when the two Music Associations combined their efforts for the annual Musical Concert in honour of St. Cecilia. A graceful Indian dance lost none of its charm when accompanied on the piano. Bohemian and Finnish Folk Dances were just as gay when violin and veena directed the steps, whilst vocalists found no beauty was lost though piano and veena had exchanged places.

Inter-Collegiate Debates acquired new interest this year, when the College was named one of the centres.

January.—

A full month ushered in 1954.

Economic students aroused the envy of all, when thanks to the gracious assistance of Mrs. Tara Cherian, they enjoyed the rare privilege of a visit to the Madras Legislative Assembly during the discussion of the Agriculturists' Moratorium Bill. This was a fitting reward for the year's activity during which the Co-operative Store was so ably managed that associates and dividend both increased. From monthly subscriptions a number of new books on Indian Economic Problems were procured for the Association Library. Two additional Economic Periodicals were made available to readers.

Mrs. Caldwell, a distinguished pianist recently returned from England, delighted all music-lovers by an excellent recital of classical music.

Student vistas were expanded by Miss Moore's most interesting lecture on the "Many-sidedness of Shakespeare".

January was a month of Inter-Collegiate Competitions, in several of which our students secured prizes : R. Sadgum Ben, I.U.C. was awarded a Special Prize in the Hindi Oratorical Competition. R. S. Sundarvalli, IV. U.C., Special Prize in the Classical Music Competition.

N. Y. Visalakshi and S. Lakshmi, both of II. U.C., won for the College the second rolling cup in Sanskrit during the year, S. Lakshmi being awarded the First Prize for Recitation.

On Republic Day Mrs. A. Iswariah, Lecturer in History, addressed the College students on the birth and responsibilities of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India.

February.—

Was a month of farewells. "Actions speak louder than words"—so too did the very enjoyable parties given by grateful Junior Intermediate and B.A. students in College and Hostel to the out-going Seniors, who initiated them so well into College life.

March.—

Last but not least came College Day, March 6th. A few days later bidding a last goodbye to the Seniors, Junior students settled down to a few days of revision before Promotion Examinations. As they left, University Examinations began, in which we wish each and all great success.

Early Memories.

Japan—the land of my dreams ! What magnificent visions that word conjures up before me ! Tokyo, standing amidst evergreen fields, holds one of the best positions in Japan. The city is a combination of old and new. Lovely women with flowing kimonos can be seen in the busy streets accompanied by handsome men. Shops throw open their show-rooms displaying an array of silks and satins fit for a king. Many other scenes of interest and beauty can be seen, for Tokyo is the capital of Japan, the land of the Rising Sun.

Born and bred in a small village in the vicinity of Tokyo, I have a fond love for my birth-place, although an Indian. I prick up my ears like a keen watch-dog when I hear people speaking of Tokyo. Immediately my mind speeds back to those by-gone days, those happy days of innocent childhood spent in far-off Japan.

The most striking thing about the Japanese is that they have much in common with the Indians. Besides resemblance in religious beliefs, they have numerous similar festivals, outstanding among them being the Kite Festival for boys and Doll Festival for girls. Boys and men alike take part in the Kite Festival, sometimes placing bets as to whose kite will fly the highest, and vying with one another in cutting the kite strings of their opponents. The Festival of the Dolls is similar to ours and is a happy day in the life of every little girl. Japanese funerals and marriages are carried out in great pomp and splendour.

The people, of a pale yellow complexion, are kind and hospitable. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that they are sometimes even cruelly kind, for they would go to any length in honouring their visitors, even though this causes the visitor real embarrassment.

Japanese names have beautiful meanings. My teacher's name meant "sugar" and one of my friends had a very long name meaning "sweet voiced nightingale".

I spent a very happy childhood in Japan. The primary schools take great care in moulding the character with all the surety of a potter who knows just how he wishes his work to turn out. One common trait among the Japanese is that from their childhood they are taught to act in a calm and cool manner, thus preparing to acquit themselves honourably in any ordeal.

During World War II, Japan lost her happy peaceful atmosphere. After 1942, she was continually attacked. Our family had taken the precaution of constructing an underground shelter to which we ran at the first sound of the siren, closing our ears with cotton-wool and stuffing our mouths with rubber balls, to safeguard us from shock. We children, unaware of the grave danger hanging overhead, were immensely pleased with this novel home and delighted to play at being soldiers. Cherries were used as bombs, and whenever one fell upon any one of us, he was either wounded or dead, and had to be carried away from the zone of battle. Finally the war ended, and I suppose we were the only ones who regretted its end, for we had lost a fine game.

Shortly afterwards communications which had long been cut were resumed and we received a letter from my grand-father inviting us to India. We embarked on the very first ship leaving for my motherland, and arrived in Madras in 1948. We met our relations and friends, and were glad to be among our own people once again. Tropical India, with its sudden changes of climate, forms a marked contrast to my fairyland of Japan. Should I ever return to my birth-place, I wonder if I shall find it the same as before.

S. LEELA, II. U.C.



BE THE BEST OF WHATEVER YOU ARE

If you can't be a pine on the top of the hill,
Be a scrub in the valley, but be
The best little scrub on the side of the rill ;
Be a bush, if you can't be a tree.

We can't all be captains, we've got to be crew ;
There's something for all of us here ;
There's big work to do and there's lesser to do,
And the task we must do is the near.

If you can't be a highway, then just be a trail ;
If you can't be a sun, be a star ;
It isn't by size that you win or you fail—
Be the best of whatever you are !

R. J. CUSHING.

Little Baldhead.

Before my readers start wondering as to what manner of creature the title suggests, let me hasten to assure you that it is of a human person that I am about to speak. Between the innocence of babyhood and the dignity of manhood is a bundle of mischief called a boy, and such a creature was Little Baldhead, our servant's child. I say was, because not more than three years after he had opened his eyes to this world, he closed them again, to behold a far richer and better world than ours. His name originated from a simple source. His elder brother was nick-named Big Baldhead and so it follows that the younger brother should be called Little Baldhead, though really he bore a dignified old Indian name.

A remarkable little boy was Little Baldhead, full of quaint tricks and mannerisms that endeared him to all. The most charming of his qualities were his smile which he used generously and to his advantage, and his smiling eyes, glinting with mischief. My hero was a sturdy, intelligent youngster who learned to walk at a remarkably early age. His capacity for resistance was immense and one had to see to believe the treatment he suffered at the hands of his elder brother, who seemed to be determined to bring up Little Baldhead as a prize-fighter. As a result he used to knock Little Baldhead about, although with the best of intentions. But one must not suppose that our hero took it all 'lying down'. Oh no, at the earliest opportunity he would climb upon his elder brother, pull his hair and kick him in a most satisfying manner.

It will be noticed that most babies' noses are flat and snubby. Little Baldhead was no exception, on the contrary, his nose was snubbier and flatter than usual; his trick of rubbing it hard with the palm of his hand to gain a copper from my cousin, did not in any way help. He seemed to know that that was what my cousin wanted, for no sooner did the latter appear, than Little Baldhead would vigorously flatten his nose and extend his grubby hand for a reward. Babies love eating, and eat anything and everything from baby food to sand; Little Baldhead was, I shall not say greedy, but a trifle over fond of food. It seemed that he was always eating. One would frequently see him come toddling down the garden from his hut, as fast as his fat legs would carry him, face dirty and smelling somewhat fishy, to get an extra tid-bit from one of us. This he would gobble up speedily and then grin his charming grin which made you want to gather him up in your arms, dirt, fish and all.

I do not think I am being conceited when I say that, apart from his family, Little Baldhead loved me the best, and I reciprocated his love. Perhaps this attraction was due to the fact that he was an exact replica of myself at that age, snub nose included. Anyway he had a special smile for me, and many a time I would come home to be greeted by his beaming face and his A h, which was his way of saying "Hello"!

I wish I could tell you more of his little tricks, but as I mentioned before, Little Baldhead is dead. He died quite suddenly and in a strange manner, taking with him the joy he used to bring to his parents and to all those who came in contact with him. So, though he was so little and not in the least famous, I write this in memory of a little boy with a heart-warming smile.

E. VISALAM,
II. U.C

Christmas Eve.

It was 4 p.m. on the 24th of December when my three elder sisters, my brother-in-law, my two nephews, my niece and I were riding on the upper deck of a double-decker omnibus, on a busy street of Ceylon's gay capital, Colombo.

It was Christmas Eve and all the Christian hearts were full of excitement. Gay groups of girls were dashing about doing their last-minute shopping. Children were aiding their elders in decorating their houses, and men were felling branches for Christmas trees. Each house was competing with the other in the way of decoration, in preparation for the great day—the day of the Saviour's birth.

But where were we going, and what did we feel like? Sure enough you would ask that question of me.

The bus halted opposite to the board which read "General Hospital". Yes, it was the very place we were going to. It was the day of my dear mother's operation.

She is on the wrong side of fifty and the only dear possession we have, my father having quitted this life while I was quite young. And now a deadly cancer on her throat was trying to take her away from us. We would not have it so, and the doctors would not have it so either, and hence the operation was fixed for 4-30 on Christmas Eve.

Thousands and thousands are operated on for some disease or other, every day, in every corner of the world. But this operation was different to us. It sent a shivering fit into all of us and forced bitter tears from our eyes.

The visitor's bell usually rang at 4-30 and the operation was scheduled for the same time. Now it was only four and the gate-keeper like a tyrant in spite of our pleadings would not let us in. We wept, we begged, we pleaded, but the man was adamant and would not yield even at the sight of tears. We wanted to see our dear mother before she was removed to the Operating Theatre. The cruel looks and rough voice of the man made the little kids cry, and they shouted 'Grandma, Grandma' simultaneously.

At last a surgeon was approached and permission was granted to us, and we entered the hospital premises before time.

We all rushed into 'Ward 19' and my mother was already prepared for the dreadful event. She wore a grey woollen coat, and cream stockings and her head was tied up in white cloth. She smiled contentedly and handed to my sister the last bit of valuable jewellery that she wore on her ears. Each one of us had something to tell her. "Mummy don't be afraid". "It is only a minor operation". "We will be praying for you." These were the kind of things we were hurriedly whispering in her ears. At this juncture my seven year old nephew who had worn a neck tie for the first time shouted "Grandma, Grandma, look at me—look at my tie". My mother bent and kissed the three grandchildren in turn.

My darling mother looked dazed. Her eyes were puzzled and she seemed to be thinking deeply but at the same time she glanced at each one of us standing round her bed.

The clock struck 4-30. A wheeled stretcher was brought and mother's eyes were covered before she was laid on the stretcher. My eldest sister who had given me a telling-off for weeping in mother's presence now burst forth into tears. The Orderly pushed the stretcher towards the Theatre and my eldest sister and I walked behind it like two convicts being led for execution while the rest of the party left in haste for the hospital chapel.

We stopped where a board read ' No admittance ' but the stretcher with mother and the Orderly went into the Operating Theatre.

There is a saying that people forget God when things go well, but when something has gone amiss their piety increases by leaps and bounds. I am no exception to the rule and therefore I clasped my hands and repeated, " Jesus, Jesus ".

The nuns in the hospital were busy preparing Christmas trees in every ward. The orderlies and the members of the minor staff were happily untying their Christmas presents. The nurses were carrying beautiful bouquets of flowers from one ward to another. Though my eyes were engaged in scenes like these, yet I do not remember having uttered anything besides the sweet name of Jesus till I spied a stretcher being pushed towards my direction.

It was raining heavily and therefore the patient on the stretcher was fully covered with a dark blue blanket. Anyway, I could see streaks of grey hair and I roughly guessed it must be mother. I ran towards the stretcher and from the ring on the finger I made sure it was none other.

In a few minutes we were smiling as we stood around Bed 23 in Ward 19, but mother was still unconscious. She was breathing heavily and seemed to be fast asleep. There was a tiny hole on the blanket through which mother's little left toe peeped and we all touched it in turn to see if her body was warm.

It was past seven now and we could hear a symphony of soul-ravishing music being wafted from the walls of the little hospital chapel. No doubt they were Christmas carols. It was time for us to leave, and each of us bent down to give mother our Christmas kisses. This being done we left without wishing her goodbye.

Later in the night the telephone bell rang. I stumbled over an ash-stool in trying to get the receiver, but my sister grabbed it first. " Hello ! who is speaking ? " she said. We stood so close that we could hear distinctly what the person at the other end had to say. " Your mother has just recovered and she is keeping quite well. She wanted me to inform you ", said the dear nun who was in charge of ' Ward 19 ' that night. My sister thanked her, wished her a happy Christmas, rang off and hung the receiver. It was no longer Christmas Eve but Christmas for it was now 12-20 a.m.

EMILY SELVANAYAGAM,

I. U.C.

En Lisant "Les Oberlé".

It was after reading René Bazin's novel, "Les Oberlé", that I came to know Alsace and her people. Shall I tell you how ?

One hot afternoon I sat down to read, "Les Oberlé". I soon lost myself in a description of the Vosges. Oh ! I could almost see the pathway winding through the woods—hear the rustling of the many fir-trees ! The Vosges seemed so close to me, that mechanically I lifted up my eyes as if to scan their heights. Were my eyes deceiving me ? For there were the majestic, forest-clad slopes, rising up into softly rounded mountain tops, lost in mist and sky. If my fairy-godmother had done so much for me, I boldly ventured, perhaps . . . perhaps, she would do just one thing more : show me Alsace from the mountain-top as John had seen it ! I closed my eyes and hoped so very hard that, can you believe it ? I opened them to see before me as I had

never dreamed to see it, all the valley and the beautiful plain of Alsace, stretching far off into the distance.



At first I tried to follow the winding River Ill, for the Ill it was that gave its name to Alsace, and still today it gently branches off into new streams to wash her plains. It was then I noticed how many little villages were clustered in the valley : happy villages, hidden away among the orchards. Within these were the quaintest old houses, that you would see only in Alsace : houses with simulated beams on the outside walls, and strange little gables jutting out, one above the other, on the roofs. And you will never guess what else I saw ! big, gangling storks, astride stringy nests, built, if you please, on the very house-tops !

My eyes kept coming back again, however, to my Vosges and I next discovered something quite new to me, which I had not read of in "Les Oberlé"—the lakes of Alsace, that mirror the hills and the sky : le Lac Blanc, le Lac Noir, Gérardmer, Longemer, Retournemer . . . I was whispering each name to myself when suddenly a voice broke in on my reverie ; hadn't I heard that song before ?

Que notre Alsace est belle,
Avec ses frais vallons !
L'été mûrit, chez elle
Blés, vignes et houblons !
Iuhé !
Blés, vignes et houblons !

Why, that's what we sang in our French class ! It could only come from the fields. Yes, there they were : beautiful fields which I guessed to be wheat and hops, going down like broad terraces as far as I could see : now I knew just what John felt when he looked down like this and could only say, " Qu'elle est belle ! "

"Oui, n'est-ce pas qu'elle est belle?" But who was it had guessed what I was thinking ? I turned quickly to see. I don't know what her real name was, but for me she was Odile. For a moment I could only stare at those lovely blue eyes fixed on me, at the flaxen hair, half-hidden by the black "noeud des filles d'Alsace", at her gaily coloured skirt and black velvet bolero, laced in front. "Do you see," she continued, "a spire in the distance ? Look, over there—it is shining in the sun. That is the great cathedral of Strasbourg, our capital. That spire is a symbol of our people : as long as it reaches up to God's heaven, and our people come to kneel within the nave—so long will Alsace cling to her faith, even if the whole world should be set against us !"

"Wasn't Joan of Arc born somewhere near it?" I asked hopefully. My new friend smiled at my ignorance and said : "No, she was born in a little village, Domrémy, in our sister-country, Lorraine. See, down there !"

I blinked as I looked down, for an entirely new landscape lay before me, but, by this time, I had given up asking how such a thing could be, and I was very much afraid of missing what my Odile was telling me : I only caught her last words . . . "the basilica, a church," she explained when I looked puzzled, "built in her honour. There is her house and that is the very room where she was born."

How thrilled I was to feel so very close to the patron Saint of France : how I should like to be as brave and good as she was ! As I looked about, I saw a spire once more. "That's Strasbourg again, isn't it ?" I announced proudly. My little Odile was very patient, and although she smiled that same funny smile she just added : "That is the cathedral of Metz. It is an old, old city that goes back to the time of the ancient Gauls. It has always been a stronghold ; its old section still tells the story of bygone days and the spirit of our people."

"Now, over there, you have Nancy . . . perhaps you'd like to know its other name : 'La Ville aux Portes d'Or'—because for many hundreds of years the Dukes of Lorraine built their palaces there. It was also the birth-place of one of the greatest of French soldiers : Le Maréchal Lyautey."

"But where is Ste. Odile," I queried, "where pilgrims?"

"Oh, that is back in Alsace—you really have our spirit now, for you do not seem to separate Alsace from Lorraine. It is true, we have suffered much together."

“Do tell me about 1871, and all the sorrows of Alsace-Lorraine,” I begged, “your people must have told you so many stories.”

For a moment Odile looked very pensive and sad, but then she began : “You know that our land lies between the two great nations of France and Germany. It might seem that we belong as much to one as to the other, but from ancient times we have been nearer to the heart of France ; in fact, our country was merged into the one great territory of Gaul. There were moments, however, in our history, when we formed part of a German kingdom; but, since 1648, we had been separated from the House of Austria, and linked to France. Our Alsace shall always be Alsace, but yet our thoughts are somehow more French thoughts—and so too, our feelings, tastes and our cherished Faith. You can understand then that when it was announced in 1871 that we were a part of the new German Empire and were lost to France, it was the soul of a whole people that rose up in anguish. Yet we appeared helpless in the face of the might of the conqueror and it seemed our own children would be lost to us, when German was declared the official language in the schools, for neither our own Alsatian tongue nor French were to be ours henceforth. But the Germans were to realise what it meant to test our mettle : although brilliant and even liberal-minded professors were sent in May 1871 to found a German University in Strasbourg—the Director chose to retire from pure discouragement within a very short time.

“But the telling blow was Chancellor Bismark’s refusal to grant exemption from military service to our sons. Within a few months, as a most eloquent protest against foreign domination, our menfolk left behind all that was dear to them and fled across the frontier into France. Our rich mines in Lorraine fell into German hands : saw-mills and factories stood idle, our fields uncultivated, and many of our people were forced to go into even greater exile in distant Algiers, while the hearts of those who remained were stricken with loss and sorrow. The statue of Strasbourg in the Place de la Concorde in Paris was draped in heavy mourning and it was indeed no idle symbol.

“But in our hearts we prayed and trusted that we should again be free. That day came with the peace of Versailles—you can just imagine with what jubilation we welcomed the first French troops to cross our frontier. There were banners and music, and to the very skies rose up our hymn of triumph :

Amour sacré de la patrie,
Conduis, soutiens nos bras vengeurs.
Liberté, liberté chérie”

“Saraswathy, Saraswathy wake up, you’re singing the Marseillaise at the top of your voice !”

I opened my eyes and saw, no longer Odile, but my room-mate who handed me my copy of “Les Oberlé” that had slipped to the floor. So it had all been a dream then? but such a lovely dream while it lasted ! Perhaps, who knows ? such things do happen my lovely dream may one day come true !

V. SARASWATHY,

I.U.C.

The Old Salt.

“Ahoy there ! Make way chums !” This familiar cry is heard every day more than once in the little village of St. Mary’s by the sea. Old Captain James Hawk, known to everyone as Captain Jim, is a retired seaman. Every morning he goes along the beach on his cycle which he says goes at “two knots” an hour. Jim, who considers the sea as his beloved home, lives alone in a little cottage standing on a rock facing the ocean. His cottage is called the “Golden Hawk”, after his ship.

Every evening, Jim can be found cleaning his bicycle, to make it ship-shape for the morrow’s “cruise”. Sometimes he helps the village newspaper boy to deliver his “cargo” and often stops at the “port” of a friend. Jim is known to everyone in the village, and all know his love for the sea. Nothing makes him happier than to relate tales of the sea and of his adventures aboard the “Golden Hawk”.

At times someone is heard to yell, “Ahoy, Captain” and from within comes the answer, “Yo ho, Tim”. Soon a tall, old man with a snow-white beard can be seen walking up the path to the cottage. Tim is one of Jim’s old sailors who still calls him “Captain.” They sit together for hours, chewing the ends of their pipes and talking of the good old days, in a language which none but sailors would understand. Often they sit and silently gaze at the ever-murmuring sea, their sad yearning faces recalling memories of bygone days. Upon them comes the urge to abandon everything and return “home”. Except for Jim and Tim the rest of the “Golden Hawk’s” crew lie in “Davy Jones’ Locker.”

The little village boys hero-worship Jim and never tire of hearing his tales. Many an evening when twilight draws near, Jim can be seen sitting on the beach, surrounded by his little “sailors”, teaching them to make models of the “Golden Hawk”. When the twinkling stars appear in the blue canopy above, the little “sailors” are still there, kneeling around Jim, their eager faces uplifted, listening with rapt attention to his tales. Their young hearts yearn for adventures such as Jim’s. Slowly, as the tide rises and laps their feet, Jim sends them back to the village, while he “sails” back to harbour. As he “cruises” along, the soft echoes of the Angelus bell far below in the valley reminds him of the many times he and his crew used to kneel in fervent prayer while the stormy seas lashed about the ship in all their fury.

Jim’s word is accepted by everyone in the village ; should anyone dare to doubt it, he expounds with conviction, “Three score years and four have I lived on the sea !” He is a great help to the mothers of the village. Often as he “cruises” along, one of them gives him a little mischievous boy who is only too delighted to be Jim’s “light cargo”.

At night, after supper, which he eats perched on a huge sea-chest, from a tin can belonging to the “Golden Hawk”, he goes back to the beach. There he stands with his feet in the water, all alone, gazing far out to sea with a vacant look. When he spies a vessel, he takes his white kerchief and waves it, shouting “Ahoy Amigo !” The echoes of the rolling waves are sweeter than music in his ears ; there is yearning and pathos lined deeply on the old weather-beaten face. Everything and everyone are wiped out of his mind. Only the sea, and the waves and past memories make up his solitary world. Thus this lonely old sailor who treasures dearly his museum of memories, gazes and gazes at his beloved sea, yearning fiercely to return to his only “home” on earth—the perilous, billowing and tossing waters.

DAISY ARIANAYAGAM, I. U.C.

Glimpses of Borneo.

Perhaps you have not heard much of Borneo, the largest island in the East Indies. The northern portion belongs to the British and the remainder to the Dutch. One can hardly find a stretch of flat land, for everywhere are hills covered with clusters of ever-green trees. Islands are scattered along the coastline, forming beautiful natural harbours.

The first thing which attracts the visitor's attention is the houses. Can you imagine houses built in water? Well, that is exactly what you see. Huge wooden posts or cement pillars are driven into the sea-bed and houses built on top of them. Under the buildings is a constant flow of water which during high tides rises to about 9 ft. Another peculiarity about the houses is the building materials. As wood is abundant the roof, floor and walls of the buildings are all made of wood. From the houses long, winding bridges lead to the spotlessly clean roads.

The Dusans are the natives of Borneo, but unfortunately the race is fast dying out. These people are short, uncivilized, and yellow-skinned, and like the Chinese they have straight, black hair. The women wear black, tight-fitting clothes, their long unpleated skirts reaching far below the knee. Around the waist, over the clothes all their gold is worn in the form of coins. In addition to this it is the custom for married women to wear black bamboo, and unmarried girls red bamboo, around their waists. The Dusans consider black teeth a feature of beauty, and so their beautiful white teeth are blackened with a kind of nut.

The houses of the Dusans are small, bamboo huts. The people live chiefly by means of hunting and they are usually very good marksmen. It is a belief amongst the natives that when they die they go up to Kinabalu, the highest mountain in Borneo. The name Kinabalu means "sacred mountain".

There is another race of natives living in the very heart of Borneo. These are the Dyaks, but very few of them remain. They go about naked except for a loin cloth. One very seldom comes across the Dyaks who are usually known as the "head hunters of North Borneo". The fishermen of Borneo are the Bajans. They are Malays.

The rivers of Borneo are full of crocodiles. When one journeys by train into the interior hundreds of them can be seen lying lazily on the banks.

Jesselton, the capital of North Borneo, is also a port. Huge buildings are fast springing up. During the last war the whole town was bombed, so none of old Jesselton remains. The busy town is full of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Europeans, Javanese and people of all races. The common language is Malay.

On festival days there are water sports and other similar entertainments, when each community co-operates to the full. This spirit of unity is the main reason for Borneo's growing importance and popularity.

Borneo is to me one of the loveliest spots in the East where the people lead a happy and contented life.

PUSHPAM RAGHAVAM,

I. U.C.

A Fancy.

Tick ! tock ! went the clock.

It was nine-thirty p.m. ; silence prevailed everywhere. The world was like a huge egg enfolded within the wings of the mother-bird of night. The cloudless sky sparkled with twinkling stars, but as it was new moon no glimmer of moonlight could be expected.

Our exams. were fast approaching. Only a week more ! An English text lay open in front of me and though my eyes monotonously scanned the lines, my mind refused to grasp the sense. It was far, far away from the proud world. My eyes had reached the last line and my hand automatically moved to turn over the page. " Before that let me review what I have read so far," so thinking I tried, but could not recollect anything. Once again I made another vain attempt. I do not know how many times I repeated this process for it was now ten-thirty, yet I was at the same page.

Sleep had covered the world and in that dead silence only the tick ! tock ! of the clock was heard. My heart, too, beat fast, in harmony with its ticking. Vacantly I gazed at the clock and as I gazed I heard a strange voice—it was strange indeed and most unnatural ! Gradually to my surprise and fear I realised it was the clock which spoke, in a voice that was clear and distinct. I felt very uncomfortable and alarmed. I wanted to scream and arouse everyone but I was benumbed with fear. I was then reminded of the words of Galsworthy.

" Once in a way the ghost of the past came out to haunt and brood and whisper to any human who chanced to be awake,

Out of my unowned loneliness you all came, into it. one day you will all return."

Then this must be the ghost of the past ! I shuddered. It spoke.

" I hope you know who I am. I am the spirit of the clock. You are young, but I have been in your family for more than thirty years and I know its past history well. Your family was originally in Rangoon and immigrated to India only during the last World War. You were then a child. Fortunately your parents escaped the bombings. They came and settled down here. I too was saved along with the family. Meanwhile what was happening in India ? She was struggling for freedom. The whole atmosphere was filled with the spirit of Independence. Her leaders were imprisoned in order to put an end to the agitation, but their imprisonment only served to increase and strengthen the cry of liberty. Finally the British leaders realised that the only solution lay in the granting of independence, which was carefully considered by Mr. Atlee.

" It was then that the Conference of Asiatic Nations was convened. The whole Conference had one great message : that imperialism was dying and new life arising in the Asiatic countries. For the first time the peoples of Asia had come together to discuss their own problems rather than have them settled by other powers.

“Among the several teas and receptions during the conference, an ‘At Home’ was given by the Viceroy and his wife, Viscount and Viscountess Mountbatten. Nehru was present and watched it all : soon India should be free ! The host was the last Viceroy of India. He was a tribute to England, the new England.

“The party ended. Nehru held out his hand to say goodbye. ‘Thank you,’ he said simply, ‘and may there ever be an England, such an England as there is today.’ His eyes glistened suddenly but he kept them fixed on the Viceroy’s face. ‘And ever a free India,’ Lord Mountbatten replied gravely, bowing above their clasped hands.” Here the clock stopped. I looked at it questioningly. “Adieu ! Adieu !” it answered, and went on “Tick ! tock !” I understood that the clock would no more reply and laughed silently to myself. It is now more than six years since India has been free.

Slowly I turned my attention once more to my text. To my wonder I found the words of the clock written there on the page. “The Past is Dead”. This was the title of the Chapter I had been reading and re-reading for so long. I realised that the story of the clock was only a reverie, the result of repeatedly reading the same passage over and over again.

I was satisfied that I had understood the chapter at last. I closed my book, waved “goodbye” to the clock and went to bed.

G. S. SARASWATHI,
II. U.C.

Kites.

Weary the plains on an evening in May,
Brazen the sky where a pair of kites sway ;
Burnished they flash in the fierce sunset ray :
Points of sky melting and flowing away.

Flowing away, reappearing to sight :
Moulded like swords that are keen for a fight :
Life in rebellion asserting its right,
Shaking off heat and its wearisome might.

Sun’s fiery darts become fainter and fail ;
Cirrose the sky as the sea in a gale,
Through which the kites like twin argosies sail,—
Heralds of life and refreshment, we hail.

S. PARVATHY,
III. U.C.

An Excursion.

Independence Day this year was duly celebrated with the usual rites and rejoicings, but the note-worthy item on that day's programme, besides the solemn ceremony of hoisting the national flag, was our trip to St. Thomas' Mount.

The day was sunny and clear and just appropriate for a picnic. We packed ourselves into our college bus long before the time and waited impatiently. Presently, however, the gravel gritted under the tyres and away we went. Life streamed out of the bus as each voice gleefully burst into song, amusing the nuns who accompanied us. Thus in a seemingly short time we reached Little Mount.

Each one jumped out and eagerly surveyed the area. It gave one a strange feeling to think that St. Thomas himself had once lived in that place. The holy quiet of the atmosphere was disturbed as we passed from one thing of interest to another, gaily chattering and clicking cameras to take photographs. Many a stone and spot had a story to tell.

St. Thomas had sought refuge from the wicked men of the king of Mylapore, in a cave, and over this now stands a church. We gained access to the cavern by a small recess beside the Altar, with the presence of electric light facilitating our entrance, though not entirely without our groping about. It was really fun trying to make oneself as short as possible to wriggle in, but once it was done, the cave itself was found to be roomy. The only source of natural light, revealing the mysterious jagged interior, was the opening St. Thomas had pushed open for himself when fleeing from his enemies to Big Mount. His finger marks are still to be seen on the side walls of the aperture. By the time we finished exploring the place and started for St. Dominic's Convent, the noon had advanced considerably.

The sun was scorching when, to our relief, we came to St. Dominic's Convent, lying sprawled in a cool secluded corner near Big Mount. At first, the place seemed devoid of life, but soon one of the nuns came out, her face beaming all over and presenting a picture of welcome. We chose an open dining-shed and made ourselves at home. All that can be said about lunch is that it was simply scrumptious, the more so because we were thoroughly famished. The afternoon was spent more or less in idleness and when we had sufficiently rested we were shown around the place. In the kindergarten there were various paintings on the walls and one, Mother Goose's Village, attracted us most. There were characters in the picture representing about twenty nursery rhymes, and happy memories came flooding back as we pointed out a picture and said the corresponding rhyme, behaving like delighted little children. After tea, we were fresh and eager to make a move and soon did so, after thanking the nuns for their hospitality.

Within a few moments the bus came to a stand-still. We looked out and there were the steps leading to the top of Big Mount. Out we scrambled and started to climb straight away. It was a tedious ascent and at that time one could not help thinking of the Everest climbers and marvel at their attainment. Reaching the top we flopped down with sheer exhaustion, but the invigorating air up there revived our spirits and we were

soon ready to drink in the beauty of the panorama, stretching all around us. ~~Madras~~ city in the immediate neighbourhood seemed to be lazily tranquil from that height ~~and~~ not at all, as one would expect, a busy industrial centre. Two idle aeroplanes on the aerodrome lay glittering in the evening sun. On the farther side were ragged brown hills, shrouded in a haze.

As we gazed, a huge wave of this obscure atmosphere came sweeping towards us and in another instant we were in the grip of a violent gale, the worst of its kind that most of us had experienced. Sand lashed our faces with stinging blows and we ran helter-skelter, hugging our dresses, until we were safely within the little Church. Here, we saw the Cross engraved on a slab of stone, displaying the stains of St. Thomas' blood. The other object of interest was the nearly one thousand-year-old painting (according to tradition), on wood, of the Virgin Mother and Infant Jesus, that had been retrieved from under the ground.

When we emerged from the Church, the ferocity of the wind had somewhat subsided and the sun was smiling once more, to the great joy of the photographers. Suddenly someone shouted : "There's Mother, carrying a child." We rushed to meet her and were told that there were more children in the house. Here we encountered many little innocent faces and we were completely taken by surprise to learn that all these were abandoned children. Noble nuns, who offer up their lives to look after such helpless infants for the love of God, were bringing up these children. There were seventy-two little ones, and the very tiny babies presented such a moving spectacle that words cannot express the feelings that possessed each one of us. They just captured our hearts. Some of the babies were sleeping, some crying, some laughing, some playing and still some others quietly amusing themselves with an indifferent air—it was overwhelming ! We spent a long time playing with them and it was with great reluctance that we finally tore ourselves away. Yet, the ineffaceable impression they created continued to stir such conflicting emotions within us that we felt satisfied only after resolving to help them to the best of our ability.

Rain accompanied us on our return journey, and we arrived at College spent and weary. Nevertheless, we had enough energy to enjoy a puppet show before we finally retired to the blissful state of slumber.

RAMATHILIKAM NAIDU,
I. U.C.

