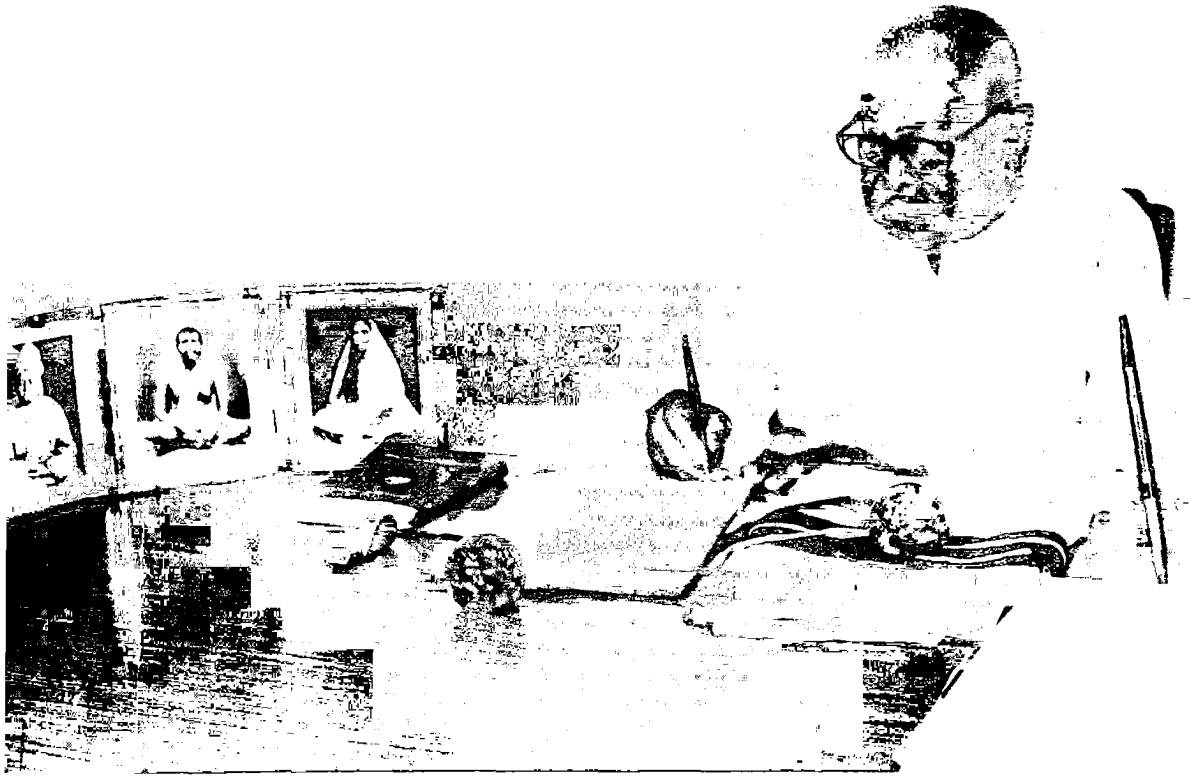
AYYA Dr.T.S.AVINASHILINGAM

Saga of Dedicated Life and Service



Editor

Rajammal P. Devadas

First Edition : January 1993

Copy right : All rights reserved. This book or any part thereof may not be reproduced without the written permission of the Editor.

Published by : Dr. K. Kulandaivel, Trustee
For the Avinashilingam Education Trust Institutions
Saradalaya
Coimbatore - 43.

Printed by : DTP (Desk Top Publishing)
Department of Computer Science and
Saradalaya Press
Avinashilingam Deemed University

Price : **Rs. 200/-**

FOREWORD FROM
Hon'ble VICE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
HIS EXCELLENCY
Dr. K. R. NARAYANAN

Dr. K.R. NARAYANAN
Vice - President of India

FOREWORD

I am glad that a Memorial Volume is being brought out in the name of our Freedom Fighter - Educationist and Social Reformer, Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam. His life has been a life of devotion and dedication to national development particularly, in the field of Education. He has inspired thousands of young men and women and endeared himself in the hearts of all those who came into contact with him.

Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam, though born in an affluent family, came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi and dedicated himself to spiritual life and national service. He did not enter into family life, kept himself away from his ancestral family and its problems and lived like a monk in the educational institutions he started. Without any other diversion, he put his heart and soul into the freedom struggle and in the national developmental activities mainly in the field of education.

Dr. Avinashilingam courted imprisonment four times for participating in the Freedom Movement and later became the first Minister for Eductation in the Independent Madras Province. He brought several long lasting reforms in Education

such as giving importance to Tamil in the School and College curriculam and making Tamil the Medium of Instruction and giving importance to Library Movement. He also founded the Tamil Academy and through it brought out the Tamil Encyclopedia in 13 volumes and later Children's Encyclopedia in Tamil in 10 volumes, the first of their kind in any Indian language. He was a Gandhian to the core and associated himself with the Gandhian movement in all its activities. As Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Gandhi Memorial Committee, he arranged for the translation of Gandhiji's complete works in Tamil.

Dr. Avinashilingam was a great institution builder. He started Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya for boys in 1930 with one Harijan student. Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation for the Vidyalaya. Dr. Avinashilingam developed it into a mighty educational complex in a three hundred acre campus where about 4000 students from nursery class to Ph.D., study in 12 different institutions. It provides not only academic studies but also professional courses in Teacher Education, Engineering and Agriculture. It is run on the ancient Gurukula pattern, where moral and spiritual values are inculcated along with academic knowledge.

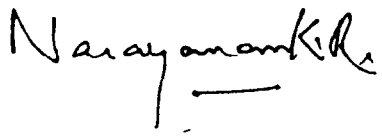
Dr. Avinashilingam realised that the best use of wealth was to utilise it for social welfare. So he donated all his properties to The Avinashilingam Education Trust for Women's Education. Through this Trust, he has started a group of institutions for girls. These institutions offer education from Preschool to post Ph.D. in the same campus. The Avinashilingam Deemed University is a part of these institutions and it does excellent work combining academic work with community outreach programmes with several innovations to its credit. The discipline, the quality of work and the values it upholds have won it name and fame and students from all parts of the country and abroad seek admission in this university.

Dr. Avinashilingam was a great visionary. Long back he visualised the needs of independent India and tried to cater to these needs through education. His patience and continuous work for over 60 years have borne fruit and now his institutions are acclaimed as one of the best institutions in the country.

I have great pleasure in associating myself with the celebrations to honour Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam. He deserves all

these honours in abundance. His life will always be an inspiration to the present generation and the generations to come. I am sure this Memorial Volume will reach our youngsters and will motivate them for higher life and values.

I congratulate Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, Vice Chancellor, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University) and her colleagues on taking the initiative to bring out this volume. I wish their efforts every success in pursuing the ideals of their Founder Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam.



MESSAGE FROM
Hon'ble
Sri P.V. NARASIMHA RAO,
PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

सत्यमेव जयते

P.V. Narasimha Rao
Prime Minister

I am happy to learn that the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, is bringing out a memorial volume in honour of Dr. Avinashilingam. Sri Avinashilingam was a pioneer in the field of education. A Gandhian in thought and deed, Dr. Avinashilingam also participated in the freedom struggle. He continued to serve the nation after independence by promoting education. The educational institutions started by him are a living testimony to his selfless spirit of social service.

New Delhi
October 27, 1992

P.V. Narasimha Rao

[P.V. Narasimha Rao]

TRIBUTES FROM LEADERS

விடுதலை வீரர் அவினாசிலிங்கம்

ஆர். வெங்கட்ராமன்

'தேசப் பிதா' அண்ணல் காந்தியடிகளின் அடிச்சுவட்டைப் பின்பற்றி தம் வாழ் நாட்களை நாட்டின் பணிக்கு அர்ப்பணித்த பலருள், எல்லோராலும் 'ஐயா' என்று அன்புடன் அழைக்கப் பட்ட 'அமரர்' அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களுக்குத் தனியிடமுண்டு. அவர் இளமைப் பருவத்திலிருந்தே காந்தியடிகள் துவக்கிய விடுதலைப் போராட்டங்களில் ஈடுபட்ட தியாக சீலர் என்று சொன்னால் மிகையாகாது. ஐயா அவர்கள் நான்கு முறை சிறை சென்றவர். சிறை வாசத்தை வீணாக்காமல், கம்ப ராமாயணம், திருக்குறள் மற்றும் பல இலக்கியங்களனைத்தையும் மனம் லயித்துப் படித்தார். 1934-ஆம் ஆண்டில் மத்திய சட்ட மன்ற உறுப்பினராகவும், 1952-ஆம் ஆண்டில் மக்கள் சபை உறுப்பினராகவும், பின்னர் 1957-ஆம் ஆண்டில் ராஜ்ய சபை உறுப்பினராகவும் சிறந்த பணியாற்றினார். கடினமான பொரு ளாதாரக் கருத்துக்களை எளிய நடையில் அனைவரும் அறிந்து கொள்ளும் வகையில் விளக்கும் திறமை பெற்றவர். 1946-ஆம் ஆண்டு அவர் தமிழகத்தின் கல்வி அமைச்சராயிருந்த காலம் 'பொற்காலம்' என்று பலராலும் பாராட்டப் பெற்றது. தாய் மொழியைப் போதனா மொழியாக்கிய பெருமை ஐயா அவர் களைச் சாரும். அத்தருணத்தில்தான் தமிழகத்தில் அடிப்படைக் கல்வித் திட்டம் கொண்டு வரப்பட்டது. திருத்தியமைக்கப்பட்ட மேல்நிலைக் கல்வி முறை அறிமுகப்படுத்தப்பட்டது.

பாரதியாரின் கவிதைகள் பாமர மக்களை விடுதலைப் போரில் ஈர்த்தது மட்டுமின்றி, இந்திய ஒருமைப்பாட்டையும்

வளர்த்த கருவியாகும். வரகவி பாரதியாரின் கவிதைகளையும், அவரது படைப்புக்களையும் நாட்டுடைமை ஆக்கி அரசுப் பதிப்பாக முதன் முதலில் வெளியிட்ட பெருமைக்குரியவரும் 'ஐயா' அவர்கள்தான். அவர் அமைச்சராயிருந்த காலத்தில் கல்வித் துறையில் பற்பல முன்னேற்றத் திட்டங்களைக் கொண்டு வந்தார் என்று சொல்வது சாலப் பொருந்தும். கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் பலவற்றை நிறுவி, சீரிய முறையில் அவற்றைக் கண்காணித்து, நாட்டின் பொற் களஞ்சியமாக அவற்றை நமக்கு ஈந்தார். மகளிர் முன்னேற்றத்தில் தனிக்கவனம் செலுத்தி, மனை யியல் கல்லூரியை நிறுவினார்.

இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர் இந்திய நாட்டின் ஆன்மீக மறுமலர்ச்சிக்கு வித்திட்டவர். அன்னார் வாழ்க்கையைத் தனது மேற்கோளாக ஏற்று, பிரம்மச்சரியம் பூண்டு, ஆன்மீகத்தை வளர்த்த வள்ளல் என்றால் ஐயா அவர்களுக்கு முற்றிலும் பொருந்தும். எந்த நன்மை விளைந்தாலும், ஆண்டவன் அருள் என்று கூறுவாரேயன்றி, தான் செய்ததாகப் பெருமையடித்துக் கொள்ளும் இயல்பு அற்றவர். தன்னலமற்ற தியாகியாக உலகுக்கு வழிகாட்டியாக வாழ்ந்து மறைந்த அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் திருநாமம் வாழ்க! வாழ்க!

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - AN EDUCATIONIST

C. Subramaniam

As I pen this article for the Memorial Volume which is being brought out in honour of T.S. Avinashilingam, founder President and Chancellor of the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, memories of the events of a momentous era, the era of India's unique pilgrimage to freedom come flooding to my mind. Ayya, as Sri Avinashilingam is affectionately called, and I were active participants in our freedom struggle.

I had the privilege of knowing intimately "Ayya" for more than 60 years. I had a special kinship with him as I was his Gurubandhu. At a very early age both of us were blessed to come in close contact with Swami Sivananda, popularly known as Mahaprushji Maharaj, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Ayya was seven years senior to me and was a college mate of my paternal uncle Chinnu. Chinnu became a Sanyasi under the name of Swami Chidbavananda. In the ordinary course, Avinashilingam would have inherited his father's enormous wealth, become a successful lawyer and led a life of ease and luxury. As he had revealed in his auto-biography, The Sacred Touch of Mahapurushji transformed his entire life and he dedicated himself heart and soul to the cause of emancipation of the down-trodden and the promotion of women's education. His quest for serving God found full expression in selfless service to his fellow human beings.

For a person who had a spiritual bent of mind and who had adopted service as his creed, it was a difficult decision whether to plunge headlong into the freedom struggle when the call came. He sought Mahapurushji's permission for entering into politics. His Guru's encouraging words were : "Have no fear, my boy. You have lived so long with us. My love and blessings are ever with you. And

so I am sure, wherever you are and in whatever circumstances you may be placed nothing will be able to drag you into the world and make you forget Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) who will be ever with you. He is your guide and goal".

In February 1934, Mahatma Gandhi undertook a tour of the Coimbatore District as part of his Harijan Movement. "Ayya" was in charge of his tour programme in Coimbatore District and also actively participated in the tour. One night Mahatmaji stayed at the Vidyalaya at Podanur and I was asked to look after him during his stay at the Vidyalaya. It was a great opportunity and privilege for me to be in the company and serve Mahatmaji. I was told that Mahatmaji would be getting up at 4 O' clock in the morning and I should be ready there to serve him. I got up sufficiently early and after my bath went to see Mahatmaji at 4 a.m. He had already got up and was seated with a hurricane lantern placed on an over-turned bucket and was perusing the accounts of his collection for the Harijan Fund for the previous day. He was also cleaning his teeth with a neem stick. Later in the morning there was the usual morning prayer. Mahatmaji had his light breakfast after that. Then he took up the collection account and verified with Avinashilingam whether the amount with him tallied with the account he had. There was a slight discrepancy and he insisted that it should be thoroughly scrutinised and the accounts tallied. After that he asked Avinashilingam to deposit the money in the Bank and give him a cheque for the amount. In writing the amount Avinashilingam exhibited a certain amount of hurry and nervousness and in the process the cheque was spoiled by pouring of the ink. Mahatmaji tersely remarked : "More haste less work". It was on this tour that Mahatmaji laid the foundation of the new building of the Vidyalaya founded by Avinashilingam at Periyanaickenpalayam in Coimbatore.

Ayya courted arrest four times in 1930, 1932, 1941 and 1942 and his jail days (some of them in solitary confinement) were a testing time for him. He utilized his enforced leisure as His Majesty's Guest to delve into treasures of Tamil literature like Kamba Ramayanam and Thirukkural. This was the beginning of his great interest in Tamil which led him later to the founding of the Tamil Academy in 1946, the publication of the Tamil Encylopaedia on the lines of the Encylopaedia Britannica and also the publication of the Children's Encylopaedia in Tamil. He was also instrumental in getting the

complete works of Mahatma Gandhi translated into Tamil in 17 volumes.

In the year 1935, there was election to the Central Legislative Assembly. Sri T.S.Avinashilingam contested for one of the seats. His constituency consisted of four districts - Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Salem and North Arcot (Salem has subsequently been divided into two districts - Salem and Dharmapuri). It was a vast area for any candidate to cover fully. The person opposing Sri Avinashilingam was one Dr.P.Varadarajulu Naidu who was once a leading Congress leader but later left the Congress. It was a very keen contest and I was asked to look after two districts - half of the Salem district and the North Arcot district in full. Shri C.P. Subbaiah was one of the prominent Congress leaders of the Coimbatore District. He was a great orator in Tamil. He could keep any audience spell-bound and make them laugh or shed tears. Such was his power of Tamil oratory. Subbaiah was my companion during the election campaign. In many places they took me for the candidate and later on after the election when Avinashilingam and myself visited many places in the constituency, generally I received the reception first and I had to point out to them that I was not the M.L.A. but Sri T.S. Avinashilingam. He was a simple man and therefore nobody easily recognised him as a leader of the Congress Party.

Ayya's parliamentary life spanned over three decades. He was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1946 and was Education Minister for three years when T. Prakasam and Omanandur Ramaswamy Reddiar were Chief Ministers. He was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1951 and to the Rajya Sabha in 1957. He politely turned down the offer of a Congress ticket to the Lok Sabha elections in 1964.

Ayya was a great institution-builder. He started the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya with just one destitute Harijan student in 1930 at a time when orthodoxy fiercely frowned on such ventures. Today, this Vidyalaya has grown into a mighty banyan tree at Perianaickenpalayam in Coimbatore, having a dozen institutions including a College of Education, an Arts and Science College, both leading to Doctorate, a Physical Education College, a Polytechnic and an Institute of Agriculture. The Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women at Coimbatore the

biggest institution of its kind in the country, providing scope for girls's education from pre- school to Ph.D. is a living monument to Ayya's crusading efforts to promote women's education.

Deeply influenced by the thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji "Ayya" established the Vivekanandapuram Centre for Rural Development near Coimbatore which has adopted more than a hundred villages where the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji are put into practice.

On 21st November I was in Delhi attending a Seminar organised by the Indira Gandhi Foundation on the theme "Challenges of the 21st Century". According to my original plan, from Delhi I was to leave for Bangalore on 22nd evening and from there to go to Coimbatore on the 23rd and as usual I would have gone to meet Sri Avinashilingam that day. But fate decreed otherwise. On 21st morning I was blissfully unaware of the serious condition of Shri Avinashilingam. But something in me told me, you may call it the sixth sense, that I should leave for Bangalore on 22nd morning itself. Sri P.V.Narasimha Rao, our Prime Minister, was going to Bangalore on 22nd morning on his way to Puttaparthi where he was inaugurating a Speciality Hospital founded by the Satya Sai Baba Trust and I could go with him in his plane on 22nd morning to Bangalore and further on to Puttaparthi. On reaching Bangalore I got the sad news of the demise of Sri Avinashilingam. From Bangalore I could reach Coimbatore in a special plane in time to pay my homage to the mortal remains of Avinashilingam and attend his last rites. In retrospect I feel that it was the Divine Hand which guided me to take the decision to go to Bangalore a day earlier than my scheduled visit but for which I would not have been able to attend the funeral of my close friend and associate for many years.

Death, no doubt, is inevitable. But when it comes to a great man like Avinashilingam it creates a void which is very difficult to fill. In his death the country has lost a great patriot, a veteran freedom fighter, an institution builder, a champion of womens' education, a Gandhian constructive worker and above all a fine human being, who in spite of his greatness was humble and led a simple life. It is rightly said that the true greatness of a person is to be measured not by the number of years he lives but by the quality of his life and his achievements. By this yardstick "Ayya" was truly a great man. I

am sure the life and work of this great Karmayogi will continue to inspire generations of our people and he will live in our memories through the many educational and other institutions founded by him.

AVINASHILINGAM - AN INSTITUTION BUILDER

Bhishma Narain Singh

I am very happy to be present here today on the occasion of the 90th birthday of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the founder of Sri Avinashilingam Educational Trust Institutions. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam was a very well-known personality. He was in the forefront of the Freedom Movement in this State from 1930 onwards. He became the first Minister of Education for Madras province when he introduced Basic Education.

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam dedicated his life for the cause of education and the uplift of the masses. His life is a saga of service and sacrifice which will be remembered by posterity. He followed the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi in his thoughts, words and actions. In his life, there was harmony between precept and practice. With devotion and determination, he built this Temple of Learning which has been turning out a large number of women graduates with value-based education during the last three decades. He radiated love and cheer and brightened the lives of generations of students, staff, parents and well-wishers who came in contact with him. His concern for the young children was boundless and his faith in their worth and value for the great future of the country, made him conceive these institutions which will serve to perpetuate what he stood for in life.

Dr. Avinashilingam has to his credit not only the establishment of the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women but also several other institutions which gave expression to his mission in life to do something lasting for the young men and women of the country. Some of the other notable institutions founded by him are the Sri Ramakrishna Mission

Vidyalaya for which Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation stone in 1934, and the Vivekanandapuram Rural Centre in 1978.

The Institute has grown from **Pre-school to Ph.D.** thanks to the vision and dedication of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam who founded the Avinashilingam Education Trust and who had set the laudable goal that the educational institutions which he established should become unique centres of Higher Education for Women and cater to the allround development of the students and foster the well being of their families and community, the nation and the world at large, in accordance with what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said :

> "A University stands for humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth. It stands for the onward march of the human race towards even higher objectives. If the Universities discharge their duties adequately, then it is well with the nation and the people".

Under the inspiring leadership of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the Deemed University has introduced several novel features, such as diversification of the Bachelor's degree programmes to enable students face the competitive world. The courses are life oriented and community based. The total Internal Assessment is another feature in which students and staff have been able to interact closely with mutual trust producing optimum learning outcome and partnership. Integration of Community Service components such as literacy, child care, nutrition and NSS in the curriculum itself for credit, value-based education and relevant research and publication are other noteworthy features of the higher education pattern in this University. These help to bring out the creative abilities of students and tap their potential for the common good of the society. In these efforts to blaze a new trial, the role of teachers is paramount, similar to that in the Guru Shishya tradition.

It is praiseworthy that the objectives of this Deemed University include inculcating ethical values and social and moral standards, to serve as a centre for national integration and to provide opportunities for allround development of the students and excellence in higher education, research and extension in different disciplines for women. I also find that the Institute seeks to uphold a life of purity, discipline and service. Swami Vivekananda

considered education as the manifestation of perfection already in man. In consonance with this ideal, the University has been seeking to impart higher ideals to the students to prepare them to meet the challenges of life in the family and the society.

Mahatma Gandhi had said :

> "All training without the culture of the spirit is of no use, and may be even harmful".

The preservation of the traditional culture of the country and its ethical and spiritual values is of utmost importance and so also the inculcation of patriotism and pride in being an Indian. This is being achieved by students participating in prayer songs and through recitation of messages and sayings of great saints, teachers, leaders or prophets. Besides, the University is organising national integration camps and meetings, symposia and cultural programmes periodically highlighting the importance of unity and integrity of the nation.

The National Service Scheme (NSS) of the Institute has been rendering service to the community by conducting cleanliness campaign and peace march in connection with the International Literacy Day, World Health Day and Vivekananda Jayanthi. The NSS volunteers have also been involved in conducting adult literacy classes.

Education is recognised as the main instrument of change for family and society. Eradication of illiteracy is basic to national development and welfare of the people. Adults need education for leading an adequate life. And this need is being fulfilled through Adult Education Programmes. Educational institutions, particularly, colleges and universities should not remain ivory towers but should identify themselves with the community. It is heartening to note that the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women has involved itself in eradication of illiteracy drawing inspiration from Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam who incidentally was a recipient of the Nehru Literacy Award for 1974. The current thrust is on adult literacy work in the context of making the whole of Coimbatore district literate. I hope this goal, which is part of the National Literacy Mission endeavour, would be achieved in the near

future under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor of the Deemed University and the District Collector.

The other institutions which Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam founded in his life time also offer unique systems of education and support for developmental activities. The Vidyalaya is an educational complex in a campus of 300 acres with a Residential High School, Post-graduate Arts and Science College, a Central Library, the Vidyalaya Teachers' College offering B.Ed., M.Ed., M.Phil. and Ph.D. courses with extension and audio-visual departments and a computer centre and providing M.Ed. in Integrated Education of the Visually Handicapped, the Gandhi Teacher Training Institute, Sri Swami Sivananda Higher Secondary School and a Middle School, Maruthi College of Physical Education providing certificate, under-graduate and post-graduate courses in physical education, an Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development, a Polytechnic providing Diploma courses in civil and mechanical engineering with a Community Polytechnic doing rural development, an Industrial Institute and non-formal education courses like automobile and agricultural engineering, a variety of short courses for ryots, a workshop producing electric motors, pumpsets etc. providing in-plant training for the students of both the Polytechnic and the Industrial Institute.

The Vivekanandapuram Rural Centre was established in 1978 at Vivekanandapuram for promoting integrated rural development. To aid and supplement these activities, Sri Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra was started in 1979 to raise the socio-economic and cultural level of the people in Coimbatore District. The Centre works through the following institutions established in the campus :

1. Sri Avinashilingam Rural Centre
2. Sri Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra
3. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Rural Health Centre
4. Demonstration Dairy Farm
5. Goat Unit
6. Poultry unit

7. Agricultural Farm

8. Tailoring unit

9. The Biogas plant

10. Balwadi

11. Industrial Training Institute and

12. Nuresry Schools.

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra runs several courses on cultivation of paddy, oil seeds, millets, cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, ragi, groundnut, cholam, kitchen gardening, rat control, weedicides and so on. The Mini Health Centre covers nearly 15 villages and treats more than 6000 patients every year.

Swami Vivekananda said, "Our great national sin is the neglect of the masses.... A nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spreads among the masses". It is fitting that several institutions of the Sri Avinashilingam Trust are engaged in rural development work, including non-formal education courses,particularly adult literacy work. Avinashilingam Shramik Vidyapeeth was established in 1984. It imparts skills for employment to young dropouts - boys and girls in the city. It has trained thousands of young persons who are readily employed.

I am sad to mention here that Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam is no more now. I pay my respectful homage to him. I am sure his spirit will guide all those concerned with education in the state for decades to come. I hope that the University will continue to be a centre of excellence and grow in strength.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD From
Hon'ble Vice President His Excellency Dr. K.R.Narayanan i

MESSAGE FROM
Prime Minister - Hon'ble Sri P.V. Narashimha Rao iv

TRIBUTES FROM LEADERS

Sri. R. Venkataraman - Former President v

Sri. C.Subramaniam - Our Chancellor vii

His Excellency Bhishma Narain Singh
Governor of Tamil Nadu xiii

PREFACE xix

1. AYYA - AN INSPIRING LEADER
Rajammal P. Devadas 1

2. தேசபக்தராகவே வாழ்கிறவர்
செ. அரங்கநாயகம் 11

3. SRI AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR - THAMBI
Lakshmi N. Menon - Akka 13

4. A TRUE GANDHIAN
Sushila Nayar 17

5. GLIMPSES OF AYYA'S PERSONALITY
Sarojini Mahishi 20

6. AVINASHILINGAM - A DEVOTEE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA
Swami Ranganathananda 22

7. YOGA FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Swami Satchidananda 24

8. INDIA'S SPECIAL MESSAGE OF PEACE
Swami Swahananda 29

9. HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION
Swami Tanmayananda 35

10. இராமகிருஷ்ண இயக்கமும் அய்யா அவர்களும்
சுவாமி சோமானந்தா 41

11. ஆன்மீக மேம்பாட்டிற்கு அய்யா அவர்களின் திட்டங்கள்
தவத்திரு. சாந்தலிங்க இராமசாமி அடிகள் 47

12. இறைப்பணியில் அவினாசிலிங்கனார்
தவத்திரு. சுந்தர சுவாமிகள் 51

13. இலட்சிய தீபம்
தவத்திரு. குன்றக்குடி அடிகளார் 52

14. AVINASHILINGAM - A MAN OF VISION
Malcolm S. Adiseshiah 53

15. A TRIBUTE TO SRI AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO NUTRITION
C. Gopalan 59

16. WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT
M.S.Swaminathan 64

17. AVINASHILINGAM - A PATRIOT WITHOUT PARALLEL
S. Mohan 68

18. BECAUSE OF THEM THE WORLD SURVIVES
V.C. Kulandai Swamy 72

19. SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - "A NOBLE SOUL"
S.Padmavathi 78

20. DR. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - AN ABLE ADMINISTRATOR
V. Karthikeyan 79

21. PADMABHUSHAN Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM (AYYA) - AN EDUCATIONIST PAR EXCELLENCE
S.V.Chittibabu 83

22. THE PATH SHOWN BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
K. Venkatasubramanian 88

23. A TRUE ENVIRONMENTALIST
B.B. Sundaresan 94

24. Dr.T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION
S.Muthukumaran 98

25. Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION
K.M. Marimuthu 103

26. Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS ROLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
S. Jayaraj 107

27. SRI AVINASHILINGAM - FOND MEMOIR
D. K. Oza 110

28. REMINISCENCES - ON REVERED AYYA
S.Lakshmi 112

29. HOMAGE TO AYYA
Kamala Anandam 114

30. கல்விப் பணிக்காக தன் வாழ்வை அர்ப்பணித்து சாதனை படைத்தவர் டாக்டர். டி. எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார்
மு. கலைவாணன் 116

31. கொங்கு நாட்டின் விடிவெள்ளி
கே. எஸ். சௌந்தரம் 118

32. T.S.A. I HAVE KNOWN
N. Mahalingam 120

33. SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - LOVE FOR HUMANITY
M. Gopalakrishnan 126

34. அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அய்யா
ஆர். வெங்கடேசலு 131

35. வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்ந்த பெருந்தகை
சந்திரகாந்தி கோவிந்தராஜுலு 134

36. MY ASSOCIATION WITH AYYA
S.R.P. Ponnuswamy Chettiar 136

37. சிறந்தவர்கள் நீங்குகையில் சிந்தை அழுகிறதே . . .!
சௌந்தரா கைலாசம் 138

38. அய்யா அவினாசிலிங்கனாரின் தமிழ் நெஞ்சம்
சி. பாலசுப்ரமணியன் 146

39. உணர்வைத் தூண்டும் உத்தமப் பேச்சாளர் !
சோ. சத்திய சீலன் 153

40. RAISING THE STATUS OF TAMIL TEACHERS
John Asirvatham 156

41. மறைந்த மாமகான்
ஞா. சௌந்தரராஜ் 162

42. திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கத்தின் நாட்டுப்பற்று
ம. பொ. சிவஞானம் 163

43. DR. AVINASHILINGAM - FEARLESS FREEDOM FIGHTER AND ONE OF THE MAKERS OF NEW INDIA
G.Ramachandran 168

44. வித்தியாலய அய்யா
அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள்
க. அருணாசலம் 170

45. HE BELONGED TO THE GREAT
V. Padmanabhan 176

46. எங்கள் அருமை ஐயா
வே. அப்பாக்குட்டி 179

47. அவினாசிலிங்கம் அய்யா அவர்களும் தமிழ்நாட்டில் கதரும்
வி. ராமச்சந்திரன் 193

48. THE INSPIRATION HE GAVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL
P. Somasundaram 199

49. SRI AVINASHILINGAM, THE PIONEER
K. Muniandi 207

50. DR. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT
Sarojini Varadappan 210

51. AYYA - THE AFFECTIONATE GUARDIAN
Leila Diraviam 216

52. SRI AVINASHILINGAM AND HIS DESIGN FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
T. Padmasini Asuri 220

53. A LIFE OF SELFLESS SERVICE - SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM
Tarlok Singh 224

54. தன்னம்பிக்கையின் வடிவம்
எம். எஸ். உதயமூர்த்தி 226

55. A SILENT STRENGTH TO DISABLED PERSONS
P. Gnanadurai Michael 231

56. DEDICATION AND SOCIAL WORK
D.Paul Chowdhry 235

57. HIS CONCERN FOR RURAL INSTITUTES
K. Viswanathan 243

58. AYYA - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO FARMERS' DEVELOPMENT
P. Muthiah Manoharan 247

59. AYYA AVARGAL'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S EDUCATION
K. Jegathambal 253

60. AVINASHILINGAM A SILENT SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY
R.K. Bhan 255

61. HIS LEADERSHIP FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION
Margy J. Woodburn 258

62. Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM: HIS HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO INTERNATIONAL GUESTS
Catherine R. Mumaw 260

63. HIS INTEREST IN MODERN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN CONDITION
Willis H. Skrdla and Betty J. Skrdla 263

64. DR. AVINASHILINGAM I HAD KNOWN
Catherine Ed. Hakola 266

65. AN EDUCATIONIST WITH A TWINKLE IN HIS EYES
Yasmin Morenas 267

66. THE AYYA WE SAW
Gunnar and Brigitta Jacks 268

67. திருவாளர்கள் டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம்
என். எம். ஆர். சுப்பராமன்
என். எம். ஆர். இருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி 269

68. A MEANINGFUL LIFE
K.S. Ramanujam 281

69. எனக்குத் தெரிந்தவரை. . . .
எஸ். இராமசாமி 284

70. நம் அய்யா அவர்கள்
டி. கே. சண்முகானந்தம் 290

71. பாசம் மிகுந்த தந்தை
டி. எஸ். பி. தனலக்ஷ்மி அம்மாள் 292

72. Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS ADMINISTRATIVE ACUMEN
K. Kulandaivel 296

73. A DOYEN OF EDUCATION, POLITICS AND SOCIAL SERVICE
S. Janakarathnam 302

74. AYYA'S VISIONARY APPROACH TO EDUCATION TECHNOLOLGY
S. Purushothaman 304

75. AYYA - THE CHAMPION OF THE DISABLED
M. N. G. Mani 309

76. AYYA AVARGAL - AN IDEAL TEACHER
Mohan Devadas 317

77. AYYA - OUR BEACON LIGHT
Godavari Kamalanathan 320

78. THE AYYA I KNEW
Lakshmi Santa Rajagopal 323

79. AYYA - THE GREAT TEACHER
HIS EXPECTATIONS OF A TEACHER
M. Chandramani 325

80. Dr. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS EXHORTATION TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
Nirmala K. Murthy 328

81. ECONOMICS IN AYYA'S CONCEPTUALISATION
G.Ramathilagam 333

82. A BOUQUET OF THOUGHTS
R.K. Tharachandrika 337

83. TRIBUTE TO REV. AYYA
P. Malligeswari 339

84. AYYA - THE DEDICATED LEADER
S. Krishnamurthy 340

85. AYYA'S INTEREST IN TAMIL LITERATURE
R.Senkottuvelan 344

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

INDEX

PREFACE

PREFACE

Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam affectionately addressed as **Ayya Avargal** was a great nationalist who had dedicated his entire life for the larger cause of national development. Born on May 5, 1903, in one of the most religious and well known families of Tirupur, he came, early in his life, under the benign influence of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda through Swami Sivananda Maharaj, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He responded to the call of Mahatma Gandhi, joined the Freedom Struggle, participated actively in the national movement and sacrificed his comforts in imprisonment. Integrating harmoniously politics, national reconstruction and religion, he embarked upon education. As a staunch enthusiast in the Gandhian concept of Basic Education, he modelled his institutions in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya and Sri Avinashilingam Trust on sound spiritual and patriotic lines. He devoted his entire life spanning over eight decades to the higher causes which were dear to him and in the process, created a large number of leaders to continue his work. He thus brought education and prosperity to thousands of men and women who passed through the portals of his institutions. He remained a bachelor and reached the lotus feet of the Almighty on November 21, 1991, in his 89th year.

Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University), erstwhile Avinashilingam Home Science College exclusively for women, is one of the institutions which Dr. Avinashilingam had nurtured. It offers education at all levels with focus on integrated Home Science Education. With the rich vision and the insights he gave for the development of the university, the Institute has earned for itself a very special place in the Home Science map of the nation and the world. As a discipline, it has now taken roots in India, responding to national problems and challenges.

This Memorial Volume in honour of our Founder-President and first Chancellor is being brought out as a mark of our deep love and respect for the great saintly soul. Numerous educationists, Gandhian workers, administrators, swamijis, Tamil scholars, international friends and students who had the privilege of knowing Ayya Avargal and working with him

have written the chapters and articles of tribute, highlighting the immense contributions made by him in various areas of national life, particularly, Tamil Development, Education, Administration, Science and Technology, Nutrition, Child Development, Social Work, Rural Development and Women's Uplift.

The Editor expresses her profound gratitude to His Excellency Dr. K. R. Narayanan, Vice President of India who kindly accepted the invitation to release this book, and for his **Foreword**. She acknowledges thankfully the messages and contributions received from Hon'ble Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Prime Minister of India who is a great friend of Ayya Avargal, and who had supported him whole heartedly in his effort to achieve the Deemed to be University status for Avinashilingam Home Science College; Sri R. Venkataraman, the former President of India, with whom Ayya Avargal had moved closely for several years; and who had initiated and announced the idea of the Deemed University during the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the College; Sri C. Subramaniam, the former Governor of Maharashtra and one of the Senior Trustees of the Avinashilingam Education Trust, who, out of his deep regards for Ayya Avargal readily accepted the chairmanship of the Trust and the mantle of Chancellorship of Avinashilingam Deemed University; His Excellency Sri Bhishma Narain Singh, Governor of Tamil Nadu, who had recognised Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam's services in the cause of nation building and participated in his birthday celebrations in 1992 and Hon'ble Dr. C. Aranganayagam, Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Government of Tamil Nadu for the consistent encouragement and support he has given to the educational endeavours of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam in the past and for the interest he continues to evince in our institutions.

The Editor owes a great debt of gratitude to the distinguished authors who have reflected on the various aspects of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam's versatile personality and his achievements: former Union Ministers Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon, (External Affairs), Dr. Sushila Nayar, (Health), Dr. Sarojini Mahishi, (Law, Justice and Company Affairs); His Holiness Swami Ranganathanandaji, the great spiritual ambassador and President, Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Hyderabad; His Holiness Swami Sachidanandaji of Integral Yoga Institute; Swami

Swahanandaji, Swami Tanmayanandaji, Swami Somanandaji, Thavathiru Santhalinga Ramaswamy Adigalar, Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal and Thavathiru Kundrakudi Adigalar; the renowned educationists, scientists and professionals: Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, former Director General of UNESCO and former Vice Chancellor of the University of Madras whose interest in the growth of our institutions is ever fresh; Dr. C. Gopalan, President of the Nutrition Foundation of India; Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, the world renowned agricultural scientist; Honourable Justice S. Mohan, Justice of the Supreme Court of India; Dr. V. C. Kulandaiswamy, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU; Dr. S. Padmavathi, President of the National Heart Institute, Delhi; Sri V. Karthikeyan, I.A.S.; Vice Chancellors : Dr. S.V. Chittibabu, Dr. K. S. Venkatasubramaniam, Dr. B. B. Sundaresan,Dr. S. Muhukumaran, Dr. K. M. Marimuthu, Dr. S. Jayaraj, Sri. D.K. Oza, I.A.S. and Dr. S. Lakshmi; Dr. Kamala Anandam, Sri M. Kalaivanan, I.A.S., Dr. K. S. Soundaram, M.P.; Arul Selvar Dr. N. Mahalingam, industrialist and philanthropist closely associated with Ayya; Sri M. Gopalakrishnan, Chairman, Indian Bank; late Sri S. R. Ponnuswamy Chettiar, Sri R. Venkatesalu, Dr. Chandrakanthi Govindarajulu; Tamil scholars and professors : Smt. Soundara Kailasam, Dr. C. Balasubramanian, Dr. S. Sathyaseelan, Dr. John Asirvatham, Dr. G. Soundararaj; Gandhian colleagues : Silambu Chelvar Dr. M. P. Sivagnanam, Sri G. Ramachandran, Sri K. Arunachalam, Sri V. Padmanabhan, Sri V. Appakutti, Sri V. Ramachandran, Sri P. Somasundaram and Sri K. Muniandi; Social Workers : Smt. Sarojini Varadappan, Ms. Padmasini Asuri, Dr. Tarlok Singh, Dr. M. S. Udayamoorthy, Sri P. Gnanadurai Michael, Dr. Paul Chowdhry, Dr. K. Viswanathan, Dr. P. Muthiah Manoharan, Ms. K. Jegathambal and Sri R. K. Bhan; International scholars who had visited the institutions at various points of time: Dr. Margy J. Woodburn and Dr. Catherine R. Mumaw of Oregon State University, Dr. Willis H. Skrlda and Betty J. Skrdla, Iowa State University, Catherine Hakola of Columbus, Ohio State, Dr. Gunnar and Brigitta Jacks of Stockholm, Sweden, Dr. Yasmin Morenas, Senior Officer of FAO Rome; Other Friends and well wishers: Sri N.M.R. Krishnamoorthy, Sri K. S. Ramanujam,Sri S. Ramaswamy, Sri T. K. Shanmuganandam and Smt. T. S. B. Dhanalakshmi; Staff and students of both his institutions Sri Ramakrishna

Vidyalaya and Avinashilingam Deemed University: Dr. S. Janakarathnam, Dr. S. Puroshothaman, Dr. M.N.G. Mani, Dr. Mohan Devadas, Dr. Godavari Kamalanathan, Dr. Lakshmi Santa Rajagopal, Dr. M. Chandramani, Dr. Nirmala Krishnamoorthy, Smt. Tharachandirka and Dr. P. Malligeswari.

The Editor acknowledges thankfully the valuable assistance given by Smt. Leila Diraviam, wife of late Chief Secretary, Sri K. Diraviam I.A.S., in editing this work with affection and interest and for her chapter; Dr.G.Ramathilagam, Dean-Humanities assisted by her colleagues Smt. C. Jaya and Smt. K. Arulselvam in editing this work with great devotion and for her article and Dr. K. Kulandaivel, Registrar, for his article and help in editing certain portions of the book. The unstinting services rendered by several colleagues Dr. N. Krishnamoorthy, Head of the Department of Computer Science who cheerfully accepted the responsibility of printing the book assisted by Sri. K. Selvan, Sri. B. Perumal, Manager, Saradalaya Press and Sri. I. Swaminathan, University Artist are deeply appreciated.

Lives of leaders like Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam carry eternal messages to the youth of the country. They demonstrate that great *Sadhanas* are possible through high thinking, team work, sacrifice and faith in the goodness of men and trust in God. The accomplishments of this great man and the manner in which he discharged his duties in quietness and joy, because of the great commitment he had for the cause, namely, service to humanity stand as a Himalayan testimony. The youth will realise that modernity, nationalism and spirituality can be happily blended, each merging with the other and enriching the whole.

It is our hope that this book will remain a lasting source of inspiration to all those who want to achieve extraordinary accomplishments in their ordinary lives.

Avinashilingam Institute for
Home Science and Higher Education for Women
(Deemed University)
Coimbatore - 641 043

Rajammal P. Devadas
Vice Chancellor

16 January 1993

INTRODUCTION

AYYA - AN INSPIRING LEADER

Rajammal P. Devadas

Ayya The Person

The great woman poet of Tamil Nadu, Avvaiyar said, "It is good to see good persons; it is good to listen to their words, it is good to talk about their good qualities and it is good to live in close harmony with them." God manifests himself to us in human form as pure personalities, great souls and idealists - men and women. To them no sacrifice is too great and no effort too strenuous in discharging their mission for human welfare. Once their goal is set, they run the race until the victory is won. Ayya Avargal Dr. Avinashilingam, was one of those pure personalities, representing God in human form to his colleagues and students.

Ayya was an embodiment of affection, benevolence and munificence. He was an inexhaustible source of faith, courage and hope. His life was dedicated to the realization of his great ideals. He was a man of deep thoughts and clear convictions. Frankness and outspokenness were among his outstanding characteristics. His abiding passion for the educational progress of the country was seen in his devoting his thoughts, energy and life itself to the shaping of more than two dozen institutions. He was a shining example of simple living and high thinking. He was full of humanism and love.

Born on 5th May, 1903 in an affluent family in Tirupur, Coimbatore District, Ayya Avargal excelled in all walks of his life. His parents were pious people and observed religious rites meticulously, with great devotion. This background had a profound influence on him from his childhood. He completed his school education in Coimbatore and collegiate education in Pachaiappa's College and Law College, Madras. During his college days, he came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He met Swami Sivananda who was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa during his college days and accepted him as his Guru. Swami Sivananda initiated him into the spiritual life.

His Guru wrote, "Whatever you do and whatever profession you undertake, always remember that you are the child of Gurumaharaj. You came to this world to serve him, to love his children and his cause. That is the mission of your life". Ayya was inspired by these words and later proved himself as a worthy son of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

As a lawyer he was a follower of truth and justice, but had no job satisfaction or joy in that profession. The thought, "You are born to do great things - a life of love and sacrifice, not to spend your life in petty thinking for your own welfare and money" came to his mind continuously.

As time passed on, he turned more and more toward an Ashram life and decided to remain a bachelor and started an orphanage on Vijaya Dasami day in 1929. In spite of the opposition from his near and dear ones for admitting a Harijan boy, his great passion for the upliftment of the poor and the downtrodden was so great that he decided to admit a Harijan boy as his first student in his orphanage.

As Sri Ramakrishna said, "Those who have faith have all and those who lack it lack all." He had immense faith in God, followed the path shown by Swami Vivekananda and accomplished great things which an ordinary person could not have done in a lifetime. "A spider's web with proper velocity can cut through an oak" - Ayya used to repeat these words of Swamiji very often and proved this in his life by having the great velocity of idealism, endless zeal and a compelling passion for service to the very limit of the strength of his human body.

In spite of all his great achievements, he never said or took pride that he had done all these. He used to say that all his achievements were due to God's grace and he was only an instrument for God's work. In times of trials and difficulties, he used to feel the presence of an unseen hand which steered his institutions during the past 60 years and that is the secret of the success of his educational ventures.

The nation recognized his achievements and honoured him. He was awarded Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 1970. For his remarkable contribution to adult literacy

work he was conferred the Nehru Literacy award in 1974 by the President of India. In 1978, the Government of Tamil Nadu honoured him with the title **Senthamizh Chelvar**. The Madurai Kamaraj University conferred on him the title, "Tamil Peravai Chemmal". He was awarded the Honorary Degree of D.Sc. by the Tamil University in 1984. In 1985, Sri Rajiv Gandhi honoured him with a citation and a plaque for his contribution as a Freedom Fighter. In the same year, he was awarded the Jamnalal Bajaj award for his activities in rural development, and was also awarded "For the Sake of Honour Award" by the Rotary Club.

The awards never elicited excitement or pride in him. Ayya was proud of only one fact that Sri Gurumaharaj Ramakrishna was his inspiration and light. He was a testimony of Appar Swamigal's saying - "My duty is to serve" (என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே).

Ayya - The Patriot

Mahatma Gandhi's life and message had a profound impact on Ayya and he took an active role in the national freedom movement. He joined the Indian National Congress against the advice and protest of his parents, friends and wellwishers. He became the President of the Congress Committee for Coimbatore and the President of the District Congress Committee which position he held throughout the freedom struggle. He courted imprisonment by participating in the Freedom Struggle four times in 1930, 1932, 1941 and 1942. He came in close contact with many great persons who later became his staunch friends and associates throughout his life. He was elected to the central Legilsative Assembly in 1946 and became the First Minister for Education for erstwhile Madras Presidency in Independent India. He introduced basic education, reorganised secondary education and introduced Madras Libraries Act which ushered in the library movement in the state and in the country. At the national level also, he served in many policy making bodies. In 1951, he was elected to the Lok Sabha and in 1957 to the Rajya Sabha.

National Development is the task of building a bright future for every citizen by utilizing his/her contribution. There are two dimensions to development:

(1) material or physical aspect such as land, capital, inputs and innovations and

(2) the non-material or human aspect such as education, administration, organisation, management, performance and dedication.

Both these, the physical frontiers and the non-material dimensions, must receive balanced attention in development efforts to achieve optimum results.

What was the type of education or system of education that Ayya thought of ? He was of the opinion that the University can not possibly approve a system that preaches hatred, violence or totalitarianism in any form. Again any religious education that does not permit respect for other religious systems and tolerance and goodwill towards the practitioners of the other systems, makes itself indefensible. Ayya dreamt that a University should stand for experiences for humanism, practices of tolerance, promotion of creative ideas and pursuit of truth. It should reflect the onward march of the human race towards even higher objectives. On this basis, Ayya developed Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya and Saradalaya into mighty educational complexes.

Swami Vivekananda spoke about **man-making education and man-making religion**. He did not care whether one belonged to the Hindu or the Muslim or the Christian religion. He was in search of men endowed with strength of character, the spirit of freedom and **social feeling**. "We have wept long enough. No more weeping now; but stand on your feet and be men". These words of Swamiji inspired Ayya, and he concentrated his attention mainly on education to achieve this goal. He believed that the greatest blessing to men and women is the light of knowledge coming from education; where there is darkness there

is fear and fear is the mother of superstition and narrow mindedness. The human mind, if enlightened will experience no fear. He said, "Light the lamp of knowledge, become fearless, compassionate and large-hearted, and acquire practical efficiency".

Swami Vivekananda felt that all the problems of an Indian woman could be solved largely by herself as soon as she received education on the right lines; for a woman, the heart is the essence of personality. Education, apart from imparting information and ideas, should help to expand her heart to strengthen her capacity to love, cherish and protect. Ayya felt that such an education has to be spiritual. Secular education narrowly conceived, makes for selfishness and exploitation, but spiritual education is meant for human development and enrichment of mankind. This is possible only when education is conceived in love and imbued with spiritual purposes.

The period, 1944-1946, was marked with fervour of the expressions, emotions and excitement of Swaraj. I was then working as a research scholar in nutrition in the Women's Christian College. I had heard the name of "Sri Avinashilingam" through the newspapers and read his thunderous contributions in the Central Assembly, as the youngest member in the opposition to the mighty British ruling party. His clear enunciation and standpoints kindled my admiration and I was eager to meet him in person. My ambition was fulfilled when I had the privilege of meeting Ayya at the first national flag hoisting ceremony at Queen Mary's College, Madras on 15th August 1947 in the midst of the jubilation of Independence.

At that time I was preparing to proceed to the USA on a Government of India Overseas Merit Scholarship for an advanced degree in higher education, since there was no University in India offering Master's degree courses in Home Science. I received Ayya's blessings and requested him to establish a Home Science College in Madras before my return. Immediately he said," You first return safely with your feet on the ground. We will then think of starting the Home Science College". When I returned to Madras in June 1950 after completing my Ph.D. Degree in Nutrition, from the Ohio State University, Ayya

asked me,"Are you still eager to have a Home Science College ?" I said "Yes". On a holy Vijayadasami day in 1952, Ayya registered the Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust dedicated to women's education in the revered memory of his mother, turning over to the Trust the entire property he had received as his share from his family. At Ayya's invitation I joined Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College as its Principal in 1960. From the humble beginning in 1955 as a High School, and as a Home Science College in 1957, today the institution has grown to cater to thousands of students, from all over India, and including some from different countries. The University Grants Commission granted Autonomous Status for the college in 1978, and in 1988, the Home Science College and Avinashilingam College of Education were merged under the name, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, which was granted **"Deemed to be University"** status by the Government of India with the concurrence of the Government of Tamil Nadu. Today, more than 6000 women students receive education in Saradalaya campus, from Preschool to post Ph.D. levels, and about 400 teachers teach the students to have a better and brighter future. This magnificent growth was mainly due to Ayya's unshakable faith in God's grace and his magnetic inspiration which through the years have brought about the phenomenal development. He had immense faith in the persons he had chosen to head his institutions, and brought out the best in them. I could not have achieved the professional heights I have, but for God's grace and Ayya's unrelenting faith in me and his abiding love.

Ayya - The Tamil Scholar

Sri Avinashilingam's contribution to Tamil language and literature has been unique and remarkable which remains a glowing guide for many Tamil scholars. He studied deeply the great Thirukkural, Kamba Ramayanam and the spiritual literature such as Thevaram, Thiruvasagam, Thiruppavai and Thiruvembavai. He organised research on Thirukkural and brought out a comprehensive publication on Thirukkural. He felt that the Tamil Language and Tamil cannot grow if they simply eulogised and glorified the past achievements without taking effort to improve the present. He founded the Tamil Academy

of which he was the lifetime President and through which he published the Tamil Encyclopaedia. This has been the first ever encyclopaedia in one of the Indian languages. He published also the Children's Encyclopaedia in Tamil in ten volumes and made them available to the primary school children. He was responsible for organising Tamil Conferences through the Tamil Academy. As a true Gandhian, he wanted to popularise Gandhiji's teachings in Tamil Nadu and for this purpose he brought out a translation of all the writings of Gandhiji in Tamil under the Gandhiji's Works Publication Committee. He had a flair for writing and has produced many useful books in Tamil and English.

Ayya - The Nation Builder

Ayya was a Saint, Savant, Scientist, Teacher, Philosopher, Friend and embodiment of Love, all in one. Abiding faith in God and prayerful life had given him great courage to face the storms and calms, with equanimity. He was meticulous in his habits. Getting up at 4.00 a.m. daily and spending several hours in prayers and meditation, he was always punctual and prompt in keeping his engagements and answering letters. Clarity in thinking, ever flowing stream of love from his heart, full control of senses, unflinching faith in the grace of God were the qualities he radiated. Regularity in habits of prayer, food, sleep, exercise and relaxation was a hallmark of his sublime life. He was a voracious reader. He was also a gracious host. He used to entertain his guests in his unique style under the banyan tree in the mornings in the Vidyalaya.

With complete detachment from worldly pleasure, he would always affirm, "We are not subordinate to anyone. We need not fear death," which indicate his fearlessness. To him the highest form of fearlessness was reaching God. Such fearlessness comes from infinite knowledge, from knowledge of our oneness with all; this infinite knowledge connotes also infinite love; wherever there is love, there is no fear. Swami Vivekananda said, "Where there is no fear, there will be no superstition either".

Ayya Avargal was a not only a veteran freedom fighter, but also an outstanding intellectual and a true **Karmayogi** who practised what he preached till his last breath. He believed that

we should not put our trust in money but put our money in trust. On this basis, he had helped a large number of individuals and institutions. He had great hope in the unique capacities of the young men and women of our land and always stressed that we belong to a great country. As Swami Vivekananda pointed out, Ayya wanted men, women and youth of India to possess "Muscles of iron, and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into mysterious secrets of the universe and accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean meeting death face to face". He had an ability to select able and efficient co-workers for the great mission he had taken upon himself. After selecting the proper persons, he gave them necessary guidance and training and trusted them fully and made them responsible for the work entrusted to them.

His love for children was immense and he lived all his life with the students in the Ashram. He was a role model to the children in all the activities of the institution. His personal requirements were very simple and limited. His room was an open place and never locked. The students used to sleep at nights in his room and he enjoyed their presence and company. His heart always felt for the poor for whom he never denied help. To the students, Ayya was always an affectionate father and hero. He adhered to moral, ethical and spiritual values so scrupulously that he expected others also to follow them. In his institutions, he helped the students to follow them and never tolerated any lapse by teachers. He was a great disciplinarian and insisted that all should observe discipline in all matters. As a result, the educational institutions he founded are much sought after by parents interested in academic excellence, character development and discipline of their children. The coming generations will ever be grateful to this Great Soul for having built up many educational institutions, catering to the needs of the entire life span, from nursery school children to research scholars in various subjects relevant to national development.

Ayya - The Able Administrator

Ayya Avargal was an able administrator who knew the technique of centralised supervision and decentralisation of

responsibilities. He was fully aware of all that was happening in the institutions and gave the necessary directions and guidance to the heads of institutions and other senior staff members. He planned everything perfectly and meticulously and left nothing to chance. He planned his work everyday thoroughly and always kept before him notes for discussions whenever he called the staff members for any work. He had no other thought in mind except the development of his educational institutions and amelioration of the poor and the downtrodden. Ayya was very much concerned about the uplift of the poor. There were times when he wept over the conditions of the poor people in the villages and the neglect of their development by the people in power. Swamiji said, "Who feels for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance ? Him I call a Mahatma whose heart bleeds for the poor". Ayya considered it his duty to do something for uplifting the rural poor and started for this purpose the Rural Development Centre at Vivekanandapuram. Ayya visited the Centre and The Krishi Vigyan Kendra until almost his last days and gave guidance for its proper functioning. When we, the Vice Chancellor and staff members wanted to include NSS (National Service Scheme) programme in our curriculum, Ayya encouraged us to do what we can do to our community through the NSS student volunters. He appreciated always our students for doing excellent social work and adult literacy work. Transcending the barriers of caste and religion, he had become a lyric of truth, full of justice and integrity.

Ayya - The Guiding Star

Personally I am very much indebted to our beloved Ayya Avargal for all that I have achieved in my professional life. As a research scholar, I approached him and requested him to start a college for Home Science. True to his great self, he recognised my sincere urge and encouraged me in all efforts to serve the country through my knowledge of Home Science. Starting my career as a teacher in Queen Mary's College, Madras, I served through various capacities like Dean of Home Science in M.S. University of Baroda, Director of Extension Services in ICAR, Principal of Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College and now beause of the ever abiding grace of God and blessings of Ayya, I have been given the opportunity to serve as the first

Vice Chancellor of our University. I am proud that I was chosen by a great Gandhian - our Ayya to fulfil his dream of providing everlasting educational opportunities to thousands and thousands of women students.

Ayya wished that I must be a loving mother to our students, guide them as a great teacher, help them as a true friend and above all inspire them to achieve great heights by setting an example. He was a friend, philosopher, and counsellor to me. Always feeling his presence by my side, I have resolved to do what he expected me to do. Let the thoughts which had inspired him reverberate in our minds, circulate in our blood and let us have the joy of giving dedicated service to the poor and downtrodden in our country.

We are fortunate to have Ayya who lived and worked amidst us and proved that nothing is impossible in the world, provided there is god's grace, knowledge, preparation and sustained, devoted, concerted, intelligent effort.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MINISTERS PAST AND PRESENT

தேசபக்தராகவே வாழ்கிறவர்

செ. அரங்கநாயகம்

கோவை மாவட்டத்திற்கு பெருமை சேர்த்த பெருமக்களுள் தலைசிறந்து நிற்பவர் மறைந்த அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்கனார் ஆவார். இளம் வயதிலேயே சுதந்திர போராட்டத்தில் தன்னை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொண்டவர். அதன் காரணமாக 1930, 1932, 1941, 1942 ஆம் ஆண்டுகளில் சிறை சென்றார். கோவை, நீலகிரி மாவட்டங்களுக்கு 1934ல் காந்தியடிகள் வந்தபோது, அவருடைய பயண ஏற்பாடுகளைப் பொறுப்பேற்று நடத்தினார்.

1934லிலேயே மத்திய சட்ட மன்றத்திற்கு தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டார். 1946ல் சென்னை சட்ட மன்றத்திற்கு போட்டியிட்டு வெற்றி பெற்றார். சென்னை மகாணத்தின் (அன்று தமிழ்நாடு உருவாகவில்லை) கல்வி அமைச்சராக இருந்து பல நல்ல திட்டங்களை அமுல் நடத்தினார்.

1951ல் மக்களவைக்கும் 1957ல் மாநிலங்கள் அவைக்கும் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப் பட்டார். தேசிய அளவிலான பல்வேறு குழுக்களில் உறுப்பினராக இருந்து நாட்டுப்பணி ஆற்றினார். அவர் காந்தியவாதி. அரசியல் பணி மட்டுமே செய்வது; அதன் மூலம் அரசியல் பதவிகளில் இருப்பது என்றிருந்தவர் அல்ல.

மாணவப் பருவத்திலேயே ஸ்ரீ ராமகிருஷ்ணர், விவேகானந்தர் ஆகியோருடைய உபதேசங்களை ஏற்றுக் கொண்டவர். துறவு நிலையை மேற்கொண்டவர். சொந்த வாழ்க்கையைத் துறந்தவர். பிறருக்காக வாழ்வதே வாழ்க்கை என்று வாழ்ந்தவர்.

அதற்கேற்றாற்போல அரசியலில் காந்தியடிகளின் தலைமையை ஏற்றுக் கொண்டார். காந்தியடிகளும் விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தோடு, வறுமையைப் போக்கவும், நாடு பொருளாதார முன்னேற்றம் அடையவும் பல நிர்மாண திட்டங்களைச் செயல் படுத்தி வந்தார்கள். அவற்றிலும் ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கனார் முழு மனதோடு தன்னை இணைத்துக் கொண்டார்.

சமுதாயத்தில் பலவீனமானவர்கள் முன்னேற கல்வி ஒன்றே உதவும் என்பதை நன்கு உணர்ந்த அவர், பெரிய நாயக்கன் பாளையத்தில் பல கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் ஆரம்பித்து நடத்தி வந்தார். அதோடு பெண்களுக்காக அவினாசிலிங்கம் அறக்கட்டளை நிறுவி, அதன் மூலம் பல கல்வி நிறுவனங்களை கோவை மாநகரில் துவக்கினார். அதில் அவருக்கு வலக்கரமாக இருந்தவர்தான் டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் ஆவார்கள்.

இன்று அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரி ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகமாக வளர்ந்துள்ளது. விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தில் ஈடுபடுவது மட்டுமல்ல. மக்களுக்காக எந்தத் துறையிலும் தியாக உணர்வோடு கடமையைச் செய்வதும் தேச பக்தியே!

SRI AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR - THAMBI

Lakshmi N. Menon - Akka

Today we are living in a world of uncontrolled violence and unprecedented indiscipline. One wonders if we are really moving towards the end of decent living. False promises, insincere behaviour and lack of honesty are taken for granted or accepted as normal norms of behaviour for successful living. When we mouth noble ideas and sentiments or pretend to stand for great ideals we seldom stop to think if we really mean what we say or our actions are usually like our words. Righteousness of heart which should lead to nobility of character is rare. Even so, I like to think that all is not lost. Somewhere perhaps beyond our keen, beams of light penetrate the encircling gloom. Does not the Lord say in the Bhagavad Gita that when there is a decline in Dharma,He will come to us to redeem the world of its evil and corruption. "Sambhavami Yuge Yuge". He comes to us in human form, in the form of idealists, men and women who pursue the ideal like Sir Galahad pursuing the Holy Grail. To them no sacrifice is too much, no effort too strenuous. For once the goal is set, the race must go on till the flash point is reached. I know of a few persons who have given up home, family, riches and a life of leisure and comfort in pursuit of their ideals.

I like to think of Sri Avinashilingam of Coimbatore as one such, known, admired loved and respected and honoured by all. His contribution to the culture and glory of India is invaluable, for he dedicated his life to change the lives of thousands of men and women by providing an all round education - man making education as Swami Vivekananda would call it.

Long before I met him as a fellow member in the Rajya Sabha, I had heard of him as a Congress man, Education Minister of Tamil Nadu and nephew of Sri Ramalingam Chettiar, a similarly admired and respected philanthropist and social worker. It was left to the years in Rajya Sabha to know him as a person of noble character.

I heard Sri Avinashilingam for the first time when he made his maiden speech on the budget perhaps. He spoke loudly and so enthusiastically with passion, I was reminded of a great statesman in Europe who hearing a young diplomat speaking zealously seems to have said, **not so much zeal of course, he sounded sincere and earnest** and became a marked man in my modest gallery of friends.

We became friends with shared ideals and ideas on education and other subjects.Closer understanding brought a closer relationship and we became Akka - Thambi to each other. In course of time I was able to understand his earnestness and depth of feeling, nobility of character and sincerity of his professions. He laughed easily and heartily. He took delight in conversation; all the same he was totally serious and concerned about the causes dear to him. His mind was always playing with problems, proposals and plans and programmes for a better, or rather, a good education for boys and girls. I changed better into good as the French saying that better is the enemy of good seems more to our taste, in our search for suitable solutions to the endless problems that confront all of us striving for a better and more humane world.

Although my Thambi was trained for law, he yielded to other inspirations. There was the spiritual call of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda for a man-making education and more immediate demand from Gandhiji to give up everything and opt for Gandhian thought and programmes. Swami Vivekananda's call for service and sacrifice did not fall on deaf ears. The demand became urgent when Gandhiji and Azad placed the basic education or Nai Talim as a panacea for all the ills of our education system. Basic education became a popular idea. Conferences were held in different parts of India and even in places like Santiniketan regarded as the home of a grand and brand new educational experiment. Everyone was excited at this new form of Talisman. But alas ! the pulls and pressures of the existing system much maligned though it was, had popular approval and support. The delicate plant of Nai Talim was overpowered by the pressures of the majority which did not willingly accept the new idea or share the enthusiasm and faith of the sponsors of the idea.

Basic education failed everywhere, because those who accepted it initially did not know how to integrate and unify the two systems. But the little experiment that Thambi started at Perianaickenpalayam taking nourishment from both the old and new, nurtured with love and faith grew up like the Banyan tree from an insignificant seed to a mighty spreading tree, with roots and branches all over, far flung in its shade, impact and usefulness. It has given and is giving shelter, hope and fulfilment to thousands of young men and women. The Ramakrishna Vidyalaya was followed by a host of institutions from nursery to postgraduate courses inclusive of institutions taking care of physical, mental, technical, emotional, scientific and spiritual needs of those who come to it to live and learn to become citizens of a great country. Nor was the welfare and development of rural population neglected. The Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Vivekanandapuram reminds us that agriculture is the main stay of the people and under no circumstances it should be ignored. Thambi, the great educationist, intelligently synthesized the old and new ideas of tradition and modernity. For he was convinced that a changing world must accept change, should not stand and look back with satisfaction and contentment. While remembering the deep roots of old systems we should think on new lines and progressively go forward.

The Avinashilingam Trust Institutions are an expanding, growing thriving phenomenon. The multitude of institutions prove that academic education need not be a close preserve of one group of people with one type of interests. On the other hand, it should lead to the discovery and development of the manifold tastes talents and abilities the human being is heir to. It is heartwarming to see this realisation expressed in action. "Growth" says Swami Vivekananda, "is expansion, contraction is death". Today, while new ideas do not thrive every where, at the Trust Institutions nurtured with affection and enthusiasm, they thrive to the joy of all of us. No sincere effort is lost to the world. From the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy down to Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, enlightened opinion had not failed to subscribe to the need for girls education. Yet we are not very far from where we were decades ago. There were conferences as to what kind of education should girls have, whether it should be the same as for boys, what should be the ideals they should adopt and so on. Very little has been done at

the State level, or from Government's side at the Centre to give form and shape to the decisions of these conferences. I am not forgetting the pioneer work done by individuals and organisations to encourage girls education. But Thambi has given to us in the South, institutional status and sustenance to the idea by starting the Home Science College - now the Deemed University. Swami Vivekananda said, "Give girls education and they will solve their problems". Of course he was right. But then what kind of education should women have ? It is an unnecessary question. In a bi-sexual society boys and girls must have the education they should have according to their talents and tastes. This cannot be done only by providing an academic education or by reassuming the virtues of our mythical heroines. To bring about a new revolution in thinking about women's status in the modern world, we have also to think of the changes that are overtaking us and the need to make the necessary adjustments thereto and our objectives, methods and goals. That is what the Avinashilingam College of Home Science does silently and unobtrusively. Today it has become the premier institution on the subject and wherever I go I meet its alumni holding responsible jobs. Dr. Devadas has revolutionised the whole concept of Home Science which was regarded as a combination of domestic science, household management and catering. The persistent endeavour of its Director Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas has made it a comprehensive discipline of various aspects of Science and Art. Thambi had given her a free hand to develop the concept and content of Home Science so as to comprise everything under the sun by way of knowledge.

Let us now take a look at the man behind this grand scenario. Sri Avinashilingam above all is god fearing and a man of deep faith who does not take credit for anything he does. He is quiet, gentle in speech and behaviour, always willing to help others in distress, appreciates the small things you do for him. His life is characterised by utter simplicity. He lives by the norm "man wants here so little and that not for long". He might well say like Gandhiji "my life is my message". Wealth whether personal or ancestral is for spending. He had the full support of his family friends and relatives who admired his determined and single minded effort to follow Swami Vivekananda's idea of service and sacrifice. May his life be a light to all and strengthen their halting efforts to service and sacrifice.

A TRUE GANDHIAN

Sushila Nayar

Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar was a dedicated Gandhian who having joined Gandhiji's army of Satyagrahis in 1930 never looked back. He went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and was released along with others after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. In January 1932 after Gandhiji's return to India from the Second Round Table Conference, Civil Disobedience movement was revived in the face of ruthless repression let loose by Wellington who had replaced Irwin as Viceroy. Gandhiji and thousands of Satyagrahis including Avinashilingam Chettiar were back in jail.

In 1941 he participated in the Individual Satyagraha started by Mahatma Gandhi as a protest against the British Government declaring India as a belligerent country on the side of the Allies without consulting Indian leaders. The Indian leaders were not willing to participate in the war effort without effective power being transferred to Indian hands.

On 8th August 1942, the Congress under Gandhiji gave notice to Britain to quit India. The Japanese were at the gates of India and had come upto Imphal. India could defend herself only if she was free to manage her own affairs. Britain replied by still more repression. So Gandhiji and his followers were back in prisons all over the country.

Avinashilingam Chettiar was born on 5 May 1903 in a Well- to-do Chettiar family of Coimbatore. He had his education at the Coimbatore Mission School and then shifted to Madras. There he joined Pachaiyappa College and after completing the studies there, studied Law at the Madras Law College and set up practice of Law. He gave up legal practice in 1930 when he joined the national movement for freedom of India. He never went back to the practice of Law.

Avinashilingam became President of the Coimbatore District Congress Committee, a position which he occupied till 1946 when he was elected to Madras legislature. He served as

Minister of Education in the Madras Government from 1946 to 1949. He had studied Basic education advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and introduced it in Madras. He also reorganised secondary education and introduced Library legislation.

Avinashilingam had joined the Ramakrishna Mission as a young man in 1934 and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Mahatma Gandhi were the beacon lights guiding all his activities. He never married and devoted all his energies to service of mankind in the fields of politics and education. He was founder of many educational institutions in Coimbatore, chief among them being Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya which includes a residential High School, a Teacher's Training College, Basic Training School, Post-graduate Centre in Basic Education, School of Engineering, School of Agriculture, College of Rural Higher Education, College of Physical Education, Rural Service Centre, etc.

He was also the founder of the Tamil Academy, which undertook preparation of an encyclopaedia in Tamil.

He set up Avinashilingam Education Trust which established and is running Avinashilingam Home Science College for Girls. The Trust also runs an institution to provide education from Nursery School to M.Sc. level at Coimbatore. He drew Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas from Delhi to look after this institution and she is doing an excellent job. A few years ago I went to South India to collect funds for building a Prohibition House at Delhi. Avinashilingam asked me "Have you thought as to who will look after the property after you." A wise man, he had been faced with the problem which all public workers who achieve anything must face. God does send help. But as he knew, it is not easy to find suitable successors.

Avinashilingam was also Chairman of Gandhiji's works Publication Committee, which brought out Gandhiji's works in fifteen volumes.

He was a prolific writer and wrote many books in Tamil and English on education and political and spiritual matters. For instance he translated Swami Vivekananda's lectures from Colombo To Almora, in Tamil.

Avinashilingam became a member of the Central legislature in 1935 and continued to occupy the seat till 1945. From 1946 to 1951, he was a member of Madras legislature and from 1952 to 1957 he was elected to the Lok Sabha representing the erstwhile state of Madras. From 1956 to 1964 he was a member of the Rajya Sabha.

Avinashilingam Chettiar was an upright man with high ideals, who put his ideals into practice. In the Avinashilingam Institute of Home Science he was a father figure. He tried to propagate the teachings of Gandhiji and Swami Ramakrishna Paramahamsa all his life through education and through personal life of spotless purity, honesty and dedicated selfless service of humanity irrespective of caste, colour and creed. One hopes and prays that a few of those whom he has been instrumental in providing education in his idealistic institutions may carry the spark. I pay my homage to a veteran freedom fighter, an outstanding intellectual, an educationist and a true Karma Yogi who practised what he preached till his last breath. He passed away on 21st November 1991 at Coimbatore.

GLIMPSES OF AYYA'S PERSONALITY

Sarojini Mahishi

I knew Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who was then Principal of the Avinashilingam Home Science College in Coimbatore much earlier than 1970. This was in connection with the Home Science College Gram Sevika Training Centre and Home Economics which was being introduced in the rural area through the village level workers. In fact, I had the opportunity of inaugurating the biannual Home Science Conference in Nagpur sometime in the early Seventies. I had the opportunity of delivering a series of lectures on the origin of law, democratization, and future of women in Hindu Law in Coimbatore organised on behalf of Avinashilingam Educational Trust. I used to be happy at the gracious presence of Shri Avinashilingamji popularly known as AYYA at the lectures. Calm and composed Ayya was a man of a few words. Whenever he visited Delhi in connection with some meetings or in connection with his educational institutions with Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, he used to visit my place and both of them used to give me pleasure of company for dinner. Ayya used to call my house an Ashrama. Wheat was grown in the backyard of the house; so were vegetables! There was a Jersey cow also to welcome the honoured guests with her milk and curds and so were the humming bees. Bee-keeping was my hobby. I used to collect nearly two kgs of honey in a quarter and this was all the food which Ayya relished. He would mix up all the steamed vegetables, curds, milk, honey and Roti and eat it enjoying the flavour. When we used to laugh at him he also laughed with us.

Discipline was a way of life for him. Whether the person whom he was to meet was there or not, he would be present there at the given time. He would not feel sorry if the other person is not there. "These are all the things we have to put up in life. But on our part we should be punctual", that is what he adhered to. The Institutions which he has built speaks volumes for his perseverance, tenacity to stick on to the principles in spite of difficulties and his determination to achieve the goal. The campus of Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College consists of not only the Home Science College for women but it also consists

of Arts, Science, Commerce and Education Colleges. The institutions conduct many diploma courses in different disciplines. This has rather become a centre for activities in the surrounding villages within a radius of 30-40 kms. The leaf protein extraction plant given to the institution is used for the children in the rural areas. In the surrounding villages women and children are mostly benefitted by the extra-curricular activities taken up by the Institute. Ayya always thought that this institute with all pre-requisites needed for a university should become an University. Anyway he saw that it was converted into a Deemed University.

If this was the social and educational aspect of Ayya's personality, the spiritual aspect was even more potent. He was a staunch devotee of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and every day (morning and evening) he would make it a point to attend the prayer session in the premises of his institutions. He also spent some time in meditation. The Ramakrishna Mission movement grew from strength to strength under his guidance in greater part of South India. The polytechnic in smithy, carpentry and other allied subjects run by the Ramakrishna Mission was fully under his control in Coimbatore. In fact, he spent more time with the boys to inculcate the habit of discipline amongst them. No outside turbulence ever perturbed him.

Ayya's memory will ever remain a source of inspiration for us.

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
SPIRITUAL LEADERS

AVINASHILINGAM - A DEVOTEE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Swami Ranganathananda

Many great men and women have appeared in our country in the course of its long history. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam embodies in his life the glorious spirit of the past with the dynamic current of the modern scientific era. The secret of the success of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam was the spiritual eminence which he had attained through his association with the Ramakrishna Mission and the holymen of India. It was the spiritual background which gave him a unique distinction among the national leaders. I have been very much impressed by his devotion to Sri Ramakrishna and the desire to spread his message of unity and harmony among the people. He put into practice the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, of seeing God in the human beings and serving them, especially the weaker sections. All his work was inspired by his devotion to Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam's own biography provides a background canvas to portray events like our freedom struggle and high level of character, patriotism, dedicated service and sacrifice he evoked in millions of our people. He was able to achieve this largely impersonal approach due to his pure patriotism and his intimate association with some of the great disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and his tremendous impact on his multifaceted life and work.

Sri Avinashilingam has been in public life ever since he left college as a youth, but before entering public life, he received the blessings of Mahapurush Swami Sivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. In his autobiography Sri Avinashilingam often referred to this sacred touch and its power that has sustained him in all his services for the people.

Swami Vivekananda had said in one of his letters written in 1894, "They alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive". This is also the truth proclaimed in the dictum of the Isha Upanishad :

"Kuruanneveha Karman: jijivished satem samah."

"Desire to live (the full human span of) one hundred years by performing (good) works". Apart from his political and administrative activities, Sri Avinashilingam had filled his long life of 89 years with untiring and dedicated activities for the good of the nation including literary monuments like the Tamil Encylopaedia, the first of its kind in any of our national languages, the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya with its multifarious nation building activities and the Avinashilingam Deemed University.

Sri Avinashilingam has combined true religion and true politics into one in his life under the inspiration of Swami Vivekananda's famous mantra - "The national ideals of India are renunciation and service, intensify her in those channels, the rest will take care of itself". He has exemplified in his life and work the teaching about Dharma given by the merchant Tuladhara to the Brahmana ascetic Jajal as given in the great epic Mahabharata (12. 254, 9. Bhardarkar Edition) :

Sarvesham Yah Suhrunnityam
Sarvesham Cha hita ratah;
Karmana, Manasa, Vacha,
Sa dharman Veda, Jajale

" O' Jajah! he (or she) knows dharma, who is always the friend of all, and who through action, thought and speech is always actively engaged in promoting the welfare of all."

The life of Sri Avinashilingam is bound to interest all who respect and seek for the higher values of life.

YOGA FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Swami Satchidananda

The ultimate goal of every human endeavour, and the wish of every individual, is to be always happy and peaceful. Every activity, every relationship, every subject studied, we do directly or indirectly to find happiness. In this context we can say that the fully developed human is the one who has found that lasting happiness-happiness not based on the ever-changing external phenomena. The fully developed human is someone who is always at peace.

Those who have not experienced that permanent happiness and peace continue their search in various ways. The problem is that not everyone knows where to look or how to find it.

Most of us are searching in the wrong places. We look outside ourselves, hoping that by doing, getting, or achieving something we'll find contentment. Though we acquire possessions, positions, name and fame, we fail to find lasting happiness. All the happiness we seem to be getting by our daily efforts is fleeting and mixed with a great many troubles and worries. We experience a few moments of happiness and, on either side, unhappiness. In a way, we cannot even look for happiness to come from God. If He gives it, He might take it away. Anything that comes will some day go.

One day or other, we will tire of this constant searching for permanent happiness outside ourselves. It is at this point that we are ready to look within, to become spiritual seekers. We sit and question, "What is this? Why am I unhappy ? Why do I always seem to lose what happiness I have ?" If we analyze well, we find, ultimately, that the happiness we seek is never the result of doing or achieving something. It can never be found outside. The happiness that we search for is in us always, as our True Nature. We are Happiness personified, the image of God. We are that Supreme Bliss. We are that Joy.

Though Supreme Peace abides in us as our very Self, ordinarily we don't experience it. Yoga teaches that to experience the reality of who we are, we need to purify the instrument of experience, the mind. Your True Self is like a radiant Light that is always shining within you. The mind is like a mirror. The Self is reflected on the mirror of the mind. If the mirror gets distorted or disturbed, though the Self remains unaffected, we see a disturbed image. We identify with the image, forget who we are, and feel that we are disturbed, unhappy. So, the true you appears to be distorted, or mixed up with the mind. The aim of Yoga is to make the mirror that is the mind clean, and steady. Once that is achieved, we see a clear image of who we are, and experience the Peace and Joy that is our True Nature. The essential teachings of Yoga offer profound guidelines to help us attain this steadiness and clarity.

Let us examine what disturbs the mind in the first place. Physically, we know how wrong food can disturb the health and ease of the body. It is the same with the mind. Our thoughts are the food for the mind. If our thoughts are pure, the mind remains clean, and is at peace. If the thoughts are impure, the mind becomes disturbed, resulting in feelings of fear, anger, depression, and so forth. That is why we need to take care of our mental diet, our thoughts to let them be pure. We can define an impure thought as any which would disturb the mind.

The root cause of all mental impurities is selfishness. Selfish thoughts and actions always contain in them the seed of suffering. When we do things for our sake alone, we do not leave room in our minds for God's higher plan. When our ego-centred plans fail, we experience frustration or sadness. Even if our plans do succeed we canot avoid the pain; we have the fear of losing whatever we have gained or we experience a renewed craving that results from the satisfying of selfish needs.

A thought free from selfishness will never disturb the mind. If you are interested in retaining your peace, allow only those thoughts that are for the benefit of others.

The mind has gotten into the habit of thinking selfishly, so it is very difficult to control. We need to learn the skill of training

the mind. It is here that Sri Patanjali Maharishi, the father of Yoga, can offer us good advice. According to his Yoga Sutras, our thoughts can be either painful or painless, we can easily substitute the words selfish and selfless. The sutras go on to say that these thoughts can be controlled by practice and non-attachment. Sri Patanjali states that practice is any effort to steady the mind. This means that a Yogi doing japa, a Christian repeating the rosary, or Whirling Dervish dancing, are all, in a sense, engaged in Yoga practice. It's not so important what technique we take up to steady the mind; what is important is that we choose something that is uplifting, and something that we like. It should be uplifting because, "As you think, so you become." The mind begins to absorb the qualities of whatever thoughts it focuses on, so it is important to fill the mind with holy, divine thoughts. Gradually, we will begin to manifest those divine qualities. It is also important to have a liking for whatever practice we take up. If it's something we enjoy, we are much more likely to continue its practice.

The effort to keep the mind filled with uplifiting thoughts is often difficult in the beginning, because our practice has not become habitual. We gain the greatest benefit from our efforts when our sadhana becomes second nature to us. To achieve this, Sri Patanjali teaches that we need to keep up our practice "for a long time, without break, and in all earnestness". He says for a long time, because good habits are never formed quickly. But just a long time alone is not enough. Practice must be regular. Sometimes aspirants will say, "I have been practising for twenty years, and I don't see the benefits." If you enquire a little into the quality of their practice, you'll find that they have been practising only off and on. At other times students will say, "I have been practising regularly, and I haven't achieved anything."

"How long have you been practising?"
"Oh, three weeks".

But even uninterrupted practice sustained over a long period is not quite enough. We need to bring zeal and enthusiasm to our sadhana. This can only come from convincing the mind of the benefits that will come. If you fully know of the great benefits

that are in store for you, the enthusiasm will be there automatically.

These teachings on practice are not only invaluable on the spiritual path, but can be applied to any area where one would like to grow and be successful.

Formal practice alone, however, is not sufficient to bring us to our spiritual goal. We need to cultivate the attitude of non-attachment. Non-attachment means to be free from cravings, to be free from selfish desires. Though it is more difficult to develop, in a way, non-attachment is even more important than our formal sadhana. We can row a boat all day, but we won't get very far if we are still attached to the dock. We can do our practices, but they will take us only as far as our attachments will allow. The practice of non-attachment brought into daily life is what we call Karma Yoga, the Yoga of selfless actions.

No one can be in the world without performing actions. Actions based on attachment or performed with selfish expectations bind us and bring suffering. The best way to avoid the suffering is to overcome the selfishness by leading a dedicated life. This is the essential teaching of Karma Yoga.

Sacrifice is the law of life. What does a tree teach us? Sacrifice. The tree sends its roots deep into the soil, facing all kinds of obstacles to draw nourishment from the earth. It sends its branches up to receive the sunlight. After years of effort to grow and mature, the tree finally produces apples. After all that work, the tree doesn't even taste its own fruits. If no one comes along to taste its fruits, it will simply drop them. Likewise, the candle burns itself away to give us light; the incense stick, to give us fragrance. There is sacrifice everywhere. The entire nature demonstrates the benefit of sacrifice. So don't expect anything for yourself. If you make an appointment for some result, you must be ready to face disappointmant. When you sacrifice the attachment and expectation of the fruits of your actions, you retain your peace.

The Bhagavad Gita says, "How can someone be happy if he or she has not found peace ? Ashaantasya kutah sukham ?"

Then it gives the answer also : The dedicated ever enjoy Supreme Peace. "Tyaagat shaantir anantaram". How can there be happiness without peace ? And what is the way to peace ? Dedication, sacrifice.

Our entire life, our very living itself must be for the sake of others. Eat for the sake of others, breathe for the sake of others. Then nobody in the world can disturb your peace. It is guaranteed.

The path to lasting peace requires practice, dedication, and constant vigilance. It is like ascending a steep, slippery mountain. It is very difficult to do it alone. If climbers are tied to one another, they won't slip far.

Likewise, keeping the proper company is invaluable to attaining the experience of the True Self. We want to be liberated - to be free from the fears, worries, and anxieties that bind us, to be a jivanmukta. The great sage Adi Shankaracharya gives a beautiful saying. It begins with satsang, the good company, and ends with jivanmukta: "Satsanghattve nisanghattbvam. Nisanghattve nirmohattvam. Nirmohattve nischalatattvam. Nischalatattve jivanmukta." By keeping the good company, the first benefit is that you're away from the bad company. When you're away from the bad company, the mind stays out of delusion. When the mind stays out of delusion, it becomes steady. When the mind is steady, you are liberated. So simple, yet so powerful. All you need to do is put yourself in the proper environment, and you will grow, because you'll be with like- minded people who can help you when you slip, who can support you, and who can help support.

So keep your goal always in mind. Let nothing distract you. The experience of the Peace that lies within is worth all efforts.

May you experience the glories and greatness of the Science of Yoga, and share the benefits with one and all.

OM Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi.

INDIA'S SPECIAL MESSAGE OF PEACE

Swami Swahananda

India has a great message for the world in the field of spirituality and world peace. For thousands of years, she has cultivated and harvested this field.

The Vedic seers envisioned the unity of the whole creation and epitomized it in the nomenclature of the highest reality as Brahman. Everything that we see around us is the emanation of this reality. So also, are all living beings. Love, amity, tolerance, acceptance, and compassion all these are the manifestations of this realization of the unity of existence.

In the last century, Sri Ramakrishna, the great prophet of modern India, gave an unprecedented and timely commentary to this Upanishadic revelation of ancient India. After practising the paths of various Hindu sects and of the world's major religions - including Islam and Christianity, Sri Ramakrishna then proclaimed with authority the harmony of all religions : "Different faiths are but various paths to the same truth of god." They ultimately culminate in the Supreme Peace "that passeth all understanding"- the abiding existence, consciousness, and bliss which pervades and transcends all creation. Today's world movement towards religious harmony owes much to this God man of India, who practised and proclaimed religious harmony and through practical Vedanta provided a firm philosophy of understanding.

"Ethics is unity", Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna's foremost disciple, once said. To love is an attempt to feel oneness with others. Therefore, peace is a natural expression of that love experienced to the degree, one is able to love. India's history is saturated with remarkable examples of this capacity for love and acceptance.

In the sixth century B.C., Buddha clarified the practical application of unity by preaching non-violence. Fourteen hundred years later, Mahatma Gandhi reinstalled non-violence as a practical ideal in modern society and as the guiding principle

behind a national movement that caught the imagination of the world and was, in turn, the inspiration of future civil rights leaders in America. Non-violence, loving one's enemy once a novel idea, has now entered in the world's political arena.

Three centuries following Buddha's life, Emperor Ashoka, after a victorious battle in which his army slaughtered innumerable people, came to understand the evils of war, and embraced Buddha's idea of non-violence. He sent out ambassadors who were a new type of political representatives, bearing peace to all. The Ashoka edicts, the columns or pillars of dharma erected by Emperor Ashoka are found in India and neighbouring countries, and are objects of veneration. In written inscriptions, they proclaim the dignity of man and the rights of all beings from birds to mammals. This message of harmony based on humanism created a unique message of good will in society in civic rights and in the field of politics.

In the sixteenth century, the Moghuls entered Indian civilization, and in 1569, Akbar the Great, though a Muslim conqueror, founded Din Ilahi a symbol of his acceptance and veneration of all religions, which were then flourishing in India. He summoned holy men from Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam to formulate a belief in a universal God and a doctrine of right conduct.

India's eternal message of peace and harmony inspired the world-famous historian Arnold Toynbee:

> In the present age, the world has been united on the material plane by Western technology. But this Western skill has not only "annihilated distance"; it has armed the peoples of the world with weapons of devastating power at a time when they have been brought to point blank range of each other without yet having learnt to know and love each other. At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way. The Emperor Ashoka's and the Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Sri Ramakrishna's testimony to the harmony of religions: here we have the attitude

> and the spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family and in the Atomic Age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves.[1]

Tolerance and acceptance are central themes in Indian national life. That is why India gave sanctuary to the Jews before the Christian era, to the Christians in the first century A.D., the Zoroastrians after the fall of Persia, around the ninth century A.D., and to the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees in the twentieth century. The same idea of universal love and acceptance was proclaimed by Swami Vivekananda in 1893, at the Chicago Parliament of Religions with the words :

> "Help and not fight", "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension".

Peace has always been the eternal concern of ancient India. That peace-loving concern is grounded in her spirituality and repeatedly expressed in her scriptures.

According to the ancient Indian sages, man suffers in three ways: viz., from the mind, other beings human and sub-human, and from natural calamities. To ward off these sufferings, the Upanishads prescribe the word Shanti, peace, to be repeated thrice during prayer and at special occasions.

"Be peaceful and meditate", says the Chandogya Upanishad. "Where is happiness for a peaceless person?" asks the Gita. The individual's need for peace is imperative.

But the collective need for peace, social and political, is even more essential. For without it, the resulting social and moral upheaval prevents individual pursuit of any higher ideal.

Swami Vivekananda was proud of the peace-loving Hindus who never conquered any country. Even the Buddhists,

---

[1]Swami Gnanananda, Sri Ramakrishna and his Unique Message, "Foreword" by Arnold Toynbee (London : Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, 1970) p. viii.

ADU LIB
88860

INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)
LIBRARY

who migrated to Southeast Asia where they created kingdoms, settled down and became one with the population, raising the cultural standard of their area.

India, the land of Bharatavarsha, maintains a unique position in raising the banner of peace in today's world, because her hands were never soiled by the blood of other nations.

Any Indian who is as idealistic as Sri Avinashilingam is naturally dedicated to this ideal of peace and harmony.

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam lived an extraordinary life. Ordinary people live their lives centred in small concerns: their own lives, their immediate families, and perhaps those of their neighbours. If they expand themselves at all, it is to include their community, or at the most their own country. Rare is the soul who can expand himself to the point where his own life becomes a mission for others a mission for the benefit of the world. Sri Krishna declares in the Gita that whatever we do whether eating, performing sacrifices, charity or austerity we must do as an offering to God.

But the highest offering and the greatest sacrifice is the sacrifice of one's entire life at the altar of a great ideal. That is truly an extraordinary life and it carries with it a tremendous power - the power of dedication.

Dedication is the consecration of one's actions for a sacred purpose.[2] In spiritual life, dedication is giving one's body, mind and soul to the Lord and His work. Swami Saradananda[3], a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, said, "The highest worship is the unconditional dedication of yourself to Him". We see this ideal beautifully exemplified by Sri Avinashilingam, whose life was dedicated to the highest ideal of God-realization and service to god in man.

Great inner strength comes to those who dedicate their lives to God; the strength that such devotees feel is the strength

---

[2]Oxford English Dictionary

[3]Sabina Thorne, ed., Precepts for Perfection (Hollywood : Vedanta Press, 1961), p. 170.

of God. Those who have dedicated their lives to Him feel that they are under the Lord's care and protection, and they feel infinite strength in that assurance. Implicit in the ideal of dedication is self-surrender.

In his student days, Sri Avinashilingam was influenced by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He was inspired to enter deep into spiritual practices and dedicated himself to the selfless service of others, as advocated by Swamiji.

In this connection, he wrote in his autobiography about the time when he was first sent to jail leaving his fledgling institution, the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. But a devotee from unexpected quarters stepped forward to take charge of it. So self-surrender was natural for Sri Avinashilingam, who had various experiences of God's grace.

Avinashilingam's love for India and her people, soon brought him under Mahatma Gandhi's influence and the freedom movement. As an important member of Congress, he selflessly championed the political freedom of India to the point of being jailed four times, which ultimately broke his health.

Later he became an Education Minister, then and later, inaugurating works such as the Tamil encyclopedia, educational and cultural institutions, and civic projects for the uplift of the poor.

As an idealist, Sri Avinashilingam was devoted to noble ideas from wherever they originated. That is why he was prompted to publicize the world teacher's ideas on education. His earlier book, Swami Vivekananda on Education, compiled when in jail, expressed his own fundamental philosophy, his belief in the innate goodness and divinity of all men and women.

He introduced Mahatma Gandhi's practical aspect of basic education at the very beginning of his movement. In fact, the foundation stone for the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya a residential school, was laid by Gandhiji in 1934.

Swami Vivekananda used to say that both wings of a bird are necessary for flying. So also, is education necessary for both men and women, if India is to rise. Sri Avinashilingam took this to heart, and thus started the Saradalayam, a series of institutions for women in Coimbatore, which is now a University. There dedicated women came forward to build up the institutions in order to give shape to the ideal he cherished and upheld.

Sri Ramakrishna defined a holy man as he who surrenders his body, mind and innermost self to God. The life of Sri Avinashilingam was inspired by Sri Ramakrishna and his ideal and his character and achievements were built on dedication and sacrifice. Those who have had the privilege of knowing him can attest to the truth of Sri Ramakrishna's words and feel inspired by his life and dedication to the message of peace and harmony of Eternal India.

"The three aspects namely, intellect, emotions and will, have to be integrated so as to express the great qualities of love, dedication and Abhaya, freedom from fear. These, when integrated with academic education, will prepare young people to face the challenges of a progressing nation with fortitude and confidence."

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

HIS CONTRIBUTION TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Swami Tanmayananda

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam , whom we lovingly called as Ayya, came in contact with Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj and Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the direct disciples of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna, when he was a student in Madras doing his graduation. It must have been around 1923. He was very much drawn to Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and received his blessings. He came under his influence and received Mantra diksha from him. His Guru profusely blessed him. Through these blessings a seed of spiritual growth, dedication to higher life, a spirit of service and God consciousness, was sown in his mind. The seed began to grow and blossomed during the years to come. His Guru had a watchful eye over his spiritual growth, and directed him in the proper channel.

Ayya's dream of founding a school for poor children took shape in 1930. He practised law for some time after his graduation, but the thought of serving the poor by imparting Gurukula type of education (students staying with their teachers and learning from them) was uppermost in his mind. He discussed his plans with Swami Chidbhavanandaji and others at the Ooty Ashram. He was in touch with his Guru, Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, looking forward to his advice and guidance. Finally his Guru gave him permission and as a result, what we see today, Vidyalaya, a mighty educational complex, a big banyan tree, was born on 3 February, 1930.

Vidyalaya celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in 1990-91. In these 60 years Ayya's contribution to the growth of Vidyalaya in the field of education was immense. Started with a humble beginning of one Harijan boy with a capital of five rupees and twelve annas, Vidyalaya today is proud to impart education to nearly 5000 students from pre-school to Ph.D levels. There are nearly 500 teaching and non-teaching staff in the Vidyalaya institutions, spread over an area of 300 acres on the

Mettupalayam road at Perianaickenpalayam, nearly 20 km from Coimbatore city.

Sri Ayya had an opportunity to see the functioning of an orphanage at Madras Students' Home started under the inspiration of Swami Ramakrishnanandaji, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. It was the only institution of its kind run by the Ramakrishna Mission in the early part of the century. Boys from all over Tamil Nadu had the opportunity to live and study in that orphanage. Life in the orphanage enabled them to build up their character.

The Gurukula system as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda helped the boys to imbibe the Hindu traditions and also a sense of values in life.

Sri Ayya brought the Ramakrishna Vivekananda ideal to further South in Coimbatore District by starting this Gurukula at Perianaickenpalayam in Coimbatore. If he had not started this institution the Ramakrishna movement might not have spread this far south of Madras. In other words, the movement would have limited itself to Madras and its vicinity. Of course some influence would have been there in Nilgiris and also in the village of Nattarampalli in the North Arcot District through our centres there. So Ayya's contribution to the Ramakrishna order is very great when we consider his founding of the Vidyalaya and its tremendous growth and influence not only in and around Coimbatore area but throughout Tamil Nadu even in the whole of India and abroad.

Vidyalaya had its permanent location in the Perianaickenpalayam area sometime in 1936 when Sri Ramakrishna Naidu donated 14 acres of land. From 1930 to 1936 it was located in different places in and around Coimbatore. Sri Ayya lived with the students and spared no efforts to impart to them man-making education, as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda. The living conditions were very poor, food was moderate, and the boys had to attend to all types of work besides their studies, but they had a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment and were aware that a golden opportunity had been given to them to mould their lives. Sri Ayya dined with them, bathed with them,

slept with them, while teaching the boys and building the Vidyalaya. The students who were fortunate to study and have Ayya's association in those early days are now occupying very high positions in society. The training they received here is enabling them to be of men of character, to radiate the spirit of Vidyalaya wherever they go. They stand out distinctly from people who did not have the privilege of association with the Vidyalaya and its founder. Groups after groups of well-trained students have left the portals of Vidyalaya in these last sixty years. Wherever we go we see our old students as high officials in Government departments, in police, in medical and engineering profession, in industries and trade, not to speak of good number of dedicated teachers and professors and agriculturists. Irrespective of their profession and positions in life, the value-oriented education they had at Vidyalaya has left an indelible impression on them. The teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda have entered deep into their personalities, moulding their lives. They carry with them the culture and spirituality and the tradition of our Mission as taught at Vidyalaya. This is a very great contribution of our order, made possible by Sri Ayya's sacrifice, immense struggles and unremitting efforts in the cause of education.

Ayya dedicated his life for the cause of education. That was his dream, his mission and everything. To serve the poor and downtrodden by giving them sound education, Ayya worked day and night and as a result of his hard work, new institutions began to be founded one after another. When the Gurukula School was taking roots, he felt the need for basic education and so the teachers' training institute for basic education on the Gandhian lines came into existence. Then came the necessity for good trained teachers and so the college of education came up. After independence he felt the need and urgency of serving the rural masses. So he started the Rural Institute with the following three wings: School of Engineering, School of Agriculture and College of Rural Higher Education. These institutions over the years have grown well and continue to serve the rural population as the Polytechnic, Institute of Agriculture, and Arts and Science College respectively. A Physical Education College was added afterwards.

Another distinctive feature of Vidyalaya is the celebration of the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna on the first Sunday every year. The activities of Vidyalaya begin every year with the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, whose name the Institution bears. On the first Sunday of the year, students, staff and well-wishers of Vidyalaya jointly organise this grand celebration. Teachers and students plan for this grand celebration with all devotion. All the details are worked out with meticulous care. Nearly twenty thousand people from all over the Coimbatore district participate in this day-long function. Nearly ten thousand people are fed on the occasion. All arrangements such as keeping shoes and cycles, cooking and distribution of food, collecting materials for the function, erecting pandals etc. are done by staff and students with devotion and a sense of involvement. As a part of the celebration, all sections of Vidyalaya organise an educational exhibition, depicting the latest trends in general education, teacher education, technical education, physical education and agricultural education, besides depicting the life of great personalities, social problems and their solutions.

Ayya planned for this celebration with the main purpose of spreading the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda among the people of this area. The people who come here get the opportunity to know about the Master and Swami Vivekananda. During the celebration a public meeting is arranged in the evening where the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna are discussed. Thus the Gurupuja celebration has a manifold effect on the public as well as on our staff and students. This is considered as an unique contribution of Sri Ayya in spreading education and dissemination of the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Vidyalaya has brought out a good number of publications highlighting the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. These publications help to spread the message of the Master. **Sacred Touch, Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda, Make me a Man,** are some such important publications.

Ayya was very particular that our teaching staff should keep themselves abreast of the latest trends and developments in

their respective fields of education. Time and again, he would insist on conducting seminars and symposia so that our staff and students will have ample opportunity to have discussions on topical problems of the day and also they have an opportunity to hear from experts in various fields of education and their achievements in different branches of science. His dream was to see that the Vidyalaya institutions are in line with national level institutions. He would say that there is no limit to excellence. He expected our staff and students to work hard, to be challenging in their approach to problems of life and maintain the high tradition of Vidyalaya.

A good number of dedicated teachers and workers rallied round him. Sri Ayya wholeheartedly acknowledges their cooperation, help and involvement in his autobiography, **Sacred Touch.** He acknowledged in his book that, but for their help he could not have achieved what he did in the field of education. To mention a few among his loyal followers, they are Sri Periaswamy Thooran, Sri K. Arunachalam, Dr. M. Aram, Sri K. Venkatachalam, Dr. K. Kulandiavel and Sri N. Krishnamurthy.

Ayya was a true follower of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji's message of upliftment of women and their education were uppermost in his mind, when he started an institution for girls at Coimbatore. Today it has grown into a Deemed University of international repute, doing very useful work in the field of women's education, especially Home Science. As an expression of his devotion to Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, the institution is called Saradalaya. Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas has dedicated her life for women's education and actively worked with Ayya for its growth and development.

Another message of Swamiji to serve the poor and downtrodden living in slums and villages caught the imagination of Sri Ayya. Shramik Vidyapeeth and Krishi Vigyan Kendra - centres for slum improvement work and village upliftment in the field of agriculture and rural development - were the result of that inspiration.

Another important work done by the Vidyalaya was the flood and famine relief work undertaken at Bhavani in 1972 and

Paramakudi in the early Seventies. Ramakrishna Mission's service to humanity can be broadly divided into medical, educational, cultural and relief activities. As part of relief and rehabilitation work, Ayya took upon himself the task of rehabilitating the famine victims of Paramakudi and flood victims of Bhavani. Pucca houses were constructed for them besides immediate relief activities to give them food, clothing and other necessities of life.

As one of the branches of the Ramakrishna Mission, Vidyalaya stands for certain high principles which the founder carefully introduced and assiduously tried to inculcate in the lives of students and staff. A harmonious development of head, heart and hand is the secret of development of an integrated personality of a student. That forms the basis for man-making education of Swami Vivekananda. In Vidyalaya atmosphere, there is a kind of simplicity, peace and serenity. Vidyalaya boys imbibe the idea of simple living and high thinking. As they grow in this vast healthy atmosphere with proper training, they learn to appreciate the ideal of Seva. Time and again the idea of inculcating values in life is emphasised and hence there is no wonder that Vidyalaya students become men of refined manners and sound character. Above all, the religious and spiritual ideals form the very core of Vidyalaya life. Daily prayer, weekly congregational prayers, bhajans and observance of the festivals and birthdays of great men give the students ample opportunity to cultivate their spiritual and religious sentiments.

Vidyalaya serves the nation by producing men of character and nobility. India badly needs such men at this juncture. It is all made possible through the inspiration, motivation self- sacrifice, dedication and constant struggle of our beloved Ayya. This is his special contribution in the field of education to the Ramakrishna Mission.

இராமகிருஷ்ண இயக்கமும் அய்யா அவர்களும்

சுவாமி சோமானந்தா

மல்லிகை மலர் மலரும்போது அதன் மணம் எங்கும் பரவுகின்றது. தேனைப் பருகத் தேனீக்கள் யாரும் அழைக்காமல் தாமே மலரை நாடி வருகின்றன. அதே போன்று, தெய்வத் தன்மை வாய்ந்த நிறை மாந்தர்கள் அவதரிக்கும் பொழுது அவர்களை நாடிச் சிலர் வருகிறார்கள். அவர்கள் காட்டிய வழியில் வாழ்கிறார்கள். அதன் பயனாக அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கை பெருவாழ்க்கையாக மாறிப் பலருக்கும் பயன்படக்கூடிய நல்வாழ்வாக அமைகின்றது.

திரு. தி.சு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் பிற்காலத்தில் அனைவராலும் 'அய்யா' என்று அன்புடன் அழைக்கப்பட்டவர். சென்னையில் கல்லூரியில் படித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தார். அப்பொழுது அவருக்கு வயது 16அல்லது 17இருக்கும். தம் நண்பர் சின்னு (பிற்காலத்தில் சுவாமி சித்பவானந்தர்) அவர்களின் மூலம், சென்னை இராம கிருஷ்ண மடத்திற்கு, இராமகிருஷ்ணரின் நேர் சீடர்கள் சுவாமி பிரம்மானந்தர், சுவாமி சிவானந்தர் ஆகியோர் வந்திருப்பதாகக் கேள்விப்படுகிறார். தம் நண்பருடன் மடத்திற்குச் சென்று சுவாமிகள் இருவரையும் தரிசிக்கிறார். சுவாமி பிரம்மானந்தர் எப்பொழுதும் ஆழ்ந்த தியானத்தில் இருப்பவர்கள், அதிகம் பேச மாட்டார்கள். சுவாமி சிவானந்தா, தம்மிடம் வந்த இளைஞர்களிடமும் பக்தர்களிடமும் ஓரிரு சொற்கள் மட்டுமே பேசுவார்கள். அவற்றில் அளவற்ற அன்பும் பரிவும் ததும்பும். உண்மையான அன்பு சொற்களுக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டதல்லவா?

சுவாமிகளது எல்லையற்ற அன்பால் ஈர்க்கப்பட்ட இளைஞர்கள் இருவரும் ஒவ்வொரு நாளும் கல்லூரி முடிந்த பிறகு மடத்திற்குச் செல்வது வழக்கமாகி விட்டது. இராமகிருஷ்ண இயக்கத்துடன் இவ்வாறு தொடங்கப்பெற்ற தொடர்பு வாழ்க்கை முழுவதும் தொடர்ந்தது.

சென்னை இராம கிருஷ்ண மடத்தில் நடைபெறும் இராம கிருஷ்ணரின் பிறந்த நாள் விழாவின் ஓர் அங்கமாக அன்ன தானம் நடைபெறும். பக்தர்கள் பலர் தாங்கள் நன்கொடைகள் வழங்கியதோடல்லாமல் நண்பர்களிடமிருந்தும் பொது மக்களிட மிருந்தும் அன்னதானத்திற்காக நிதி திரட்டி உதவினார்கள். அய்யா அவர்களும் இத்திருப்பணியில் தம்மால் இயன்ற தொண்டினை ஆற்றினார்கள். கல்லூரி விடுதியில் தங்கியிருந்த சக மாணவர்களிடமிருந்து எட்டணா, ஒரு ரூபாய் என்ற முறை யில் நன்கொடைகள் பெற்று மடத்திற்குக் கொடுப்பார்கள். அன்னதான சமாராதனையில் பங்கெடுத்துக் கொண்டு ஆர்வத் துடன் உணவு பரிமாறியும் மகிழ்வார்கள். இவ்வாறு இளமையிலேயே பொதுத் தொண்டிலும் இறைப்பணியிலும் ஆர்வத்துடன் ஈடுபட்டு, 'விளையும் பயிர் முளையிலேயே தெரி யும்' என்ற வாக்கிற்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டாகத் திகழ்ந்தார்கள் அய்யா அவர்கள்.

கல்லூரி மாணவராக இருக்கும்பொழுதே ஆண்டுதோறும் கோடைவிடுமுறை நாட்களில் அய்யா அவர்கள் பேலூர் இராம கிருஷ்ண மடத்திற்குச் சென்று தம் குருநாதரான மத் சுவாமி சிவானந்த மகராஜ் அவர்களுக்குப் பணிவிடைகள் செய்வதில் அளவற்ற ஊக்கமும் மனநிறைவும் பெற்றார்கள். அத்துடன் பேலூர் மடத்திலிருந்த மற்றத் துறவிகளுடனும் நெருங்கிப் பழகும் வாய்ப்பினையும் அய்யா அவர்கள் பெற்றார்கள். பேலூர் மடம், இராம கிருஷ்ண மிஷனின் தலைமையகம். அங்குப் பல துறவிகள் தவ வாழ்க்கையிலும் சேவையிலும் ஈடுபட்டிருந்தார்கள். நன்கு கல்வி கற்ற பிரம்மச்சாரிகள் பலர் மடத்தில் இருந்தனர். அவர் களில் பெரும்பான்மையோர் கல்கத்தா சர்வகலாசாலையில் படித்துப் பட்டம் பெற்றவர்கள். அந்த இளம் துறவிகள் ஜெபத் திலும் தியானத்திலும் ஈடுபடுவதுடன் ஏழை மக்களுக்கும், துன்பப்படுவோர்களுக்கும் சமுதாயத்தின் தாழ்ந்த நிலையில் உள்ளவர்களுக்கும் சேவை செய்ய வேண்டுமென்று புகட்டப் பட்டு அதற்கான பயிற்சியும் கொடுக்கப்பட்டது. 'மக்கள் தொண்டே மகேசன் தொண்டு' என்னும் அற்புதக் கருத்து வலியுறுத்தப்பட்டது. இயற்கையின் சீற்றங்களான வெள்ளம், புயல், பஞ்சம் போன்றவற்றால் மக்கள் துயர்படும் சமயங்களில்

எல்லாம், மடத்தைச் சார்ந்த துறவிகள் அவ்விடங்களுக்குச் சென்று துயர்துடைப்புப் பணிகளில் ஈடுபட்டனர். அத்துடன் நோய் வாய்ப்பட்டவர்கள் தங்கிச் சிகிச்சை பெறும் பெரிய மருத்துவமனைகளும், இளைஞர்கள் நல்ல தரமான கல்வி பெறுவதற்கென பல்வேறு நிலைகளிலான கல்வி நிறுவனங்களும், மாணவர்கள் தங்கி, குருகுல முறையில் பயிற்சி பெறுவதற்கான மாணவர் இல்லங்களும் தொடங்கப் பெற்றன. இவற்றுடன் கிராம முன்னேற்றத்திற்கான சேவைப் பணிகளும் செய்யப்பட்டன. பாரத நாட்டுப் பாரமார்த்திகக் கருத்துக்களைப் புகட்டுவதற்காக உலகின் பல்வேறு பகுதிகளுக்கும் சாதுக்கள் அனுப்பப்பட்டனர்.

ஸ்ரீ ராம கிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர் வாழ்ந்து போதித்த சமய ஒருமைப்பாட்டைப் போதிப்பது இராமகிருஷ்ண இயக்கத்தின் சிறப்புப் பணிகளுள் ஒன்றாகும். ஆகவே பல நாடுகளையும், பல சமயங்களையும் சேர்ந்தவர்கள் அதாவது இந்துக்கள், கிறித்தவர்கள், முகமதியர்கள், பார்சிக்கள் போன்றோர் மடத்தில் தங்கி ஆன்மீகச் சாதனைகளில் ஈடுபட்டார்கள். அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு இந்த சத்சங்கம் கிடைத்தது, தானும் சேவையில் ஈடுபடவேண்டும் என்ற எண்ணத்தையும் ஆர்வத்தையும் ஏற்படுத்தியது.

சட்டக் கல்லூரியில் தம் படிப்பு முடிந்த பிறகு, ஏதாவது சேவையில் ஈடுபட வேண்டும் என்ற தீவிரமான எண்ணம் அய்யா அவர்களுக்குத் தோன்றிற்று. அந்தக் காலத்தில் நாட்டில் தரமான கல்விநிலையங்கள் இல்லை. ஏழைக் குழந்தைகளும், வசதி படைத்த குழந்தைகளும் எந்த வகையான வேறுபாடுமின்றி ஒன்றாகத் தங்கிக் கல்விபெறும் கல்வி நிலையம் ஒன்றை நிறுவ வேண்டும் என்று அய்யா அவர்கள் எண்ணினார்கள். அதைக் குறித்துத் தம் குருநாதரான ஸ்ரீமத் சுவாமி சிவானந்த மகராஜ் அவர்களுக்கு எழுதினார்கள். ஸ்ரீமத் சிவானந்த சுவாமிகள் கல்கத்தாவிலிருந்து 1929 ஆம் ஆண்டு நவம்பர் மாதம் 19 ஆம் தேதி கீழ்க்கண்டவாறு பதில் எழுதினார்கள் :

"அனாதை இல்லம் தொடங்குவது சிறப்பான செயல் என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை. ஆனால் அதற்குப் பண வசதியும் இட வசதியும், இடையறாத உழைப்பும் தேவை. இப்பணியைத் தொடங்குமுன் இப்பணிக்கு உன் முழு ஆற்றலையும் செலுத்திச் செயல்பட உன்னால் முடியுமா? இப்பணியில் உனக்கு உதவி செய்ய உன் நண்பர்கள் முன் வருவார்களா? இவைகளைக் குறித்து தீவிரமாகச் சிந்திக்க வேண்டும். இப்பணியில் சுயநலமில் லாமல் உன்னால் ஈடுபட முடியுமானால் பணம் தானாக வரும்."

இந்த நல்வாழ்த்துக்களுடன் தொடங்கப்பட்டதுதான் ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ண மிஷன் வித்யாலயம். ஐந்தே முக்கால் ரூபாய் மூலதனத்தை வைத்து ஒரு ஹரிஜன மாணவனுடன் தொடங்கப் பட்ட நிறுவனம் இப்பொழுது 3500 மாணவர்கள் பல்வேறு கலைகளைக் கற்கும் பல்வேறு கல்வி நிறுவனங்களைக் கொண்டு ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகத்தைப் போன்று வளர்ச்சி பெற்று நம் நாட்டின் புகழ்மிக்க கல்வி நிறுவனங்களுள் ஒன்றாகத் திகழ் கின்றது. இராமகிருஷ்ண மிஷன் வித்யாலயத்தில், ஓர் உறைவிட உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளி, விடுதியுடன் கூடிய ஒரு மேல் நிலைப்பள்ளி, ஒரு நடுநிலைப்பள்ளி, ஓர் ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சி நிறுவனம், ஒரு விவசாய கிராம வளர்ச்சி நிறுவனம், ஒரு கலைஅறிவியல் கல்லூரி, ஓர் உடற்பயிற்சிக் கல்லூரி, ஒரு கல்வியியல் கல்லூரி, ஒரு பாலிடெக்னிக், ஒரு தொழிற்பயிற்சி நிறுவனம் எனப் பல்வேறு கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் செயல்பட்டுச் சிறந்த முறையில் நடைபெற்று வருகின்றன. ஒவ்வொரு நிறுவனத்திற்கும் தனித் தனியே மாணவர் விடுதிகள் உள்ளன. இவைகள் குருகுல முறையில் நடைபெறுகின்றன. விடுதிகளில் காலை மாலைப் பிரார்த்தனை, கட்டுப்பாடான வாழ்க்கை வாழ்வதற்கான அன்றாட நடைமுறை ஆகியன நடைபெறுகின்றன.

அய்யா அவர்கள் வித்யாலய உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளி வளாகத்தில் வாழ்ந்தார்கள். ஆகவே உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளியில் படித்த ஒவ்வொரு மாணவனுடைய போக்கு, பண்பு, குடும்பச் சூழ்நிலை முதலியவற்றை நன்கு தெரிந்து வைத்திருந்தார்கள். மாணவர்களின்பால் அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு இருந்த அன்பும், பரிவும் சொற்களால் விவரிக்க முடியாதவை. அது தன்னலமற்ற தூய இனிய அன்பாகும்.

வித்யாலயம் தொடங்கப்பட்ட ஓரிரு ஆண்டுகளுக்குள், நாட்டில் காந்தியடிகளின் தலைமையில் சுதந்திரப் போராட்டம் தொடங்கிற்று. இளைஞர்கள் பலர் நாட்டு விடுதலைக்காக எதையும் தியாகம் செய்யத் துணிந்து விடுதலைப் போராட்டத் தில் ஈடுபட ஆயத்தமாக இருந்தார்கள். ஒத்துழையாமை இயக்கம், சட்டமறுப்பு இயக்கம் தொடங்கப்பட்டன. அவற்றில் தீவிரமாக ஈடுபட்டுப் பலர் சிறை சென்றனர். அய்யா அவர்களும், சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் ஈடுபட வேண்டும் என்று மனதார நினைத் தார்கள். அதைக் குறித்துத் தம் குருநாதருக்கு எழுதினார்கள். ஸ்ரீமத் சிவானந்த சுவாமிகள் கீழ்க்கண்டவாறு அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு எழுதினார்கள் :

"என் மகனே! எதற்கும் அஞ்சாதே. மனித வாழ்க்கையின் நோக்கமும் பயனும் எவை என்பதை நீ நன்கு அறிவாய். வாழ்க்கையில் நீ எங்கிருந்து எந்தப் பணியை ஏற்றாலும், எந்தச் சூழ்நிலையிலும் எதுவும் உன்னை உலகப் பந்தத்திற்கு இழுத்து குருதேவரை மறக்கும்படி செய்துவிடாது என்று உறுதியாக நம்புகிறேன். அவர் உன்னுடன் என்றும் இருந்து உனக்கு வழி காட்டுவார்."

சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் கலந்து கொண்ட அய்யா அவர்கள் நான்கு முறை சிறை வாழ்க்கை அனுபவிக்க வேண்டி யிருந்தது. அந்தக் காலத்தில் சிறை வாழ்க்கை என்பது மிகமிகக் கொடுமையானதாக இருந்தது. கடுமையான சிறை வாழ்க்கை அய்யா அவர்களின் உடல் நலத்தை மிகவும் பாதித்தது. இருப் பினும் கொண்ட கொள்கையில் உறுதியாக இருந்து எத்தகைய துன்பத்தையும் தாங்கிக் கொண்டார்கள். தேச சுதந்திரத்திற்காக எல்லையற்ற இன்னல்களையும், துன்பங்களையும், துயரங் களையும் ஏற்று எத்தகைய தியாகத்தையும் செய்ய முன் வந்தார் அய்யா அவர்கள்.

சிறை வாழ்க்கையின் போது தான் அய்யா அவர்கள் சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரின் கல்விக் கருத்துக்களைத் தொகுத்து 'Education' என்னும் பெயரில் நூல் ஒன்று எழுதினார்கள். இந்த அற்புதமான நூல் பிற்காலத்தில் பல இந்திய மொழி களில் மொழி பெயர்க்கப்பட்டு வெளியிடப்பட்டது. சுவாமி விவேகானந்தர் மேல்நாட்டுப் பணியை முடித்துக் கொண்டு

இந்தியாவிற்குத் திரும்பிய பொழுது உணர்ச்சிமிக்க சொற் பொழிவுகள் சிலவற்றை ஆற்றினார்கள். உறங்கிக் கொண்டிருந்த இந்திய மக்க ளைத் தட்டியெழுப்பி அவை உணர்ச்சியூட்டின. அந்தச் சொற் பொழிவுகளைத் தமிழில் மொழி பெயர்த்ததும் அய்யா அவர்கள் திருச்சிச் சிறையில் இருந்த பொழுதுதான். விவேகானந்த சுவாமிகளின் 'இந்திய பிரசங்கங்கள்' என்ற அந்த நூல் மிகவும் புகழ்பெற்ற நூலாகும். இன்றைய இளைஞர்களின் நல்வாழ்க்கைக்கு வழிகாட்டும் அற்புத நூலாக அது திகழ்கின்றது. தமக்கிருந்த பல்வேறு அலுவல்களுக்கு இடையிலும் 'Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda' என்ற அற்புதமான ஆங்கில நூலையும், எழுதி வெளியிட்டார்கள். தம் இறுதி நாட்களில் அவர் எழுதிய 'Make Me a Man' என்ற ஆங்கில நூலில் வீரவாழ்க்கைக்கும், தியாக வாழ்க்கைக்கும், உயர்ந்த சிந்தனைக் குமான அற்புதக் கருத்துக்கள் அடங்கியுள்ளன.

இராமகிருஷ்ணரிடம் அய்யா அவர்கட்கு இருந்த பக்தியும் நம்பிக்கையும் ஈடுபாடும் சொற்களால் விவரிக்க இயலாதவையாகும். மானிட வாழ்க்கையில் சிரமங்கள், பிரச்சினைகள் வருவது இயல்பு. பிரச்சினைகள் வரும் பொழுது குரு தேவரே முன்நின்று அவற்றைத் தீர்த்து வைப்பதாக அவர்கள் ஆழ்ந்து நம்பினார்கள். ஏதேனும் பிரச்சினை வருமானால் 'ஸ்ரீராம கிருஷ்ண', ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ண' என்று ஏழு, எட்டு முறைகள் காகிதத்தில் எழுதுவார்கள். சில நொடிகள் அமைதியாக இருந்து மனதில் அப்பொழுது என்ன தோன்றுகின்றதோ அவ்வாறு செயல்படத் தொடங்குவார். பிரச்சினையை ஸ்ரீராமகிருரிடம் சமர்ப்பித்து விட்டதாகவும், அதைத் தீர்க்க வேண்டிய பொறுப்பு அவரைச் சேர்ந்தது என்றும் மனதார நினைத்தார்கள். வாழ்க்கை முழுவதும் குருதேவரைச் சரணடைந்து சேவையில் ஈடுபட்டார் கள். அதில் நிறைவும் மகிழ்ச்சியும் கண்டார்கள். நிறை வாழ்க்கை வாழ்ந்த நிறை மனிதர் அய்யா அவர்கள். அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கை இளைஞர்கட்கு ஓர் எடுத்துக் காட்டு.

நிறைமொழி மாந்தர் பெருமை நிலத்து
மறைமொழி காட்டி விடும்.

- திருக்குறள்

ஆன்மீக மேம்பாட்டிற்கு அய்யா அவர்களின் திட்டங்கள்

தவத்திரு சாந்தலிங்க இராமசாமி அடிகள்

தமிழ் பழமையான மொழி. இனிய பாடல்களைக் கொண்டது. மன நெகிழ்வுக்குரிய இசையுடன் கூடியது. 'கற்க கசடற' என்றார் வள்ளுவர். கல்விப்பணியில் பல்வேறு இனங்கள் ஈடு பட்டுள்ளன. தத்தம் நிலைக்கு ஏற்ப இளைய உள்ளங்களில் கல்வியைப் போதிக்கின்றனர்.

நமது இலக்கியங்கள் வழி மனிதப் பண்பை வளமாக்கு வதற்கு கல்வி துணைபுரிகிறது. அறநெறியை உணர்ந்து வாழக் கற்றல் வேண்டும். கடவுள் நெறியில் வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்வது தான் கல்வியின் பயன் என்று வலியுறுத்துகின்றன. கற்போர்க்கு வழிகாட்டும் திருவள்ளுவர் அகர முதல் எழுத் தெல்லாம் என 'அ', என்ற எழுத்திலிருந்து எல்லா எழுத்துக்களும் தோன்றுகின்றன எனக் கூறினார். அதுபோல நம்மால் காணப் படும் இவ்வுலக இயக்கத்திற்குக் காரணம் பேராற்றல் மிக்க இறைவனருள் என்பதை

'அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு' என்று கூறியுள்ளார்.

கல்வி கண் போன்றது. நமது கண்ணால் நம்முன் இருக்கும் பொருளை உணர்ந்து எது ஏற்புடையது, எது ஏற்கத்தகாதது என்பதை உணரச் செய்கிறது. மனித உடம்பு பெற்று வாழ்கின்ற நமது உயிர் நலம் பெறுவதற்கும் இன்புற்று வாழ்வதற்கும் உதவுவது கல்வி.

கல்வியுடையவர்கள் தமக்கு இன்பம் தருகின்ற ஒன்று பிறர்க்கும் இன்பம் தருவதாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று கருது கிறவர்களாக இருக்க வேண்டும். இத்தகைய கல்வியை எப்போ தும் கற்க வேண்டும். அவ்வாறு கற்பதனால் எல்லா உயிரும் நம்முடையது என்று உணர்வு வரும் அனைவரும் நம்மவர்

என்று எண்ணும் சிந்தனை வளரும். உலகத்தில் உள்ள நாடுகள் அனைத்தும் நமக்கு உரிமையுடையது என்ற நினைப்பு உண்டா கும். ஆதலின்

'யான் பெற்ற இன்பம் பெறுக இவ்வையகம்' என்ற விரிந்த உள்ளம் உடையவர்களாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்பதை

'யாதானும் நாடாமால் ஊராமால் என்னொருவன்
சாந்துணையும் கல்லாத வாறு'
என்று கூறுகிறது திருக்குறள்.

இத்தகைய கல்வியைத் தாய்மொழி மூலம் சிறப்பாகப் பெற முடியும். நல்லுணர்வுகளை வளமாக்கும் தாய் மொழிக் கல்வி புறக்கணிக்கப்பட்டால் சமுதாயம் சீரழியும். பண்பாடுகள் குறையும். கலைச் செல்வங்கள் குன்றும். அயல் மொழிக்கு அடிமையாகும் சூழல் ஏற்படும்.

நமது தமிழ் தொன்மையானது. வாழ்வாங்கு வாழும் வாழ்வியலுக்குரிய இலக்கண இலக்கியங்களையுடையது. உலகம் வியக்கும் கலைச் செல்வங்களைப் பெற்றிருக்கிறது. "யாமறிந்த மொழிகளிலே தமிழ் மொழிபோல இனிதாவது எங்கும் காணோம்" என்றார் தேசியகவி பாரதியார். நமது முன்னோர்கள் நாடு செழிக்க கோயில்களையும் ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ஆண்டு களுக்கு முன்பே அமைத்துள்ளனர். அறிவுத் திறத்தால் எழுப்பிய வண்ண வடிவான கோபுரங்கள், ஆயிரங்கால் மண்டபங்கள், சிற்பங்கள், ஓவியங்கள், அணிகலன்கள், எழில்மிகு ஆடைகள் ஆகியன செந்தமிழ்க் கல்வியறிவால் வளம் பெற்றன. உலகம் வியக்கும் கலையறிவுக்குரியவர்களாகிய நாம் அயலார்கள் ஆட்சி யால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டு அயல்மொழிகட்கு அடிமையாகி நமது மொழித்திறத்தை மறந்திருக்கிறோம். தன்னுரிமை பெற்ற நாட்டில் தாய் மொழிக் கல்வி வளர்ந்தால்தான் சிந்தனைத் திறன் வளரும். புத்தம் புதிய கலைகளை வளமாக்கலாம். இந்த சிந்தனையை வளர்த்து வளமாக்கியவர் அய்யா அவர்களாவார்.

எனவே நாமும் நமது தமிழ் மொழிக் கல்வியை வளமாக்கி வருங்காலச் சமுதாயம் சிந்தனைத் தெளிவும் செயலாற்றலும்

உடையதாக வளர்வதற்கு அனைத்து நிலைகளிலும் முயல வேண்டும்.

'தொட்டனைத்தூறும் மணற்கேணி' போல ஊறிக் கொண்டிருக்கும் இத்தகு கல்வியின் பெருமையை உணர்ந்தவர் கள் அய்யா அவர்கள். அனைத்து மக்களும் எந்த வித பேதமும் இன்றி கல்வி கற்க வேண்டும் என்பதில் உள்ளார்ந்த ஆர்வம் கொண்டு முதன் முதலில் ஆன்மீக உணர்வுடன் கூடிய குருகுல முறையில் ஆரம்பித்தார். மகாத்மா காந்தி அவர்கள் வந்திருந்து கட்டிடத்திற்கு அடிக்கல் நாட்டினார். பின்னர் அவர்தம் கல்விப் பணி அருள் நெறியோடு இயைந்து ஆலமரம் போல் விரிந்து வளர்ந்து வருகிறது. முதன் முதலில் பள்ளிக் கூடம் தொடங்கி னார். 'ஒழுக்கம் விழுப்பம் தருதலால்' ஒழுக்கமும் 'அடக்கம் அமர் அருள் உய்ப்பதால்' பணிவும், 'அருட்செல்வம் செல்வத்துள் செல்வம்' என்பதால் அருளும் கடமையுணர்வும் முக்கிய பாடங் களாகின. இவையே மற்ற பள்ளிகளில் இருந்து இராமகிருஷ்ணா வித்தியாலயத்தைக் காட்டின - காட்டுகின்றன. அதிகாலை, காலை, மாலை என எல்லா நேரங்களிலும் இறை உணர்வை வளர்த்தார். இவர் தம் கல்விப்பணி கிராமத்தோடு தொடர்பு டையதாக மலர்ந்தது. எனவே கிராம வளர்ச்சிப் பள்ளி, விவசாயப் பள்ளி முதலியவற்றில் கவனம் செலுத்தினார். இன்றும் காரமடை அருகில் அவர் தொடங்கிய பணி சிறப்புற நடை பெறுவதைக் காண்கிறோம். மற்ற நாடுகளுடன் நம் தாய்த் திருநாடும் சிறந்து விளங்க தொழில் வளர்ச்சி முக்கியம் என்பதை உணர்ந்து தொழிற்கல்விப் பயிற்சிகூடங்களை நிறுவிய பெருமை அய்யா அவர்களையே சாரும். ஒரு காலத்தில் தமிழகத்தில் பேணப்பட்ட பெண் கல்வி இடைக்காலத்தில் தளர்ந்தது. பெண்களுக்கு என மனையியல், கல்வியியல் கல்லூரிகள் எனத் தொடங்கி இன்று கிராம மேம்பாட்டுக்காகச் செயல்பட்டு வரும் சிறந்த பல்கலைக் கழகமாகத் திகழ்ந்து வருகிறது என்றால் அதற்குக் காரணம் ஐயா அவர்கள் பெண்ணின மேம்பாட்டில் கொண்டிருந்த உண்மை ஆர்வமே ஆகும்.

மேற்கூறிய அனைத்து நிறுவனங்களிலும் சாதி, மத, இன, பாகுபாடற்ற கூட்டு வழிபாடு சிறப்புடையதாகும். இளம் வயது முதற்கொண்டு மனதிற்கு நிறைவும் அமைதியும் தரத்தக்க கூட்டு வழிபாடு பிற்காலத்தில் பல பிரச்னைகள் வந்த போதும் மனம் தளராப் பண்பைப் பெற்றுத் தந்தது. முன்னாள் மாணாக்கர்கள் கூறும் பொழுது அய்யா அவர்கள் இளம் மாணவர்களுக்கு ஆன்மீக அறிவு புகட்டி நற்சிந்தனையை வளர்த்தார்கள். அதுவே இத்தகு உயர்வுக்குக் காரணம் என்பர். இன்றும் தினசரி வகுப்புத் தொடங்குமுன் கூட்டு வழிபாடு, வாரத்திற்கு ஒரு முறை ஒருங் கிணைந்த கூட்டு வழிபாடு தொடர்ந்து வருவதைக் காண்கிறோம். உலக நலனுக்காக அய்யா அவர்கள் ஏற்படுத்திய சாதி, மத, இன பேதமற்ற இத்தகு வழிபாடு எல்லாக் கல்வி நிலையங்களிலும் நடந்தால் உலகில் எங்கும் அமைதி நிலவும்.

இறைப்பணியில் அவனாசிலிங்கனார்

சுந்தர சுவாமிகள்

ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ணா வித்தியாலய ஐயா என்று அனைவரும் அழைக்கும் திரு. தி.சு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் சமூக நலம், கல்வி, காந்தியம் முதலியவற்றைப் போற்றி வளர்த்ததைப் போலச் சமயத் துறையிலும் ஆர்வம் உள்ளவர்கள்.

நம்மைக் காணும் போது திருக்கோவில்கள் பற்றி விசாரிப் பார்கள். மிக்க உரிமையுடன் வித்தியாலய விழாவில் பங்கு பெறும்படி அழைப்பார்கள்.

நமது சொற்பொழிவை மிக்க ஆர்வமுடன் கேட்பார்கள். திருநாவுக்கரசர் என்ற தலைப்பில் பகவான் இராமகிருஷ்ணர் குருபூசையில் பேசச் செய்ததுடன் அடிக்கடி திருநாவுக்கரசரைப் பற்றியும் அவர் "என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே" என்ற பாடலின் கருத்து பற்றியும் பேசச் சொல்லிக் கேட்டு மகிழ்வார்கள்.

அவினாசிலிங்கேசுவரர் கோயில் அவர்கள் முன்னோர் களால் திருப்பணிகள் செய்துள்ளதால் நாம் அந்தக் கோவில் திருப்பணி செய்தபோது திருப்பணியைப் பாராட்டி நன்கொடையும் தந்தார்கள்.

நீங்கள் நன்றாகத் திடமாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று நமது சிறுவயது முதல் கூறுவார்கள்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரியிலும் சொற் பொழிவாற்ற அழைத்து உடனிருந்து கேட்டு மகிழ்வார்கள்.

வெண்பா

அவினாசி லிங்கப்பேர் ஐயா மறைந்தார்
புவிபோற்றும் செயல்யாதும் பொன்று - ரவிபோல்
ஒளியுடனே ஓங்கிடுக ஒண்முருகப் பெம்மான்
தெளியருளைச் செய்வான் சிறப்பு

இலட்சிய தீபம்

தவத்திரு. குன்றக்குடி அடிகளார்

அடையாற்று ஆலமரம் போலத் தழைத்து வளர்ந்து பல பணிகளைக் கண்ட ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள், காலத்தைவென்று விளங்கியவர்கள். ஆரவாரம் இன்றித் தமிழை வளர்த்தவர்கள். தமிழ்நாடு முழுதும் உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளிக் கல்வியைத் தமிழ்வழிக் கல்வியாகத் தந்த பெருமை, ஐயா அவர்களுக்கே உரியது. இந்தப் பணியைத் தொடர்ந்து செய்வாரைக் காணோம். இன்று மாணவர்கள் பயிலும் கல்வியில் திருக்குறள் இருப்பதற்கும் ஐயா அவர்களின் தொண்டே காரணம்.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் குறிக்கோளுடன் கூடிய வாழ்க்கையை அறிமுகப்படுத்திய பெரியவர்; அடக்கம், அமைதி, எளிமை, பரிவுடன் பழகும் பாங்குடையவர், அழகு பொலியும் சூழ்நிலையைப் போற்றும் பண்பினர். சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரைப் போலவே விவேகமும் வீரமும் கொண்டு விளங்கியவர்.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் நம்முடைய இலட்சிய தீபமாக விளங்குகிறார்கள். அவர் தம் நினைவுடன் அவர்களுடைய அடிச்சுவட்டில் பணியைத் தொடர்வோமாக!

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EDUCATIONISTS, SCIENTISTS AND PROFESSIONALS

AVINASHILINGAM - A MAN OF VISION

Malcolm S. Adiseshiah

What is vision?

The Christian scriptures warn us that without a vision, people will perish - a startling and sombre thought. What is this vision that is referred to here? It is the picturisation, the mental imagery of the future towards which we should move in terms of values, human development, national and international relations, and above all the kind of man, woman, youth and child that will emerge from this concatenation of forces. What then is the relation between this combination of factors and the life or death of a nation? A nation is the binding together of a group of people of men and women, for certain purposes, because the human being is both sovereign as an individual, as in the end. It is his thought and mind, it is his spirit and soul which determine the kind of person who exists at any point of time. He is also at the same time a social, and gregarious being, because no person can live unto himself, can be an island unto himself, he must band along with a group and collectivity, as a member of a family, a caste, class or tribe, a village, a state or a nation. The latest expression of this facet of human togetherness has led us to describe, in fact, the whole world as a global village in which each of us, individuals live. Is it true that without the various factors which underline and constitute this vision ranging from values to human relation of various kinds, this collectivity will breakdown and perish ? Empirically history shows us that this warning is validated in the break up and disappearance of individuals as in the garden of Eden or Ravana of nations as in the case of Assyria and Babylon, and of global entities like the Roman Empire. Without going into a theoretical analysis of the relation between the life and death of a human being and his collectivity, and the vision involved and on which it is based, we can see the close and inescapable life giving connection between the two.

Avinashilingam and his vision

Avinashilingam was a man of vision in the above sense. He had a vision for each of us individuals - man, woman and child;

he had a vision for youth; he had a vision for women; he had a vision for farmers; he had a vision for workers; and he had a vision for his country and its constituent states including Tamil Nadu. He was a man of many sided, multiple vision but was also one of the few who worked at translating his vision into reality. There was a common thread running through this many- sided vision and that thread was his deep love and attachment for the human person. His innate humanity flowed out in this love and attachment, and made him the intensively human and humanistic person that he was.

In this note which concentrates for the major part on one facet of his vision, his vision for youth, it is important to bear in mind that his vision for youth was a part of his total vision and comprehensive commitment to this many-sided vision, which made up his life. In a sense his vision for youth was on all fours with his total vision.

Avinashilingam and his vision for youth

This part of his vision, his vision for youth, can be looked at in terms of its basic assumptions and quality on the one hand, and also its outflow in important practical results, on the other.

Looking at Avinashilingam's vision for youth quantitatively, we find that his vision for the country's youth was deeply grounded in the values of simplicity, integrity, non-violence and love - all being the outcome of his deep belief in the supreme being, who is immanent in each youth, who guides and leads every young person, and whose call and demands must be implicitly met and obeyed. A second quantitative aspect of his vision for youth was its development - as an individual, as a member of the nation and ultimately of the nations of the world. A third facet was the consequent complete personality and personal development of every young man and woman to the point where there was the full blooming of all the faculties inherent in every one of them.

The vision and education

Avinashilingam 's comprehensive and arresting vision for youth on the above basis had an outflow, a practical expression,

and that was the education of youth to which he devoted his entire life. In accordance with his vision, he saw the purpose of the education of youth being grounded in the formation of the values listed earlier. For him, the basic purpose of education was character building. Hence the educational structures that he developed for youth were not only gaining knowledge, - it was that also in part, not only for acquiring skills for wage earning and self employment in a country where there is a youth workforce of over 100 million, that was for him also an imperative, not only for acquiring the tools of science and technology in the physical, natural, engineering, and human sciences, it was that also, but it was to start from a grounding in values which arose from his deep attachment to the belief in one who is in all of us but who is also above all of us. His educational institutions were informed by this religious belief, of which the teachings and precepts of Sri Ramakrishna was for him the quintessential essence. Hence his vision for youth was to make available education to every young person which would help produce young men and women of character. He accepted and conformed to the educational structures of his times, - he himself was one of the architects of that structure as a legislator in the state and the Federal centre, and as minister - but he saw to it that the youth had every opportunity to be grounded in the values for which education was essentially an instrument. This ran from his programme of adult and non formal education right upto higher education at the post graduate and research levels.

Education and his vision for workers

Avinashilingam's vision for youth extended to the entire life time of every young person. It was this, for the reason that he was concerned about the future employment and even more employability perspective of the youth. He saw no cut and dried distinction between what we have come to call today liberal education and, vocational education. For him all education was both **liberal** in stimulating the mind through the study of the arts and mastering the sciences, and simultaneously **vocational**, namely, learning the skills demanded by the market from which there would be for the young person avenues of either wage employment or self employment. For the boys, he therefore introduced the foundry skills, against the backdrop of

Coimbatore being the focus of the country's foundry industry. In order to help develop both inventive as well as learning skills, his youthful learners were taught constantly, to look at ways and means of improving the foundry machine, its heating system, its possibilities of conservation of energy, while at the same time learning how to work it. For the girls, he introduced spinning and weaving, again involving while learning to work the charkha or the loom to improve them so that they would call for less routine labour and provide qualitatively improved production. This was also the double approach to all the other training activities like tailoring, food preparation, etc. in which they were involved. Simultaneously the grounding involved continuing to ensure for the foundry youth or the weaving girl, their development as persons of character.

His vision for women

The place of girls and women in the country, particularly in this state, is influenced by certain unique, social and cultural forces, and so we have the peculiar system of separate educational institutions for girls. Avinashilingam's vision for girls accepted this fact, though he was also preparing for the day when all learning will be common for both men and women. (This stood out when he readily agreed to his close confidante and collaborator, Rajammal Devadas heading a commission which examined and recommended against separate colleges for women, at a time when the chief minister of those days denounced Rajammal Devadas's report and recommendation as laying the foundation for the ruin of Tamil Society). In accepting for now the present system, he also accepted as the women's major specialisation in society, Home Science and Foods and Nutrition. In fact, he used this as the key stone for the outstanding women's educational institution which was developed with the assistance of that usual and indefatigable collaborator of his, Rajammal Devadas. The result was that what was started as the Avinashilingam College of Home Science, which later developed into the autonomous College of Home Science and Education for Women and more recently as the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University) which is continually contributing to the improved all round education and development of girls, and which through its

research is piloting the way for inexpensive nutritious food, particularly, for the women and children in the one half of the families of the state living in poverty. It is also the lead agent in the state putting into practice through the state's mass feeding programmes - the Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR's noon meal programme for children in elementary schools, for the old age pensioners, and for the pre-school child and the pregnant mother, affordable nutritious food.

The vision for adult education

Avinashilingam's vision on adult education had some special and unique features. Adult education for him was not conceived as a separate spare time educational activity by the educated, nor as a means of merely acquiring knowledge of the 3Rs. - reading, writing and arithmetic. It comprised both elements, but it was built into the entire learning process of learning from the high school right on to the university post graduate and research levels. There was built into formal educational programme a deep concern for those who had been deprived of learning and were the non school going children (wrongly called the dropouts, when they were really the push outs from society). Hence for Avinashilingam, adult - education became the responsibility of every person receiving education at the high school, college or university level, to take his/her share in the responsibility for providing education and learning opportunities - either non-formal, instruction or adult learning, to those who had been deprived of education. For this group, the content of education became important and was radically different from that available in the formal school and college. The learning in non-formal programmes and adult education programmes had to be immediately grounded in the social and economic realities of the environment, in which the young person or adult was being brought up. And so part of this non-formal adult education vision involved study or analysis of the socio-economic conditions of the village, of the state and of the country, on which there were a number of study conferences and workshops to expose those involved in teaching and instructing those educationally deprived persons, the skills of learning (the 3Rs.) built into the backdrop of the kind of social and economic environment in which they had to live and work.

The vision for holistic system of living and learning

Thus for Avinashilingam, as for his master and mentor, Gandhiji, life was grounded in the values of truth and non-violence, of simplicity and integrity. These qualities were not only part of the individual's heritage which had to be guarded and treasured, but also had to be transmitted to the future generations. That involved all of learning - the school and out of school, in childhood and youthful stages of life, in family and the sports field, in play and work, in learning what to learn and how to learn at all stages of learning from infancy to adolescence, adulthood and old age. In fact his vision of human life was one of continuous searching and seeking and learning for a purpose. Those of us who were privileged to know him and enjoy the honor of his friendship can recall having the daily breakfast with him under the banyan tree, where his vision for life and learning shone forth in its full effulgence; binding us to all the weaknesses and foibles of our individual lives and social obstacles and inequities; and challenging us to join him in moving forward to realise his vision into the kind of reality which he was forging step by step, with particular reference to youth whom he surrounded himself with; with whom he spent all his life and from whom he derived the necessary sustenance and inspiration and in return gave them the wherewithal to build step by step, brick by brick their lives, as a meaningful being and holistic becoming; starting with the basic values and expressing them in a life of learning and action. It is this vision of the youth, which is still alive and throbbing, which he has left for us as a precious heritage which we, each of us, have to nourish and cherish. Then there will be the vision which keeps alive the individual, the community and the nation. There will be with Avinashilingam no perishing but life, learning, growing and glowing. That is what his vision means to me!

A TRIBUTE TO SRI AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO NUTRITION

C. Gopalan

I welcome this opportunity to pay my tribute and homage to Sri Avinashilingam - freedom fighter, philanthropist, pioneer-educationist, administrator, parliamentarian and above all, a remarkable human being. Sri Avinashilingam's life was a shining example of selfless service and sacrifice, devotion to duty, enlightened leadership and moral integrity. In these troubled times when traditional values are being challenged, probity and rectitude in public life are at a discount, **self** commands precedence over **service**, and divisive fanaticism masquerades as "religion", society needs the examples set by great and good men like Sri Avinashilingam to stem its moral decline.

The sponsors of this volume have assigned to me the specific task of writing on Sri Avinashilingam's contribution to Nutrition. In the ultimate analysis, durable upliftment of the nutritional status of any population can be brought about, not through simplistic "solutions" which address one or other symptom of undernutrition but only as part of its all-round socio-economic improvement.

Female literacy/education :

It is now abundantly clear from all available data that, of all the social factors that have a bearing on health/nutrition, the most important is the level of female literacy/education, in the community. It is the educated and motivated women, that hold the key to the socio-economic development of the family and community; and nutritional well-being is but a part of this development. It is a tribute to Sri Avinashilingam's foresight that the major thrust of his life's endeavour was directed towards promotion of the status of women and towards equipping them with knowledge and competence to play the role for which they are naturally endowed.

In order to bring about all-round social development, female education, needs to be promoted at different levels of the

society - ranging from the university to the village community; and strategies for this purpose appropriate to each level have to be identified and pursued. It is, again, a tribute to Sri Avinashilingam's wisdom, that he was fully cognisant of this need. His efforts at promotion of female education did, in fact, encompass a wide spectrum of society.

For female education to be effectively reflected in nutritional upliftment of the community, it is important : a) to generate a critical mass of young women who would act as spearheads and **resource persons**, providing the leadership and technical direction for a community movement for nutritional improvement (university level); b) to generate at intermediate levels (school level), cadres of workers such as, anganwadi workers who could assist in the actual implementation of developmental/nutritional programmes; and c) to organise a programme of non-formal broad-based "education-for-better living" beamed to young women and adolescent girls of the village community, which would help them to utilise maximally the resources available for their nutritional betterment and overall advancement. Sri Avinashilingam's approach to female education was generally based on such a comprehensive concept.

Vocational training :

Sri Avinashilingam had also recognised that literacy and formal education alone will not help women of the poorest sections of our society to find full expression to their innate potential. In order that they achieve their rightful status in society, and in order that they and their families enjoy adequate nutritional status, they will also need to be equipped with income-generating vocational skills. In recognition of this need, Sri Avinashilingam had initiated several imaginative programmes for imparting income-generating vocational skills to poor women and men. These programmes have been an important part of the extension activities of the Sri Avinashilingam Trust.

Thus what Sri Avinashilingam was promoting among poor communities, was a programme which sought to integrate formal education with meaningful vocational training. It is only through such an imaginative strategy that we can hope to reduce

the current high school drop-out rates in our countryside. Today, millions of young adolescent girls of poor communities in our country get **trapped** into marriage when they are barely 12 or 13 of years of age, at a time when they are wholly unprepared for the challenging tasks of motherhood. Adolescent girls are the **mothers-to-be**, who will usher in the next generation. The **quality** of that generation, will depend upon their state of health, nutrition and competence. In any meaningful long-range programme for the promotion of the **quality** of our human resources, it is this crucial segment (the adolescent girls) which is now largely neglected - that needs central attention. Programmes of nutrition, child health and family planning can make headway only when this crucial group is motivated and adequately educated. Sri Avinashilingam's comprehensive concept of female education took adequate note of this need.

The University of Home Science :

However, the part of Sri Avinashilingam's contribution to female education in general and to nutritional upliftment in particular which has earned national and international attention and acclaim is the establishment and development in Coimbatore of the College of Home Science - which has now blossomed into a University. Even Sri Avinashilingam, with all his zeal and administrative skill could not have accomplished this task but for the dedicated and enlightened support he received from Dr. Rajammal Devadas. If Sri Avinashilingam was the **heart** which provided the inspiration, Dr. Rajammal Devadas was the **head** which helped to convert the dream into a reality. It is to the good fortune of the country and the Home Science movement that these two outstanding leaders chose to blend their talents for the pursuit of a common noble cause.

To be sure, the programmes of Sri Avinashilingam College of Home Science are not confined to Nutrition alone, but Nutrition does enjoy a special focus in its overall agenda. The College does not stop with academic training of students in Nutrition for a University degree; it provides in many instances technical direction and support for the formulation and implementation of nutrition-related developmental programmes. For example, the College in general and

Dr.Rajammal Devadas in particular had played important roles in the implementation of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Noon Meal Programme and the Integrated Child Development Service Programme in Tamil Nadu. While the College had striven to maintain good academic scientific standards in Nutrition Training, its emphasis, rightly, has been on the practical rather than on the purely theoretical aspects. Also, the topics chosen for all the theses and dissertations assigned to the students have largely related to problems of immediate relevance and practical importance to poor communities. **Science for service** has apparently been the guiding motto.

The Avinashilingam College of Home Science, under the joint leadership of Sri Avinashilingam and Dr. Rajammal Devadas provided the **technical support** to the massive Noon Meal Programme in Tamil Nadu. The involvement of the Institute ensured that the diets used in this massive feeding programme were of good nutritive value, wholesome, and based on locally available foods - not foods donated by foreign agencies.

The Institute's contribution towards the evaluation of school-meal programmes in Tamil Nadu has also been a notable one. Also, at a time when practically every one had jumped on the **massive-dose of synthetic vitamin A** bandwagon as the answer to the problem of vitamin A deficiency, Dr.Rajammal Devadas and her group strove hard to promote the use of inexpensive indigenous natural food resources - green leafy vegetables for combating the problem. This was only to be expected of an Institute functioning under the inspiration of a patriot of the stature of Sri Avinashilingam .

It is in fitting recognition of the contribution of Dr.Rajammal Devadas (and her Institute) to the movement for the betterment of nutritional status of poor communities, that she was unanimously chosen to head the Nutrition Society of India as its President for four eventful years. Dr.Rajammal's election to this office of distinction is also a recognition of the fact that the Home Science colleges in the country have as important a role to play in the nutritional upliftment of poor communities as the prestigious national institutes like the National Institute of

Nutrition (undoubtedly the most outstanding Nutrition Research Centre in the country) and the Central Food Technological Research Institute. If Home Science Colleges in general and the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science in particular have thus carved out for themselves this important place in the country's **Nutrition Map**, it is largely because of the wisdom and vision of enlightened leaders in the field of Home Science, of whom Dr.Rajammal Devadas is the most outstanding.

Sri Avinashilingam's powerful support and guidance, and Dr.Rajammal Devadas's active involvement in the direction of the Home Science College, had not only helped to ensure that Nutrition found its rightful focus in the overall agenda of the Home Science College; but had also, perhaps helped to rescue the Home Science movement in the country itself from oblivion and irrelevance. The concept of Home Science had its origin in U.S.A. If the programmes of the Home Science Colleges had been patterned and pursued entirely on the American model, these colleges might not have served the useful practical purpose in the Indian context which they are now richly serving. They would have perhaps been no more than dignified **finishing schools**. It was the vision of leaders like Sri Avinashilingam (imbued with traditions and value systems imbibed from Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Mahatma Gandhi), and Dr.Rajammal Devadas, that helped to ensure that the curriculum of training in Home Science reflected the ethos and needs of India.

The educational institutions which Sri Avinashilingam founded and nurtured have richly contributed to the upgradation of the **quality** of our Human Resources. That all this work was done without much fanfare and in an unobtrusive manner, speaks of the character and stature of Sri Avinashilingam. The rich legacy that he has left behind needs to be treasured and fostered; the several **candles** that he had lit must continue to glow, spread light and dispel the darkness around us.

WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

M.S.Swaminathan

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam converted Gandhian ideals of human and rural development into reality. He was convinced that the way to a **Sarvodaya** society is the **anthyodaya** approach to development. In a world which today speaks about sustainable development, Ayya showed that only sustainable life styles can lead to sustainable and equitable development. He knew that without institutional tools, individuals cannot accomplish much. This led him to establish numerous institutions including the world famous Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women.

Mr.Robert McNamara, when he was President of the World Bank, was asked in 1978 what single intervention he would make to advance development if he were restricted to only one action worldwide. His response was, "Dollar for dollar, the best intervention would be to put every girl in the world into school. This would immediately change population, family incomes, energy consumption, health, hygiene - everything". Mahatma Gandhi had expressed a similar view over 60 years ago and the human development indicators in Kerala serve as evidence of the wisdom of this approach. Ayya converted this concept into concrete achievements.

Yet we find not only widespread illiteracy among women in our country, but also inexcusable discrimination of various kinds, reflected by adverse sex ratios (the 1991 census revealed that there are only 92.9 females for every 100 males, down from 93.4 in the 1981 census and 93.00 in the 1971 census). Ms.Sharon Capeling - Alakijaa, Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, said recently, "Millions of women have died because they are women. In most societies, women are the bearers of tradition, and if decisions are made between boy children and girl children, women are involved in making decisions". This is why Ayya laid great stress on developing a Home Science institution, which has become an agent of change in our society and is helping to foster love and

respect for all members of human kind regardless of sex, religion, race or language.

Ayya wanted a national commission for women and I am glad this has at last come into existence. The Committee on the Status of Women in its report submitted in 1976 recommended the establishment of an autonomous commission with a mandate "to review, evaluate and recommend measures and priorities to ensure equality between men and women and full integration of women in all sections of national life". The National Commission for Women Act enacted by Parliament in 1990 has assigned several important tasks to this Commission, including a careful study of all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women in our Constitution.

There is no dearth of suggestions or ideas on what needs to be done. Both "Shramshakti", the report of the National Commission of Self-employed Women and Women in the informal sector and the National Perspective Plan for Women (1988 - 2000) prepared by a core group set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India have given valuable suggestions. At the international level UNICEF has given high priority to the education of girls and women in its **Girl child** programme for 1992. There is widespread agreement on the high multiplier effect of female education on critical issues such as population stabilisation and quality of life improvement. As mentioned earlier, the experience of Kerala in social development is a striking example of the critical importance of female literacy and the economic status of women with reference to human development indicators.

We can follow the footsteps of Ayya by working for goals such as those listed below :

1. Achieve literacy and numeracy for every girl and boy by the year 2000;
2. Document positive developmental results from the education of girls and spread awareness about them;
3. Develop **techniracy** courses (i.e. imparting new technical skills through learning by doing) which can help to enhance economic opportunities for

women, particularly with reference to value-added jobs. Training programmes for rural women often tend to be in areas such as sewing, cooking and crafts and fail to take into account women's roles as farmers and managers of natural resources; and

4. Compile an inventory of opportunities opened up by new technologies for women belonging to families with land and those without land or without productive assets. The total number of landless households was 15 million in 1961, rising to 26 million in 1981, and is projected to reach 44 million by the year 2000. For off-farm employment to absorb all those who are unemployed and underemployed, non-agricultural sectors would have to grow at more than 12 percent a year, which is over twice the rate we have witnessed so far. Thus, there is a fast - growing pool of rural women and men without land or adequately remunerative work and there is need to address separately their special technological and training needs.

We must scan the scientific work in progress in our country and elsewhere with regard to technologies available for women and particularly for those seeking wage employment. It would be useful if agricultural scientists could indicate whether the technologies developed by them for reducing drudgery and increasing the energy input-output efficiency ratio could lead to a diversification of labour use and income or only to the displacement of women wage labourers from their traditional occupations. Since women will benefit greatly if there is flexibility in the timing, duration and place of work, there is particular need for examining what efforts, if any, have been made by scientific institutions to introduce flexibility in time and place in jobs for women.

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra established by Ayya shows how to bridge the growing gap between know how and do how. His contributions to agricultural research and education have been many and varied. He helped the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to achieve greater relevance and excellence in its research, training and lab to land programmes. He urged us not

to relax and rejoice over past accomplishments, so long as a single child, woman or man goes to bed hungry in our country. His message to all of us is clear - he wanted us to learn and work until death, based on Gurudev Tagore's poem

A candle which is not lit
cannot light others

A teacher who is also not learning,
cannot teach others

Like Gandhiji, Ayya's life was his message. Working for an India where hunger becomes a problem of the past is the best tribute we can pay to his memory.

Youth must be conscious of the problems of the country. The future is theirs. The country will be as great as the youth make it.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AVINASHILINGAM - A PATRIOT WITHOUT PARALLEL

S. Mohan

Way back in 1945 how good was my fortune that I met Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, the first Education Minister of the then Madras Province. Since that meeting he cast his magnetic spell over me. I was greatly attracted to him on account of his simplicity, straight forwardness and sincerity. He was a true Gandhian with lofty ideals. He was a staunch believer in helping the poor and the helpless. he was a man imbued with religious spirit. He was a man of erudition and compassion.,

He was popularly known as **Ayya**. For over 50 years, he was in public life, ever since he left the college. What is remarkable is that his image, throughout his public life, had remained pure as the icicles of snow. It is a matter of pride and a worthy example to be emulated. This is because he received blessings of Mahapurush Swami Sivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. This blessing as Ayya himself would call as **Sacred Touch** sustained him in all services for the people. Selfless service was in his blood. He dedicated himself in no small measure to the cause of emancipation of the lowly and the downtrodden and the promotion of women's education,the causes dear to the Father of the Nation.

When the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi roused his heart, he could hardly contain himself. He strongly exhorted: "Duty, honour, courtesy: these three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, and what you will be. They are your rallying points to build courage when courage seems to fail, to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn".

It was in 1934, he came in close contact with Gandhiji. While referring to that, he says "My contact with Gandhiji during the Harijan tour was the beginning of a long affectionate and intimate relationship with one of the greatest men of the century, which had a large share in giving direction to my life. From that time onwards, I had had occasions to meet him many times in

Delhi and Wardha. Every time, the visit was inspiring and elevating". During those meetings, he came to understand what Gandhiji thought of politics and religion. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "there never can be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any conflict, there is something wrong with one's religion, namely, one's morale. True religion means good thought and good conduct. True patriotism also means good thought and good conduct. To set up a comparison between the two synonymous things is wrong". These lofty principles had been the guiding stars of Sri T.S. Avinashilingam.

When Mahatma Gandhi gave the final call **Do or die**, he said, "Here is a mantra, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it". The mantra is, " **Do or die.** We shall either free India or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congress man and woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted".

Yes, Ayya was not a coward or faint-hearted. He jumped into the freedom struggle and he was arrested and sent to jail. Not withstanding, his spirit remained ever glowing. In jail he enriched his knowledge by reading Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, Thirukkural and Kamba Ramayanam. Thanks to the internship, he wrote several books of eternal value, a book on Indian Education in Tamil and Thirukkethara Yathirai about his visit to Himalayan Shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath and translated Swami Vivekananda's Lectures from Colombo to Almora.

In all, Ayya courted jail four times but his spirit never wrinkled. Each time, he went to jail, he returned gathering more knowledge and wisdom by utilising his well-earned leisure. As a true patriot he gave up everything for the cause of the mother land: a rich life, a blissful family, a lucrative practice at the bar. Had he desired, he could have lived a luxurious life caring for himself alone. But he had imbibed the spirit of Swami Vivekananda's saying : "They alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive". He always thought of his fellow countrymen, always impelled by a burning desire to sacrifice anything at the altar of freedom. His life's motto was: "After what I owe to God, nothing should be more dear or more sacred than the love and the respect I owe to my country". How great was this thinking !

According to Ayya, the impact of the freedom movement, was many sided. "First it gave us, the individuals and the nation, something to live for, work for and strive for. It has been truly said, "The joy is in the striving and in the effort, more than in the achievement". The second great effect of the freedom struggle was, it made a nation which was enslaved, afraid and which had lacked national confidence for many centuries, free from fear and gave people a new sense of confidence and courage. It freed us from the fear of suffering and death. Thousands of boys, girls, men and women did not ask anything for themselves. Inspired by a cause, it was an unselfish struggle, namely, attainment of Freedom for the great Mother and for the future generations yet to come. This gave the nation a new identity, unity of purpose, a new confidence, and tremendous strength both individually and as a nation. Greater than all these, insistence on truth and love as the method of the freedom struggle, spiritualised politics and public life, as nothing else had done in the past. The whole country rose to a higher level of ethical living and selfless service".

As Education Minister of the composite Madras State, Ayya left an indelible impression. If one man has revolutionised the course of education in South India, the credit goes only to Sri Avinashilingam. He introduced basic education and reorganised secondary education; library movement had its birth at his hands. His admiration to Thirukkural was so immense that

he introduced it by way of greater study in the high school. Yet another first to his credit was delivering the Convocation Address in Tamil which was unheard of in those days. One of his great achievements during this period was founding of the Tamil Academy in 1946 and the publication of Tamil Encyclopaedia on the lines of the Encyclopaedia Britannica and also the publication of the Children's Encyclopaedia in Tamil. He was instrumental in getting the complete works of Mahatma Gandhi translated into Tamil in 17 volumes.

Ayya will remain ever-green in our hearts for his great and valiant fight in the freedom struggle, his great service in the field of education and the upliftment of rural masses. What better tribute can I pay him than in the words of Owen Meredith?

"That man is great, and he alone,
Who serves a greatness not his own,
For neither praise nor self :
Content to know and be unknown :
Whole in himself".

BECAUSE OF THEM THE WORLD SURVIVES

V.C. Kulandai Swamy

Some 2000 years ago a very strange doubt arose in the mind of a Pandian king who, as was the case with many kings of that age in Tamilagam, was also a poet. He raised within himself the question :

"How does this world survive ?"

He must have brooded over the weaknesses of man; the jealousies, the conflicts, the quarrels among groups and individuals; the wars among kings and nations and must have wondered, how in spite of all these fatal flaws, humanity survives and progresses. Among the living beings man alone asks questions and he has no one else outside his own species to answer his questions. He has to find answers and human progress is a record of the questions he has asked and the answers he has found.

The Pandian king has recorded what he thought was responsible for the survival and progress of humanity in a poem. According to him :

> There are people who will not keep to themselves even if they get Ambrosia that bestows immortality. They know no hatred and are free from indolence. They fear what is to be feared and avoided. They will sacrifice even their life if it be for fame; but even if the whole world is offered as a gift they will not accept if there be any blemish. They are free from temptation. Such is their greatness. They are the people who live, not for themselves, but for others; it is because of them the world survives.

Thiru Avinashilingam Ayya whom I shall hereafter refer to as Ayya was one such great soul who exerted through his own living and working an elevating as well as energizing influence that radiated and left an impact on all.

When I was the Vice Chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University, I visited a college in 1978, where the students were on strike for reasons which may not be elaborated here. They had put up a board with the following questions:

> Political Leaders
> Administrators and
> Teachers !
>
> Please consult your conscience and answer :
> **Are you entitled to advise us** ?

As a teacher, I have answered many questions raised by the students; but to this one, I had no answer **then**, and have no answer **now**.

How does one earn the right to advise others on matters of conduct ? One may have knowledge and thereby be qualified to teach ; one may have position of power and therefore may exercise authority ; one may have wealth and can patronise others. But one needs a record of exemplary living to be entitled to advise others on right and wrong. The question raised by the students is another way of communicating their opinion that the leaders, administrators and teachers have forfeited the right to advise them since they themselves did not provide an example by their conduct.

The younger generation needs a model to emulate; needs tall leaders of men and women to inspire them. Paucity of resources in a country may not be a cause for worry : we can acquire them or even create them : but paucity of men and women worthy of emulation is real poverty and cannot be made up or compensated by any other means. Ayya was one of the few Titans of the Gandhian era who lived and worked with us and inspired us by every word he uttered and every action he performed and every scheme he initiated. To me personally, meeting him was one of receiving inspiration; being charged with new energy; getting endowed with fresh vigour.

Ayya radiated an extraordinary measure of optimism, confidence and strength. The kind of concern that he showed for the common man and the country was so transparent, so sincere

and the irrepressible enthusiasm that he exhibited for action was so overwhelming that the impact he left on the people who came into contact with him was extraordinary. I often took leave of him as a battery recharged.

Ayya was a builder of men. He who builds leaders of men builds the nation. Valluvar makes a profound statement as is often the case with him, when he says in a couplet :

> "That land will not prosper which bears the burden of the bodies of people who have no claim to fame."

Ultimately, it is people who matter; they are the creators and the beneficiaries of their creation; though the spark may come from the gifted few, the fire may be harnessed by all and for the benefit of all. Education and training is the only staircase by which the homosapiens may climb up in the process of refinement. Ayya therefore dedicated his life, energy and efforts to set up educational institutions.

Though born in an affluent family of the traditionally rich merchant community, he adopted the life of a **Sanyasin** without adopting any of the external symbols like saffron cloth and shaven head or the bead and the beard. What he renounced was the comfort and convenience for himself and not the world as such. It is the love he had for the people and his concern for the world at large that made him liberate himself from the small enclave of a family and relatives. He participated in the freedom struggle and served prison terms in 1930, 1932, 1941 and 1942. He participated in politics; was Education Minister in the then Madras Presidency for 3 years; was elected to Lok Sabha in 1951 and to Rajya Sabha in 1957. Above all these activities stood his main mission of education.

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, which he founded in 1930 with three destitute Harijan students, which was a revolutionary step considering the orthodoxy prevailing at that time, has now grown into a mighty banyan tree at Perianaickenpalayam, consisting of a dozen institutions covering subjects like arts, sciences, physical education, technology and agriculture. The programmes range from diploma to doctorate.

The campus catering to a student strength of 4500 must have been upgraded to the level of the University long back. That such a thing has not happened during Ayya's life time itself, is a matter to be deeply regretted. Such considerations as might have weighed with the management against such a transformation have blocked an extremely desirable development, bound to take place sooner or later and have made these institutions remain as affiliated colleges circumscribed by the constraints of the affiliating University which is like containing a big fish in a small tub, inhibiting its growth and development. A possessive parent, sometimes does great harm to a child, though due to love and affection. It is my fond hope that Perianaickenpalayam will soon be the seat of the fourth University in Coimbatore district; a development long due and highly desirable.

Ayya's eyes were always set on the weak and the deprived. Irrespective of caste and class, race and religion, nation and language, the one universally deprived class is the women. They do not really enjoy equal status anywhere in the world. Ayya established a chain of institutions for the education of girls, starting from the Pre-school stage and leading upto Ph.D. His aim was to develop a centre of excellence in education and research for women with an inbuilt tradition of close association with, and service to the community forming an integral part of education. The Avinashilingam Home Science College, founded by Ayya and nurtured with extraordinary dedication and involvement by the veteran Home Science specialist Dr. Rajammal Devadas became an autonomous college in 1978 and a Deemed University in 1988 under the name of "Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women". It is again one of the biggest campuses of women's education with 4000 students. I have some knowledge of the single-minded devotion and superhuman effort displayed by Ayya at a relatively advanced age to break the many barriers that pettiness of individuals, procedures of bureaucracy and prejudices of politics normally raise against any good effort in this country and obtain for the institution the status of a deemed to be university. One must also record for the benefit of posterity the uncommon perseverance and unfailing tenacity with which the redoubtable Dr. Rajammal Devadas supported Ayya in this effort.

For Ayya, education is not an ornament or an embellishment. It is a developmental tool which people must acquire and use in their social and economic life. If that is to happen, it should form part of their life and such a situation is possible only if knowledge is available in the language of the people. The community at large cannot make use of knowledge that is not available in its own language. The scholars may use a foreign tongue, but the common man is conversant only with his mother tongue. Consequently Ayya's attention was drawn to the following issues :

i. Use of Tamil as the medium of instruction and

ii. Development of Tamil as the vehicle of modern thought.

When he was the Minister of Education, he introduced Tamil as the medium of instruction for the intermediate class at the Muncipal College, Salem and the Government Arts College, Coimbatore. It was the first ever effort to introduce Tamil as a medium of instruction in higher education. Introduction of Tamil as a medium by itself will not mean much unless that language is developed to meet the new demands that would in consequence emerge. He established the Tamil Academy in 1946 essentially for the development of Tamil.

Ayya started under the auspices of the Tamil Academy, the preparation of Tamil Encyclopaedia in 10 volumes. This was followed by the preparation of Children's Encyclopaedia in 10 volumes. These were pioneering efforts, first of its kind in Indian languages and a monumental contribution to Tamil. In this effort, he had with him another unusual man with a total commitment and divine dedication in M. Periaswamy Thooran. Great men achieve results not by what they themselves personally do, but by specifying the goals, identifying the right men and women and allowing them the autonomy and giving the support to achieve the objectives set forth.

There is a unique virtue in undertaking great tasks and associating oneself with great people. One imbibes something of the greatness of the leader you associate yourself with and also that of the task you are engaged in. Great missions elevate the

men and women who undertake them. Ayya's appeal was irresistible. Those who came under his influence became part of the mission and earned for themselves an enduring place in the long record of Ayya's expeditions.

Valluvar raises the question as to how you assess the worth of an individual. He answers it by a simple statement. According to him, we must "assess the worth of a person by what he leaves behind". One may not judge an individual by the power he wields, the authority he exercises, the reputation he enjoys or the wealth he possesses, when in position. You judge him by what he leaves behind when he vacates that position.

One may leave behind great physical assets; more important than that, one may leave behind a second and third line of leaders to continue the task; even more important than these, one may leave behind great institutions and traditions. Ayya has left behind under each category a great legacy, a great heritage and also worthy inheritors. The words of the Pandian king aptly describe the situation. The world succeeds in giving to itself giants of men and women like Ayya, who live, not for themselves, but for others. Because of them the world survives.

SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - "A NOBLE SOUL"

S.Padmavathi

Sri Avinashilingam's name has been a legend as far as I can remember, as a great patriot, freedom fighter and educationist. I came to know him well when I began to see him for his medical problems. He had led a very disciplined and regular life and his problems arose from old age rather than from any special disease.

As a patient he cooperated fully with his doctor even if it meant a tremendous effort on his part with regard to diet, exercise and changes in his life style. He visited Delhi a few times for extensive check-ups and was extremely patient in going through several difficult tests. He accepted old age with all its attendant infirmities but nevertheless made a brave effort to carry out his mission in life to the very end appearing at all public functions at the School and College and making a brave effort to say a few words for which the audience was waiting.

Treating him meant visiting him at his headquarters in Perianaickenpalayam and this provided many occasions to understand his philosophy of life and the range of his thoughts. We would discuss many aspects of life, education, particularly of women, Indian history particularly relevant to South India and other subjects quite unrelated to medicine. It was amazing to see the catholicity of his outlook and his erudition particularly in Tamil literature and the old Tamil epics. He presented me with several of his books which I enjoyed reading and which gave me an insight into the depth of his knowledge of many diverse subjects.

His concern for one and all particularly, women and children was very genuine as were his suggestions for remedying illiteracy and other ills in the short and long term.

I have attended many of the functions at both Perianaickenpalayam and at the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and seen the dedicated work of those working there, for whom he was the inspiration, first and last. He leaves a void which will be hard to fill in but I am sure the message will live on.

DR. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - AN ABLE ADMINISTRATOR

V. Karthikeyan

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the Founder-President and Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University), Coimbatore, passed away on November 21, 1991 at a very ripe age, leaving behind a host of institutions and a wonderful record of dedicated service and achievements in the fields of politics, education and social welfare. I am one of his innumerable admirers and I had known him for many decades. His demise is an irreparable loss and the void can not be easily filled.

His record as the Education Minister of Tamil Nadu was a golden chapter in the state's history and his sustained and well-considered emphasis on education in the mother tongue was acclaimed by one and all. He had a clear vision, and exhibited great drive and enthusiasm in implementing the chosen policies and programmes of the Government. He founded the institutions at Coimbatore with great expectations and it was his good fortune that those expectations were fulfilled in his own time when he himself became the Chancellor of the Deemed University. Throughout his career as a Legislator, Parliamentarian, Minister, Educationist and Head of the University, he acquitted himself an **An Able Administrator.**

What goes into **able administration**? Administration is both an art as well as a science. The rudiments of this art start even at the family level. The head of the family, be it father or mother, has to administer the affairs of the family, covering aspects including financial matters, man power management, human relations, ethical and social demands, cost and time management and coordination of activities.

The concept of administration and its contents and demands become wider and wider and more and more complicated when the unit of administration grows in size/volume/area and sophistication. Look at the administration of a village, a panchayat union, a taluk, a division, a district, a

region or zone, a state and the whole country. We can easily see the variations in the dimensions and the nature of the administration that each of these territorial units require. Similarly, it is not difficult to appreciate the differences between the administration of a one man or family owned business, a partnership firm, a private limited company, a public limited company, a giant public sector company and a multi-national corporation operating in several countries of the world. However,in spite of these undeniable and visible differences, the basic principles of administration are the same and are valid in respect of all or any one of these multiple forms of organisation.

What are these basic principles ? Any administration must have a goal and it must be well-defined, clear and precise. Vagueness here will only lead to confusion and purposeless activities. In Government, the goal may be the welfare of the people. Welfare is a very broad term and will mean many things to many sections of a huge population. Emphasis on different components of welfare may also have to undergo changes from time to time. In business and industry, the goal may be profit making and image building. In an educational institution, it may be excellent results in examinations, character building and skill development. I think Sri Avinashilingam did exactly set this goal for the Deemed University.

Once the goal is agreed upon, the administrator has to identify the resources required, secure them, test them and train them for the tasks to be performed and then allocate responsibilities. Human resources come first in administration, because it is only their competence and dedication that can produce results leading to the chosen goal. Out of all other resources the right man for the right job is an established maxim in administration. Training, orientation courses and refresher courses are a must in skill building. Next comes, adequate motivation, a scheme of rewards for goodwork and punishments for negligence and humane handling of all working personnel. Rules and regulations have to be applied strictly and impartially but with a human touch, avoiding excessive severity or vengeance.

A good administrator must be cost conscious and must use his financial resources effectively and efficiently. Many in

Government fail in this test. As funds come to them regularly from the approved budget, they tend to assume money is not a problem. It is true, of late, this complacent feeling is getting jolted due to budgetary constraints. Many of the public sector executives are borrowing funds from commercial banks at stiff rates of interest. Still, the need to economise wherever feasible can never be over-emphasized.

Good administration also involves appreciation of the value of time. It is not often realized that effective time management is vital, if the set-goal is to be achieved before the deadline. Time is perishable and it cannot be stored, stopped or regained. It simply passes, making no distinction between nations, continents, religions, races, sexes and economies. Both the millionaire and the street beggar have a day of only 24 hours and a year of only 365 days, nothing more, nothing less. Thus it follows,work must be completed within a time frame and over use of time is also a loss of a valuable resource. Such a loss of time very often results in loss of money, output, name and fame as well.

Public administration must respect the law and hold the scales even in rendering justice. The Statute Book is full of enactments of the central and state legislature which govern and regulate the activities of individuals, institutions, corporate bodies, local bodies, autonomous bodies and central and state governments and authorities serving under them. These laws and rules have been framed with the best of intentions and must be honoured and obeyed by all the citizens. The administrators must understand and apply them correctly and properly as aids to good administration and not as tools of oppression. Objectivity and impartiality in enforcement of the laws and rules are a must in good administration. Receptivity to constructive suggestions for amending or improving the laws and rules is also a virtue in administrators.

The people want a corruption-free administration. But, in practice, it has not been easy to satisfy this demand. Volumes can be written on how and why corruption thrives and how most of the measures taken so far have not yielded very satisfying results. It is sufficient to say that in the ultimate analysis, it is only

the weakness of human character that is the root cause of this problem. Though there are many contributory factors for the growing corruption in all walks of life in the country, the basic point is that we have lost or forgotten our time honoured values in life. Existentialism and material success have taken hold of us. Ethics, morality and spiritual values have gone to the background. A good administrator will never, even under trying circumstances, compromise in regard to these values.

Dr. Avinashilingam has been a shining beacon to all of us and he vigorously followed every one of the requirements of good administration set out above. That is why I wish to call him "An Able Administrator".

Eradication of poverty, misery and ignorance throughout the country and provision of opportunities for all, are the major tasks to be accomplished. Every citizen must dedicate himself to achieve these objectives.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

PADMABHUSHAN
Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM (AYYA)
- AN EDUCATIONIST PAR EXCELLENCE

S.V.Chittibabu

Padma Bhushan Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, who was respectfully addressed as **Ayya** was a unique personality who was an "enfranchised human being", a liberated soul. Determined to remain single, with no family ties to defer his total dedication to the service of the nation and the people as a doughty **Freedom Fighter,** he endeavoured till the last days of his glorious life to make use of education, to build right attitudes, right understandings and right skills in the youth of the land on the lines indicated by Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. He never strayed away from his conviction that education, if imparted with vision and imagination, could bring about a silent social revolution which would provide a healthy, moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes.

With a versatile, penetrating and gracious mind combined with a tender heart, Ayya laid great stress on elementary education not only on grounds of social justice and democracy but also for raising the competence of the average worker and for increasing national productivity. In his words, "the provision of universal primary education is crucial for spreading mass literacy which is a basic requirement for economic development, modernisation of the social structure and the effective functioning of democratic institutions and it also represents an indispensable first step towards the provision of equality of opportunity to all its citizens".

Secondary education, according to Ayya, is that stage of education which helps children to become full members of a complex modern society. It develops to the highest potential the child's ability, his/her aptitudes, his/her interests and qualities of character. It enables him/her to enter life as a knowledgeable active-minded, and sociable individual. Secondary education is

really the nation-building education and the maintenance of good quality therein is of tremendous importance. It is obvious that secondary education forms the central link in the chain of education because it is through this that backward and forward linkages are established.

To make secondary education interesting and meaningful, Ayya was for the adoption of activity methods, with a constant and realistic appraisal of the pupil's progress. Efforts should be made to design new evaluation and testing procedures which would not be a test of memory only but a measure of the pupil's educational growth. Ayya was critical of the haphazard implementation of the Kothari Education Commission's proposals, which resulted in a number of problems cropping up. He was keen on diversification of studies and specialisation being initiated at the higher secondary stage, which, he felt, provided scope for vocationalisation of courses so designed as to meet the specific needs of boys and girls in urban and rural areas. He suggested that for the qualitative improvement of secondary and higher secondary education, there be a well-regulated scheme of expansion, revamping of curricula, proper guidance and purposeful supervision and equalisation of educational opportunities. He was against the mushroom growth of sub-standard institutions. To make secondary education a strong link in the chain of education, he called for efforts being made to raise the standard of all schools upto a minimum norm and to select a few and develop them as "peaks of excellence". He sought to raise the image of his own Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya at Perianaickenpalayam as a model institution in quest of excellence in every sphere of academic activity and socially useful productive work.

On many an occasion Ayya had given expression to his candid views on the role of universities and colleges as agents of social change and national development. Some of his speeches and writings deal with the goals of higher education, the problems and dilemmas in the functioning of centres of higher learning, the nature of autonomy, formal or real, and the special aspects relating to women's education. They are of great value to planners, policy makers, scholars and researchers concerned with higher education in India. Ayya was not happy with the

university's role in reducing the inequalities of our unequal society, for he saw the bias of the system in favour of students from the richer sections of the society as against the vast majority of potential students who were from the poor families, apart from its educational content reflecting the values of the dominant class. He, therefore, strongly pleaded for an effective part being played by universities in reducing social inequalities while keeping their lights burning and not wandering away from the right path of upholding values and standards of humanism and spirituality. He said, "Education of the future providing for man's total life-span must be oriented to his self-actualisation as an individual, as a creative thinker, as a fruitful worker and as a member of his society, at regional, national and global levels". The curricular content of educational programmes and experience at all levels should be designed in the context of life-long education aiming at a fresh adventure in learning that is primarily directed to the development and sustenance of the learner's integrity and his independence of mind and spirit.

Ayya had definitive views on the question of medium of instruction. The medium selected, he observed, should enable students to assimilate knowledge with ease to articulate themselves with clarity and to think with vigour and exactness. It should enlarge the mind through the communication of great thoughts embedded in its literature. There can be no doubt that it is the mother-tongue that is the most appropriate medium for acquisition of knowledge with a sense of comprehension. Ayya averred that as a matter of sound educational policy the medium of education in school and higher education should generally be the same. It was no wonder, therefore, that when he became the first Minister of Education of the then Madras State after independence, the first major educational reform he implemented was to make Tamil the medium of instruction in all schools from standard I to XI (end of the S.S.L.C. course). In fact it was he who introduced Tamil as the medium of instruction at the degree- level in selected colleges. The bold initiative he had taken was not only welcomed but highly appreciated.

Ayya had great regard and respect for Indian womanhood. He attached great importance to the education of women whom he regarded as the transmitters of the heritage of

the past to the future generations and the protectors and preservers of social bonds and traditions by virtue of their ingenuity, intellect and spirit of sacrifice. "All those evils in our present-day society which stand in the way of our women fulfilling their noble mission in life should be totally eradicated". This was the clarion call of Ayya. Convinced as he was that women, if properly educated, could play a dynamic role in family welfare, social uplift and national progress, he advocated a system of education for them characterised by a proper blending of our old lofty ideals with the really progressive ideas of today for a healthy national reconstruction. The Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University) symoblises the ideas and ideals, the vision and the exalted spirit of Ayya who was its Founder-Chancellor and who in his very lifetime gave concrete shape to his dream of imparting the right type of education to young women through well- structured need-based courses, with emphasis on Home Science and its allied branches. In this regard he had fully utilised the services of Padmashri Dr. Rajammal Devadas, the present Vice-Chancellor of the Institute who is an internationally-renowned nutrition expert, an efficient organiser and effective administrator.

If the essentials in education are to be ensured, teachers have to be of the right calibre, fighting against pernicious extraneous forces and exerting upon the youth a salubrious influence. Ayya who held the teaching profession in high esteem was deeply anguished whenever he witnessed outbursts of teacher militancy, clamouring for the fulfilment of their demands for higher emoluments, better service conditions, etc. Teachers, he said, ought to exercise self-restraint and their conduct should be marked by sanity and sobriety even under trying circumstances. It is the teachers, who, by their personal example, mould the character, outlook and attitude of their students, who otherwise are most likely to get alienated from the former.

Ayya, having been every inch an educationist, wedded to the ultimates of human spirit was deeply perturbed about the youth, whenever they, misguided and misdirected, floundered on the rocks of frustration and despair. He, therefore, spared no pains to the end of his eventful life to instil in them through the

outpourings of his heart such positive values as faith in a Supreme Power, discipline, humility, tolerance, forbearance, flexibility, strength of character and rectitude. It is our earnest hope that the magnificent message of Ayya to the people at large, particularly to the youth, will help them to rerail oneself along the right track to the right destination. It is again our earnest hope that every effort will be made by all those concerned with education to create an atmosphere which favours comtemplation and experience of truth and beauty. Ayya's message must seep into the mind, heart and spirit of teachers and students alike in all our educational institutions.

Boys and girls in schools and colleges should feel and cultivate the zest for a devoted life.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

THE PATH SHOWN BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

K. Venkatasubramanian

"Shaanto mahaanto nivasanti santo,
Vasanta valleeka hitam charantah
Teernaa swayam bheema bhavaarnavam
janaanahetunaanyaanapi taarayantah"

"There are great saints, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others, as does the Spring, and who, having themselves crossed this dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever".

Bhagwan Sri Adi Shankara
(Viveka Choodamani, Verse 37)

Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar was a very rare patriot of the highest order. His contribution to Indian Education had been immense. His intrepretation of the thoughts of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda had a ring of unquestionable authority about them as he himself was a living example of their teachings. It is fitting that the commemoration volume to be brought out by Padmashri Dr. Rajammal Devadas, Vice Chancellor, concentrates on the thoughts of these savants.

Adi Shankara's definition of a great saint given above from Viveka Choodamani, fitted Swami Vivekananda exactly. Swami Vivekananda was a real sage of great dimensions. His spiritual wanderings had a global impact. He saw a clear goal for Bharat and outlined a distinct path for the Indians to reach the goal. But it is a sad fact that we have not realised the import of Swamiji's sayings and many are not even aware of the royal road he laid for us to travel to glory. He gave us the essence of what education should be. Time has come for us to realise this goal.

The lectures that Swami Vivekananda delivered from Colombo to Almora after his return from the West, after the famous Chicago address, carried a special significance as they reflected not only his spiritual realization, but also his secular

experience in the West. It was in Colombo that he delivered his first public lecture on January 15, 1897, while returning to India from the West. After Colombo, he delivered public lectures at Jaffna, Pamban, Rameshwaram, Ramnad, Paramakudi and other places as he was moving towards the north of India via. Madras and Calcutta. In all his lectures, he emphasised a five point programme for immediate action as follows :

1) the role of religion in India,
2) the distinction between the essentials and the non-essentials in Hinduism,
3) the oneness of reality and the different approaches thereto,
4) upliftment of the masses through education and culture , and
5) the futility of secular knowledge without spiritual knowledge.

The future of India as envisaged by the Swamiji must be based upon these basic principles; and he suggested a plan of campaign with a view to realise the goal.

While delivering a lecture at the Victoria Hall in Madras in 1897, Swami Vivekananda highlighted, for example, the special significance of religion in the Indian context. His thesis was that, like every individual, every nation has its own speciality and it is necessary to develop it to the full to drive the maximum benefit out of it. In the words of the Swamiji: "I see that each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre, the principal note round which every other note comes to form the harmony... In India, religious life forms the centre, the key-note of the whole music of national life; and if any nation attempts to throw off its national vitality - the direction which has become its own through the transmission of centuries - that nation dies if it succeeds in the attempt".

(Swamiji's Madras Address 1897)

Hence, all reformers, planners and political and social leaders should bear this in mind when they formulate any scheme

of action for the betterment of India. If they fail to do, their endeavour, according to the Swamiji, will be in vain.

A distinction has to be made between the essentials and the non-essentials in every religion. This is as much true with regard to Hinduism as it is with regard to other religions. The **essential** principles are those which abide for ever. They are perennial for the simple reason that they are, declares Swami Vivekananda, "built upon the nature of man, the nature of the soul, the soul's relation to God, the nature of God, perfection, and so on". The **non-essentials** of a religion are concerned with the day-to-day practices, religious observances, and make forms and so on which vary from time to time and place to place. In the case of Hinduism, this distinction between the **essentials** and the **non-essentials** is based upon the distinction between the teachings of **sruti** and those of **smriti**. According to Swami Vivekananda, religious quarrels arise when people, ignoring the **essentials**, pay attention only to the non-essentials.

We could see today how true this clear distinction is which Swamiji had demarcated between essentials and non-essentials. Most of our quarrels are on non-essentials, while essentials and fundamentals are not attended to, at all. To cite a few examples, murders happen on such small issues like who should first receive Prasadam, or whether trumpets and nadaswaram music could be allowed in a particular route.

Swami Vivekananda was never tired of repeating one of the central teachings of **sruti** - "That which exists is one Sages call it by various names". Supreme reality which is by definition infinite, eternal, immutable must be one. It makes no sense to speak of a plurality of reality. However, this supreme reality can be spoken about in different ways, as Siva, Vishnu, God, the Absolute and so on. Whatever be the name that one uses, it refers to the same reality. Also, this reality, according to the Swamiji, can be approached in different ways. The example that his master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, used to give is relevant here. "There are many steps in the four directions of the tank to reach the water in it. Whatever be the direction through which people proceed to reach the water, one and the same water is attained by all of them. Even so, there are many paths to one

and the same ultimate reality. It is against this background that one must try to understand the differences, for example, between non-dualism and dualism. If one realises that the core of all religions is the same, there will be, according to the Swamiji, religious harmony. To quote the Swamiji : "That is religion which makes us realise the unchangeable one, and that is the religion for everyone."

Reference has already been made to the lecture that the Swamiji delivered at the Victoria Hall, Madras in which he outlined his plan of action. That service to the people - to the poor and the downtrodden - is service to God is one of the basic principles of the practical Vedanta of Swami Vivekananda. Nothing short of radical reform, says the Swamiji, will help India to progress. What is urgently required is education for the poor and the downtrodden; and unless education of the masses is taken care of, the country will not progress. To the question, "Why does not the nation move?" Reformation of the superstructure is no reformation at all. On the contrary, reformation of the substructure is real reformation. Going down to the basis of the thing, to the very root of the matter - this is what the Swamiji called, **radical reform**. It is a pity that this first step in what the Swamiji characterized as "My plan of Action" has not been taken care of and fully implemented even after the Independence of the country. The problem of "adult illiteracy" will not stare at us to-day if every child born after independence had been given the benefit of education. Mere talk will not do. Reform calls for action and not for talk. The Swamiji had nothing but contempt for those who would talk and not act. We today see several departments organising functions with huge advertisements but very few departments are really functional.

If the upliftment of the masses has to be achieved only through education, then what kind of education is needed? According to Swami Vivekananda "the gems of spirituality that are stored up in our books" have to be made available to the masses, have to be made the common property of all. The Swamiji was convinced that for achieving this Sanskrit education was necessary for all. Mere economic and social upliftment without cultural upliftment will not help the masses. In the words of the Swamiji: "Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them

ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses".

In the course of his talk on "The Future of India" Swami Vivekananda draws a distinction between the right type of education for the cultural upliftment of the masses and the wrong one which does not promote cultural upliftment. Ideal education, according to the Swamiji, is life-building, man-making, and character-making; and cultural upliftment can be achieved only through ideal education. Commenting on the present day education, Swami Vivekananda observed, "In the first place, it is not man-making education, it is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education or any training that is based on negation, is worse than death. The child is taken to school, and the first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies! By the time he is sixteen, he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless."

What, then, is the alternative to this negative education ? According to Swami Vivekananda, we must think in terms of life-building, man-making and character-making education as the alternative. The Swamiji spells out what we should avoid and also what we should aim at in our education. He says, "If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages in the world, and the encyclopaedias are the Rishis. The ideal, therefore, is that we must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our own hands, and it must be on national lines, through national methods as far as practical."

This observation of Swamiji requires careful consideration. The Swamiji refers to (1) the content (2) the administration, (3) the scope, and (4) the method of education in this statement. An educational system which is satisfactory in all these four aspects can be looked upon as the ideal one. Let us first consider the content of education. The Swamiji is against the dichotomy between secular and spiritual education. Secular education, however useful, will not be beneficial when it is divorced from spiritual education. Here it is not necessary to go

into the details of spiritual education. On the basis of the Upanishadic distinction between the pleasant (preyas) and the good (sreyas), we could say that, while secular education is concerned with the former, spiritual education aims at the latter. If we impart only one of these two, that is either secular or spiritual education, we are not providing according to Swami Vivekananda, whole education. As for educational administration, the Swamiji says that it must be "in our own hands". It means that Swami Vivekananda was against the foreigners controlling and administering the educational set up in India. We must have total freedom in educational administration. Thirdly, education should foster national spirit; it should be conducive to the development of the ideal of unity of the nation. Swami Vivekananda quotes one of the Rig- Veda texts which says: "Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought..." Commenting on this text, he says that "being of one mind is the secret of society".

Lastly, the methods of education should be national. The methods that an educationist follows should be suitable to the people to whom education is imparted. It will not be helpful to import the methods which are successful elsewhere. Our education will be ideal, i.e. will be life-building, man-making, and character-making, only if we have control over the content, administration, scope and method of education, with a goal to inspire the students by the cultural heritage of this great nation which could produce world masters like Bhagwan Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda.

Has not the Swamiji given us a message to follow which unfortunately many could not even remember today ?

VIVEKANANDA the great master visualised a great future for India and indicated the steps we should follow. It is up to us to realise his vision.

A TRUE ENVIRONMENTALIST

B.B. Sundaresan

Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar, Ayya, a born nationalist imbibed the spirit of nationalism from his student-days focussing all his efforts towards education with least prejudice or hatred against the British masters. As early as 1948, when he became the Education Minister in the composite state of Madras he became more interested and involved in the cause of education as a process through which society can be transformed rather than blaming the colonial system for all the ills of higher education in India. His dedication to the cause of education particularly among women is something amazing and even incomprehensible to the present generation. Establishment of Vidyalaya during 1930's and the Home Science College in the 1950's, nurturing the Home Science College to grow and mature into an institution of higher learning and subsequently to the status of a Deemed University, by single minded devotion is a marvellous example of his achievement in the field of education. Very few individuals in modern times could have achieved so much, overcoming the various obstacles, from administration, political leadership and society itself.

A brief review of the historical background of modern education in India would be relevant. The British Parliament while renewing the Charter of East India Company in 1813 laid down a specific condition that the Company must set apart annually a sum of Rs.1.0 lakh to be used for revival and improvement of literature and encouragement of "learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of the British territory in India". Lord Hastings established some vernacular schools near Calcutta for the education of Indians as early as 1819. Though there had been barbaric excesses during the East India Company occupation of India, it was left to Lord Bentinck, the then Governor General of India, to introduce modern education. Munroe, the Governor of Madras recorded in 1824 that some of the ablest British administrators introduced the gradual preparation of Indian people for self government. The reforms

introduced the true spirit of freedom into the Indian sub-continent prior to which education was left to the wisdom of kings practising oriental despotism.

The Charter Act of 1833 introduced during the time of Bentinck declared that "no native of India nor any naturally born subject of His Majesty should be disabled from holding any place, office or employment by reason of religion, place of birth, descent or colour". It took two more decades with the culmination of Woods Despatch of 1854 during the Governor Generalship of Dalhousie when the education system in the modern context had its origin.

No doubt there were aberrations by individual administrators as well as the British system of administration which brought about the slavish mentality among the large number of Indian intellectuals. Such attitudes of British administration, instead of provoking hatred, was accepted as a challenge, to promote excellence in higher education by national leaders.

Environmental education to be introduced into the curriculum and environmental sciences as a subject of study at the collegiate level has to be viewed in this context. When Ayya became aware of this, he started the process of discussion with the writer. Discussions on several occasions led to questioning on environmental issues which were brought to his attention and the imperative need of exposing the younger generation to environmental issues. In order to improve the quality of life for the vast population, food, clothing and shelter should necessarily be given top priority. Would it have any improvement in the quality of life, if in the process the very resources sustaining it such as air, water and land are degraded ? Developmental programmes, rural, urban or industrial have to be necessarily in harmony with environment.

The criteria of assessing the growth and development of a country in economic terms and specified in terms of more jobs and consumer goods should have led to an improvement in the quality of life of the citizen. Unfortunately high growth rate and increase in gross national product have not necessarily led to an

improvement in the quality of life. Urban slums with poor environmental sanitation, rural population denied modern education and energy sources, diverted attention to forests, leading to deforestation and environmental degradation are some of the issues which the curriculum should focus so that the youth become aware of the pit falls of over emphasis on economic development.

When these issues were discussed with Ayya, as early as 1970, when structural changes in the Bachelor's degree course in Home Science was contemplated, he was one among the few who saw the wisdom of bringing about structural changes to introduce waste recycling and reuse at household and small community levels, recovery of biogas from cowdung and naturally available wastes to be introduced in the curriculum itself. The writer was invited to interact with the faculty in Home Science Department to introduce some of these topics in the syllabi so that the graduates become aware of it and get exposed to the scientific pursuits. It might appear to be a simple effort now, but in the year 1970, almost two decades back it was a revolutionary idea to be accepted.

Similarly Ayya pursued vigorously with the writer when he was Director, NEERI, Nagpur, to support research projects to be funded and located in the Home Science Department. He was able to get research grants for waste recycling directly from the Planning Commission, Government of India. Systematic efforts were made by him by deputing the faculty members from the Institute to Madras and Nagpur to follow this up so that societally relevant data could emerge. Ultimately it led to sanction of a research project wherein kitchen and toilet wastes could be introduced into biogas plant for recovery of energy. Though he was not directly involved in the research projects, his enthusiasm and encouragement given to the faculty members was such that meaningful results could be achieved.

When the college was upgraded as a Deemed University, Ayya supported programmes to introduce more subjects at Bachelor's and Master's degree level in the area of environmental sciences. It could now be said that the Home Science Institute for Women is one among the very few institutes of higher

learning exclusively for women's education which has enlarged the academic and scientific activities in the area of environmental sciences as well. Only an individual with vision, who could look far ahead of his times, would be able to bring about these structural reforms in higher education. It is pertinent to point out that the seeds planted six decades back have now grown into fullfledged trees which provide shelter for the large number of intellectuals who in turn provide forward looking education for the youth. Its effect would be visible and intensity felt in the large number of homes of the past students of this institution as well as families which got exposed in the villages around Coimbatore where projects on food, nutrition and environment were undertaken by the faculty and the students. A true environmentalist emerges from such historical background having an impact in modern times, planning and promoting the educational system for the future.

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

S.Muthukumaran

தோன்றின் புகழொடு தோன்றுக; அஃதிலார்
தோன்றலின் தோன்றாமை நன்று.

(திருக்குறள் 236)

Anyone who knows Dr. Avinashilingam or has read his autobiography ("The Sacred Touch" - Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in 1986) will immediately feel that his life story is "an inspiring, participatory excursion into the cultural heritage of his or her motherland.....the wonderful saga of our freedom struggle and the high level of character, patriotism, dedicated service and the sacrifices it evoked in millions of our people,...." (Benediction by Swami Renganathananda). In the year 1921, the young Avinashilingam was attracted by Swami Sivananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. Thereafter throughout his life he remained a true devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and led a life as ordained by the Ramakrishna Mission. He devoted his whole life for the benefit of the people of his motherland. He spent most of his wakeful hours for the education of the young ones of our motherland, i.e., Bharath. His contributions are many and varied. In the field of education, his contributions include the following: Served in several national level policy making bodies; established and maintained several educational institutions - a high school, a college of teacher education, a college of arts and sciences, a college of physical education etc; publication of a journal of educational research and extension; establishing a rural polytechnic and school of agriculture for assisting in rural development; establishing the Home Science College to advance women's education; integrated education for the handicapped; introduction of value-oriented education; development of Tamil and so on. In a short essay such as this, it is not possible to bring out the contributions of his life-time dedicated work for the development of education in this part of the world. Therefore, some

of the outstanding contributions which are dear to the writer's heart are dealt with.

Tamil Encyclopaedia

Dr. Avinashilingam from his early childhood days had a deep passion for Tamil language along with the love for the country. He writes in his autobiography: "Tamil has a great literature built over thousands of years. Its classics Silappadhikaram, Kamba Ramayanam and Thirukkural and devotional literature of the Saivaite and Vaishnavite saints are unrivalled and have inspired millions of people through the ages. However, to meet the needs of the present modern age it has become necessary that Tamil should grow as a modern scientific language, so that the ordinary men and women can learn all branches of knowledge through their own language. This idea prompted me to think about initiating work on an Encyclopaedia". With this object in view, he started the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam (Tamil Academy) in the year 1946. The work of the Tamil Encyclopaedia began in 1948. The first volume was released in 1954; thereafter one volume was released every year till 1963. The final volume (10th volume) was published in 1968. During this period many things happened. The princely States were integrated with the country and a new division along linguistic lines was made. Tamil Nadu State came into being. Several new countries emerged in various parts of the world especially in Africa. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, passed away. Tmt. Indira Gandhi, his daughter, was in power. Many of these changes had to be taken note of in compiling the final volume. About the preparation of the encyclopaedia, a monumental work, Dr. Avinashilingam states with all humility: "It was only faith in the Tamil people and the great Tamil Mother that gave me strength and courage to conceive and take up this mighty task". After a brief period, he had the urge to follow the effort by bringing out a children's encyclopaedia following the practice in the West. Ten volumes of the Children's Encyclopaedia were published between 1968 and 1975. While preparing these publications he was aiming at making available knowledge to ordinary adults and children of Tamil Nadu in their own language at a cost that they could afford.

Higher Education for Rural Development :

Dr. Avinashilingam established a number of educational institutions mostly around the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya founded by him in 1930. The Vidyalaya was opened on 3rd February 1930 at 6.30 a.m. in a tiled building owned by his family in the Race Course in Coimbatore. Even though the Vidyalaya provided free food, lodging, clothing, education, books, note-books, writing materials etc. in the early days there was a social boycott as a Harijan boy was admitted. But slowly things changed. He describes those hard days as follows : "I felt alone and lonely. No! there was one other person always with me couselling, encouraging, guiding and protecting me. That was Sri Ramakrishna. It was not a mere platitude, but evidence of it was coming to me in various ways. That belief continues in me even today after fifty-two years of trials and difficulties". The first report of the Vidyalaya, published in 1933, provides us with the ideals of the Vidyalaya: "We have attempted to evolve a type of education by which the boys will grow into strong and self-dependent young men, always ready to serve the country and the community. It is for that reason, all the work of the Vidyalaya is done by the boys themselves. The work of the Vidyalaya is divided into many sections and each section is entrusted to a captain under whom there will be a batch of boys. The captain will be responsible for the work entrusted to him, and he in turn will have to get the work done by others under him. This develops the latent instincts of leadership in the boys besides teaching them the value of team work. Caste prejudices are not respected in the Vidyalaya. The boys forget their caste consciousness and feel that they all belong to the great Indian community. The rich and the poor are treated alike. It teaches the rich boys a sense of simplicity, humility and brotherhood, besides dignity of labour; and the poor boys acquire a bold and independent spirit. We are also attempting to give vocational bias to the education imparted in the Vidyalaya. But we are handicapped by the fact that, if we are to follow the usual curriculum of our schools, there is not much time left for a vocational or professional training. If we are to really teach an efficient avocation, we think it can only be done when the boys

INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION (DEEMED UNIVERSITY) LIBRARY

devote the major part of their time to learning that profession. We are considering some schemes with that end in view. We would like the boys to grow with healthy national and religious ideals. If the boys are to attain the maximum benefit of their education, they should feel free and happy in this atmosphere. They must feel that the Vidyalaya is their own. With that end in view, the greater part of the work in the Vidyalaya is adjusted and regulated according to their suggestions and wishes. They are also asked to settle their disputes among themselves".

Dr. Avinashilingam had always shown keen interest in education for rural development. He also encouraged the students of his educational institutions to involve themselves in working with the rural poor. Literacy, sanitation, school facilities, latest agricultural and technological practices are some of the extension activities in which the students engaged themselves. He also started a rural college in the 1960s. With this rural college, supporting educational institutions such as school of agriculture and rural polytechnic were also added. Dr. Avinashilingam informs us about the rural institutes as follows : "The rural institute brought with it a new approach to education. .....Work in co-operation with others done with an attitude of service helps in the creation of healthy attitudes. Education, extension and research formed a new approach to learning in the rural institutes. In addition, study of problems in the rural areas with a view to creating a new readership which will be necessary for the development of the rural economy was the main feature of these institutions".

At the School of Agriculture the course of study is of a duration of 2 years after S.S.L.C. The subjects taught included agriculture, animal husbandry, rural economics, co-operation including agricultural legislation and marketing, public health, humanities including village administration, village industries, horticulture, forestry and agricultural extension. At the School of Engineering, a 3 year Diploma programme after S.S.L.C. in rural civil engineering is being offered. The course includes : soil mechanics and water supply, conservation of water, rural housing, rural road development etc. The College of Rural Higher Education offers a degree programme and also post-graduate programmes.

In due course because of difficulties in getting the programmes recognised, the College of Rural Higher Education was merged with the Arts College, the School of Engineering became the Polytechnic and the School of Agriculture was affiliated to the Agricultural University.

In spite of these modifications, these institutions continue to cater to train individuals to work for rural development.

Value-Oriented Education :

Dr. Avinashilingam had written many books on various aspects of education. But in all of them value orientation is the essence of his writings. He has pointed out that the values should become integral part of our education. He was always very keen that all his educational institutions impart value-based education. He organised a number of seminars on value-oriented education for the benefit of his staff. The staff and students of all his institutions were always proud of our great culture and heritage. About inculcation of values in education, he says, "It is unfortunate that our education system, as pointed out by the Kothari Education Commission, lays greater emphasis on narrow individualism, unhealthy competition to the neglect of social good, verbal fluency in language, and mere acquisition of information, while it neglects social objectives, co-operation, manual work, training skills and building up of character. This can be changed only by inculcation of spiritual values in education". Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya has prepared a detailed syllabi of instructions and activities for various stages of education from nursery to college.

Concluding Remarks

As long as Tamilians and the Tamil language prosper, Dr.Avinashilingam will be remembered for his great dedicated service to the growth of Tamil and higher education. May God give the Tamils the wisdom to recognise the greatness of the thoughts of Tamilians like Dr. Avinashilingam and the courage to follow their advice.

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

K. M. Marimuthu

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam affectionately known as **AYYA** by all, was a great educationist. He devoted his entire life to the cause of education. He founded two educational complexes, one for boys at Perianaickenpalayam and the other for girls at Coimbatore. In both the places education is given from Pre-School to Ph.D. He has also included vocational and professional education in these institutions.

Higher educational institutions generally do not have the discipline and order that are to be seen in the schools. Emphasis is mainly on instruction in the class rooms and practicals in the laboratories. The students are free and teachers do not have much contact with students except acquaintance in the class rooms and laboratories.

But Ayya's concept of higher education was different. As a Gandhian he believed in the Basic Education Scheme of Mahatma Gandhi and as the first Minister of Education in independent India in the erstwhile Madras Presidency he took earnest steps to propagate Basic Education. He started Basic School and Teachers Training School in Basic Education in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya and introduced the important elements of Basic Education in other institutions he founded. He believed that higher educational institutions also should follow the important elements of Basic Education.

Ayya started a Teacher Training College (College of Education), a College of Physical Education, a College of Rural Higher Education which later on became the Arts and Science College, a Polytechnic and Community Polytechnic and An Institute of Agriculture and Rural Development at Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Campus and a Home Science College and a College of Education for Women at Coimbatore. All these higher educational institutions have certain unique features emanating from his educational ideology. Development of character, spiritual and moral values, love for one's language

and country and attitude for service are given importance in these higher educational institutions.

These institutions start with prayer every morning and spiritual and moral values are developed through lectures and corporate life in the colleges and hostels. Abundant opportunities are given to develop love of country and people through celebration of national days and serving the poor in the neighbouring villages. The students wear uniform dress and there is discipline in the institutions and hostels. Study hours in the hostels are strictly maintained and the students are not allowed to leave the hostels after the night meals. They participate regularly in cleaning the campus and maintaining the institutions neat and tidy. These elements of Basic Education have successfully been implemented in these educational institutions. Ayya used to meet the students once a week and motivate them on these lines.

Ayya introduced several new ideas on the academic programmes also. He firmly believed that education, research and extension are three important and inseparable aspects of higher education and gave importance to them in his higher educational institutions. He insisted that students must devote undivided attention to their studies and have depth in their subjects. He never accepted any excuses for lower achievement and always stressed on higher marks and grades. He wanted that every student originally think and make some innovation or contribution. For this he wanted the students to take up some problems and do research and experiments and find out ways and means of solving the problems. He did not want higher educational institutions to be islands in society. So, he wanted the students and staff to visit the villages, study their problems, extend the knowledge they have gained in the colleges to the villages and solve their problems. He involved the students in cleaning the villages and in teaching the village students and adults literacy, health and hygiene.

Ayya encouraged organising several seminars, workshops and conferences in his higher educational institutions and the students and staff preparing and presenting papers. He used to say that every department must organise at least one seminar or

workshop in their subject every year. This encouraged the students and staff to refer to latest magazines and books and keep themselves upto date.

Swami Vivekananda wanted the young men and women to have muscles of iron and nerves of steel and develop strong and healthy bodies. He said, "you are nearer to heaven by playing football than by reading Gita". Poet Subramania Bharathi sang :

தோளை வலிவுடையதாக்கி
உடல் சோர்வு பிணிபலவும் போக்கி
அரிவாளைக் கொண்டு பிளந்தாலும்
கட்டு மாறா உடலுறுதி தந்து

Ayya strongly believed in these ideas and wanted our young boys and girls to be physically strong. For this he gave importance to physical education in his institutions and provided adequate playgrounds and facilities. He started a College of Physical Education to train teachers of physical education for schools and colleges and named it after Maruthi, the embodiment of strength, purity and service in our great epic Ramayana. He encouraged boys and girls to play every evening and discouraged their staying in the class or hostel rooms after the college hours.

Ayya believed in the ancient Gurukula system of education in which the students and staff live together in the same campus and learn. He insisted on the students and staff living together and for this he has built hostels and staff quarters in the institution campus. He himself lived in the campus and moved freely with students and gave encouragement to their development.

Ayya believed in Tagore's words that only a burning lamp can light another lamp and gave importance to the inservice educational programmes for teacher development. He encouraged staff to attend seminars, workshops and conferences organised by universities and colleges. He deputed staff to several faculty improvement programmes in India and also to foreign countries for further learning. He organised staff seminars every month and discussed with staff the ways and

means of imparting high quality and character building education.

Ayya had great concern for the poor and downtrodden and encouraged admitting poor and first generation learners in his institutions. He was particular that boys from rural areas must be given preference as their access to higher education is very limited. He was against collecting donations and capitation fees for admission and always insisted that admission must be only on merit. He never accepted any donation even for the seats under management quota which he gave to the sons and daughters of his staff, freedom fighters and who are doing service to the society. He was very much pained over the higher educational institutions collecting donation for admission.

All these made Ayya's institutions very popular and there is always heavy rush for admission. Many parents from rural areas firmly believe that their children's character and education will be safe under Ayya's care and want them to study in his institutions. Many higher education institutions considered Ayya's institutions as models and developed on these lines.

Ayya has spoken to me on several occasions on giving importance to character development, nation building and ensuring academic depth and maintaining discipline in our colleges and universities and how to develop them. His love for the country and the people was such that he never got tired of telling these ideas to all the educators who met him. He wanted our higher educational institutions to maintain high standards and attract students from other countries. His pride in India's great culture and capacity was so great that he considered it beneath our dignity to go to foreign countries for higher education. He desired that our young men and women must be able to have their higher education in our country itself and our higher educational institutions must rise upto that standard. Let us hope and pray that his dreams will become a reality soon and our higher educational institutions will become second to none in the world.

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS ROLE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

S. Jayaraj

The city of Coimbatore as every one knows, is characterised by farm science through Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and home science through Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University). The farm and home fronts are the two sides of the same coin, inseparable and interdependent.

The Founder-President-Chancellor of the Deemed University, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam affectionately and popularly known as "Revered Ayya" is no more with us, but his way of life, his preachings and his constructive works will be sources of inspiration for ever to the present and future generations of Tamilians. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam was a stalwart from the generation of freedom fighters with abundant and ardent patriotism. He was a true disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and devoted his entire life to the realisation of the Gandhian ideals of life, truth, non-violence and sacrifice. The Revered Ayya was a unique personality on the scene of social reforms in India and his anxiety for the poor and the down-trodden is well known. As we know, he started Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya as a school with a few destitute Harijan students under a thatched roof in the rural setting of Perianaickenpalayam near Coimbatore in 1930 and its foundation stone was laid by Gandhiji. The seed sown in 1930 is now in full blossom with the multitude and proliferation of several educational centres. The Vidyalaya depicts his monumental work for the cause and promotion of vocational education. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya is a unique campus with facilities of education from nursery to post-graduate and doctoral level in the fields of arts and science, physical education, engineering, agriculture, rural development, teachers training, etc. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam as a true educationist conceived education as a way of life with moral and ethical values.

Women are the custodian of tradition and culture and as mothers, they are the primary builders of nation. Swami Vivekananda stressed the urgent need to educate our women and Gandhiji was an upholder of women's education for the social transformation and women's freedom for self-development. Carrying the messages of Bapuji and Swami Vivekananda, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam did his continued service to the women's education. His interest in women's education deserves special attention and he wanted to see women as men's equals in occupying positions, in involvement in nation building by providing the maximum benefit of education. With this vision in his mind, he founded Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women under the auspices of the Avinashilingam Education Trust in 1957 with 45 students. The Institute has now grown into the biggest institute in home science in the country with more than 4000 students on its rolls. The college as an outstanding centre of higher learning for women, provides education under one umbrella from pre-school to Ph.D. course. In 1988, the University Grants Commission recognised the Institute as Deemed University, the only Home Science College in the country to receive the recognition as a single campus Deemed University. Under the dynamic leadership of the first Vice-Chancellor Dr. Rajammal Devadas, the University is growing fast as an excellent premier centre of women's education with higher academic standards. In fact, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam gifted all his property to a trust which he established for developing and managing educational institutions especially for women's education.

The development of Tamil language and its role as a medium of education are well known. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam evinced keen interest in Tamil which led him later to the founding of the Tamil Academy in 1946 and the publication of the Tamil Encyclopaedia on the lines of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. He was instrumental in getting the complete works of Mahatma Gandhi translated into 17 volumes. As the Education Minister of the Composite Madras State in 1946, he introduced the Basic Education System and reorganised secondary education. As an educationist, he never failed to put all his educational ideals and thoughts into printed form. Some of his valuable contributions towards education are **Educational Philosophy of Swami**

Vivekananda, World Teachers on Education, Educational Ideals, Education - Swami Vivekananda and **Education for National Integration.**

Sri Avinashilingam Shramik Vidyapeeth as the non-formal education centre, is one of the landmarks in Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam's contribution towards vocational education. The Vidyapeeth started in 1984 offers several skill oriented trainings to the unemployed, promoting self-employment. The centre organises long term courses of three months to 1 year duration for men and women, short-term courses of one day to fifteen days in special areas like motor winding, electrician, carpentry, plumbing, radio and television mechanism, computer, textile technology, composing and binding, painting, bakery, food preservation, tailoring, hospital administration etc. The Vivekanandapuram Centre for Rural Development near Coimbatore is another creation of Ayya. The Centre has adopted more than 100 villages where the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and Gandhiji are put into practice.

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam stood for the educational ideas of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Sri Saradamani Devi, Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. As a brilliant educationist, he founded a chain of educational institutions in primary, secondary and higher education. He was a great institution builder. He was a pioneer in women's education.

In appreciation of Ayya's untiring efforts in the field of education, he was awarded Padmabhushan in 1970 and Jamnalal Bajaj award in 1986. Besides being an educationist, he was one of the great sons of India, having taken part in the freedom struggle from 1930 to 1943. Also he was a Member of Legislative Assembly from 1935 to 1946 and Member of Parliament for thirteen years from 1951.

His sudden demise on November 21, 1991 has left a vacuum in the educational sphere in our state as well as at the centre. Real tribute to him is to cherish his ideals in our educational mandate.

SRI AVINASHILINGAM - FOND MEMOIR

D. K. Oza

As a Government official I came to Tamil Nadu in 1958 and started working first in North Arcot District and a year later in Chengleput District. It is there that I made a reasonably systematic study of the freedom movement in Tamil Nadu and the personalities connected with that movement. Since I came from Gujarat, I already knew something about that movement in Gujarat and Maharashtra, but not much about other parts of India.

I went through as many writings of Sri Rajagopalachari as I could lay my hands on and also the history of the Indian National Congress and its roots in Tamil Nadu. Most of us know that Swami Vivekananada had a strong bond for Tamil Nadu where he found his first support and the recognition of his merit. Before coming to Tamil Nadu for my work I had not been here and one of the first things I did was to visit Kanyakumari where Swami Vivekananda had spent sometime in the last decade of the last century.

In the course of my study of both South Indian History, and the chronicles of the Independence Movement, I came across the name of Sri Avinashilingam. I did not, however, meet him until late 60s. I noticed that probably he was the only man whom I knew, who had come under two separate but powerful influences - that of Swami Vivekananda and of Mahatma Gandhi. I saw his institutions in the early 70s and was struck by the fact that he had nurtured those institutions in and around Coimbatore with the same care as a sculptor would devote to his art. Perianaickenpalayam, about 20 kms from Coimbatore, was then and as now, is an impressive place. I knew him in the late 60s, during my visit, as a vigorous man totally dedicated to his mission in the field of education. Some years later, I discovered that his knowledge of Sanskrit was also very good and he had published a booklet with a few selected verses of Bhagavad Gita, together with an English translation. He put his signature on the booklet and gave it to me which is still with me.

Quite apart from his mental vitality, what one noticed about Ayya was his total absence of feeling of self-conciousness. He talked to every one at an equal level, was easy in his manners and was capable of working very hard.

It was long after I knew Ayya first that I discovered his love for Tamil and his scholarship in Tamil. He was among the early pioneers who did their best for the development of the language, without ever being chauvinistic. He had put a great deal of effort for the publication of good books in Tamil.

Ayya was a pioneer all his life. He has implemented the integration of teaching of the handicapped children with normal children in his institution. His love for physical education led him to establish Maruthi College of Physical Education and any one who visits it will be struck by the fact that several of the teaching aids and equipment there are very modern. He was convinced that "no construction stands unless built on solid foundation." He built every building in his Education complex with meticulous care, and those buildings stand as monuments to his farsightedness.

When my two daughters were in their early teens, I took them both for a breakfast with Ayya. We sat together eating sumptuous breakfast while he confined himself to a very small and simple meal. We sat in the open ground under the magnificent tree. Ayya was always happy to be in the company of young people and he talked to the girls casually. Later my daughters told me, "He is a very fine man." That was what he was - a very fine man !

In the late evening of his life Ayya continued to work despite his obviously failing health. I met him last only a few days before he passed away. His life is an example for all of us to follow because he combined in himself personal dedication, scholarship and idealism.

During my last meeting with Ayya, I told him how much I had enjoyed his book, **The Scared Touch**. He was very delighted and his joy was visible. He commented, "Very few people read books nowadays."

REMINISCENCES - ON REVERED AYYA

S.Lakshmi

Man is the maker of his own destiny stated Swami Vivekananda. Very few men are chosen by the Lord Almighty to be the **Destiny - makers** who will set and reach their goals of excellence and help humanity around them, strive for **Excellence** in the various spheres of life. Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar, affectionately called **Ayya** by everyone of us, belongs to the aristocracy of human wisdom and values. In his simple, endearing and unassuming way, he had been a wonderful **leader** and **decision - maker.** Whoever came into contact with this great soul, was ever aware of the inspiration that he drew, in his very presence.

The occasions, when I could come under the benign presence of **Ayya**, were very few. But then, he made those occasions memorable. In a Seminar on National Policy of Education, his soft, lucid style of English, with clear, scientific and realistic ideas, had set the audience into thinking as to what **best** could and should be achieved, for today and for tommorrow. As Principal of Sri Sarada College of Education, there had been several academic programmes, in which our college received great help and encouragement from him. He would always say, **Sarada** is **our institution** and hence should be given all the help she needs.

With Ayya's assurance and with the blessings of our beloved Swami Chidbhavananda, **Sri Sarada College of Education, Salem** could grow from strength to strength and enjoyed affectionate indulgence as a younger sister of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Coimbatore.

Six or seven years ago, we conducted an educational tour, for our B.Ed. students to Ooty and while we were returning, due to certain unavoidable reasons, we decided to stay at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, for the night **Ayya** was there and I requested him to permit our stay. The positive reply from him was immediate. We not only stayed there for the night but the next morning, the institution of Mother Sarada had sumptuous

food from the hostel. Like the daughters, who rejoice, when they go to their parents, the whole college of education, enjoyed the experience. I was no longer the Principal of the College. I realised that I had become the child of Sri Gurumaharaj.

Three years ago, I was invited to be the chief guest for the Annual celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya College of Education. Dr. Soundararaja Rao, Principal, had made elaborate arrangements and the cultural programme given by the students was exemplary. Rev. Ayya was there, in time and I greeted him with **pranaams**. He welcomed me (what an honour) and blessed me saying,

> "You are daughter of Mother Sarada and a disciple of Swami Chidbhavananda. You must continue your service for the cause of education, throughout your life"

His body was weak when he uttered those words but his spirit was full of life. The strength of the spiritual self was revealing itself.

Even today his benediction still rings in my ears. It is my great privilege, that I have seen him, listened to him, talked to him, and got strengthened by his inspired self. Rev. Ayya had been a great builder of educational institutions. He was a great architect who carved rigorously humane, dedicated beings out of mere men and women. His very life stands as a proof of total dedication to a great cause.

"Revered Ayya, we know you are always with us and will continue to work wonders through every one of us."

HOMAGE TO AYYA

Kamala Anandam

"Ayya" says it all about Sri. Avinashilingam who has left behind a legacy of boundless compassion for human kind, unconditional loyalty to his country, unshakable belief in the goodness of individuals, and an endless list of activities to help people help themselves. Vidyalaya in Perianaickenpalayam and Saradalaya in Coimbatore are the enduring testimonies of his legacy.

He had a dream and he was willing to let others have their dreams. He had the wisdom and the craft to generate a collective dream which created a great sense of pride and commitment in all his colleagues, from the closest to the farthest. At times he pulled and pushed so that the work would be done and at other times he stood still and let people unleash their potentials. Most of the times, however, he walked side by side with his colleagues in the pursuit of the collective dream. He was a solid rock of strength when things did not go well, reminding us that "tommorrow is yet another day".

Ayya loved children and the "child" in him became alive whenever he spent time with them. No wonder, children were attracted to him ! Children caught on to his spirit of curiosity and discovery. His love for children of his colleagues earned him an indelible place in their hearts. No wonder, his colleagues hesitated not to walk the extra mile to achieve the collective dream !

Through his speeches and writing, Ayya inspired the young and the old, the rich and the poor, and men and women to cast aside their pettiness, selfishness, and helplessness and hopelessness in order to stand tall for the cause of human dignity, welfare and happiness. In his view, no one was too weak to contribute to this cause and no one was too strong to do it all by oneself.

Ayya who had a great mind and a kind heart knew his convictions clearly and pursued them relentlessly. With even a greater mind and a kinder heart, Ayya also knew that different

people heard different drummers, and therefore, would have to travel a different path in life. Ayya never thought less of persons who had to go their separate ways. "Once a friend, always a friend" was his motto.

All of us feel the emptiness because we cannot see him, hear him, or touch him. In time, we'll realize how much he lives in us and through us.

> In one sense there is no death. The life of a soul on this earth lasts beyond his departure. You will always feel that life touching yours, that voice speaking to you, that spirit looking out of other eyes, talking to you in the familiar things he touched, worked with, loved as familiar friends. He lives on in your life and in the lives of all others that knew him.

கல்விப் பணிக்காக தன் வாழ்வை அர்ப்பணித்து சாதனை படைத்தவர் டாக்டர் டி. எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார்!

மு. கலைவாணன்

அறுபது ஆண்டுகளுக்கும் மேலாக தன்னுடைய வாழ்க்கையை கல்விப் பணிகளுக்காகவே அர்ப்பணித்து, பல்லாயிரக்கணக் கான பட்டதாரிகளையும், அறிஞர் பெருமக்களையும் உருவாக்கி, பாரதத்தின் கடைக் கோடியில் வாழும் ஏழை எளிய பாட்டாளி மக்களின் கல்விக் கண்ணை திறந்து, மக்களுக்காக, சமுதாயத்திற்காக நாட்டிற்காக வாழ்ந்து மறைந்த சத்திய சீலர் அமரர் டாக்டர் டி. எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர் கள். இவர் மகாத்மா காந்தியின் நெருங்கிய நண்பராகவும், சீடராகவும் விளங்கி, காந்தீய கொள்கைகளையும், காந்தீய பொருளாதாரத்தையும், அகிம்சையையும் கடைப்பிடித்து, எளி மையான வாழ்க்கையே ஒரு மனிதனின் சிறப்பம்சம் எனக் கூறி தேசத்தின் ஒற்றுமைக்கும், வளர்ச்சிக்கும் அரும்பாடுபட்டார்.

மகாத்மா காந்திஜியின் தலைமையில் நடந்த உப்பு சத்தியாகிரகப் போராட்டத்திலும், 1932ல் நடந்த சட்டமறுப்பு போராட்டத்திலும், 'வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு' போராட்டத் திலும் கலந்து கொண்டு சிறை சென்று, அந்நிய ஆதிக்கத்திற்கும், அடிமை விலங்கிற்கும் விடை கொடுத்து சுதந்திர பாரதம் உருவாகப் போராடி தாய் நாட்டிற்காகத் தன்னையே அர்ப்பணித் துக் கொண்ட தியாக வீரர் டாக்டர் டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள். இந்திய அரசியலில் தீவிர ஈடுபாடு கொண்டு மத்திய, மாநில அரசாங்கங்களில் கல்வி அமைச்சராகப் பணியாற்றி பல்வேறு சீர்திருத்தங்களை செய்ததோடு, முதன் முதலாக தமிழ்நாடு பாடத் திட்டத்தில் திருக்குறளை அறிமுகப்படுத்தி, பாரதியார் பாடல்களைத் தேசியமயமாக்கிய பெருமை இவரையே சாரும்.

கோவையில் ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ணா வித்தியாலயத்தைத் தொடங்கி, அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரி மற்றும்

தொழில் நுட்பக் கல்லூரி, கலைக் கல்லூரி மற்றும் விளையாட்டுப் பயிற்சிக் கல்லூரி, தொழிற் பயிற்சி நிலையம் இப்படி படிப்படியாகக் கல்வித் துறையில் பல நிறுவனங்களை உருவாக்கி இத்துறையில் பெறும் சாதனை படைத்து "ஆண்டவன் அருளும், மனித முயற்சியும் இருந்தால் உலகில் ஆகாத காரியம் ஒன்றும் இல்லை" என்பதற்கு எடுத்துக் காட்டாக வாழ்ந்தவர் டாக்டர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள்.

இவரின் சீரிய பணிகளையும், சேவைகளையும் பாராட்டி இந்திய அரசு 1970ல் பத்ம பூஷண் விருதும், 1974ல் நேரு இலக்கிய விருதும், தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் டாக்டர் பட்டமும் வழங்கி கவுரவித்துள்ளது என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கதாகும். இவரின் மறைவு கல்வித்துறைக்கு மட்டுமல்லாமல், இந்த சமுதாயத்திற்கு, நாட்டிற்கு ஏற்பட்ட ஒரு மாபெரும் இழப்பாகும். அவர் காட்டிய வழியில், அவருடைய கொள்கைகளைக் கடைப் பிடித்து, நாட்டின் ஒற்றுமை, பாதுகாப்பு, வளர்ச்சி ஆகிய வற்றைப் பேணிக் காக்க நாம் ஒவ்வொருவரும் உறுதி மேற்கொண்டு செயல்படுவது ஒன்றே நாம் அவருக்குச் செலுத் தும் அஞ்சலியும், மரியாதையும் ஆகும்.

கொங்கு நாட்டின் விடிவெள்ளி

கே. எஸ். சௌந்தரம்

அய்யா என்று அன்புடன் அழைக்கப்படும் "அவினாசிலிங்கம் பெருந்தகை" கொடி காத்த குமரன் பிறந்த திருப்பூரில் 1903ம் ஆண்டு மே மாதம் ஐந்தாம் நாள் பிறந்தார். செல்வம் கொழிக்கும் குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்தாலும் எளிய வாழ்க்கையினால் ஈர்க்கப்பட்டு ஆன்மிக நெறியில் நின்றவராய் வாழ்க்கையின் இறுதிக் காலம் வரை தூய வெள்ளை கதர் ஆடையையும் நெற்றியில் பட்டை விபூதியும் ஆக திகழ்ந்தார். இந்திய விடுதலைப் போராட்டத்தில் கலந்து கொண்டு பல தடவை சிறை சென்றார். மத்திய சட்டசபை உறுப்பினராக விளங்கினார். மாகாணத்தில் கல்வி யமைச்சராகி, 'விடுதலை பெற்ற இந்தியாவின் முதல் அமைச்சர்' என்னும் சிறப்பையும் பெற்றார். நாடாளுமன்ற உறுப்பினராகவும் இருந்தார்.

இவ்வாறு அரசியலில் ஈடுபாடு கொண்டவரானாலும் கல்வி வளர்ச்சிப் பணிகளிலும் அளவற்ற அக்கறைக் காட்டினார். கோவை அருகே பெரியநாயக்கன் பாளையத்தில் ஸ்ரீஇராம கிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலத்தைத் தோற்றுவித்தார். இங்ஙனம் ஒரு மாணவனுடன் குருகுல அமைப்பாக அவர் தொடங்கிய வித்தியாலயம் இன்று பல நிறுவனங்களுடன், வைரவிழா கொண்டாடும் அளவிற்கு உயர்ந்து நிற்கிறது என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

சமுதாயத்தில் பெண்கள் நிலை உயர்ந்தாலன்றி சமுதாய உயர்வு முழுமையுடையதாகாது என்பதில் அழுத்தமான நம்பிக்கையுடையவராய் பெண்கள் கல்விக்கென 'சாரதால யம்' என்னும் கல்வி நிறுவனம் ஒன்றையும் அமைத்தார். அது மழலைப்பள்ளி முதல் டாக்டர் பட்டம் பெறுகிற வரையிலான உயர் கல்வி அளிக்கும் நிறுவனமாக அகில இந்திய அள வில்அமைந்துள்ளன. பெண்களின் உயர் கல்விக்கென அவர் தோற்றுவித்த மனையியல் கல்லூரி இன்று பல்கலைக் கழகத் தகுதியைப் பெற்று புகழுடன் விளங்குகிறது.

இத்துடன் நிற்காமல், இந்தியா ஒரு விவசாய நாடு என்பதை மறவாது அத்துறையில் இளைஞர்களைப் பயிற்றுக்கும் நோக்கத்தோடு விவேகானந்தபுரத்தில் கிராம விவசாயப் பயிற்சி மையம் என்னும் ஒன்றையும், ஏட்டுப் படிப்போடு தொழிற் படிப்பின் இன்றியமையாமையையும் எண்ணியவராய் 'சிரமிக் வித்யாபீடம்' என்னும் கல்விக் கூடத்தையும் தோற்றுவித்தார்.

கல்வித் துறையில் அவர் ஆற்றிய அரும்பணிகளுக்காக 1970 ஆம் ஆண்டில் அவருக்கு 'பத்மபூஷண்' விருது வழங்கப் பட்டது. நேரு இலக்கிய விருது உட்பட பல்வேறு விருதுகள் பெற்ற தோடன்றி 1986 ஆம் ஆண்டு கல்வி சேவைக்காக ஜம்னாலால் பஜாஜ் விருதினையும் பெற்றார்.

தன் வாழ்நாளின் கடைசி வரை பிரம்மச்சரியத்தைக் கடைப் பிடித்து ஒரு தனி மனிதனாய் இந்த சமுதாயத்திற்கு அதிலும் பெண்களின் கல்விக்கு அவர் ஆற்றிய சேவை மெய்யாகவே ஒரு மகத்தான சேவை. புகழ்மிக்க குடும்பத்தில் தோன்றி அண்ணல் காந்தியடிகளின் கொள்கைகளைக் கால மெல்லாம் பின்பற்றி இப்புவியில் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்ந்தவர் கொங்கு நாடு ஈன்றெடுத்த தவப்புதல்வன் அருளாளர் அய்யா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள். நாம் கற்கும் கல்வியும், பேணும் குணமும், பழகும் பழக்கமும் நல்வாழ்வு வாழ்ந்து, சமுதாய நலம் பெருகுவதற்கு பயன்படும்படி ஊக்குவித்த செயல் வீரர் அய்யா அவர்கள். அவர் காட்டிய வழிகளும், சொன்ன சொற்க ளும், கடலிற்பட்ட கலத்திற்கும் கலங்கரை விளக்கம் போல் நின்று அனைவரையும் வழி நடத்தும் என்பதும் திண்ணம். இப்பொன்னொளிர் கொங்குநாடு தந்த அய்யா அவர்களை என்றென்றும் போற்றி வணங்குவோம்.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM INDUSTRIALISTS AND PHILANTHROPISTS

T.S.A I HAVE KNOWN

N. Mahalingam

It was in Pollachi at my residence that I first met Revered T.S.Avinashilingam when I was a student in the local Muncipal High School. My father, Sri Nachimuthu Gounder was Muncipal Chairman and my grand father, Sri Palani Gounder was connected with the local Congress Party.

Those were times when the District Board elections took place and later elections to the Central Legislature took place which was contested by Sri T.S.A. Later State elections came in 1937, when more Congress leaders like Sri C.P.Subbiah, Sri K.Subri and others used to visit Pollachi and also my residence.

When I had occasions to visit Coimbatore for Grigg Memorial Sports, I also visited Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam, where Shri K. Venkatachalam, was a B.A.B.T. Assistant. The School was residential and all staff and students were wearing khadi. Sri Venkatachalam later became Head Master and after a long spell came to Pollachi to take up educational management.

In 1937 elections, Congress fielded Sri V.K. Palanisami Gounder of Vettaikaranpudur, for the Pollachi-Udumalpet double member constituency. Many of us students joined the cycle jothi to propagate the yellow box, the symbol of the Congress party. Sri T.S.A. and Sri C.Subramaniam had come for party propaganda when I had occasion to meet them.

In 1938 I passed S.S.L.C and joined Loyola College and started reading The Hindu. The speeches of Bhulabai Desai and Sri Satyamurti and the crossfire questions of Sri C.R.Reddy and Sri T.S.A in the Central Assembly were all well reported.

During this time, Sri T.S.A. went on a Himalaya pilgrimage and visited Kedarnath and wrote a book in Tamil. The book, which came to my father, found in me an ardent reader.

My father's another book, **Ramakrishna's Teaching**, also attracted me and it set my mind on a higher path.

As a student in the High School, I used to read all available books in the local Muncipal library - puranas, novels, short-stories, etc. When I reached IV Form, the medium was changed to English and I got Nehru's works, Discovery of India, World History, Autobiography, etc. and started reading them. In college, I started reading Mahatma's **My experiments with Truth** and the weekly Harijan. Of course, I read many other books connected with college as also Tolstoy, Tagore, etc.

During vacations, I used to visit Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya and had occasions to meet Ayya, who always spared his time to meet young people. He was always an emotional person and in his public meetings used to urge people to follow Mahatma Gandhi and Vivekananda's teachings.

In 1941 Individual Satyagraha and later in 1942 August Quit India Movement came. I remember Sri T.S.A's visit to Pollachi and his giving the August declaration of J.P. to all Congressmen in my house. Many patriots were arrested including T.S.A., C.S., C.P.Subbiah and K. Subri.

I took B.Sc. Degree from Loyola College and joined Guindy Engineering College in 1942. 1946 saw the end of war and the coming of Independence.

In 1946 Sri T.S.A. became the Education Minister in Madras State under T.Prakasam and I remember my father meeting him when I also went along. It was great news when Tamil Encyclopaedia was started and Sri Periaswamy Thooran, Head Master of the Vidyalaya, was made editor of that great work.

It is interesting to remember the days, when a weekly **Kalachakra**, was started by C.S. and friends, wherein I was also associated. By 1946, I had come back here and joined my father in business.

There were changes in political fields when Sri Kumaraswami Raja became the Chief Minister. Sri T.S.A.

came back to attend to Vidyalaya. In 1952, elections came after the Constitution was formed. Sri T.S.A. contested from Nilgiris Constituency for the Parliament, C.S. stood in Coimbatore city and I was a candidate from Pollachi Constituency.

More occasions arose to meet Sri T.S.A. who spent more time in Vidyalaya as also, for the Congress work of the District. A research on Thirukkural was inaugurated and Sri K.V.Jaganathan of Kalaimagal was the editor. I was put as Secretary of the Committee. The work was published by Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya and was released by Rashtrapathi Sri Rajendra Prasad in 1956 at Madras. It was a momentous occasion as it gave me an opportunity to be associated with organising that function.

I was made a member of the Vidyalaya Managing Committee and it gave me an opportunity to see Vidyalaya's working as also get guidance from Sri T.S.A. This helped me to start N.G.M. College and Nachimuthu Polytechnic in 1957 at Pollachi. Sri T.S.A. built buildings strongly but also took care that the cost of maintenance was low. When I built the Polytechnic with lime plaster and colour work and mosaic for Verandah, he remarked that the cost of maintenance would be high.

Mahatma's guidance in Harijan on education and the practical work of Ayya at Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, with which I was associated, made me devote time for education. The training helped me later in my membership in the Syndicate of Madras University. In 1967 when Congress was defeated and all top leaders were defeated, I had more time to devote for educational activities. Sri M.S.Palaniappa Mudaliar, a good friend of my father and an associate of N.G.M College, suggested my getting into Madras University Syndicate.

Sri T.S.A's impact on Coimbatore-Periyar Districts in the educational field is worth-telling. Kugalur High School by Sri K.K.Subanna Gounder and the Girls High School at Gobi by Sri C.K.Kumarasami Gounder were done at his initiative.

Sri T.S.A's interest in education also made him start an institution for girls at Coimbatore and it has grown into a deemed

university under the stewardship of Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, which specialises in Home Science.

Sri T.S.A's initiative in Tamil Encyclopaedia and later children's Encyclopaedia is a memorable one. He also arranged for Mahatma Gandhi's works to be published in Tamil in 10 volumes. The work of Sri Periaswamy Thooran as editor was great in the Encyclopaedia.

Many of us of the younger generation have been guided more by the work of Sri T.S.A. than by his speeches. He has devoted his share of the family property as well as that of his brother Sri Dhandapani Chettiar for the cause of education.

When Ayya reached 70 years of age, we had a celebration. I requested him to make Delhi his head quarters so that he might be able to influence the educational policy of the country. It was rather unfortunate that after 1962 Sri T.S.A.'s association with Delhi was not much as he did not choose the legislative work.

Ayya was always available for any good work and travelled to take part in school and social functions. When Congress got defeated, in 1967, many Congressmen wanted him to become President of TNCC and guide the affairs of the Party.

My association with Ayya has been from my school days when I used to see him with awe as he was associated with Ramakrishna movement. Later, during and after college, more associations and the exchange of ideas, guided me in much of my work in the field of education.

I recall with pleasure my memories of certain important occasions in the Vidyalaya.

The Silver Jubilee was celebtrated in the Vidyalaya in the year 1955. Sri Rajendra Prasad, the President of India, came from Madurai to participate in the celebrations. On my initiative, a grand reception was accorded to him at the Pollachi Railway Station and a meeting was arranged. After addressing the meeting, Bapu went to Coimbatore but he could not take part in the Silver Jubilee function the next day owing to his sudden illness that night.

In the year 1963, Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, the then President of India, was the chief guest at the Vidyalaya on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Centenary. I attended the function and listened to the inspiring and illuminating address of Dr.S.Radhakrishnan.

I had also the good fortune of listening to Rev.Swami Vireshwarananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, who opened a building in Swami Sivananda Higher Secondary School in Perianaickenpalayam.

I have attended the Guru Pooja many times. The Guru Pooja is celebrated in the Vidyalaya every year in the month of January. It is a solemn occasion when people especially from the surrounding rural areas and old students come in thousands, participate in the celebrations and listen to the speakers on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Once I was the chief guest.

The Vidyalaya has grown in size and stature during the last sixty years, having created a host of institutions catering to the different educational needs of our younger generations. A number of monks of the Ramakrishna Mission like Swami Sarvakrunananda, Swami Somananda and Swami Tanmayananda have served the institution with devotion and dedication and contributed in no small mesaure to its growth and development. The Vidyalaya has not only produced hundreds of young men who shine with singular Brilliance in various walks in life but has also shaped and sculptured many illustrious teachers such as Dr.M.Aram, Sri K. Arunachalam, Sri Periaswamy Thooran and Dr.K.Kulandaivel.

It is essential that Vidyalaya should develop into a Deemed University like Gandhigram Rural University and also a cottage industries centre be developed around Vidyalaya as in Gandhigram. Ayya as a Gandhian will be best remembered by such future developments.

Let me pay my respects to a great soul who was a friend of my father and a good guide to me during the formative years of my life.

The light of Sri T.S.A. illuminated the hearts of many a young person apart from thousands of students who studied in his institutions. My respects to the great soul in whose memory two great educational institutions stand today in Coimbatore and Perianaickenpalayam.

Many of the great heroes began their lives as ordinary men with common human weaknesses, but with vision, purity, indomitable will, love, devotion and service, they reached the peak of achievement. They are not distant personalities beyond human reach, but are men of human flesh and blood, who by dint of persistent work reached the highest stage of human endeaveour, a stage which others can also reach through hardwork and faith.

SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - LOVE FOR HUMANITY

M. Gopalakrishnan

The memories of the great soul Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, the affectionate Ayya, brings forth instantly a sense of sadness at the loss and a sense of awe and wonder which marvels at the achievements of the multi-faceted personality that he was. A freedom fighter, an educationist, able administrator and above all the great humanitarian, Sri Avinashilingam was. But that part of the personality that impressed me most was his love for humanity. It was this facet of his personality that pervaded his actions in every other sphere.

The love for humanity was best revealed in his act of giving his properties to a Trust for educational purposes. As is well-known, Sri Avinashilingam belonged to a well to do joint family. Their family, in fact, was a model of the Hindu traditions where the elders were respected and the love and affection tied the entire family together. It was decided to partition and share the properties amongst the brothers only as a device of avoiding heavy losses by way of Income-Tax. Deeply ingrained in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and a true follower of Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Avinashilingam had a better idea of putting the property into the best use. He thought of converting his properties into a trust for educational purposes and consulted the elders in the family. He was advised to convert only a part of the property into a trust. But the desire to serve the humanity was so over-whelming in him that ultimately almost the whole property was donated to the trust. The broad vision of Sri Avinashilingam is best recalled in his own words the Trust Deed which partly reads :

> "It has been my desire for sometime to make a Trust of my properties. The properties really do not belong to me. They are ancestral properties and belong to my father and others who earned them. Even if they had been earned by me, the real purpose of money is to get maximum value for it. The rich man who hoards does not get the best

value out of his money. His clinging to it gives him only the pain of clinging to it and the ever-present fear of losing it ... The real purpose of money is to use it.... The value of money to people is in inverse proportion to their wealth.... Feeding the hungry is good. Many choultries were established by my ancestors for that purpose. But as it has been said in our scripture, feeding one does not give any permanent relief. It has also in certain cases degenerated into encouraging laziness. Medical relief is also very valuable. But greater than these are education and spiritual values.... Relieving one from physical pain relieves him for the time being but the education and spiritual help raise man permanently to a higher level and help him to solve the problems of his life."

If one looks back at the life history of Sri Avinashilingam, one can easily see that the ideals set above pervades through all his activities. Swami Vivekananda has said : "Him, I call a Mahatman, whose heart bleeds for the poor". Fairly, the description applies to our Ayya too. The attitude to serve humanity was an inborn quality in him acquired partly from his parents. His family was well-known for its philanthropic attitude as he himself recalls :

> "In addition to the duties to their own families, they did also their duty to the community. It makes me happy every time I see a choultry which my forefathers had built in Palladam, now about 200 years old. Our family has provided for Pooja everyday in the Avinashi Temple. They had built choultries in many other pilgrim centres like Avinashi, Perur, Thirumuruganpoondi and provided for worship in many shrines."

This noble deed had a larger influence on him and even as a lad he was more attracted by the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. He developed connections with Ramakrishna Mission while still a student. After completing his graduation in law, he began his career as an advocate and he had a good start too. As time passed, the legal profession lost its charm for him,

the call for a life of dedicated service making its impact on the youngster increasingly. He felt that Swami Vivekananda's advice, "You are born to do great things - a life of love and sacrifice, not to spend your life in petty thinking of your own welfare or money" was especially addressed to him. He decided to fully plunge into social service. Thus was born Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya.

The history of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya is the history of his dedication, sincerity to ideals and his love towards children to evolve them into healthy, cultured and able adults. Having been born in a rich family and accustomed to comforts, the sacrifices made by him while undergoing the difficult years at the Vidyalaya amidst various shortages can only be explained by his love towards the children. In fact, the Vidyalaya was a fore-runner for many of the reforms in education system that were to follow later. The ideals of the Vidyalaya was stated in its first report :

> "We have attempted to evolve a type of education by which the boys will grow into strong and self-dependent young men, always ready to serve the country and the community. With that end in view, the whole scheme of the institution has been drawn. It is for that reason, all the work of the Vidyalaya is done by the boys themselves.... Caste, prejudices are not respected in the Vidyalaya.... The rich and the poor are treated alike."

The achievement of the ideal was not an easy task. As Sri Avinashilingam himself recounts,

> "That a Harijan boy has been admitted led to social boycott and for some time no other boys were forthcoming, even though every thing was provided - free food, lodging, clothing, education, books, note-books and pencils and even travel charges to home and back for holidays. But slowly the situation changed and some children, the poorest in the community attracted by the free facilities, began to come."

Raising the funds for the Vidyalaya was not an easy task. It also meant a compromise on the self-respect for a public cause. This should have been doubly difficult for a person like Sri Avinashilingam who was not used to asking anything from anybody and for whom the very idea of begging even for good causes was disgraceful. Even as a student he was only helping other poorer friends with money that he used to receive from his father. But his concern for the poor children was so great as to push to background any other consideration. In fact, it made him feel proud about being called a professional beggar, in the same way that Gandhi used to call himself. He pledged his self-pride for the public cause for the first time when he asked for a donation for the institute from his father who generously donated Rs.10,001/-. As Sri Avinashilingam states in his autobiography,

> 'This is not to say that going for collections will always be smooth sailing. Many times one will have to put up with abuse and insults. I remember an incident when Sri C. Subramaniam and I went to a gentleman asking for support. He treated us with contempt and asked us virtually to get out of his house. We have to put up with such insults and still carry on the work in the name of the Lord".

Sri Avinashilingam was a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi. He plunged into freedom struggle and underwent the trials of jail life many times. Even during his imprisonment his thought was towards service to the public. He spent his time turning out useful books for the community. The seeds for bringing out a Tamil Encyclopaedia on the lines of Britannica Encyclopaedia was sown during this period.

The welfare of women received great deal of attention from Sri Avinashilingam. Here again he was inspired by the ideals of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda wanted the highest education to be imparted to Indian women in every sphere. To transform his ideal into practice, Sri Avinashilingam founded the Home Science College for Women which has now grown into an unique institution imparting education from the basics to the highest level. It was fortunate that while he was the Minister of Education, he could identify the latent talents of

Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, then an Assistant Lecturer in Home Science in Queen Mary's College, Madras and proceeding abroad for higher studies, to lead this institution. The growth of this institution is in no small measure due to her persistent and tireless efforts.

During his ministership he had initiated many reforms to make education wide-spread.

Dearest to the heart of Sri Avinashilingam was the Vidyalaya. He says, "Here I have learned that real greatness is not to be measured by position, power, wealth or educational attainments, but by the sincerity and dedication with which daily duties are performed." No other person can be a better example of true greatness than Sri Avinashilingam.

அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அய்யா

ஆர். வெங்கடேசலு

பரந்த இவ்வுலகில் பல கோடி மக்கள் பிறக்கின்றனர்; சிறிது காலம் வாழ்கின்றனர்; அப்புறம் வந்த சுவடும் கூட தெரியா வண்ணம் உலகை விட்டே மறைந்து விடுகின்றனர். அவர்களிலே விரல் விட்டு எண்ணக்கூடிய ஒரு சிலரே வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்ந்து தங்கள் பூத உடம்பை நீத்த பிறகும் புகழ் உடம்போடு என்றும் வாழ்கின்றனர். அத்தகைய சில புருஷர்களில் குறிப்பிடத்தக்கவர் நம் வித்தியாலய அய்யா அவர்கள். அவருடைய பெருமைக்குக் காரணமாய் இருந்தது என்ன என்பதைச் சற்றே பார்ப்போம்.

அவர் பிறந்தது திருப்பூரில் ஒரு நல்ல வளமிக்க குடும்பத்திலே. ஆனால் தம் வாழ்நாள் முழுவதையும் மிக எளிய வாழ்க்கையைக் கடைப்பிடித்து வாழ்ந்தார்; காட்சிக்கு எளியவராய் யாரும் எளிதில் காண முடியும் என்ற நிலையிலே அவர் வாழ்ந்தார். உரிய காலத்தில் பட்டம் பெற்ற பின் சட்டக் கல்வி பயின்றார். ஆனால், அத்தொழிலிலேயே பொருள் சேர்த்து வசதியாக வாழ்வதை விட்டு விட்டு சமூகத்திற்காகவும், நாட்டிற் காகவும் காந்திஜியைப் போலவே தன்னை அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்ட தியாகசீலர் நம் அன்பு அய்யா.

ஸ்ரீ ராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சருடைய நேரிடையான சீடர் சுவாமி சிவானந்தரிடம் தீட்சை பெற்று பிரம்மசாரியாகவே தன் ஆயுள் முழுவதும் வாழ்ந்து காட்டினார். சிறந்த ஆன்மீக வாதியாகத் திகழ்ந்த அவர் ஒரு முழு நேர சன்னியாசியாகவே தன் வாழ்க்கையை அமைத்துக் கொண்டார். ஏழைகளுக்கும், எழுத்தறிவு அற்றவர்களுக்கும் சேவை செய்ததோடு நம் நாட்டு சுதந்திரப் போரில் தீவிரமாக ஈடுபட்டார். நான்கு முறை சிறையிடப்பட்டார். சிறைச்சாலையைத் தவச்சாலையாக ஆக்கிக் கொண்ட அவரை நாம் மறக்க முடியமா? சுவாமி விவேகானந்தர் அன்றே சொல்லிவிட்டுப் போன "They alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive" என்ற அருள்வாக்கை தாரக மந்திரமாக ஏற்றுக் கொண்டார். திருக்குறளும் கூட இதே கருத்தை,

"ஒத்தது அறிவான் உயிர் வாழ்வான் மற்றையான்
செத்தாருள் வைக்கப் படும்"

என்ற குறட்பாவின் மூலம் வலியுறுத்துகிறது. மகாகவி பாரதி இன்னும் விரிவாக இக்கருத்தை அடியிற்கண்டபடி கூறிச் சென்றார்.

"தேடிச் சோறு நிதம் தின்று - பல
சின்னஞ்சிறு கதைகள் பேசி - மனம்
வாடித் துன்பம் மிக உழன்று - பிறர்
வாடப்பல செயல்கள் செய்து - நரை
கூடிக் கிழப்பருவம் எய்தி - கொடும்
கூற்றுக்கு இரையெனப் பின் மாயும் - பல
வேடிக்கை மனிதரைப் போல - நான்
வீழ்வேன் என்று நினைத்தாயோ"

சின்னஞ்சிறு வயதிலிருந்தே ஆன்மீகப் பற்று கொண்டு இம்மேலோரின் அறிவுரையைக் கேட்டு அந்த நெறியிலேயே நடை பழகினார். பள்ளிப் பயிற்சி, கல்லூரிக் கல்வி, வழக்கறிஞர் பணி ஆகியவைகளைத் தொடர்ந்து அவர் சுவாமி சிவானந்தரின் அருள் ஆசியுடன் காந்திஜியின் அஹிம்சைப் படையில் சேர்ந்தது ஒன்றும் ஆச்சரியப்படத்தக்கதல்ல. காந்தியடிகளின் நிர்மாணத் திட்டங்களை மனப்பூர்வமாக ஏற்று, ஹரிஜன முன்னேற்றம், தேசிய கல்வித் திட்டம், பெண் கல்வி, தாய்மொழிப் பணி, முதியோர் கல்வித் திட்டம், கிராம முன்னேற்றம் ஆகியவைகளில் பெரும் அக்கறை எடுத்துக் கொண்டார். ஆங்காங்கே கிராம மக்களை இத்திட்டங்களில் பெரிதும் ஈடுபடுத்தியது அவருடைய சிறப்பாகும். சென்னை மாகாணக் கல்வி மந்திரியாக இருந்த போது அவர் நிறைவேற்றிய திட்டங்களைக் கற்றோரும், மற்றோரும் பாராட்டிப் போற்றுகின்றனர். தமிழ் முதன் மொழி யானது அவர் காலத்தில்தான்; திருக்குறள் பாடத்திட்டத்தில் கட்டாயம் ஆக்கப்பட்டது; தமிழில் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் தொகுக் கப்பட்டது.; சிறுவர் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் வெளியிடப்பட்டது; நூல் நிலையங்களை நெறிப்படுத்தச் சட்டம் நிறைவேற்றப்பட்டது; மகாகவி பாரதியின் நூல்கள் தேசியமயமாக்கப்பட்டன.

நல்ல குடிமக்களை உருவாக்கும் நோக்கத்துடன் குடிமைப் பயிற்சி பள்ளிகளில் கட்டாயப்படுத்தப்பட்டது; ஏட்டுக் கல்வி யோடு தொழிற் கல்வியைப் புகட்ட, (Bifurcation course) தொழில் கல்வி பள்ளிகளில் இடம் பெற்றன. (மனை இயல் கல்வித் திட்டம் இதன் ஒரு பகுதியே என்பது நினைவு கொள்ளத் தக்கது). 'தெள்ளிய ஆலின் சிறு பழத்தொடு விதைதெண்ணீர் கயத்துள் சிறுமீன் சினையிலும் நுண்ணியதேயிலும் அண்ணல்யாவை ஆட்பெரும் படையோடு மன்னர்க்கிருக்க நிழல் தரும் பெரிய மரமாக வளர்கிறதன்றோ? இதேபோல் அன்று விதைக்கப்பட்ட இந்த மனையியல் திட்ட விதை சிறியதுதான். ஆனால் இன்று அவ்வித்து பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான பெண்களுடன் டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அரவணைப்பில் ஸ்ரீ அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் பல்கலைக்கழகமாக பரிணமித்துள்ளது என்பது மிகையாகாது. "எண்ணிய எண்ணியாங்கு எய்துவ எண்ணிய திண்ணியராகப் பெரின்" என்ற வள்ளுவர் வாக்கு அவருடைய வாழ்வில் நிரூபிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. கீதையின் தலையாய உபதேசமே "பக்தி செய்து பிழைக்க வேண்டும்; பலன் கருதாது உழைக்க வேண்டும்" என்பதாம். இவ்வொற்ற உபதேசம், நம் அய்யாவால் ஒவ்வொரு மூச்சிலும், பேச்சிலும் கடைப்பிடிக்கப்பட்டது.

அச்சமின்மை, விடாமுயற்சி, நாட்டுப்பற்று, கடமை உணர்ச்சி, கடவுள் பக்தி, நன்றியுடைமை ஆகிய குணப் பண்புகளைக் கொண்டு ஒரு உருவத்தை அமைத்து உயிர் ஊட்டினால் அது அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்மாகத்தான் இருக்கும்.

இத்தகைய மேதையால் 1930 ஆம் ஆண்டில் ஒரே ஒரு மாணவனோடு ஆரம்பிக்கப்பட்ட ஸ்ரீ ராமகிருஷ்ணா மிஷன் வித்தியாலயம் ஆல் போன்று விரிந்து பரந்து அருகு போல் வேருன்றி ஆயிரக் கணக்கான மாணவ மாணவியர்க்கு பொதுக்கல்வி, தொழிற்கல்வி, போதனா முறைக் கல்வி ஆகியவைகளை வாரி வழங்கும் பெருமை பெற்றுள்ளது. இந்த அருளாளருடைய வழி நின்று நாம் இயன்ற அளவு சமுதாயப்பணியில் ஈடுபடுவதே நாம் அவருக்குச் செலுத்தும் அஞ்சலியாம்.

வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்ந்த பெருந்தகை

சந்திரகாந்தி கோவிந்தராஜுலு

அறிவுச் சுடராகவும், ஆன்மீக வித்தகராகவும், வாழ்வின் வழி காட்டியாகவும் திகழ்ந்த அய்யா டாக்டர் டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்களைப் போற்றும் வகையில் மலர் வெளியிடுதல் பெரிதும் மகிழ்ச்சிக்குரிய செய்தியாகும். ஆன்றவிந்தடங்கிய கொள்கைச் சான்றோராய் வாழ்ந்த அவர் 'செயற்கரிய செய்வர் பெரியர்' என்ற குறளுக்கு இலக்கியமாய்த் திகழ்ந்தவர். இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர், சுவாமி விவேகானந்தர் போன்ற சான்றோர்களின் கொள்கைகளிலும், தேசப்பிதா காந்தி யடிகளின் நாட்டுத் தொண்டிலும் ஆழ்ந்த ஈடுபாடு உடையவர். செயல்திறன் மிக்கவராய் அவர் நாட்டிற்கு ஆற்றிய பணிகள் பல. கல்வி, அரசியல், சமூகம், ஆன்மீகம் எனப் பல துறைகளில் அவர் தன்னலமற்ற சேவை செய்துள்ளார்.

கல்வித் துறையில் அய்யா அவர்கள் காட்டிய ஆர்வம் தனிச் சிறப்பு உடையது. இராமகிருஷ்ணா வித்யாலயத்தைச் சார்ந்த கல்வி நிறுவனங்களும், அவினாசிலிங்கம் டிரஸ்ட் கல்வி நிலையங்களும் அவர் கல்விப் பணியின் விளக்கங்களாகும். 1930ல் அரிசன வகுப்பைச் சேர்ந்த ஒரு சிறுவனுடன் குறைந்த மூலதனத்தில் தொடங்கப்பட்ட வித்தியாலயம் இன்று உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளிகள், கல்லூரிகள், பாலிடெக்னிக், விவசாயப் பள்ளி, ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சி நிறுவனம், தொழில் பயிற்சி நிறுவனம் எனப் பல கிளைகளாக வளர்ந்திருப்பது வியப்பூட்டுகிறது. 'வித்தியாலயம் ஆயிரங்காலத்துப் பயிர்' என அய்யா அவர்கள் குறிப்பிட்டது மிகவும் பொருத்தமாகும்.

தமிழகத்தில் முதன் முதலாக மனையியலுக்காக ஒரு கல்லூரியைத் தோற்றுவித்த பெருமை அவரையே சாரும். துணை வேந்தராய்ப் பொறுப்பேற்றிருக்கும் டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அவர்கள் தலைமையில் இன்று, அக்கல்வி நிறுவனம் ஒரு பல்கலைக்கழகமாக (Deemed University) வளர்ந்திருப்பது கோவை மாநகருக்கே பெருமை சேர்ப்பதாகும். கடவுள் பக்தி, அன்பு, ஒழுக்கம், சேவை மனப்பான்மை, உழைப்பு ஆகிய அரிய பண்புகளைத் தரவல்ல கல்வியே அங்கு போதிக்கப்படுகிறது.

பல பயிற்சி முகாம்கள் அங்கு நடத்தப்படுகின்றன. மாத ஏடு களும், பல நூல்களும் வெளியிடப்படுகின்றன.

ஆதாரக் கல்வி, முதியோர் கல்வி, முறைசாராக் கல்வி யிலும் அய்யா அவர்கள் தனிக்கவனம் செலுத்தினார்.

தமிழுக்கும் தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிக்கும் அவர் செய்துள்ள தொண்டு ஒப்பற்றதாகும். 'தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிக் கழகம்' எனும் ஓர் அமைப்பை ஏற்படுத்தித் தமிழ்க் களஞ்சியம் பத்துத் தொகுதி களையும், குழந்தைகள் கலைக் களஞ்சியம் பத்துத் தொகுதி களையும் வெளியிட்டார். காந்தியடிகளின் எழுத்தோவியங்கள் பதினேழு தொகுதிகளாக வெளியிட உதவினார். 1963ல் விவே கானந்தர் நூற்றாண்டு விழாவில் 'திருக்குறள் ஆய்வு நூல்' ஒன்றும் வெளியிடப்பட்டது.

தமிழகத்தில் அமைக்கப்பட்ட முதலாவது அமைச்சரவை யில் கல்வி அமைச்சராகப் பணியாற்றிய அய்யா அவர்களால் கல்வி உலகம் அடைந்த நன்மைகள் பல. கல்வி நிலையங்களில் தமிழைப் பயிற்று மொழியாக்கினார். பள்ளிக் கல்வியில் திருக் குறளைக் கட்டாயப் பாடமாக்கினார். கைத்தொழில் கற்றல், குடிமைப் பயிற்சி, சமூக நூல் பாடம், தேசிய மாணவர் படை அமைக்கும் திட்டம் ஆகியன பள்ளிக் கல்வியில் இவர் செய்த புதிய சீர்திருத்தங்களாகும்.

1970-ல் இந்திய அரசு அய்யா அவர்களின் சேவையைப் பாராட்டி 'பத்மபூஷண்' விருது அளித்துச் சிறப்பித்தது. 1978-ல் தமிழக அரசு 'செந்தமிழ்ச் செல்வர்' பட்டமும், தஞ்சைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் 1984-ல் 'டாக்டர் ஆப் சயின்ஸ்' பட்டமும் வழங்கிப் பெருமை கொண்டன.

இங்ஙனம் எல்லாத் துறைகளிலும் சாதனைகளைப் படைத்த டாக்டர். டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் நம்மிடையே என்றும் வாழ்பவராவார். அவர் வளர்த்த நிறுவ னங்கள் என்றும் நிலைத்து அவர் புகழ் பரப்புவன. 'என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே' என்று தன்னலமற்று வாழ்ந்த அப்பெருந்தகையைப் பின்பற்றி வாழ்வோமாக.

MY ASSOCIATION WITH AYYA

S.R. P. Ponnuswamy Chettiar

I met Sri T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar for the first time, when he stood for the Municipal election, along with the Congress leader Sri C.P. Subbiah Mudaliar. We were informed that Jutakawallas in Chetty Street (Raja Street and Sulivan Street Junction) were taking Rs.200 from Sri K.V. Chinnappa Chettiar for their votes. I informed Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar that we should pay the money that they have spent for votes. Sri Chettiar told me that no money should be given for votes. Then I understood the principles, Sri Chettiar had for his elections. Although competition was very keen, finally Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar and Sri Subbiah Chettiar won the election. My brother and uncle were working for Sri K.V. Chinnappa Chettiar.

Sri Avinashilingam used to call me affectionately **Ponnu**. I invited him to lay the foundation stone for the Devanga High School, in 1948, which was a palmgrove with burial ground and public latrine. He first hesitated for a moment but his faith made him lay the foundation. During the construction of the school, whenever he used to meet me, he asked me how the building work was progressing? I used to tell him that I was living on the site to supervise the building work, ignoring even my business. As the building was completed, I asked him to give grants for the building. He asked me whether, I have applied to the Government for the construction of the building. I told him that we were mere business people, and did not know the rules and regulations of the Government and requested him to forgive the lapse due to our ignorance and to grant the sanction for the building as a special case. He did accept our request for which I am ever grateful.

I remember vividly the foundation day. On that day it was raining heavily and people could not sit on the ground. I approached the timber merchants in the neighbourhood and took bamboos and laid them on the ground and planks were laid on the bamboos and then rexine cloth was spread. Ayya laid the foundation stone for the school. Ayya often thereafter asked me about the progress of the building. After the Municipal election

was over, Sri T.S. Avinashilingam could not attend the council meeting, because he was arrested. His father Sri Subramania Chettiar was keen that his son Sri T.S.Avinashilingam Chettiar should become the zamindar of the **Availlalpoomputti**. When Sri Avinashilingam was transferred from Coimbatore to other places, his father and I went to the railway station to see him off. His father wept on seeing his son, transferred to some other place.

When Sri Avinashilingam was the Minister, I used to meet him whenever I went to Madras. It was usually breakfast time and he used to offer some coffee. Only on account of his encouragement my school has attained the present position.

In 1988, I requested Sri Avinashilingam to visit my school and see its 40 years of growth after he had laid the foundation. I told him that 99 percent of children in the neighbourhood were uneducated at the time of the foundation and after 40 years, 99 percent were educated. He praised me and the members of the school for acheiving this success in a central place in Coimbatore.

None in Tamil Nadu had sacrificed so much of his life for the sake of the nation and the education of children as Ayya had done.

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
TAMIL SCHOLARS

சிறந்தவர்கள் நீங்குகையில் சிந்தை அழுகிறதே...!

சௌந்தரா கைலாசம்

இறைமை நினைவென்ற எழிலார் விளக்கேற்றி
அறமென்ற பாதையிலே அஹிம்சையெனும் கோலூன்றித்
தடை நீக்கி நடைபோட்டுச் சத்தியத்து மாளிகையை
அடைவதற்கு வழிசொன்ன அருளார் காந்தியினைக்
காலமெல்லாம் பின்பற்றிக் காசினியில் வாழ்ந்திருந்த
சிலர் அவினாசி லிங்கத் திருப்பெயரார் !
நேற்றிரவுப் போதினிலே நீளுலகைத் தான் துறந்து
போற்றும் உயர்சொர்க்கப் பூமிக்குச் சென்று விட்டார்
பிறந்தவர்கள் நீங்குவது பேருலக விதியெனினும்
சிறந்தவர்கள் நீங்குகையில் சிந்தை அழுகிறதே!
பாதாளம் நோக்கியே பாய்கின்ற மாந்தரினைச்
சேதாரம் இல்லாத திசையில் செலுத்திடவே
புவியினுள் எப்புறத்தும் பேரயத்தேடிப் பார்த்தாலும்
அவினாசி லிங்கம்போல் யாரும் கிடைப்பாரோ?
வெள்ளை இருட்டை விலக்கிவிட என வந்த
பிள்ளை குமரன் பிறந்த திருப்பூரில்
"ஐயா" பிறந்ததனால் அயராமல் நாட்டுக்கு
மெய்யாகப் பாடுபட்டு மெத்த நலம் தேடிவைத்தார்!
விடுகின்ற மூச்செல்லாம் வீணுக்குப் போகாமல்
சுடுகின்ற தீமைகள் துரத்திவிடத் தான் என்பார்!
சிறைக் கோட்டம் அத்தனையும் தேசத்து விடுதலைக்கு
மறையோதும் நல்வேள்விச் சாலைகளாய் மாற்றி வைத்தார்!
எல்லோர்க்கும் கல்வியெனும் இன்னமுதை நல்குதற்கு
பல்லாற்றா னும்முயன்ற பண்பாளர் இவராகும்!
அந்நாள் அவர்விதைத்த கல்விவிதை வானுயர
இந்நாளில் வளர்ந்தோங்கி எழிலை விரிக்கிறது!

ஆங்கிலத்து மோகத்துக்(கு) ஆட்பட்ட நிலைமாற்றி
பாங்குடைய நம்தமிழில் படிக்கும்படி செய்தார் !
பரமஹம்ஸர் சொன்னவிதம் பாருலகில் வாழ்வதற்குப்
பெருமுயற்சி செய்த ஒருபெரியார் அவராவார் !
சிவானந்தர் சீடராய்த் திகழ்ந்து, துயருக்கு
நிவாரணம் தரவந்த நிர்மலராய் அவரிருந்தார் !
நல்ல மனத்தோடு நல்லதையே செய்தவரை
வல்லான் அருள்காட்டி வாவென் றழைத்துவிட்டான் !
இறைவன் விதித்தவிதி எவர் மாற்றக் கூடுமிங்கே ?
கறையின்றி வாழ்ந்திருந்த கண்ணியரின் நல்ஆன்மா
சாந்தி பெறட்டுமெனச் சரவணனை வேண்டிடுவோம் !
ஏந்தல்புகழ் உலகில் இமயம் போல் ஓங்கட்டும் !
அவரமைத்த நிறுவனத்தைச் சார்ந்தவர்கள் யாவர்க்கும்
அவர்பிரிவைத் தாங்குகிற வலிமை இறையருளட்டும் !

நாதன்தாள் வாழ்க !

(தினமணி நாளிதழில் நவம்பர் 21 1991
அன்று வெளியான கவிதை)

அமரர் திரு தி.சு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் மிகச் சிறந்த தேசியவாதி. காந்திய வழியில் தம் வாழ்நாளைக் கழித்த தியாகி. கோயமுத்தூர் ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்தின் தோற்றத்திற்கும் வளர்ச்சிக்கும் முழு முதற் காரணமானவர்.

அந்தப் பெரியவர் 1986ல் எழுதி வெளியிட்ட "The Sacred Touch" என்ற ஆங்கில நூலின் தமிழாக்கம் இப்பொழுது "அருளின் ஆற்றல்" என்ற தலைப்பில் வெளி வந்துள்ளது. ஆசிரியருடன் நெருங்கிய தொடர்பு கொண்டவரும் இந்நாள் மகாராஷ்டிர மாநில ஆளுநரும் ஆன திரு சி. சுப்பிரமணியம் அவர்கள் முன்னம் ஆங்கில நூலுக்கு அளித்த தமது மதிப்புரை யில் குறிப்பிட்டது போல இந்நூல் தனிப்பட்ட ஒருவரின்

சுயசரிதையைச் சொல்வதோடு அவருடைய அரை நூற்றாண்டுக்கும் அதிகமான சிறப்பான தியாக வாழ்க்கையையும் படம் பிடித்துக் காட்டுகிறது.

1921 இளங்கலை வகுப்பில் படித்துக் கொண்டிருந்த ஆசிரியருக்கு பகவான் இராமகிருஷ்ணரைப் பற்றி அதிகம் தெரியாது. சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரின் குரு என்பதை மட்டும் அறிவார்.

நண்பர் சின்னு (பிற்காலத்தில் சித்பவானந்தர்) சென்னையில் இராமகிருஷ்ணர் மடம் இருப்பதையும் இராமகிருஷ்ணரின் நேரடிச் சீடர்கள் இருவர் அங்கு வர இருப்பதையும் அவரிடம் கூறுகிறார். விவேகானந்தரின் சகோதர துறவிகளைத் தரிசிக்கும் ஆர்வத்தில் இருவரும் மடத்துக்குச் செல்கின்றனர்.

ராஜா மஹாராஜ் என்று அழைக்கப் பெற்ற சுவாமி பிரம்மானந்தரையும் மகா புருஷ் மஹாராஜ் என்று அழைக்கப் பெற்ற சுவாமி சிவானந்தரையும் தரிசிக்கின்றனர்.

ராஜா மஹராஜ் அதிகம் பேசவில்லை. மஹா புருஷ மஹராஜ் தடையின்றி பேசுகிறார். பெயர், ஊர், கல்லூரி, பயிலும் வகுப்பு ஆகியவற்றைக் குறித்து அன்புடன் விசாரிக்கிறார். விடை பெற்றுக் கொண்ட போது மறுபடி வருமாறு கூறுகிறார்.

அந்தச் சந்திப்புத் தொடர்கிறது. மீண்டும் மீண்டும் அவினாசிலிங்கம் சுவாமி சிவானந்தரைச் சந்திக்கிறார்.

இரண்டு ஆண்டுகள் கழித்து மந்திரோபதேசமும் பெறுகிறார்.

இந்நூலாசிரியரின் எழுத்துக்களிலே சுவாமி சிவானந்தரின் தோற்றத்தைக் காண முடிகிறது. அவருடைய அருள் உள்ளத்தை அறிந்து கொள்ள முடிகிறது. உலக பந்தங்கள் மட்டுமல்ல உடல் நலமின்மை கூட அவரை ஒன்றும் செய்யவில்லை என்பதை

அறிய முடிகிறது. அவருடைய ஆன்மிக சக்தியின் ஆற்றலை உணர முடிகிறது.

தேசத் திருப்பணியில் தம்மை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொள்ளத் துடிக்கும் ஆசிரியருக்கு சுவாமி சிவானந்தர் அனுமதி தந்து அறிவுரை வழங்குவதைப் பற்றிப் படிக்கும் போது சுவாமி சிவானந்தரின் சிறப்பியல்புகளைத் தெரிந்து கொள்ள முடிகிறது.

இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர், சுவாமி விவேகானந்தர் ஆகியோரைப் பற்றிய செய்திகளும் இராமகிருஷ்ண மிஷனின் குறிக்கோள்களும் அது தோன்றி வளர்ந்த வரலாறும் இந்நூலில் மிகச் சிறப்பாக பேசப்பட்டுள்ளன.

கல்வியைப் பற்றி சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரின் கருத்துக்கள் அடங்கிய ஒரு தனி அத்தியாயமே இந்நூலில் இடம் பெற்றுள்ளது. கல்வியாளர்கள் எல்லோருமே படித்து பயன் பெற வேண்டிய பகுதி இது.

சொந்த வாழ்க்கையைப் பற்றிய செய்தி மிகவும் குறைவாகவும் பொது வாழ்க்கையை பற்றிய செய்திகளும் அதன் தொடர்பான நிகழ்ச்சிகளுமே மிகுதியாகவும் இப்புத்தகத்திற்கு உள்ளடக்கமாய் உள்ளன.

இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்தை நிறுவுவதற்கும் அதை நடத்துவதற்கும் சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரின் அருள்மொழிகள் காட்டும் அற வழியிலேயே சென்றுள்ள ஆசிரியரின் முயற்சிகள் புல்லரிக்க வைக்கின்றன.

எழுச்சி மிகுந்த உப்புச் சத்தியாகிரஹத்தில் நாடு முற்றிலும் ஈடுபட்ட பொழுது, காந்தியடிகள் கூறிய அறிவுரைகளையும், 'ஹரிஜன்' என்னும் வார இதழுக்கு அப்பெயர் ஏன், எப்படிக் கொடுக்கப் பெற்றது என்பதையும், காந்தியடிகளின் சுற்றுப்பயண நிகழ்ச்சிகளையும் இப்புத்தகத்தில் படிக்கும் போது உணர முடிகிறது.

காந்தியடிகளின் கேரளச் சுற்றுப்பயணத்தின் போது கௌமுகி என்ற ஒரு பதினாறு வயதுப் பெண் "ஹரிஜன்" நிதிக்காகத்தான் அணிந்திருந்த நகைகள் அனைத்தையும் மனமு வந்து கழட்டிக் கொடுத்த நிகழ்ச்சியில் மனம் நெகிழ்ந்து அடிகள் அதைப் பற்றி எழுதியிருப்பது, இராமநாமத்தின் சிறப்பைப் பற்றி அவர் கூறியவை ஆகிய பல செய்திகள் இந்நூலுக்குச் சுவை கூட்டுவதுடன் மட்டுமல்லாமல் இந்த யுகத்தின் ஒரு மஹா புருஷனின் விசுவரூபத்தை நாம் தரிசிக்கவும் உதவுகின்றன.

"இமயமலைப் பயணம் ஒரு ஆன்மிக அனுபவம்" என்னும் தலைப்பில் எழுதப்பட்டுள்ள அத்தியாயம் பயனுள்ள ஒரு பயணக் கட்டுரையாக அமைந்துள்ளது. கேதாரநாத்தையும் பத்ரிநாத்தையும் பற்றிய செய்திகளை ஒரு கதாசிரியரைப் போல மிகச் சுவையாக வருணித்து, நம்மையும் அந்த இடங்களுக்கு அழைத்துச் சென்று விடுகிறார் ஆசிரியர்.

உண்மையான தேச பக்தரின் வாழ்க்கை என்பது அந்தத் தேசத்தின் வரலாற்றுடன் முழுக்க முழுக்க ஒன்றியது என்பதை நிரூபிப்பது போலச் சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தின் வெவ்வேறு கட்டங்கள் தெளிவாகவும் விவரமாகவும் இந்நூலில் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளன.

காந்தியடிகளுடன் நெருங்கிப் பழகும் பெரு வாய்ப்பைப் பெற்றிருந்த ஆசிரியர், அண்ணலின் குணநலன்களையும் இந்நூலில் சுவைபடக் கூறியுள்ளார்.

அமெரிக்க ஐக்கிய நாடுகளின் சார்பில் வந்த அழைப்பை ஏற்று அமெரிக்காவில் சுற்றுப் பயணம் செய்து அந்த அனுபவங்கள் எல்லாம், மிகவும் பயனுள்ள முறையில் இருந்ததாக ஆசிரியர் இந்நூலில் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார்.

தமிழில் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் உருவாக்குவதற்கு ஆசிரியர் மேற்கொண்ட பணிகள், அவர் தாம் மேற்கொள்ளும் எந்தப்

பணியிலும் காட்டும் ஈடுபாட்டையும் முயற்சியையும் புலப் படுத்துகின்றன.

காந்தியடிகளை முழுமையாகத் தெரிந்து கொள்ள உதவும் வண்ணம் அடிகளின் நூல் எல்லாம் தொகுத்து அவற்றைத் தமிழில் பதினேழு தொகுதிகளாகக் கொண்டு வரும் பணியைத் தமிழ்நாடு காந்தி நினைவு நிதி ஏற்ற போது அதற்கான குழுவின் தலைமைப் பொறுப்பு ஏற்று அப்பணியை ஆசிரியர் செவ்வனே நிறைவேற்றியிருக்கிறார்.

தம் சொத்துகளைக் கொண்டு பெண்களுக்கென ஓர் அறக்கட்டளை நிறுவி, பள்ளிக்கான நிலம் கிடைத்த விதம் பற்றி ஆசிரியர் எழுதியுள்ளவற்றைப் படிக்கும் போது பகவான் இராம கிருஷ்ணரின் அருளாற்றலும் இறைவனுடைய கருணை யும் நம்மை வியக்க வைத்து விடுகின்றன.

இராம கிருஷ்ணர், அன்னை சாராமணி தேவியார், சுவாமி விவேகானந்தர், அண்ணல் காந்தியடிகள் ஆகியோர் வாழ்ந்து காட்டிய உயர்ந்த இலட்சியங்களை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டு மனையியல் கல்லூரி தொடங்கப் பெற்றது என ஆசிரியர் குறிப்பிடுகிறார்.

எப்படி விவேகானந்தர் பெண்களை மதித்தாரோ அப்படியே இந்நூலாசிரியரும் பெண்களை மதித்தார் என்பதை இப்புத்தகத்தின் வாயிலாகத் தெரிந்து கொள்ள முடிகிறது.

சகோதரி நிவேதிதை இந்தியப் பெண்களுக்குச் சேவை செய்யவும், பெண் குழந்தைகளுக்குக் கல்வி அளிக்க முன் வந்த போது விவேகானந்தர் "ஒரு தாயின் இதயம், ஒரு வீரனின் மன உறுதி, தென்றலின் இனிமை ஆகியவற்றுடன் இந்தியக் குழந்தை களுக்கு நீ தாயாகவும், சேவகியாகவும் தோழியாகவும் திகழ் வாய்" என்று அவரை வாழ்த்தினாராம்.

மனையியல் கல்லூரிக்கும் மற்ற நிறுவனங்களுக்கும் இத்த கைய பண்பும் தாயுள்ளமும் கொண்ட ஒருவர் வேண்டும் என

அவற்றின் நிறுவனரான இந்நூலின் பேராசிரியர் இறைவனை வேண்டிப் பிரார்த்தனை செய்தாராம்.

அதற்கேற்ப இறைவன் அருளால் மிகச் சிறந்த ஒருவரான திருமதி ராஜம்மாள் பி. தேவதாஸ் மனையியல் கல்லூரிக்கு பொறுப்பேற்றுக் கொண்டாராம்.

இச்செய்திகளைப் படிக்கும் போது ஆசிரியர் உண்மையிலே மனையியல் கல்லூரியின்பால் எவ்வளவு ஈடுபாடு கொண்டிருந் தார் என்பது புலனாகிறது.

திருமதி ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் மிகச் சிறந்த கல்வியாளர். பல உயர்ந்த விருதுகளைப் பெற்றவர். அறிவுலகத்தில் பெரிதும் மதிக்கப் பெறுபவர்.

அம் மனையியல் கல்லூரி இன்று நமது பாரத நாட்டி லேயே மிகப் பெரியதும் தலை சிறந்ததுமான நிறுவனமாக வளர்ந்து திகழ்கிறது. உலகெங்கிலுமிருந்து பல மாணவர்கள் அங்கு பயில வருகின்றார்கள்.

இதற்குக் காரணம் அதை நிறுவ திரு அவினாசிலிங்க னாரின் இறை நெறியை சார்ந்த முயற்சியும் திருமதி ராஜம்மாள் பி. தேவதாஸின் உழைப்பும் என்பது இப்புத்தகம் நம்மை உணர வைக்கிறது.

361 பக்கங்களைக் கொண்ட இந்த அருமையான நூல் சற்றும் அலுப்புத் தட்டாத வகையில் எளிமையான, அழகிய நடையில் எழுதப் பெற்றுள்ளது.

காந்தியத்தின் அமைதியும், ஆழமான தன்னடக்கமும், ஆடம்பரமற்ற தன்னம்பிக்கையும், எளிமையும் இந்த நூலில் வரிக்கு வரி வெளிப்படுகின்றன என்பது இதன் தனிச் சிறப்பு.

இதை மொழி பெயர்த்த வித்யாலய உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளி யின் தலைமை ஆசிரியர் திரு அண்ணாமலை அவர்களை எவ்வளவு பாராட்டினாலும் தகும்.

மேலும் ஒரு சிறப்பு என்னவென்றால் இப்புத்தகத்தில் அச்சுப் பிழைகளைக் காண்பது அரிதாயிருப்பதே !

மொத்தத்தில் தமிழர்கள் படித்துப் பயன் பெற்று, தங்கள் வருங்கால சந்ததிகளுக்காகப் போற்றிப் பாதுகாக்க வேண்டிய அருமையான நூல் "அருளின் ஆற்றல்"(தினமணி நாளிதழில் வெளியானது . டிசம்பர் 21)

அய்யா அவர்களை அவருடைய 'அருளின் ஆற்றல்' வழியாகக் கண்டு கொண்டோம்.

அய்யா அவினாசிலிங்கனாரின் தமிழ் நெஞ்சம்

சி. பாலசுப்ரமணியன்

"ஆறறி வார்எங்கள் அண்ணல் பெருமையை
யாரறி வார்இந்த அகலமும் நீளமும்"

என்ற திருமூலர் வாக்குதான் அய்யா திரு. அவினாசி லிங்கம் அவர்களைப் பற்றி நினைக்கும்பொழுது என் நினை விற்கு வருகிறது. மாணிக்கத்துள்ளே மரகத சோதி போல இந்தப் பிறவியில் இயன்றது செய்ததெல்லாம் மனதில் விரி கிறது. "தேடிச் சோறு நிதம் தின்று சின்னஞ்சிறு கதைகள் பேசும் பல வேடிக்கை மனிதரைப் போல" வெற்று வாழ்க்கை வாழாமல், கிருதயுகத்தைக் கேடின்றி நிறுத்த விரதங்கொண்டு அய்யா அவர்கள் ஆற்றியிருக்கும் பணிகள் பலதிறப்பட்டன; பல்துறைச் சார்ந்தவை.

1984 ஆம் ஆண்டு மார்ச் திங்கள் 24ஆம் நாள் தஞ்சைத் தமிழ்ப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் அவர்கட்கு 'அறிவியல் முது முனைவர்' பட்டம் வழங்கிப் பெருமை பெற்றதை எண்ணிப் பார்க்கின்றேன்.

"இறைச் சிந்தனை, ஆன்மீகச் சான்றோர்கள் பகவான் இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர், விவேகானந்தரிடம் எல்லையில்லா ஈடுபாடு, சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரிடம் பேரின்ப பெரும் பக்தி, தேசப்பிதா காந்தியடிகள் நடந்த வழித்தடத்தில் இதயம் பதித்தக் கொள்கை, உலக நோக்கு, பரந்த கண்ணோட்டம், தெளிந்த பாதை, எதிலும் வீரியப்பண்புடன் நம்பிக்கை வைத்துச் செயல் படும் நிதானம் இனிமையிலும் ஒரு கண்டிப்பு, வாக்கிலும், விழி யிலும் நிறைந்த அற வழி, வாய்மையில் அரசோச்சும் தூய்மை, வெள்ளைக் கதராடை, கூப்பிய கரங்கள், ஆங்கிலம், தமிழ் இரு மொழியிலும் தனித்திறமை என்றாலும் தமிழில் எண்ண, எழுத, செயல்படத் துடிக்கும் மகா மனிதச் செல்வம் தான் அய்யா திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் எனக் கூறலாம்.

சுவடுகளை மண்ணில் மட்டுமல்லாமல் மக்கள் மனத்தில் பதிக்கின்ற நல்லவர்களைப் பாராட்டுவதுடன் வணங்கவும் தோன்றுகிறது. தனது வாழ்க்கைப் பாதையில் புதிய, புதிய சிந்தனைச் சுவடிகளைப் பதித்துக் கொண்டு செல்லுகிறவர் களைத்தான் இவ்வுலகம் கைகாட்டி மரமாக வழிப்பாதையில் கைவிளக்காக ஆக்கிக் கொள்கிறது. அதிலும் கல்விப் பணிக்குத் தங்களையே கொடுத்துக் கொள்ளுகிற மனிதர்களைத்தான் இந்த உலகம் இரு கைநீட்டி வரவேற்கிறது. காலமெல்லாம் பாராட்டு கிறது!

1903 மே திங்கள் 5-ஆம் நாள் பிறந்து 1991 நவம்பர் 21 மாலை வரை வாழ்ந்த அய்யா அவர்கள் கல்விப் பணியை தனது உயிர் மூச்சாகக் கொண்டவர்கள்.

மத்திய சட்ட அவை, பேரவை, சென்னைச் சட்டப் பேரவை ஆகியவற்றில் ஏறத்தாழ நாற்பது ஆண்டுகள் பணி யாற்றியவர்கள். விடுதலை பெற்ற இந்தியாவில் தமிழகத்தின் முதல் கல்வி அமைச்சர். மாநிலக் கல்வி அமைச்சராக இருந்த மூன்று ஆண்டுக் காலத்தில் தமிழுக்கும், தமிழ் நாட்டுக்கும் பல அரிய பணிகள் செய்தவர்கள்.

பள்ளிகளிலும், கல்லூரிகளிலும் பாடங்களைத் தமிழ் மொழி வாயிலாகக் கற்பிக்க வழி செய்தார்கள். அண்ணா மலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தில் 15.10.1946 அன்று நடைபெற்ற பட்டமளிப்பு விழாப் பேருரையிலேயே இதனை வெளிப்படுத்து கின்றார்கள். 'அன்பின் ஆற்றல்' என்ற தலைப்பில் அவர்கள் எழுதியுள்ள நூல் (பக்.93) இதனைப் பின்வருமாறு குறிப்பிடு கின்றது :

"சர்வகலாசாலைகளின் கடமை அவற்றின்பால் வரும் மாணவ மாணவிகளுக்குக் கல்வி போதிப்பது குறித்துத் தெளி வாகச் சிந்திக்க வேண்டும். ஆங்கில மொழியிலேயே கல்வி பயிற்றுவது நல்லதல்ல. கல்வி பெற்ற மாணவர்களுக்கும், சாதா ரண மக்களுக்குமிடையே இந்த ஆங்கிலக் கல்வி ஒரு பெரும் பிளவை உண்டு பண்ணியிருக்கிறது. அமெரிக்காவில் சாதாரண

விறகு வெட்டியாக இருந்த ஆபிரகாம் லிங்கன் அந்நாட்டுக் குடியரசின் தலைவனாகும் தகுதி பெற முடிந்ததென்றால் அதற்குத் துணையாய் அமைந்து எது? எவரும் தாம் கற்க விரும்பிய வற்றையெல்லாம் தாய் மொழியிலேயே எளிதில் கற்கும் வாய்ப்பு அங்கு அமைந்திருந்தமையே ஆகும். நம் நாட்டில் ஆங்கிலம் தெரியாத தெரியமுடியாத அறிவாளிகள் எத்தனையோ பேர் உயர்ந்த ஞானத்தை அடையவும், உயர்ந்த பணிகளைச் செய்யவும் சந்தர்ப்பமின்றித் தயங்குகின்றார்கள். அவர்களின் அறிவும், ஆற்றலும் இன்று நாட்டிற்குப் பயன்படாமல் வீணாகின்றன. எனவே, சாதாரண மக்களும் எத்துறையிலாயினும் உயர்ந்த நிலை பெற்று, நாட்டிற்குப் பயன் தர வேண்டுமென்று நினைக்கின்ற இக்காலத்தில் கல்லூரிகளில், பல்கலைக்கழகங்களில் அதற்கேற்றவாறு தாய்மொழியில் கல்வி பயிற்றுவிக்கும் முறை செயல்பட செயல் பெற வேண்டியது மிக அவசியமாகும்" தாய் மொழி வழிக்கல்வி குழந்தைப் பருவம் முதல் வளர்க்கப் பட வேண்டுமென்பதை அய்யா அவர்கள் பல நிலைகளில் வற்புறுத்தி எழுதியுள்ளார்கள். தாய் மொழிக் கல்வி என்ற சிந்தனைக் குழந்தைப் பருவம் முதல் வளர்க்கப்பட வேண்டும். இக் கருத்தினை அவர்களது 'குழந்தை வளர' என்ற தலைப்பில் அமைந்த நூல் முழுவதும் குறிப்பிடுகின்றது.

"ஒருவனுக்கு தெய்வபக்தி எவ்வளவு முக்கியமோ அவ்வளவு முக்கியம் தேச பக்திக்கும் தர வேண்டும்" என்ற சுவாமி விவேகானந்தருடைய கருத்தை இமைப் பொழுதும் மறவாதவர்கள் அய்யா அவர்கள். "தேச பக்தியைத் தன் தாய்மொழியில் தானே ஒருவன் பாடலாக, கதையாக விளக்க முடியும். எந்த பக்தியையும் விளங்கிக் கொண்டு, மற்றவர்களுக்கு விளக்கும் ஆற்றல் தாய் மொழிக்கு மட்டுமே உண்டு. இதைத் தான் நமது தேசப்பிதா காந்தியடிகள் கூட்டங்கள்தோறும் சொல்லிக்கொண்டு வந்தார்". இந்தக் கருத்தினை "நான் கண்ட மகாத்மா" (பக்கம் : 36) என்ற தனது நூலில் விரிவாகவே எழுதியுள்ளார். மாணவர்களுக்குச் சொல்லித்தரப்பட வேண்டிய மழலைக் கல்வி முதல் பல்கலைக் கல்வி வரை தாய் மொழி

யிலேயே அமைதல் வேண்டும். தேச பக்தி, தெய்வ பக்தியை உணர்ந்து உணர்த்தத் தாய் மொழி வழிச் சிந்தனையே சிறந்தது, முதலானது, முடிவானது என்ற அய்யா அவர்களின் கருத்து இந்த நேரத்திலும் நம் ஆழ்ந்த சிந்தனைக்கு உரியதாக அமைந் துள்ளது.

"தந்தது என்தன்னை
கொண்டது உன்தன்னை"

என்ற தேவார அடிகளை அவர்களது வாய் அடிக்கடிச் சொல்லுவதை அவர்களுடன் நெருங்கிப் பழகும் பேறு பெற்ற வர்கள் நன்கு அறிவர். சங்க இலக்கியம் தொடங்கி இக்கால இலக்கியம் வரை, இடத்திற்குத் தகுந்தாற் போல மேற்கோள் காட்டி மிகச் சிறப்பாகப் பேசுவார்கள். அவர்கள் நாவன்மை மிக்க ஒரு நல்ல மேடைப் பேச்சாளரும் ஆவார். பாரதியிடம் அவர்களுக்கிருந்த ஈடுபாடு அளவிட்டு சொல்ல முடியாது.

"சக்தி சக்தி என்று சொல்லு" எனச் சொல்லும் பொழுதே சக்தி பெற்றது போன்ற உணர்வை மற்றவர்களுக்கு ஏற்படுத்தி விடுவார்கள். நாமக்கல் கவிஞர் இயற்றிய,

"இல்லாத காலமில்லை
இருக்கின்ற பொருளுமில்லை
எண்ணாத எண்ணமெலாம்
எண்ணியும் எட்டவில்லை"

என்று தொடங்கும் பாடலில் அவர் உணர்த்த விரும்பிய மனித நேய ஒருமைப்பாட்டை தனது மாணவக் குழந்தைகள் மத்தியில் தவறாமல் எடுத்துக்காட்டுவார்கள். அவர்களிடம் பணியாற்றிய பெரியவர் அமரர் பெரியசாமித் தூரன் அவர்கள் எழுதிய பின்வரும் தமிழ்ப்பாடலில் தனது நெஞ்சைப் பறி கொடுத்தவர்கள் அய்யா அவர்கள்.

"எத்தனை ஜென்மங்கள் வந்து பிறந்தாலும்
இந்திய மண்ணிடை வேண்டுவனே"

எனத் தொடங்குவது அப்பாடல்.

தமிழ்மொழியின் மீது தனக்கிருந்த அளவற்ற ஈடு பாட்டை உணர்த்துவதற்கு வாய்ப்பு கிடைத்த பொழுதெல்லாம் பயன் படுத்திக் கொண்டார்கள். திருக்குறள் மாட்டு அவர்க் கிருந்த பக்தியும், பாசமும் எல்லையற்றது. அதனால்தான் உயர் நிலைப் பள்ளிகளில் திருக்குறளை ஒரு பாடமாக வைக்க அவர் கள் கல்வி அமைச்சராகவிருந்த போது ஆணை பிறப்பித் தார்கள். திருக்குறள் குறித்து, 'வாழ்க்கைத் தத்துவம்' என்ற தனது நூலில் பின்வருமாறு குறிப்பிடுகின்றார்கள். "மக்களின் உணர்ச்சியைப் புரிந்து கொள்ளத் திருக்குறள் சொல்லித்தரு கிறது. எல்லோருக்கும் கல்வி என்பதை வலியுறுத்துகிறது. திருக் குறள் வாழ்க்கை நூல். "எப்பொருள் யார் யார் வாய்க் கேட்பினும், அப்பொருள் மெய்ப் பொருளைக்" காண்பார்கள். மனித வாழ்க்கையில் ஊக்கம் வேண்டும். முயற்சி வேண்டும். வெற்றி வேண்டும். இதனைத் திருக்குறள் வலியுறுத்துகிறது" (பக்கம் : 121). இவ்வாறு திருக்குறளில் தன் மனத்தைப் பதித்த அய்யா அவர்கள் தினசரி காலையில் திருக்குறள் படிக்கும் பழக்கத்தைத் தன் இறுதி மூச்சு அடங்கும் வரை மேற்கொண் டிருக்கிறார்கள். திருக்குறளுக்கு ஒரு நல்ல ஆராய்ச்சிப் பதிப்பு கண்டவர்கள் அய்யா அவர்கள். வேதாந்தச் சிங்கம் சுவாமி விவேகானந்தரின் நூற்றாண்டு விழா நினைவாக வாகீசகலா நிதி கி. வா. ஜகந்நாதன் அவர்களைப் பதிப்பாசிரியராகக் கொண்டு 1963-இல் ஆராய்ச்சிப் பதிப்பொன்று வெளியிட் டார்கள். அதன் முகவுரையில் பின்வருமாறு குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார் கள் "திருக்குறள் தமிழர்களின் தலையாய சொத்து மட்டுமன்று. உலகச் சொத்தும் ஆகும். தமிழ் மக்களை ஊக்குவித்துச் செயல் பட வைக்கும் தனித்திறன் திருக்குறளுக்கு உண்டு". இன்று திருக்குறள் பெருமை பொதுமக்கள் மத்தியில் காலூன்றி வளர் ந்துள்ள பெருமைக்கு அய்யா அவர்கள் ஆற்றியுள்ள திருக்குறள் பணி பெரும்பங்கு வகிக்கிறதென்பது உண்மையாகும்.

பத்துத் தொகுதிகளாகத் தமிழிற் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் ஒன்றைத் தொகுப்பதற்கு எல்லா ஏற்பாடுகளையும் 1947 - இல் அமரர் திரு. பெரியசாமித்தூரன் அவர்களைப் பதிப்பாசிரியராக அமர்த்தி, வெளிக் கொணர்ந்து தமிழ்மொழிக்கு

ஏற்றம் தேடிய பெருமை அவினாசிலிங்கம் அய்யா அவர்களுக்கே உண்டு. இந்திய மொழிகளுக்குள்ளே தோன்றிய முதல் கலைக் களஞ்சியம் இது. பிற இந்திய மொழிகள் இதன் மாதிரியைப் பின்பற்றின. தாய் மொழி வழிக் கல்வியை வளர்க்கும் விரிந்த நோக்குடன் ஆக்கப்பட்ட இத்தொகுதிகள் தமிழுக்கும், மாநில மொழிகளுக்கும் பெருமை தேடித் தந்தன. கலைக் களஞ்சியம் தந்த இவர்களது பெருமையை முதுபெரும் பொள்ளாச்சிக் கவிஞர் கே.சி.என். அருணாசலம் இப்படிக் கவிதை பாடி மகிழ்வார்.

"அவினாசித் தேர்தன்னை
அண்ணாந்து பார்த்துவிடில்
கவிபாடும் புலவருக்குக்
கரும்பாய் இனித்திடுமாம் இக்
கன்னித் தமிழ்நாட்டில் அய்யா
அவினாசி லிங்கத்தை
அறியாதார் யாருண்டு?
கலைக் களஞ்சியமெனும்
கனகமணிப் பெட்டகத்தை இந்தத்
தலைமுறைக்குச் செய்தளித்தப்
பெருஞ்சேவை"

இவ்வாறு பாட்டுத் தலைவனாய், பாடுவதற்கேற்ற பொருள் கொண்டு பெருமையோடு விளங்கிய அய்யா அவர்கள் தமிழ் வளர்க்கும் அரண் செய்யும் வகையில் அரும்பணிகள் ஆற்றியவர்கள். விண்ணின் அழகை மண்ணில் படைக்கும் சக்தி அவர்களுக்கு உண்டென்பதை இறவாத கல்வி நிலையங்கள் இராமகிருஷ்ணமிஷன் வித்தியாலயமும், அவினாசிலிங்கம் கல்வி நிலையங்களும் உணர்த்துகின்றன. இவ்விரு கல்வி நிலையங்களும் கல்வியாலும், விரிவாக்கப் பணிகளாலும், விழாக்களாலும், தனித் திட்டங்களாலும், பயிற்சிகளாலும் தமிழைப் பல நிலைகளில் வளர்த்து வருகின்றன என்பது உண்மை.

தேமதுரத் தமிழோசை உலகெலாம் பரவும் வகை செய்வ தற்கு ஆக்க வழிகளில் உழைத்த வியத்தகு மாமனிதர்தான் அய்யா அவர்கள். வளமான தமிழ்ச்சிந்தனையாலும், வலுவான நூற்களாலும், இறவாத கல்வி நிலையங்களாலும் பல்லாயிரக் கணக்கான தமிழ் மாணவர்களை உலக முழுமைக்கும் அனுப்பி யுள்ள பெருமை அய்யாவுக்கு உண்டு. தேச பக்தியாலும், தமிழ்ப் பற்றாலும், தமிழ்க் கல்விச் சிந்தனையாலும் தன்னை உலகுக்கு வெளிப்படுத்திக் கொண்ட பெருமை அவர்கட்கு உண்டு.

வளமானதொரு ஆலமரம். ஆயிரமாயிரம் ஆண்டுகள் வாழ்ந்த எண்ணிலா இசைப் பறவைகளுக்கு இடம் தந்து மகிழ் வது போல் அவினாசிலிங்கம் என்ற பெயரில் ஒரு சரித்திர சாதனை கொங்கு நாட்டில் பட்டொளி வீசிப் பறந்தது. என்றும் பறந்து கொண்டே இருக்கும். அவர் தலைமையேற்ற இடம் முழுவதிலும் மானுடம் உயிர் கொண்டு தமிழ் மணம் வீசிக் கொண்டே இருக்குமென்பதே உண்மை !

உணர்வைத் தூண்டும் உத்தமப் பேச்சாளர் !

சோ. சத்திய சீலன்

ஏறத்தாழ முப்பது ஆண்டுகள் தமிழகம், மலேசியா, இலங்கை, அமெரிக்கா, கனடா நாடுகளில் தமிழ் மேடைகளில் சொற் பொழிவாளனாக வலம் வந்த எனக்கு மேடைப் பேச்சின் இலக் கணத்தையும் பயனையும் உணர்த்தியவர் நம் அய்யா அவர்கள் தான்.

நன்றாக நினைவிருக்கிறது! அய்யா அவர்கள் நான்கைந்து முறை குருதேவர் ஜயந்தி விழாவிற்கு என்னை அழைத்துப் பேசப் பணித்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

ஓர் ஆண்டு ஆங்கிலப் பேராசிரியர் அ. சீனிவாச ராகவன் அவர்களையும் என்னையும் பேச அழைத்திருந்தார்கள்.

பரமஹம்சரின் தத்துவங்களை மிக அருமையாக விளக் கினார் பேராசிரியர்.

அடுத்து நான் பேச வேண்டும்! உள்ளத்தில் அச்சத் தோடும் உதட்டில் தயக்கத்தோடும் எழுந்தேன்.

இளையவனாகிய நான் இன்றையச் சமுதாய வக்ரங்களை வரிசையாகப் பட்டியலிட்டுக் காட்டி விட்டு ஒவ்வொன்றாக அவற்றிற்கு மருந்து பரமஹம்சர் வழங்கிய ஞான அமுதம்தான் என்று பேசினேன்.

அய்யா அவர்கள் என்ன சொல்வாரோ! தத்துவ ஞானத்தை மட்டுமே பேசாமல் தடம் புரண்டு விட்டோமோ என்று தயங்கி நின்ற போது அய்யா அவர்கள் மேடையிலேயே தாவி வந்து மென்மையாக அணைத்துக் கொண்டு, "நீ பேசியது தான் பேச்சு" என்று தட்டிக்கொடுத்த போது நான் என்னையே அந்த ஞானத்திருக்கடலில் ஒரு துளியாக்கிக் கொண்டேன்.

அதன் பின்னர் அய்யாவின் ஆசியுரையைக் கேட்கும் பேறு பெற்றேன்.

மேடைப் பேச்சிற்கு எத்தனையோ பெருமக்கள் எத்தனையோ இலக்கணங்களை வகுத்துள்ளனர்.

அத்தனை இலக்கணங்களுக்கும் அய்யாவின் பேச்சு இலக்கியமாய் அமையும் என்பது அசைக்க முடியாத பேருண்மை.

தெளிவுறவே அறிந்திடுதல், தெளிவு தர
மொழிந்திடுதல், சிந்திப்பார்க்கே
களிவுரை உள்ளத்தில் ஆனந்தக் கனவுபல
காட்டல், கண்ணீர்த்
துளிவர உள்ளுருக்குதல், இங்கிவை எல்லாம்
நீ அருளும் தொழில்களன்றோ?
ஒளி வளரும் தமிழ்வான்! அடியனேற்கு
இவையனைத்தும் உதவுவாயே!

என்று, தனக்குப் பாட்டுத் திறம் மட்டுமல்ல பேச்சுத் திறமும் எப்படி அமைய வேண்டும் என அன்னைத் தமிழை வேண்டுவான் கவிஞன் பாரதி!

அய்யாவின் உதடுகளிலிருந்து எந்த வார்த்தை உதிர்ந்தாலும், அதனுடைய முழுப் பரிமாணத்தையும் அவர் அறிந்தே இருந்தார்.

அதைக் கேட்பவர்கள் உள்ளம் ஐயம் திரிபு நீங்கி, ஆகா! என்று மகிழும்.

அய்யா அவர்களுடைய பேச்சைக் கேட்டவுடன், சிந்தனை மலர்ந்து, செயலென்னும் காயும்கனியும் விளையத் தொடங்கும்.

அய்யாவின் உள்ளத்தே, ஓங்கிப் பெருகும் உண்மை ஒளியில் பூத்த மலர்களாக அவருடைய பேச்சு வெள்ளம்

போல் வெளி வரும் போது கேட்பவர்கள் தம்மை மறப்பார்கள். ஆனந்தக் கண்ணீர் சிந்துவார்கள்.

அய்யா வழி நடந்தால் வையகம் தழைக்குமே என்னும் ஆனந்தக் கனவும் தோன்றும். பள்ளத்தில் வீழ்ந்திருக்கும் பார்வையற்றோரும் புது வாழ்வு பெற்றுத் தலை நிமிர்ந்து நிற்பார்கள்.

வள்ளுவன் வகுத்த இலக்கணம் அத்தனையும் அய்யாவின் பேச்சுக்கு அற்புதமாகப் பொருந்தும். அய்யாவின் உரை, கேட்டாரைத் தன் வயப்படுத்தும்! கேளாதாரை ஏங்க வைக்கும்!

சொல்லைத் திறனறிந்து சொல்லுவார்! அறமும் பொருளும் அவர் சொல்லை வாகனமாக்கி வந்து மகிழும்!

அஞ்சாமை அவர் சொல்லில் கொலு வீற்றிருக்கும்! தொண்டின் தூய்மையும், வாய்மையின் வலிமையும் அவர் வார்த்தையில் வலம் வரும்!

அமைச்சராகக் கொடி கட்டிப் பறந்த போதும், கல்வியாளராக ஞானக் கடலில் மிதந்த போதும், ஆன்மீகவாதியாகத் திகழ்ந்த போதும், சமுதாயத் தொண்டராகக் கனிந்த போதும் அவர் வாக்கிற்கு எதிர் வாக்கு இந்த வையகத்தில் இல்லை.

"விரைந்து தொழில் கேட்கும் ஞாலம் நிரந்தினிது
சொல்லுதல் வல்லார்ப் பெறின்"

என்னும் குறளுக்கு எடுத்துக்காட்டு, இந்த நூற்றாண்டில் அய்யாவைத் தவிர யாரும் இல்லை.

RAISING THE STATUS OF TAMIL TEACHERS

John Asirvatham

Men may come: Men may go but only a few live even after their death. Purananooru, the ancient Tamil book of the Sangam age rightly puts it in one of its references saying that those who had lived a meaningful life in the world are very few in number - "Payan Uruppa Pirarkkatri Emam Aha In Nilam Andor Cilare" (360:7-9). Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam is one among the few who had lived a glorious life of service and sacrifice. For his services to the field of politics and education, he will be remembered for ages together. Ayya, as many of his associates address him, was an astute politician of high standard, eminent social worker and a lover of Tamil. The Institutions founded by him bear testimony for his selfless service to the Indian society. He had written a number of books in English and Tamil as well, which is again the mark of his profound scholarship. He loved Tamil language and literature very much. As a Tamil scholar, I knew him and was well aquainted with him for the last fifteen years or so. I had heard and read much about him right before I came to be aquainted with him. He had encouraged me in my researh in the field of Tamil literature and with that I have published nearly about a hundred of my articles in the monthly Tamil Magazine being released by his institution, Sri Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University).

Great Inspirer

Through his simple life and patriotism, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam had attracted the attention of Gandhiji himself. According to him Gandhism was the only solution for the ever existing problems of our nation. He stood firmly on the principles of Gandhiji and also inpsired many through his life and services. Whenever I greeted him on occasions such as Deepavali or Pongal, in return he used to send me a booklet on Gandhiji or Swami Vivekananda. He started his political life as a sincere disciple of Gandhiji and with his simplicity and scholarship became the pioneer in the field of education also. He had the

credit of being the Minister of Education for the composite province of Madras soon after independence.

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam Ayya had also written a number of books and his writings became guidelines not only for the people in the political field but also for the urban youth and village folk. Ayya had an impressive personality which he retained till his last days. Right from Babu Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, he had been congratulated by every successor to that high office upto Hon'ble R. Venkataraman, for his selfless services. Great national awards such as Padmabhushan and the Jamnalal Bajaj award have been awarded to him in recognition of his services to the nation. Inspite of all these awards and laurels he was simple which had inspired many. Dr. Ma. Po. Sivagnanam, the eminent political leader and Tamil scholar in his foreword to Ayya's Biography rightly says,

> "It is not possible for all who had been actively involved in the politics to come out and settle down firmly in the calm environment of the field of education. But Ayya could do that".

This simplicity of Ayya and his calm endeavour had inspired many and influenced them to work with him. One among them is **Padmashri** Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who readily gave up her high position in the Central Services and came to him and started working with him as the Director of the great institution in Coimbatore founded by Ayya which now had attained the status of a Deemed University.

Love for Tamil :

Dr. Avinashilingam Ayya had extraordinary love for Tamil language and literature. Kambaramayanam and Thirukkural were his favourite books.

In his Biography we read that Ayya taught his students certain portions of Ramayanam such as Guhappadalam taking much interest. The ethics he taught through these readings of Ramayanam had a lasting impact on his students for a long time. In the early days of his political life Ayya had the tendency of

taking along with him the books like Ramayanam and Thirukkural whenever he went to prison as a freedom fighter. Incidents like this indicate how Ayya had loved Tamil. He reflected this love through his services to it and not merely in words. He did not hesitate to make use of his office while he was a Minister for the advancement of Tamil. He was the one who started an organisation for the development of Tamil which flourished under the name Tamil Vazharchi Kazhakam. (Tamil Academy). Ayya himself was the first Chairman of the Academy. Tamil Academy started functioning very well. The main objective of the Academy was to propagate Tamil and its literature.

The greatest venture launched by Ayya through Tamil Academy for the upgradation of the status of Tamil on par with many developing languages of the modern world, was the compilation of an encyclopaedia in Tamil. Ten volumes had been planned and successfully completed at a cost of Rs.18 lakhs. Many organisations and individuals came forward to help. The Central Government too allocated finance. Tamil scholars enthusiastically came forward and contributed articles to the encyclopaedia.

The work went on from 1948 to 1968. This could be considered as a tremendous achievement of Ayya for Tamil and a mark of Ayya's sincere devotion for Tamil.

Chilambuchelvar Dr. Ma.Po. Sivagnanam in his book entitled, **The History of the Development of Tamil Since Independence** has spoken vividly of Ayya's service to Tamil. Almost one third of that book deals only with the services of Ayya to Tamil. Ayya was such a Tamil lover whose memories will be cherished by Tamils for ages to come. Ayya is the best example for the sincere love one should have for one's mother tongue. Mere praising of Tamil or uttering slogans is not enough. Something concrete should be done for its development.

With holy ashes on his forehead and his spotless Khadi dhoti and kurtha, Ayya reminded us of the traditional Tamil savants and profound scholars of Tamil. We have not lived in the time of Appar or Sundarar or Manickavachakar. Through him

we visualised such great saints of ancient days. He was known for his simplicity and innocence.

Ayya Raised the Status of Tamil Teachers :

Unless the builder is perfect and of good standard, a building cannot be said to be of a good quality. Ayya must have had this idea while he worked for the development of Tamil. Hence, his foremost effort had been to elevate the status of Tamil teachers. Even after Independence, after the English people had left the shores of our country in the early years, English still dominated the field of education. The conditions of the Tamil teachers were pathetic. Only a teacher teaching English was permitted to be the class teacher. Tamil teachers remained only as language teachers. Moreover, Tamil teachers were not treated equal to other teachers in rank and in emoluments. This must have terribly disturbed Ayya's patriotic mind. He vowed to remove this discrimination. Ayya must have felt that unless the fundamental rights of the teachers of the Indian language were restored, the raising of the standard of Tamil too would remain only a dream. He initiated this mission with the establishment of a Poet-Laureate Chair for Tamil in the Government of Tamil Nadu. Poet Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai was appointed as the first court poet of Tamil Nadu. Following this step initiated by Ayya, Tamil teachers came to be respected. Simultaneously,the best post of Professor of Tamil also was created in the University of Madras for the first time. As Minister for Education, he passed orders to the effect that Tamil teachers will be treated on par with the subject teachers thereafter. Tamil teachers started enjoying equal rights as others in promotions and pay scales, and could head institutions in the field of education. He also made Tamil as the medium of instruction in schools.

When we think of Kamba Ramayanam we always remember Chadaiappa Vallal who was said to be the patron of Kambar. Similarly, whenever we think of the great renaissance of Tamil in 20th century, we are to remember Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam.

After a careful study Ayya had come to the conclusion with great confidence, that even all branches of the modern science could be taught through Tamil, for Tamil is one of the

great languages of the world rich in vocabulary. He put into practice this method of teaching science in Tamil in his own institution. Today that institution which stands in his name as Avinashilingam Deemed University, stands as the best model institution for such and many more educational experiments. It can indeed be praised as a **Modern Nalanda**. He tried various other experiments also in the teaching process. He succeeded, with the assistance of his colleagues, in transferring successfully the experiment in urban surrounding to a rural background.

The Tamil University of Thanjavur had rightly conferred on him in 1984 the title of **Doctor of Science**. His services to Tamil thus not only provided recognition for his own self, his close associates also attained similar heights. One among them was Sri. Periaswamy Thooran, the associate of Ayya who was a reputed Tamil scholar in his own right. I should also mention the name of one eminent person at this juncture, as one who rose up to fulfil Ayya's expectations. She is Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, the Vice Chancellor of the Avinashilingam Deemed University.

Providing official status to Tamil is not enough by itself to raise its standard. Delivering Tamil from the confines of educated scholars and making it available and accessible to every ordinary citizen, to be beneficial towards their every day living, was also essential. Ayya worked in this direction also and had widened the circle where literary Tamil could be used by common people too. The Children's Encyclopaedia which he brought in Tamil was one such effort in this direction. He translated Swami Vivekananda's lectures into simple Tamil to enable even a common man to understand Swamiji's philosophy. Thus the techniques adopted by Ayya for the propagation of Tamil were all unique. He had wished to popularise Thirukkural as the universally accepted document of ethics. It was in his time that Thirukkural was made a compulsory subject from Sixth Standard onwards in schools. Amidst his busy schedule as a politician, it was amazing that he could find time for the service of Tamil. Even Gandhiji during his visit to Ayya's Vidyalaya as early as in 1934, signed an autograph for Ayya in Tamil.

Conclusion

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam Ayya is not with us now. But his ideals will continue to live with us. His unbounded contributions will inspire many generations to come.

We should follow his footsteps and work tirelessly for the upliftment of Tamil and give it a rightful place in education and administration.

Building the personality of children is not high philosophy or astronomy, but a practical and day to day work, which is very important for the future of the children and the progress of the nation.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

மறைந்த மாமகான்

ஞா.சௌந்தரராஜ்

காந்தி மகான் வழிவந்த சாந்திமகான்
ஏந்திய புகழுக்கோர் எல்லையிலை ;
காந்திஜியின் அடிச்சுவட்டில் கால் பதித்து
காந்தி போல் வாழ்ந்திட்ட ஜோதியிவர்.
"அடுப்பூதும் பெண்கட்கு படிப்பெதற்கு?"
அடுத்தடுத்துக் கூறியே தடுத்தோர்க்கு,
"படித்தால்தான் பெண்ணழகு, பெண்ணுயர்வு:
படித்தால்தான் பெண்நாட்டின் புகழ்சாற்றி,
ஆண்மகனின் ஊக்குவிப்பில் பெண் தழைத்து
ஆணுக்கோர் அணிகலனாய்த் திகழ்ந்திடுவாள்:
ஆண்கள் இதை உணர வேண்டும்" எனக் கூறி
ஆணித்திரனாய் அயராது) உழைத்திட்டார்.
பள்ளிக் கூடங்களெல்லாம் பாங்கான
*பள்ளிகளாய்த் துவங்கிடவே வேண்டுமென்றே
அள்ளியள்ளிக் கொடுத்திட்டார் அளவற்ற செல்வமணி
தெள்ளியமனம் படைத்த அவினாசி வள்ளலவர்.
ஏற்றியளப் பதவியிலும் மின்விளக்காய்
சாற்றிய சாதனைகள் பற்பலவே;
காற்றிலும் வேகமாய்ப் பணிபுரிந்தார்
போற்றுவோம் புகழ்ந்திடுவோம் அவர்தமையே.
பார்புகழ் முறையில் பாங்குடன் கண்ட
சீர்மிகு "ஐயா" சிறப்புடன் தெய்வத்தின்
ஓர் முகங்காணத் துடித்துமே துயிலுற்றார்:
யார் அவர் புகழைப் பாடுதல் இயலுமோ?

* பள்ளி = கோவில்

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
GANDHIAN COLLEAGUES

திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கத்தின் நாட்டுப்பற்று

ம.பொ. சிவஞானம்

ஐயா என்னும் சொல் பாண்டிப்பதியிலே குறிப்பாக "தென் பாண்டி" எனப்படும் திருநெல்வேலி மாவட்டத்திலே சான்றோரைக் குறிக்கும் பண்புடையதாகும். திருவாசகம் தந்த மணிவாசகப் பெருமாள் இறைவனையே 'ஐயா' என்று வேதங்கள் அழைப்பதாக விமர்சிக்கிறார். 'ஐயா என ஓங்கி ஆழ்ந்து அகன்ற நுண்ணியனனே' என்பது திருவாசகத்துள் இடம் பெறும் சிவ புராணத்தில் வரும் பொன் வாசகமாகும். தேசபக்தி நிறைந்த கொங்கு மண்டலத்திலே இந்த 'ஐயா' என்னும் சொல் திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியாருக்கே உரியதாகி விட்டது. பிற்காலத்தில் தஞ்சைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் அவருக்கு டாக்டர் பட்டம் அளித்ததாக நினைவிருக்கிறது. அந்த பட்டத்திற்கு முன்பு "ஐயா"வின் தலைமை தாழ்ந்து விடவில்லை.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களும்நானும் ஆகஸ்ட் கிளர்ச்சியின் போது வேலூர், தஞ்சாவூர் சிறைகளில் நீதி மன்றத்தால் தண்டிக்கப்படாத காவல் கைதிகளாக அடைக்கப் பட்டிருந்தோம். அப்போது அன்றாடம் சந்தித்துப் பழகுவதற்கு ஆங்கில சாம்ராஜ்யம் எங்களுக்குச் சந்தர்ப்பம் அளித்தது. அதற்கு முன்னும் ஐயா அவர்கள் தமிழ்நாடு காங்கிரஸ் கமிட்டித் தலைவராக இருந்த போது அவரோடு பழகவும் தமிழ் நாடு எங்கணும் சுற்றுலாச் செல்லவும் முடிந்தது. அரசியல் கட்சிகளில் ஒன்றாக காங்கிரஸ் இயங்காத காலம் ஒன்று இருந்தது. ஆம், இந்திய மக்கள் எல்லோருக்கும் உரிய தேசிய மகாசபையாக விளங்கிய காலமது. அந்த காலத்திலேயும் அரசியல் முத்திரை போட்டுக் கொண்டு ஒன்றிரண்டு கட்சிகள் நாட்டில் இருந்து வந்தன. ஆயினும், இந்திய தேசிய காங்கிரஸ் மகாசபை ஒன்றுதான் இந்திய மக்கள் எல்லோருக்கும் பிரதி நிதித்துவமானதென ஆளுவோர் நம்பினர். அங்கிங்கெனாதபடி குமரி முதல் இமயம் வரை எட்டு திக்கிலும் ஆட்சி புரிந்த பிரிட்டிஷ் சாம்ராஜ்யம் காங்கிரஸின் தேசியத் தன்மையை ஆட்சேபிக்கவில்லை; ஆட்சேபித்தவர்களும் இருந்தனர்.

அவர்களெல்லாம் "பிரிட்டிஷ் விசுவாசிகள்" தேச விசுவாசி களுக்கெல்லாம் தாய்ச் சபை இந்திய தேசிய காங்கிரஸ்தான் அந்த காங்கிரஸை இனந்தெரிந்து கொண்டு, அதைக் கட்டி வளர்த்தவர்களில் ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கமும் ஒருவராவார். இது போல, தேச விடுதலைக்காக காங்கிரஸ் போராடிக் கொண்டி ருந்த காலத்திலே முப்பது கோடி மக்களுக்கும் ஒரே தலைவர் தான் இருந்து வந்தார்; அவர் காந்தியடிகளாவார். "மகாத்மா" என்றால் மோகன்தாஸ் கரம்சந்த் காந்திதான் உலகத்தாரின் கவனத்துக்கு வருவார்.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அனைத்திந்திய காங்கிரஸ் கமிட்டியில் தொடர்ந்து பல ஆண்டு காலம் அங்கத்தினராக இருந்து வந்தார். அந்தப் பேறு, அந்நாளிலே ஒரு சிலருக்குத் தான் கிட்டியது. அவர்களில் ஐயாவும் ஒருவர். அது போல், தமிழ் மாகாணக் காங்கிரஸ் கமிட்டியின் தலைவராக இருந் தோர் பலராவார். திரு இராஜாஜி, திரு எஸ். சத்தியமூர்த்தி, திரு ஓ.பி. இராமசாமி செட்டியார், திரு சி.என். முத்துலிங்க முதலியார் ஆகியோர் வரிசையிலே வைத்து எண்ணத்தக்க வகையிலே தமிழ்நாடு காங்கிரஸ் கமிட்டியில் அவினாசிலிங்கம் இடம் வகித்தார்.

சிறை வாழ்க்கையிலே நாங்கள் மணிக்கணக்கில் அமர்ந்து நாட்டின் எதிர்காலத்தைப் பற்றி கற்பனை செய்து பார்த்ததுண்டு. அந்தக் கற்பனையிலே எங்கள் காலத்திலே நாடு சுதந்திரம் பெற்று விடும் என்ற நம்பிக்கை ஒளிர் விட்டதில்லை. திரு டி. எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் செல்வக் குடும்பத் திலே பிறந்தவர் என்றாலும், காந்தியவாதி என்ற காரணத்தால் எளிமையாக வாழ்ந்தார். அவரை நினைத்தாலே காந்தியடிகள் நினைவும், அடிகள் போதித்த ஆதாரக் கல்வித் திட்டமும் எனது நினைவுக்கு வருவது வழக்கம்.

தேசியக் கல்வி என்பதாக ஒரு கொள்கையை தமது நிர்மாணத்திட்டத்தில் சேர்த்திருந்தார் காந்தியடிகள். அந்தக் கல்வித் திட்டத்தை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதற்கென ஒரு தனிக் குழுவையும் நாடு தழுவிய முறையில் அடிகள் அமைத்திருந்தார்.

ஆதாரக் கல்வி, வார்தா கல்வி என்று இரு கிளைகளைக் கொண்டது காந்தியடிகளின் கல்வித் திட்டம். அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களும் காந்தியக் கல்வித் திட்டத்தை விளக்கும் வகையிலே "கல்வி" என்னும் பெயரைக் கொண்ட நூல் ஒன்றை எழுதி வெளியிட்டார். நாடு விடுதலை பெற இருந்த தருணத்திலே திரு ஓமந்தூர் இராமசாமி ரெட்டியார் தலைமையில், ஆந்திராவும் கன்னடமலையாள மொழிகள் வழங்கும் இரு வேறு மாவட்டங்களும் கலந்த சென்னை இராஜ்ஜியத்தில், காங்கிரஸ் ஆட்சி தோன்றியது. அதிலே ஐயாவும் அமைச்சராகச் சேர்த்துக் கொள்ளப்பட்டார். தாமே விரும்பி கல்வித்துறையைக் கேட்டுப் பெற்றார் என்பது எனக்கு தெரியும்.

திரு அவினாசிலிங்கம் கல்வியமைச்சர் பதவியிலிருந்த போதே நாடு சுதந்திரம் பெற்று விட்டது. அதனால் காந்தியடி களின் கல்விக் கொள்கையை அமுல் நடத்தும் பொறுப்பும் அவருக்கு வாய்த்தது. காந்தியக் கல்வித் திட்டம் என்பது தாய் மொழியை போதனா மொழியாகக் கொண்டதாகும்.

ஆங்கிலேயர் ஆட்சிக் காலத்திலேயே ஆரம்பப் பள்ளியிலேயே மூன்றாம் வகுப்பிலே ஆங்கிலம் கட்டாய மொழியாகப் புகுத்தப்பட்டிருந்தது. காந்தியக் கொள்கைப்படி ஆரம்பக் கல்வி போதிக்கும் ஒன்று முதல் ஐந்தாம் வகுப்புகள் வரை ஆங்கிலத்துக்கு இடமில்லை என்று சொல்லி பாடத் திட்டத்திலிருந்து அந்த அன்னிய மொழியை அறவே நீக்கிய பெருமை ஐயாவையே சேர்ந்ததாகும்.

ஆறாம் வகுப்பு தொடங்கியுள்ள உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளி களிலேயும் ஆங்கிலத்தைக் கட்டாய மொழிப் பாடமாக மட்டுமே ஏற்று, அனைத்துப் பாடங்களையும் போதிக்கும் பயிற்று மொழி நிலையிலிருந்து ஐயாதான் முதன் முதலில் அகற் றினார். அனைத்துப் பள்ளிகளிலும் அனைத்துப் பாடங்களுக் கும் தமிழை போதனா மொழியாக ஆக்கிய காந்தியத் தமிழர் திரு அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள்.

கல்லூரிகளிலும் எல்லாப் பாடங்களுக்கும் தாய்மொழியே போதனா மொழியாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்பது காந்தியத் திட்டம். ஆனால், பல மொழிப் பிரதேசங்கள் கொண்ட கதம்ப ராஜ்ஜியத்தில் அதை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதில் சங்கடமுண்டு. அப்படி இருந்தும், முன்னோடிக் கல்லூரிகள் இரண்டைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து தமிழைப் பயிற்று மொழியாக்கினார்.

நாடு சுதந்திரம் பெற்றது ஆகஸ்டு பதினைந்தாம் தேதி ஆகும். அதற்கு முதல் நாளான ஆகஸ்டு பதினான்காம் தேதி ஆட்சியின் துணை கொண்டு தமிழை வளர்க்க தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிக் கழகம் கண்டார் கல்வியமைச்சர் ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள்.

அந்நாளிலே தாய் நாட்டுப் பற்றுக்கும் தாய் மொழிப் பற்றுக்கும் இடைவெளி அதிகம் இருந்தது. அதனால் தூய தமிழ் வாதம், தேசியவாதிகளைக் கவர்ச்சிக்கவில்லை. அதிலே 'கழகம்' என் னும் தூய தமிழ்ச் சொல் அரசியல் வட்டாரத்தால் களங்கப்படுத்தப்பட்டிருந்த காலமது. அப்படியிருந்தும் அரசின் சார்பில் தமிழை வளர்க்க தாம் நிறுவிய அமைப்புக்குச் 'சபை' 'சங்கம்' என்னும் சொற்களைச் சேர்க்காமல் ஆழ்ந்த தமிழ்ப் பற்றுடைய 'கழகம்' என்னும் சொல்லையே சேர்த்து வைத்தார். அதன் பெயரில் ஆண்டு தோறும் தமிழ் விழா நடத்தவும் திட்ட மிட்டார். தாம் கல்வியமைச்சராக இருந்த போது முதல் விழாவை மதுரையில் நடத்தினார். தமிழ் விழாவை மதுரையில் நடத்தத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்ததற்குக் காரணம் உண்டு. அங்குதான் பண்டைக் காலத்தில் தமிழ்ச்சங்கம் இருந்தது. பின்னர் யாழ்ப்பாணத்திலேயும் புலவர்களைக் கொண்டு தமிழ் விழாவை நடத்தினார்.

தமிழுக்கு அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் செய்த அரிய தொண்டுகளிலே தலையாயது தமிழ்க் கலைக்களஞ்சியத் தொகுப்புகள் வெளியிட வழி வகுத்ததாகும். இந்த இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டிலே இரு வேறு செட்டியார்கள் தமிழின் வளர்ச்சி கருதி அற்புதச் சாதனைகள் புரிந்தார்கள். ஒருவர், தமிழிசை

இயக்கத்தைத் தோற்றுவித்த இராஜா. சர். அண்ணாமலை செட்டியார் ஆவார். மற்றொருவர், தமிழ்க் கலைக்களஞ்சியத் தொகுப்பை வெளியிட வழி செய்த கோவை திரு அவினாசி லிங்கம் செட்டியாராவார். தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிக்கு இந்த இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டிலே சாதனைகள் பல நிகழ்ந்தனவென்றாலும் அவற் றில் தலையாயது தமிழிசை இயக்கமும் தமிழ் கலைக்களஞ்சியப் படைப்புமே ஆகும்.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் என்னை விட இரண்டு வயது மூத்தவர். அதை விடவும் அவரது பணிகள் பாரதம் முழுவதும் தழுவியதாகும். ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அரசியலை விட்டு ஒதுங்கிய பின்னர்தான் சரித்திரத்தில் இடம் பெறத்தக்க சாதனைகள் புரிந்தார். அவற்றுள் ஒன்று, கோவையில் பெண்கள் மனையியல் கல்லூரி ஒன்றைப் படைத்து, அதைப் பல்கலைக் கழகமாக வளர்த்து விட்டது, ஆகும். ஐயாவின் கல்விப் பணியில் பெரும் பங்கு கொள்ளும் பேறு திருமதி இராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அவர்களுக்குக் கிடைத்தது.

ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் சாமான்யர் அல்லர்!
சரித்திர நாயகர் !
அவரது புகழ் வாழ்க !

DR. AVINASHILINGAM - A FEARLESS FREEDOM FIGHTER AND A MAKER OF NEW INDIA

G. Ramachandran

When the news came on the morning of 22nd November, 1991, that Sri Avinashilingam had passed away the previous night, it was a shock too hard to bear. He was one of the great men of our generation in India. He had lived upto his 89th year and was a brahmachari. Sri Avinashilingam and I had remained intimate friends throughout our life. He blended the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa since he was an ardent devotee of both. Usually there is a hiatus between followers of Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. It was recognised that Mahatma Gandhi liberated India through Satyagraha. But in spiritual realization Sri Ramakrishna was ahead of him. Sri Avinashilingam held that there was no such hiatus and he reconciled in himself the spiritual greatness of both.

We worked together in promoting basic education in Tamil Nadu. That he was for a time the Education Minister in the old Madras State was only an accident in his life. He was head and shoulders above that Ministership.

Sri Avinashilingam, affectionately called "Ayya", took a leading part in the freedom movement and was in prison more than once during the troubled days between 1930 and 1942. He was imprisoned by the British Government for his leadership in the Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement. He set up the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya in 1930 at Perianaickenpalayam starting with a very small number of students. The school blossomed into a vast educational complex in a rural setting and there is now within it an Arts and Science College upto the Post Graduate level, a College of Education, an Industrial Training Institute, among others. He was a member of the National Legislative Assembly from 1935 to 1946 and of the composite Madras Assembly from 1946 to 1951. He was also a Member of the Parliament later. The

President Mr. R. Venkataraman has rightly described Sri Avinashilingam as a Gandhian constructive worker. He was more than that. He was a wealthy man but gave all his wealth for promoting national education. One cannot imagine Coimbatore without Sri Avinashilingam . He was perhaps more than most other leaders in Coimbatore, the embodiment of the culture and traditions of Tamil Nadu. He had friendly relations with the Gandhigram Rural University. But perhaps more than all, he would be remembered as the Founder and Chancellor of The Home Science Institute, Coimbatore, which has attained the status of a Deemed University. This institution is now known throughout India and even outside and attracts students from all over the world. Dr. Rajammal Devadas who was the Principal of the erstwhile Home Science College, is now the Vice Chancellor of the Deemed University. The Home Science Department of the Gandhigram Rural University draws inspiration from the Home Science Deemed to be University. Women students from Gandhigram are sent to the Coimbatore Institution for training. It will thus be seen that both institutions continue to have close links with each other.

But let us come back to the sacred memory of Sri Avinashilingam himself. He proved beyond doubt that there can be a career of great importance outside any office. He is thus an example for many of us to follow and especially the present younger generation. Every body is seeking jobs today. But to those who are devoted to national service, jobs come tumbling into their hands.

Finally, it may be stated that good names continue to live even after death through worthy institutions or devotion to noble causes. In the life of Sri Avinashilingam, we have both. His name will, therefore, be long remembered with gratitude and admiration. This writer especially can never forget Sri Avinashilingam's generosity or his devotion to God and Man.

வித்யாலய அய்யா அமரர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள்

க. அருணாசலம்

திரு அய்யா அவர்கள் இளம் வயது முதலிலேயே தெய்வ நம்பிக்கையுடன் வளர்ந்தவர்கள். தாய் தந்தையைத் தெய்வ மெனப் போற்றி வழிபட்டவர். தாய் தந்தையர் மறைந்த பிறகும், தனது சித்தப்பா, சிற்றன்னை முதலியவர்களைத் தெய்வமெனப் பாராட்டி பணிந்து வணங்கியவர்கள். கல்லூரியில் படித்துக் கொண்டிருந்த சமயம் தன்னுடைய சகமாணாக்கர்களுடன் மயிலை இராமகிருஷ்ண மடத்துடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டவர். அதிர்ஷ்டவசமாக இவருக்கு அப்போது பேலூர் மடத்தில் தலைவராக இருந்த மகா புருஷ்ஜி என்று அனைவராலும் அன்புடன் அழைக்கப்பட்ட சிவானந்த மகராஜ் அவர்களுடன் தொடர்பு ஏற்பட்டது. சின்னுமகராஜ் சகலத்தையும் துறந்து ஸ்ரீராமகிருஷ்ண மடத்தின் துறவிகளுள் ஒருவரானார். ஆனால் திரு அய்யா அவர்களோ அவரிடம் தீட்சை பெற்று படிப்பை முடித்துக் கொண்டு வீடு திரும்பினார். இவர் துவராடை உடுத்தாத வெள்ளை வேட்டி சாமியாராகவே இருந்து ஸ்ரீராம கிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்தைத் தோற்றுவித்து வளர்த்தார். இவருக்கு குரு தேவரிடம் இருந்ததைப் போலவே அவரது பிரதம சீடரான இளைஞர் விவேகானந்தரிடத்தில் அளவு கடந்த காதல். எனவே விவேகானந்தபுரமும் இவரது படைப்பில் ஒன்றாக நிலைத்து நிற்கிறது. தாய்மையின் சிறப்பை உணர்ந்த இவர் அன்னை சாரதாமணியின் பேரிலும் ஒரு பள்ளிக்கூடம் துவங்கி அதில் தன்னையும் இணைத்துக் கொண்டு ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகத்தையே உருவாக்கினார்.

இவர் துடிப்பு நிறைந்த இளைஞர். இளமையில் போலவே வயோதிகத்திலும் துடிதுடிப்பாக இருந்தவர். காந்தியடிகள் ஆரம்பித்த சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் முழு ஈடுபாடு கொண்டு பல ஆண்டுகள் சிறைவாசம் இருந்தவர். சிறையில் அவருக்குக் கிடைத்த பரிசு ஆஸ்துமா நோயாகும். இதனால் அவர் பட்ட

உடற்கஷ்டம் கொஞ்சநஞ்சமல்ல. எத்தனையோ சிகிச்சை முறை களை மேற்கொண்டும் இப்பிணி அவரது இறுதி மூச்சு வரை யும் அவருடன் இருந்து வந்தது. இதனை அவர் பொருட் படுத்தியதே இல்லை. சதா சுதந்திரத்தைப் பற்றிய சிந்தனையி லும் பெருமை வாய்ந்த இந்தியாவை நிர்மாணிப்பது பற்றியும் பேசியும் எழுதியும் செயல்பட்டு வந்தார். பாராளுமன்ற அங்கத் தினராகவும், சென்னை மாநில கல்வி அமைச்சராகவும் இருந்து பல நல்ல திட்டங்கள் தீட்டிபொது மக்களின் பாராட்டைப் பெற்றார்.

தேசப்பிதா காந்தியடிகளின் அன்புக் கொள்கையினால் கவரப் பெற்று பெரியநாயக்கன்பாளையத்தில் ஆதாரக் கல்விக்கு விரிவாக ஊக்கமும் ஆக்கமும் தந்தார். அது காந்தி பேஸிக் டிரெயினிங் ஸ்கூலாக மலர்ந்து சீரிய தொண்டாற்றி காந்தியடி களின் பாராட்டுக்கு உரியதாயிற்று. காந்தியடிகளுடன் மேலும் தொடர்பு நெருக்கமானது. ஜாகீர்உசேனின் தலைமையில் இருந்த புதிய கல்விச்சங்கத்தின் அங்கத்தினர் ஆனார். அச்சங் கத்தின் செயலாளர்களான அரியநாயகம் ஆஷாதேவி தம்பதி களோடு நெருங்கிய தொடர்பு ஏற்பட்டது. கூர்த்தமதியினரான அய்யா அவர்கள் காந்தியக் கல்விச் சிந்தனையில் ஆழ்ந்து மூழ்கி அதனுடைய சீரும் சிறப்பும் தெள்ளத் தெளிவாக விளங்கும்படி ஆங்கிலத்தில் ஒரு நூல் எழுதி வெளியிட்டார். அது பாரத சுதந்திர அரசின் பாராட்டுதலைப் பெற்றது. அரசி னர் இவருக்கு பல விருதுகளை அளித்து கௌரவித்தனர். மேலைநாட்டு அறிஞர்கள் வில்பிரெட் வெல்லாக், ஆர்தர் மார்கன், பிரசிடெண்ட் நெல்சன் போன்ற அறிஞர்கள் வித்தி யாலயத்திற்கு விஜயம் செய்து அதன் பெருமையை உலக அரங் கில் வெளிப்படுத்தினர். காந்தியமும் ஆன்மீகமும் இணைந்த அறவாழ்க்கையை, எதிர்காலக் குடிமக்களின் வாழ்க்கையை ஒழுங்கு படுத்தும் புரட்சிகரமான இந்தத் திட்டத்தை, அமெரிக் காவில் வெளிப்படுத்துவதற்காக அவர்களது அழைப்பின் பேரில் பிரயாணம் மேற்கொண்டு வெற்றிகரமாகத் திரும்பினார்.

தேசபக்தியும் தெய்வ பக்தியும் இவருக்கு இரு கண்கள் போன்றவை, தேசத்தை நேருக்கு நேர் காண்பதற்காக இவர் மேற்கொண்ட கேதார், பத்ரி, கைபர் முதலிய யாத்திரைகளே சான்று. காஷ்மீரம் முதல் கன்னியாகுமரி வரை, துவாரகை முதல் அருணாசலப் பிரதேசம் வரை பரந்து விரிந்த இப்புனித நாட்டில் உள்ள பல தீர்த்தங்களுக்கும் இவர் யாத்திரையாகச் சென்று வந்துள்ளார். ஒரு யாத்திரை புறப்படுமுன் அந்த யாத்திரை சம்பந்தமான பலவற்றையும் தொகுத்து சேகரித்து அதற்கு வேண்டிய முன்னேற்பாடுகளையும் செய்வதில் இவர் வல்லவர். தேவார திருவாசகங்களில் இவர் நுழைந்து ஒதுவார்களைக் கொண்டு பாட வைத்து வித்தியாலய மாணவர்களையும், அதில் பயிற்றுவித்து காலை மாலை பிரார்த்தனையோடு மாணவர்கள் பஜனைப் பாடல் பாடும் போது இவர் கேட்டு ஆனந்தக் கண்ணீர் மல்கி ஆடாது அசையாது அமர்ந்திருந்ததை நான் கண்டு இன்புற்றிருக்கிறேன்.

கேதார் பத்திரி யாத்திரை புறப்படுமுன்னர் காளி கம்பளிவாலா, யாத்திரிகர்களுக்குச் செய்யும் உபகாரத்தை அய்யா அவர்கள் சொல்லுவதைக் கேட்போம்.

பாபா காளி கம்பளிவாலா அவர்களுடைய சரித்திரம் அற்புதமானது. சுமார் ஐம்பது வருடங்களுக்கு முன் அவர் இருந்தார். அவர் செய்திருக்கும் அரிய சேவைகள் என்றும் மறக்க முடியாதவை. அவர் தோன்றியதற்கு முன் கேதார், பத்ரி யாத்திரை இப்பொழுதிருப்பதை விடப் பன்மடங்கு கடின மாயிருந்து. நல்ல சாலைகளே அப்பொழுது கிடையா. நதிகளைக் கடக்கப் பாலங்களும் இல்லை. வழியில் தங்குவதற்கு விடுதிகளும் வசதிகளும் இல்லை. பல மைல் வரைக்கும் ஒருவரையும் காண முடியாது. குளிர் தாங்க முடியாதவர்கள் அதில் அல்லல்பட்டு மடிய வேண்டியதுதான். நோயாளிகளுக்கு வழியில் எந்த வசதிகளும் கிடையா. யாத்திரிகர்களில் பலர் யாத்திரையின் போது அளவற்ற துன்பத்திற்கு ஆளாவதைப் பாபா பார்த்தார். அவரது அன்பு நிறைந்த மனம் இவற்றைக்

காணச் சகிக்கவில்லை. எப்படியாவது இக்கஷ்டங்களை நீக்க வேண்டுமென்று தீர்மானம் செய்து கொண்டார்.

காளியென்பது அவர் பெயர். கம்பளிவாலா என்பது அவருக்கு வந்த காரணப் பெயர். அவர் எப்பொழுதும் ஒரு கம்பளிதான் அணிந்து கொண்டிருப்பார். எவ்வளவு குளிர் தினமானாலும், சுற்றிலும் உறை பனிக் காலங்களிலும் அதே கம்பளிதான்! ஆதலால், கம்பளிவாலா! என்று மக்கள் அவரை அழைத்தார்கள். பாபா என்பதற்குப் பிதா என்பது பொருள். தந்தையனைய அன்பு கொண்டு அவர் மக்களைப் பேணியதால், மக்கள் அவரை மிக்க அன்புடன் பாபாஜி என்று அழைத்தார்கள். இப்பெயர் அவருக்கு இன்றும் வழங்கி வருகிறது. அவர் ஒரு சாது. ரிஷிகேசத்திலிருந்து கேதார் நாத் நூற்றைம்பது மைல். இவ்வழி முழுதும் யாத்திரிகர் தங்குவதற்குச் சத்திரங்கள் கட்டி, அவற்றில் யாத்திரைக்கு வரும் சாதுக்களுக்கு அன்னமும், அனைவருக்கும் வைத்திய சிகிச்சையும் அளிக்க வேண்டு மென்பது அவர் அவா. இவற்றைச் செய்து முடிக்கப் பல இலட்சக்கணக்கான பணமல்லவா வேண்டும்? அவர் கையில் இவ்வளவு பணம் ஏது? அசாத்தியமான காரியம்போல் அது தோன்றிற்று.

ஆனால், அவருக்கு மலைப்புத் தோன்றவில்லை; ஆண்டவன் பால் அளவற்ற நம்பிக்கையும், அக்காரியத்தை எப்படியும் முடித்தே தீர வேண்டுமென்ற மன உறுதியும் அவரிடம் இருந்தன. தீவிர முயற்சியால் செய்து முடிக்க முடியாத காரியம் ஒன்றில்லையென அவர் நம்பினார். கல்கத்தா இந்தியாவிலேயே பெரிய தனவந்தர்கள் இருக்கும் இடமென்று பெயர் பெற்றதல்லவா! அங்கே சென்று ஹௌரா பாலத்தினருகில் ஒரு காலில் நின்று தவம் செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தார். தாம் கோரிய எண்ணம் நிறைவேறுவதற்கு வேண்டிய வசதிகள் கிடைக்கும் வரை "இப்படியே பட்டினி கிடப்பேன்" என்று உறுதி செய்து கொண்டார். முதலில், மக்கள் அவரைப் பைத்தியக்காரர் என்று ஏளனம் செய்தார்கள். ஆனால், நாளாக ஆக, அவர் தூய்மையும், தன்னலமற்ற தன்மையும், தியாக புத்தியும்

எல்லோர் மனத்திலும் பதிந்தன. மார்வாடி வியாபாரிகள் பலர் சேர்ந்து அவருக்கு உதவி செய்ய முன் வந்தார்கள். அவர்கள் உதவியைக் கொண்டு சத்திரங்கள் கட்ட ஆரம்பித்தார். ரிஷீகே சத்திலிருந்து கேதார்நாத், பத்ரிநாத் வரை, எல்லா முக்கியமான இடங்களிலும் அவர் கட்டிய சத்திரங்களை இப்பொழுதும் பார்க்கலாம். யாத்திரைச் சமயங்களில் சுமார் இருபது இருபத் தைந்து ஆயிரம் சாதுக்களுக்கு இச்சத்திரங்களில் உணவளிக்கப் படுகிறது. இவை சுமார் 45 இடங்களில் இருப்பனவாகச் சொல்லுகிறார்கள். சுமார் 30, 40 இலட்சம் ரூபாய் வரை வசூல் செய்து கட்டிடங்கள் கட்டியதுடன், அன்னதானம் சரியாக நடந்து வர ஒரு நிதியும் ஏற்பாடு செய்தார். அவர் கட்டிய சத்திரங்கள் வருடந்தோறும் யாத்திரிகர்கள் அனைவருக்கும் பேருதவியாக இருந்து வருகின்றன.

காளி கம்பளிவாலாவைப் பற்றி இவ்வளவு விரிவாகக் கூறியுள்ளமைக்கு ஒரு காரணம் உண்டு. இவரைப் போல ஐயா அவர்களும் "தீவிர முயற்சியால் செய்ய முடியாத காரியம் ஒன்றில்லை" என்று நம்பினார்கள். அப்படியே செய்து ஆன்ம திருப்தி அடைந்தார்கள். வித்தியாலய ஆரம்ப காலத்தில் பண நெருக்கடி ஏற்பட்டதுண்டு. ஆனால் அய்யா திருப்பூர் கோவை முதலிய ஊர்களில் இருந்த தனவந்தர்களிடமும் உற்றார் உறவினர்களிடமும் பணம் வசூலித்தார். வளர்ந்து வந்த வித்தி யாலயத்தின் தேவைகள் பெருகின. ஆனால் அய்யாவும், அதற்கு ஈடு கொடுத்து இரவு பகலென்று பாராது காரில் பல்லடம், பொள்ளாச்சி முதலிய ஊர்களுக்கும் சென்று அங்குள்ள அன்பர்களைக் கண்டு பேசி அவசியம் நேரிட்டபோது அவர்களுக்கு நினைவூட்டிக் கடிதமும் எழுதி பொருள் திரட்டி னார். தேவைக்கு மேல் வந்ததை வைப்பு நிதியாகவும் வங்கி களில் போட்டு வைத்தார். அவர் இறுதிக்காலத்தில் "இப்போது வித்தியாலய நிறுவனங்களை நடத்துவதில் சிரமமொன்றும் இருக்காது. யாரும் கவலைப்பட வேண்டியதில்லை. வித்தியால யம் ஆயிரமாண்டுப் பயிர், இது செழித்து ஓங்கும்! நானும் மனநிறைவுடன் மகிழ்ச்சியுடன் செல்லுவதற்குத் தயாராக இருக் கிறேன்" என்று கூறியதைக் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன்.

குரு மகராஜ், காந்திஜி போன்ற மகா காந்தச் சக்திகளால் ஈர்க்கப்பட்டு பல நிறுவனங்களை அய்யா உருவாக்கினார். அவையே இப்போது பெரிய காந்தக்கற்களாக மாறியுள்ளன. மனிதனில்லாமல் நிறுவனம் இல்லை. நிறுவனமில்லாமல் மனித னுமில்லை. இந்த நிறுவனங்களின் காந்த சக்தியால் கவரப் பெற்று பல இளைஞர்கள் உருவாகியுள்ளனர். இதற்குச் சான்று பெ. தூரன், ஆர். எம். குமாரசாமி, திரு சி. சுப்ரமணியம், கு. வெங்கடாசலம், டாக்டர் மு. அறம், டாக்டர் குழந்தை வேலு மற்றும் பலர். இவர்களே இப்போது பெரிய காந்த சக்திகள். இதில் அடியேனுக்கும் ஒரு சிறிய இடம் உண்டு. அய்யாவைப் பற்றி எத்தனையோ சொல்லலாம். காலம் கருதி இதனை முடிக்கின்றேன். அய்யா அவர்களின் நாமம் என்றும் வாழும்.

HE BELONGED TO THE GREAT

V. Padmanabhan

Some are born great; some acquire greatness; still in the case of some others, greatness is thrust on them. Whether Ayya - Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar - was born great, may be debatable. One can confidently say that his untiring work, his philosophy of life, his adherence to the practical Vedanta as prescribed by Swami Vivekananda, his passion for service in general and the cause of education in particular, his feelings for the children, made him not only great but also noble. He had a vision in life in which he combined the tenets of Sri Ramakrishna with the ideology of Gandhiji. He was not a member of the order of monks but he was ordained in his own right to spread the gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and that of Gandhiji. He was a pioneer in promoting the Basic Education in the then Madras Presidency, when he was the Minister for Education.

He campaigned with evangelical zeal about the importance of using the mother-tongue - Tamil - as a medium of instruction. To enrich the Tamil language, he initiated a project to prepare "Kalai Kalanchiam" in Tamil. He was also the Chairman of the Gandhi Works Publication Committee which brought out a number of volumes containing the writings and pronouncements of Mahatma Gandhi.

Though he was in politics very active and intense, he kept a frontier beyond which active party politics could not penetrate. That is the reason why cutting across party lines, he was respected by everyone. The present complex of institutions in Perianaickenpalayam in Coimbatore themselves stand testimony to his commitment to public service. Since he was steeped in the concept of basic education, he treated education as a vehicle to solve the problems of the neighbourhood. His approach to rural development had a large component of academic exercises. His perception of education did not begin or end with the mere acquisition of knowledge. Education to him meant the establishment of a value system where truth and non-violence will prevail. Education will build bridges of understanding between the community and the school.

Ayya was an administrator par excellence. He had the rare ability to size up every individual with whom he had daily transactions. He was known for his disciplined life which kept him strong both in mind and body. He continuously strove to inculcate this spirit of discipline forcefully both in the teachers and the taught. He never compromised on essentials like truth and non-violence, purity in life, adherence to sincerity and a broad outlook. Besides all other qualities of greatness and nobility, he was an undaunted administrator. He was firm and fearless. When there was some agitation in his institute of higher education, he faced it with determination and did not yield to threats. He never swerved from basic principles.

In his daily life Ayya was a spartan - very simple and austere. His immaculate white attire exuded confidence and strength, compassion and concern, selflessness and dedication. He added new dimensions in making all deeds spiritually elevating. The youth that passed through the portals of his institution carried not only a scholastic excellence, but also great ideals. Two examples will stand witness to this observation. Dr. R. Venkatasamy, the well-known plastic surgeon, who recently retired from State service is one of the old students of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. Dr. Venkatasamy is an embodiment of efficiency and service. He holds Ayya in great reverence. He is known for firmness and commitment to his profession. If today in the midst of rampant corruption and prostitution of the medical profession, there is still some sort of faith in doctors, it is due to outstanding persons like Dr.Venkatasamy. He is greatly respected by his colleagues, his students and his patients. Another person who passed out after a brilliant career in the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya is Sri Appakutti, the Managing Trustee of Kanya Gurukulam, Vedaranyam. To converse with Appakutti is itself an exercise in liberal education. His thoughts ever remained with the large number of young boys and girls who have come under his care. Inheriting from his father a high sense of duty and responsibility he has continuously been following the footsteps of the Mahatma even amidst severe odds. His father, the great Sardar endowed 75 acres of coconut plantation and rice fields to the Kanya Gurukulam. Appakutti's immense affection for serving the poor and the discarded flowed from his studentship in Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. Many more such

instances can be quoted. The former President of India His Excellency Sri R. Venkataraman in the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya touchingly pointed out thus, "Sri Avinashilingam is a bachelor. Ordinary mortals who have married are parents to a few children but the doyen of education Sri Avinashilingam has a hundred thousand children". Ayya was a close friend of Gandhigram. He had tremendous appreciation for both Dr. Ramachandran and Dr. Soundaram. He had visited Gandhigram more than once during its early makings. Similarly he showed interest in other Gandhian institutions like Gandhiniketan Ashram, T. Kallupatti. Sri N.M.R. Subbaraman known as the Gandhi of Madurai and Ayya were great pals. Each in their own style had worked for the prosperity of man. Both encouraged youngsters who joined the Gandhian society. Thus Ayya's interest did not limit itself to education. He was a sort of mentor to many like me. His affection I should admit was much greater than my reverence to him.

The best tribute that we can pay to this uncommon Titan is to follow his path and work for the good of the society. Let us salute him with all fervour; let us place our obeisance at his feet; let the glory of this remarkable soul be sung by everyone.

எங்கள் அருமை ஐயா

வே. அப்பாக்குட்டி

ஐயா, எங்கள் அருமை ஐயா, கோவை இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தி யாலயத்தில் படிக்கும், மற்றும் படித்த பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான மாணவர்களுக்கும், மற்றும் அவர்களுடன் தொடர்புடைய பல பெரியவர்கள், உயர் அதிகாரிகள் அனைவருக்கும் அமரர் டாக்டர் டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் 'ஐயா' தான். டாக்டர் மற்றும் எத்துணை விருதுகள் அவர்களை வந்தடைந்தாலும் "ஐயா" என்னும் சொல் மந்திரச் சொல்லாக அனைவர் உள்ளத்திலும் அன்பைப் பொங்கி எழச் செய்யும் சொல்லாக, பக்தியை உந்தும் சொல்லாக இன்றும் இருந்து வருகிறது.

எனக்கு 1930 ஆம் ஆண்டுகளின் முதல் பகுதியில் ஐயா அவர்களைப் பற்றி அறிந்து கொள்ளும் வாய்ப்பு கிடைத்தது. 1934 ஆம் ஆண்டு அப்போது போத்தனூரில் இருந்த இராம கிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்திலிருந்து திரு. வெங்கடாசலம், திரு. லட்சுமிகாந்தன், திரு. வாசுதேவன், திரு. மகாதேவன் என்ற நான்கு மாணவர்கள் வேதாரண்யம் வந்து எங்கள் வீட்டில் தங்கி திருமுறையான தேவாரம் பயின்றார்கள். வேதாரண்யத்தில் அக்காலத்தில் தேவாரப் பாடசாலைகள் சில இருந்தன. தேவா ரத்தில் நன்கு பண்முறைப்படி ஓதி உணர்ந்த பெரியார்கள் பலர் இருந்தனர். அவர்களிடம் அந்த ஆண்டு கோடை விடுமுறை மே மாதம் முழுவதும் தங்கிப் பண்முறை வழுவாமல் தேவாரம் பயின்றனர். நானும் அவர்களுடன் பயின்றேன். என் கல்வியின் தொடக்கமே தேவாரப் பாட சாலையில் தான். அக்காலங்களில் கற்றவர்கள் குடும்பத்தில் உள்ள பிள்ளைகள் தேவாரப் பாட சாலையில்தான் முதன் முதல் சேர்க்கப்பட்டு தமிழ், கிரந்தம் முதலியவற்றுடன் தேவார திருவாசகமும் படித்து வருவது இயல்பு. அந்த வகையில் எனது ஆசிரியர் வணக்கத்திற்குரிய சுந்தர தேசிகரே, இவர்களுக்கு திருமுறை சொல்லி வந்தார். அந்த நட்பின் மூலம் நானும் 1934ல் படிப்பதற்கு வித்தியாலயம் சென்றேன்.

என் தந்தை, காலம் சென்ற சர்தார் வேதரத்தினம் அவர்கள் ஐயா அவர்களது நெருங்கிய நண்பராவார். தங்கள் இருவரின் முதல் சந்திப்பு பற்றி என் தந்தையவர்கள் கூறக் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன்.

முப்பதாம் ஆண்டுகளின் முதல் பகுதியில் கல்கத்தா பக்கம் நடந்த ஒரு காங்கிரஸ் மகா நாட்டிற்கு அப்பா சர்தார் வேதரத்தினம் அவர்கள் சென்றிருக்கிறார்கள். அந்த சமயம் கல்கத்தா பேலூர் இராமகிருஷ்ண மடத்திற்கு அப்பா சென்றி ருக்கிறார்கள். ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களும் அங்கு தங்கி மடத்தில் தொண்டாற்றிக் கொண்டிருந்திருக்கிறார்கள். மிகவும் சுறுசுறுப்பாகவும் பக்தியுடனும் தொண்டாற்றி வந்த ஐயாஅவர் களைப் பார்த்து சர்தார் அவர்கள், "நீங்கள் தானா கோவை அவினாசிலிங்கம் என்பவர்?" என்று தானாகவே அறிமுகம் செய்து கொண்டார்கள். ஐயா அவர்களுக்குச் சற்று திகைப்பாக இருந்தது. "எப்படி நீங்கள் என்னைப் புரிந்து கொண்டு கேட்டீர்கள்?" என்று கேட்டு இருக்கிறார்கள். அப்பா அவர்கள் "உங்களைப் பற்றித் தமிழ் நாட்டில் முன்னதாகவே கேள்விப்பட்டு இருக்கிறேன். இங்கே நீங்கள் செய்து வந்த தொண்டும் கோவைத் தமிழும் தங்களை இனம் காண்பதற்கு எனக்கு உதவியது" என்று பதில் கூறி இருக்கிறார்கள். இதுதான் இருவருடைய முதல் சந்திப்பு. இயல்பாக காந்தம் கவர்வது போல இணைந்தார்கள். இருவரின் இறுதிக்காலம் வரை இப்பிணைப்பு மேலும் மேலும் இறுகிப் பிணைந்தது.

நான் சிறுவனாக இருக்கும் போதே 1932 அல்லது 1933 எனக் கருதுகிறேன். ஐயா அவர்களும், மதுரை ஐயா என்று நாங்கள் பிரியமாக அழைக்கும் திரு. என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் வேதாரண்யம் வந்தார்கள். அதிலிருந்து ஐயா அவர் கள் அனேகமாக வருடம் ஒரு முறையோ அல்லது இரு வருடத்திற்கு ஒரு முறையோ வேதாரண்யம் வரத் தவறுவதில்லை. அதே போல் அப்பா அவர்களும் அடிக்கடி வித்தியாலயம் சென்று வருவார்கள். பின்னர் சிறையிலும் இருவரும் சேர்ந்து வாழ்ந்ததுண்டு.

தமிழ் நாட்டில் காந்திய சகாப்தம் சிறப்பாக நடந்து வந்த காலத்தில் தமிழக அரசியலில் பலராலும் 'அண்ணாச்சிகள்' என்று அழைக்கப் பெற்ற நால்வர் சிறப்புற்ற நண்பர்களாகத் திகழ்ந்தார்கள். நால்வரும் ஏறத்தாழ குண இயல்புகளில் ஒத்து இருந்தார்கள்.

கோவை ஐயா, தன் கல்லூரிப் பருவத்திலேயே, பகவான் இராமகிருஷ்ணர் பேரியக்கத்தில் ஈடுபாடு கொண்டவர்கள். சென்னை இராமகிருஷ்ண மடத்தில் குருதேவரின் முக்கிய சீடர் சுவாமி சிவானந்தா அவர்களைத் தரிசித்து, அது முதல் தங்கள் வாழ்க்கையை ஆன்மீகத்தில் ஈடுபடுத்தியவர்கள். ஐயா அவர் களின் கல்லூரித் தோழர் கோவை பொள்ளாச்சியைச் சேர்ந்த சின்னு அவர்கள். இவர்தான் பிற்காலத்தில் குருதேவர் ஆன்மீக குடும்பத்தில் சேர்ந்து துறவு மேற்கொண்டு தமிழகத்தில் இராமகிருஷ்ணர் பேரியக்கத்தைப் பரப்பிய ஸ்ரீமத் சித்பவானந்த சுவாமிகள் என்று அழைக்கப்பட்டவர். எனக்குத் தொடக்க காலத்தில் அவர்களிடம் பயிலும் வாய்ப்பும் கிடைத்து பாக்கிய மடைந்தேன்.

கோவை ஐயா அவர்கள் துறவு மேற்கொள்ளாமல் குரு தேவர் இயக்கத்திலும் அதே சமயம் காந்தியடிகளின் பால் ஈடுபாடு கொண்டு நாட்டு விடுதலையிலும் தன்னை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொண்டார்கள். இந்த வகையில் ஐயா அவர்கள் தன் வாழ்க்கை யில் பிரம்மச்சரிய விரதத்தை மேற்கொண்டார்கள். என் தந்தையவர்கள் சிறு வயதில் திருமணம் ஆனவர்கள். நான் பிறந்த பிறகு தனது 25ஆவது வயது முதற்கொண்டு குடும்பத்தில் என் அன்னை அவர்களுடன் வாழ்ந்துகொண்டு பிரம்மச்சரிய விரதத்துடன் காந்தியடிகளின் தொண்டனாக உப்புச் சத்தியாக் கிரகம் முதலியவற்றில் ஈடுபட்டார்கள். மதுரை என். எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் மகாத்மா காந்தியடிகளின் ஆலோ சனைப்படி ஒரே மகள் சீதாவைப் பெற்றுப் பின் தன் மனைவி திருமதி பார்வதவர்த்தினி அவர்களுடன் பிரம்மச்சரிய விரதம் மேற்கொண்டு வாழ்ந்து பல காந்தியப் பணிகள், சிறப்பாகத் தீண்டாமை விலக்குப் பணியினை மேற்கொண்டார்கள்.

ஓமாந்தூர் திரு இராமசாமி ரெட்டியார் அவர்கள் தன் இளம் வயதிலேயே மனைவியை இழந்து விட்டார்கள். தன் ஒரே மகனை ஆந்திராவில் உள்ள ரிஷிவாலி கல்விக்கூடத்தில் சேர்த்தார்கள். அங்கு ஒரு விபத்தில் காலமான தன் ஒரே மகனைத் தனது தொண்டுப் பணிகளின் இடையில் பார்க்கக்கூட செல்லாமல் இருந்துவிட்டார்கள். இவர்கள் நால்வரும் ஆன்மீகம், காந்தியம் இவைகளால் ஆட்கொள்ளப்பட்டு நல்வாழ்க்கை நெறி முறைகளுடன் வாழ்ந்தார்கள்.

இவர்களில் ஐயா அவர்களும் ரெட்டியார் அவர்களும் விரைவில் சினத்திற்கு ஆட்படுவார்கள். ஆனால் கணத்தில் சினம் வந்த சுவடு தெரியாமல் மறைந்து விடும். இரக்கமும் ஆழ்ந்த அன்பும் கொண்டு சிறந்தார்கள். என் தந்தை சர்தார் வேதரத்தினம் அவர்களுக்கும், மதுரை ஐயா திரு.என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்களுக்கும் சினம் வராது, அமைதியானவர்கள். உள்ளத்து உணர்வுகளை வெளிக் காட்டிக் கொள்ளாமல் அமைதி யும் புன்சிரிப்பும் கொண்டவர்கள். ஆக தமிழக அரசியல் வாழ் வில் நால்வரும் அண்ணாச்சிகளாகப் பலராலும் நட்பு பாராட் டப் பெற்றுச் சிறந்தார்கள்.

நாடு சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் ஈடுபட்டு இருந்த சமயம் தேசியப் பற்றும், உணர்வும் கொண்டவர்கள் தங்கள் பிள்ளைகள் தேசியக் கல்வி பெற வேண்டும் என்று எண்ணினார்கள். அதன் விளைவாக நாட்டின் பல பாகங்களில் அத்தகைய கல்வி நிலையங்கள் உருவாயின. அதே சமயம் இராமகிருஷ்ணர் இயக்க மும் நாட்டில் விவேகானந்தரின் முயற்சியால் விரிவடைந்து வந்தது. காந்தியடிகளின் முயற்சிகளும் மக்களிடையே பேராதர வைப் பெற்றது.

இராமகிருஷ்ணர் இயக்கம் மூலம் பல கல்வி, மற்றும் தொண்டு நிறுவனங்கள் நாட்டின் பல இடங்களிலும் தோன்ற லாயின. காந்தியடிகளின் முயற்சியில் 'பண்டித மதன் மோகன் மாளவியா' அவர்களால் காசியில் இந்து பல்கலைக் கழகமும், காந்தியடிகள் அடியொற்றி காசி வித்தியாபீடம், குஜராத் வித்தியா பீடம் அகமதாபாத்திலும் ரிஷிகேசத்திலும், பீகார்,

வங்காளத்தில் இரவிந்திரநாத் தாகூர் அவர்களின் சாந்தினிகேதன் போன்ற பல கல்வி நிலையங்கள் தோன்றி வளர்ந்தன. தேசியத் தலைவர்கள் தங்கள் பிள்ளைகளை இக்கல்விச் சாலைகளில் சேர்த்தார்கள்.

தென்னாட்டிலும் சென்னை, நாட்டிராம்பள்ளி, கோவை இராமகிருஷ்ணர் இயக்கமும், திருச்செங்கோட்டில் இராஜாஜி அவர்களால் காந்தி ஆசிரமும் தொடங்கப் பெற்றன. கோவை அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களால் 1930-ல் இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயம் துவங்கப் பெற்றது. அதன் வளர்ச்சிப் பாதையில் துடியலூர், போத்தனூர் போன்ற இடங்களில் மாறி இறுதியாக 1936-ஆம் ஆண்டில் பெரியநாயக்கன் பாளையத்தில் இராமகிருஷ்ண நாயுடு அவர்கள் அளித்த 15 ஏக்கர் நிலத்தில் நிலையாக அமைக்கப் பெற்றது. இன்றுள்ள மகத்தான வளர்ச்சி குருமகராஜ் அருளாலும், ஐயா அவர்கள் முயற்சியாலும், ஐயா அவர்களின் நண்பர்களின் இடையறாத ஒத்துழைப்பாலும் அடைந்ததே. இப் பணிகளில் ஐயா அவர்களுடன் மதுரை ஐயா என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும், சுவாமி சித்பவானந்தா அவர்களும் ஆரம்ப காலத்திலிருந்தே ஈடுபட்டு வந்தார்கள்.

இதைத் தொடர்ந்து 1940 களில் கல்லுப்பட்டி காந்திநிகேதன் ஆசிரமம் வெங்கடாசலபதி அவர்களால் தொடங்கப் பெற்றது. என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தொடக்கத்தில் இருந்து தலைமைப் பொறுப்பு ஏற்றுச் செயல்பட்டார்கள். எனது தந்தை சர்தார் வேதரத்தினம் அவர்கள் குத்துவிளக்கு ஏற்றி வைத்துத் தொடங்கி வைத்தார்கள்.

இன்றளவும் இது ஆதாரக் கல்வி, மற்றும் கிராமக் கைத்தொழில் ஆகியவற்றில் சேவை செய்து வருவது கண்கூடு. காந்தியடிகளின் கிராமியப் பொருளாதாரத்தை வகுத்த அமரர் திரு.ஜே.சி. குமரப்பா அவர்களும் தனது கிராமக் கைத்தொழில் வளர்ச்சிக்குத் தளமாகக் கொண்டு பாடுபட்டு அங்கேயே அமரத்துவம் அடைந்தார்கள். இப்பணிகள் எல்லாவற்றிலும் நமது ஐயா அவர்கட்குப் பெரும் பங்கு உண்டு.

பின்னர் 1946-ல் வேதாரண்யத்தில் தந்தையவர்களால் 1944-ஆம் ஆண்டு மறைந்த அன்னை திருமதி கஸ்தூர்பா காந்தி அவர்களது நினைவாக கஸ்தூர்பா காந்தி கன்யா குருகுலம் தொடங்கப் பெற்றது. இக்குருகுலம், ஐயா டி.எஸ். அவினாசி லிங்கம் மற்றும் மதுரை ஐயா, ஓ.பி.ஆர். இவர்கள் கலந்து ஆலோசித்து, ஒரு காந்திய ஆதாரக் கல்வி நிறுவனமாக சர்தாரால் 7.2.1946இல் தொடங்கப் பெற்றது. பின்னர் 1947இல் மதுரையை யடுத்த அம்பாத்துரையில் காந்தி கிராமம் திருமதி. சௌந்திரம் ராமச்சந்திரன் அவர்களால் தொடங்கப் பெற்றது. வளர்ச்சி பல கண்டு இன்று கிராமத் தொழில் மற்றும் கல்வியில் உயர்ந்து, ஒரு கிராமீயப் பல்கலைக் கழகமாக மிளிர்கிறது.

குருகுலத்தில் ஐயா, மதுரை ஐயா ஆகிய இருவரும் தன் ஆயுட்காலம் வரை தர்மகர்த்தாவாக இருந்து பணியாற்றி வந்து அதன் வளர்ச்சியின் ஒவ்வொரு நிலையிலும் பங்கு பெற்று இருக்கிறார்கள்.

குருகுலம் ஒரு தர்மஸ்தாபனம். ஏழை எளிய பெண்களுக்கு இலவசமாகக் கல்வி, உணவு, உறையுள் முதலியவற்றை வழங்கி வருகிறது. குருகுலம் தொடங்கிய காலத்தில் அன்னிய ஆட்சி நடைபெற்றதால் அதற்கு அரசு அங்கீகாரம் கிடைக்கவில்லை. என் தந்தையவர்கள் தன் சொந்தப் பொறுப்பில் நிலம் முதல் மற்ற அனைத்துச் செலவுகளையும் ஏற்றுச் செய்து வந்தார்கள். நான் குருகுலம் தொடங்கிய காலம் முதல், நிர்வாக அறங் காவலராகப் பணிபுரிந்து வருகிறேன். பின்னர் 1948-இல் எனது திருமணத்தை ஒட்டி கோவை ஐயா, மதுரை ஐயா மற்றும் தந்தையவர்களும் கலந்து முடிவெடுத்து என் திருமண நினைவாக ஒரு தரும டிரஸ்டாக குருகுலத்தைப் பதிவு செய்து நிர்வாகம் நடத்துமாறு அழைத்தார்கள்.

இந்த நிலையில் ஆண்டுதோறும் நிர்வாக அறங்காவலர் குழு கூடி நிதி நிர்வாகம் மற்றும் கல்வி அமைப்பு இவைகளைப் பற்றி கலந்தாலோசித்து முடிவெடுப்பார்கள். அரசு மான்யமும் இல்லாமல், குருகுலப் பெண்களின் எண்ணிக்கையில் கூடுதல் செய்வது, நிர்வகிக்க முடியாது போய்விடும் என்ற கருத்து

அறங்காவலர் குழுவின் பரிசீலனைக்கு வந்தது. என் தந்தையவர்கள் "மரம் வைத்தவன் தண்ணீர் ஊற்றுவான், இறைவன் காட்டும் வழி நடப்போம், இயல்பாக எது நடக்கிறதோ அதை ஏற்றுக் கொள்வோம்" எனத் தெரிவித்துள்ளார்கள். பின்னாளில் மூதறிஞர் இராஜாஜி அவர்கள் ஒருமுறை 'ஐந்து பெற்றால் அரசனும் ஆண்டி' என்னும் பழமொழியைச் சொல்லி, ஹாஸ்யமாக 'எப்படித்தான் சர்தார் அவர்கள் இப் பெரிய நிறுவனத்தை தாங்கிப் பணிபுரிகிறாரோ?' என்று எச்சரித்தார்கள். அப்பா அவர்கள் கருத்துப்படியே இன்றளவும் இறைவனின் பெருங்கருணையால் குருகுலப் பணிகள் நடைபெற்று வருகின்றன. இன்றைய கோவை அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனைஇயல் பல்கலைக் கழகத் துணை வேந்தர் திருமதி. இராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அவர்களும் இன்றளவும் அறங்காவலர் குழுவில் பணியாற்றுவதுடன் மேலே கண்ட ஒவ்வொரு சமயத்திலும் தானும் பங்கு பெற்று முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு உதவினார்கள்.

முன்பு கூறியவாறு சில ஆண்டுகள் அரசு அங்கீகாரமும், மான்யமும் இன்றி குருகுலம் நடந்தது. அப்பொழுது பெண்கள் பள்ளித் தணிக்கையாளராக (Inspectres of Girls Schools) அனேகமாக ஆங்கிலோ இந்தியப் பெண்கள் தான் பொறுப்பு வகிப்பார்கள். அவர்களுக்குக் காந்தியடிகளைப் பற்றியும், ஆதாரக் கல்வியைப் பற்றியும் நம்பிக்கை கிடையாது. மாறாக எதிர்ப்பவராகவும், அவமதிப்பவராகவும் நடந்து கொள்வார்கள். 1948இல் ஐயா அவர்கள் கல்வி அமைச்சராக இருந்த சமயம் திருவாரூருக்கு ஒரு விழாவிற்கு வருகை தந்திருந்தார்கள்.என்னையும் குருகுலம் பற்றிய அங்கீகாரக் குறிப்புகளுடன் வரச் சொல்லி இருந்தார்கள். தக்க ஆவணங்களுடன் சென்றிருந்தேன். அங்கு மகளிர் பள்ளித் தணிக்கை அதிகாரியாக முன் குறிப்பிட்டவரான ஆங்கிலோ இந்திய அம்மையாரும் வந்திருந்தார்கள். ஐயா அவர்கள் தனக்கே உரித்தான கோபம் மற்றும் கண்டிப்புடன் உடனடியாக அங்கீகாரம் மற்றும் மான்யம் அளிக்கச் சொல்லி உத்திரவு பிறப்பித்தார்கள். நான் திரும்ப ஊர் வரும்போது அங்கீகாரம் அளித்தும், மான்யம் அனுமதித்தும் உத்தரவு வந்திருந்தது.

ஆனால் தொடக்கம் முதலே அரசின் கல்வி இலாகாவிற்கு ஆதாரக் கல்வி பற்றி ஒரு மாறுபட்ட கண்ணோட்டமே இருந்து வந்தது. படிப்படியாக அதற்குத் தக்க இடையூறுகள் செய்து என் தந்தையவர்கள் 1961இல் காலமான பின் ஆதாரக் கல்வி முறையை விடை கொடுத்து அனுப்பிவிட்டார்கள்.

ஐயா அவர்கள் தீவிர காந்தி பக்தர். அவருக்கு இராம கிருஷ்ணர், விவேகானந்தர் ஆகிய பெரியோர்களின் இயக்கங்களில் மிகவும் ஈடுபாடு. விவேகானந்தரின் கல்வி, இளைஞர்கள் பற்றிய கருத்து இவைகளில் அதுவும் ஆழ்ந்த நம்பிக்கை. மாணவர்கள் எதற்கும் பிறர் உதவியை நாடி வாழ்தல் கூடாது. விடா முயற்சியும், எதிலும் உயர்வு தாழ்வு பார்க்கக் கூடாது என்ற அடிப்படைக் கருத்து உடையவர்கள். நான் படித்த காலத்திலிருந்தே ஐயா அவர்கள் வித்தியாலயத்தில் மாணவர்களுடனேயே உண்டு, உடுத்து வாழ்ந்து கொண்டிருந்தார்கள்.

1934 இல் நான் சேர்ந்த போது வித்தியாலயம், போத்தனூரில் திரு.ஜி.டி. நாயுடு அவர்கள் பங்களாவில் இருந்தது. அப்போது நாங்கள் 40 மாணவர்கள். ஐயா அவர்களுக்குத் துணையாக சித்பவானந்த சுவாமி அவர்கள் ஊட்டி ஆஸ்ரமத்தையும் பார்த்துக் கொண்டு இங்கு வந்து தங்கி மாணவர்களின் நலனிலும் கல்வி வளர்ச்சியிலும் கவனமாக இருந்தார்கள். அப்போது வித்தியாலயத்தில் பணியாளர்கள் ஒருவரும் இல்லை. வித்தியாலய குடும்ப வாழ்க்கையை மாணவர்களிடையே தொகுதி தொகுதியாகப் பிரித்து ஒவ்வொரு பணியை ஒரு தொகுதி ஒரு வாரத்திற்கு கவனித்துக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். கட்டிடம் துப்புறவுப் பணி, சமையல் பணி, சுற்றுப்புறத் துப்புரவுப் பணி, காலம் தவறாது காரியங்கள் நடத்த மணி பார்த்து அடித்தல், வரும் விருந்தினர்களை உபசரித்தல், கழிப்பிடத் துப்புரவுப் பணி, (அப்போதெல்லாம் வாளிகளில் கழிவுப் பொருட்களைச் சேகரித்து பின் அதற்குள்ள இடத்தில் குழி வெட்டி போட்டு மூடவேண்டும்) மாணவர்கள் தங்கள் முடி சீர் செய்ய அலங்காரத்தை தங்களுக்குள்ளேயே ஒருவருக்கு ஒருவர் உதவிக்கொள்ள வேண்டும். இவ்வாறாக வித்தியாலய

குடும்பப் பணிகளைத் தாங்களே கவனித்துச் செய்து கொள்ள வேண்டும். இந்த முறை மாணவர்களிடையே ஊக்கம், தன்னம் பிக்கை, எதிலும் உயர்வு தாழ்வு காணாத மனோபக்குவம் இவைகளை ஏற்படுத்த உதவியதுடன், காலை முதல் கால அட்டவணைப்படி செயல்பட்டதால் வீண் சிந்தனைகள், ஒழுக்கத் தவறு எதுவும் ஏற்படவோ அல்லது சிந்திக்கவோ முடியாத அமைப்பாகத் திகழ்ந்தது. இது முற்றிலும் காந்திய டிகள் வாழ்க்கை முறை, மற்றும் குருமகராஜ் வாழ்க்கை முறையை ஒத்து இருந்தது. இதுவரை 8 ஆம் வகுப்பு வரை உள்ள கல்வி நிலையமாக இருந்து வந்தது.

1936 இல் பெரியநாயக்கன் பாளையத்திற்கு வித்யாலயம் சென்றபின் உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளியாக மாறியது. போத்தனூரில் பெரியசாமித்தூரன் தலைமை ஆசிரியராகப் பணி புரிந்தார். மேட்டுப் பாளையம் அண்ணா என்று நாங்கள் அழைக்கும் திரு. திருவேங்கடாச்சாரியும் பணிபுரிந்தார். பிற்காலத்தில் உயர் நீதிமன்ற நீதிபதியாக இருந்த திரு.கே.எஸ். பழனிசாமி அவர்களும் பணிபுரிந்தார்கள்.

பெரிய நாயக்கன்பாளையம் சென்றதும் திரு. பெரிய சாமித்தூரன் மேற்படிப்புக்காகச் சென்றபின், கொடுமுடி திரு. நாராயணசாமி ஐயர் அவர்கள் தலைமைப் பொறுப்பு ஏற்றார். திரு. கே.வேங்கடாசலம் அவர்களும் பொறுப்பு வகித்தார் கள். இக்காலக் கட்டத்தில் கல்கத்தாவில் இருந்து மத் சுவாமி ஹரிஷீ கேசானந்தா அவர்கள் இராமகிருஷ்ண மடத்தின் சார்பில் பொறுப்பு ஏற்றார்கள்.

கல்வித் துறையில் அரசு பாடத் திட்டங்களுடன் ஆதாரக் கல்வியையும் இணைத்துத் திட்டம் வகுத்தார்கள். மாணவர்க ளுக்கு தச்சுத் தொழில் தொழில் பாடமாக அமைந்தது. தாங்கள் வகுப்பறை மற்றும் உணவு விடுதி, அலுவலகம் இவைகளுக்குத் தேவையான ஸ்டூல், பெஞ்சு, மேஜை, உட்காரும் வகுப்பறைப் பலகை முதலிய பயன்படு பொருட்களின் உற்பத்திக்குத் திட்டம் இடப்பட்டது. படிப்படியாக முதலில் மரத்தின் தரம் பார்த்தல், பிறகு தேவைக்கு ஏற்ப அறுத்துத் துண்டு செய்தல் போன்ற

அடிப்படையிலிருந்து, பொருள் முழுமை பெறத்தக்க வகையில் செயல்பட்டனர். இதனால் மாணவர்களின் பொருள் உற்பத்தித் திறன் உயர்ந்தது. தான் செய்த பொருள் தன் வாழ்க்கைக்குப் பயன் பெறுமாறு அமைந்தது. இத்துடன் நாங்கள் செய்யும் பொருட்களுக்கு ஏற்ப எங்களுக்குப் பணமாகவும் ஊக்கத் தொகை தரப்பட்டது. இதனால் தங்களால் எதையும் செய்ய முடியும் என்ற தன்னம்பிக்கை மாணவர்களிடம் வளர வழி கோலியது. இன்றளவும் என்னை இப்பயிற்சி தான் ஊக்குவித்து வருகிறது.

இதில் ஊக்கமும், திறமையும் காட்டும் மாணவர்களுக்குக் கட்டிடம் கட்டுவதில் கொத்துப் பணி, மரவேலைப் பணி, வர்ணம் தீட்டுதல், கட்டிடத்திற்கு மின் இணைப்பு ஏற்படுத்துதல் ஆகியவையும் தரப்பட்டு அதற்கு ஏற்ற ஊதியமும் வழங்கி உற்சாகப்படுத்தினார்கள். ஆக ஆதாரக் கல்வி முறையில் உள்ள தொழில், அது சார்ந்த விஞ்ஞான உண்மைகள், கணக்குகள் இவைகளும் போதிக்கப் பெற்றன. இவை ஐயா அவர்களுக்கு இக்கல்வித் திட்டத்தில் இருந்த ஆழ்ந்த பற்று, அதை எப்படிச் செயல்படுத்துவது என்று முறைப்படி திட்டமிடல், அதே நேரத்தில் மாணவன் மனத்தில் சோர்வு உண்டாகாமல் ஊக்கப் படுத்துதல் ஆகியவற்றை உணர்த்துகின்றன. இதில் குறிப்பிட வேண்டியது பல நேரங்களில் ஐயா அவர்களும் மாணவர் களோடு சேர்ந்து பணியை ஊக்குவிக்கும் பாங்கு.

ஐயா அவர்கள் மாணவர்களிடம் பழகும் முறையே அலாதியானது. பெரும்பாலும் சிறுவயது மாணவர்கள், பெற்றோர்களை விட்டு விட்டு வந்திருப்பவர்கள். அவர்கள் ஒவ்வொருவரையும் தனித்தனியாக ஐயா அவர்கள் அறிவார்கள். தன் எதிரில் வரும் ஒவ்வொரு மாணவனையும் "என் கண்ணு" என்று அழைத்து கட்டிப்பிடித்து முதுகில் தட்டிக் கொடுப்பார் கள். சந்தோஷமாக இருக்கிறாயா? வீட்டில் ஐயாவிடம் இருந்து கடிதம் வருகிறதா? நன்றாக சாப்பிட்டாயா? என்று வயிற்றைத் தடவிக் கொடுக்கும் பாங்கே தனி. ஐயா அவர்களால் மட்டுமே

இயன்றது இது. இச்செயல் மாணவனது சோர்வை நீங்கி ஊக்க மடையச் செய்துவிடும்.

ஐயா அவர்கள் மாணவர்களுக்கு மத்தியில் தான் உட்கார்ந்து சாப்பிடுவார்கள். ஐயா அவர்கள் சாப்பிடும் தட்டைச் சுத்தம் செய்து எடுத்து வருவதில் போட்டி. ஐயா அவர்களின் இருபுறமும் உட்கார்ந்து சாப்பிடுவதில் போட்டி, இப்படி மாணவர்கள் மத்தியில் வாழ்ந்து மாணவர்களை வழி நடத்திச் செல்வார்கள். மாணவர்கள் யாரும் முதுகு கூன் போட்டு உட்காரக் கூடாது அப்படி இருந்தால், அன்புடன் முதுகில் கும்மென்ற ஒரு குத்து விழும்.

ஐயா அவர்களின் முன் கோபமும் அனைவரும் அறிந் ததே. கணத்தில் மறைந்துவிடும் அக்கோபம் சிறுமை கண்டு பொறுக்காதது அவர்கள் உள்ளம். எனக்கு சிறு வயது முதலே பொறியியல், விஞ்ஞானம் இவற்றில் ஈடுபாடு அதிகம். எனக்குக் கிடைக்கும் நேரத்தில் இப்படி ஏதாவது செய்து கொண்டிருப் பேன். ஒரு நாள் திரு. ஜி.டி. நாயுடு அவர்கள் வித்தியாலயம் வந்து இருந்தார்கள். என்னைக் கூப்பிட்டனுப்பி "எங்கள் விஞ்ஞா னியைப் பார்த்தீர்களா?" என்று அறிமுகப்படுத்தினார்கள். நான் இன்னார் மகன் என்று அறிமுகம் செய்யவில்லை. நான் அப்பொழுது''Hundreds of things a boycando''என்ற புத்தகத்தில் இருந்து Make your own camera என்ற பகுதியைப் பார்த்து அதில் கொடுத்திருந்த வரைப்படத்தைப் போல ஒட்டுப் பல கையில் ஒரு காமிரா செய்திருந்தேன். விஞ்ஞானக் கூடத்தில் இருந்து ஒரு லென்சும் வாங்கிப் பொருத்தி இருந்தேன். அதைக் கொண்டுவரச் சொல்லிப் பார்த்தார்கள். புத்தகத்தில் போட்டி ருந்த வரைபட அளவுகள், லென்சில் Focusssing point இவை சரியாக அமைந்திருந்தன. திரு. ஜி.டி. நாயுடு அவர்கள் வெகு வாகப் பாராட்டினார்கள். அது முதல், வித்தியாலயம் வரும் போதெல்லாம் என்னைக் கூப்பிட்டு ஊக்குவிப்பார்கள். இது என் மனத்தில் ஊக்கத்தைக் கொடுத்ததுடன் எனது சிந்தனை யையும் மாற்றியது. இதன் விளைவாக நான் ஒரு நாள் ஒருவருக்கும் சொல்லாமல் கோவை திரு.ஜி.டி. நாயுடு வீட்டுக்குச்

சென்று 'என்னை விஞ்ஞானி ஆக்குங்கள்' என்று கேட்டுக் கொள்ள வைத்தது. நான் சொல்லாமல் இப்படி வந்தது சரியல்ல என்று எனக்குச் சமாதானம் சொல்லி மறுநாள் காலை தானே காரில் என்னை வித்தியாலயம் கொண்டு வந்து விட்டு ஐயா அவர்களிடம் சொல்லிச் சென்றார்கள்.

வித்தியாலயத்தில் எந்தக் குற்றம் நடந்தாலும் மாணவர்கள் நீதி மன்றத்தில் வழக்குப் பதிவு ஆகிவிடும். வாரத்தில் ஒரு நாள் வெள்ளிக்கிழமை மாணவர் நீதி மன்றம் மாலையில் கூடும். அந்த வாரத்தில் பதிவான வழக்குகள் மாணவர்களால் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப் பெற்ற நீதிபதிகளால் விசாரிக்கப்படும். ஐயா, சுவாமிகள், ஆசிரியர்கள் அனைவரும் அந்த நீதிமன்றத்திற்கு வருவார்கள்.

அந்த வாரத்தில் நான் சொல்லாமல் வெளியில் சென்ற வழக்கும் நீதி மன்ற விசாரணைக்கு வந்தது. நீதிபதிகள் (மாணவர்கள் தான்) என்னை விசாரித்தார்கள். நான் சென்றது தவறு என்று நீதிமன்றத்திடம் மன்னிப்புக் கேட்கச் சொன்னார்கள். நான் மறுத்துவிட்டேன். நீதிபதிகள் தங்கள் தீர்ப்பில் நான் கட்டுப்பாட்டை மீறியதுடன் நீதிமன்றத் தீர்ப்பையும் புறக்கணித்தேன் என்று குற்றம் சாட்டி என்னை வித்தியாலயத்தில் இருந்து நீக்கிவிட வேண்டும் என்று குறிப்பிட்டார்கள். அந்தத் தீர்ப்பு நிர்வாகத்தால் ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளப் பெற்று நான் வித்தியாலயத்தில் இருந்து விலக்கப் பெற்றேன். அத்தகைய மாணவனாகிய நான் பின்னாளில் ஐயாவின் அன்பிற்கு உரியவனானேன். அது வேறு சரித்திரம். எவ்வளவு வேண்டிய குடும்பத்துப் பையனாக இருந்தாலும் தவறு செய்யும்போது ஐயாவிடமிருந்து சலுகை பெற இயலாது. சட்டதிட்டங்களுக்கு அடங்கி நடக்க வேண்டும் என்பதில் ஐயாவின் கட்டுப்பாட்டு உள்ளம் தெரிகிறதல்லவா?

குருகுல அறங்காவலர் கூட்டத்திற்கு ஆண்டு தோறும் கோவை ஐயா, மதுரை ஐயா, திருமதி இராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் இவர்கள் தவறாது வந்து கலந்து கொள்வார்கள். கோவை ஐயா அவர்கள் இதை, 'நான் சர்தார் அண்ணாச்சிக்குச் செய்யும் தல யாத்திரை' என்பார்கள்.

பின்னர் அப்பா அவர்கள் காலமான பின் மிகவும் மனம் வருந்தினார்கள். அதன் பிறகு எனக்கு ஊக்கமூட்டி அவ்வப் போது கடிதம் எழுதுவார்கள். எனக்கு வாய்ப்பு கிடைக்கும் போதெல்லாம் வித்தியாலயம் சென்று வருவேன். தந்தை போன்று அவர்கள் எனக்கு ஒரு பாதுகாவலாகவும் வழிகாட்டியாகவும் திகழ்ந்தார்கள். அப்பா மறைவுக்குப்பின் ஆண்டுக்கொரு முறை குருகுலம் வருவதை ஒரு கட்டாயமாக்கிக் கொண்டார்கள். அண்ணாச்சி அவர்கள் பொருட்டு அவர்கள் நினைவாகச் செய்யும் தல யாத்திரை இது என்று அடிக்கடி கூறுவார்கள். தன் உடல் நலம் குறைந்த பின்னும் கூட திருச்சி வரையிலும் ரயிலில் வந்து பின்பு காரில் வேதாரண்யம் வருவார்கள். வந்தால் ஒரு நாள் தங்கிப் பின் தான் புறப்படுவார்கள். நானும் எனது இதய நோய் பாதிப்பு இருந்தும் வித்தியாலயம் சென்று வருவது என்று ஏற்படுத்திக் கொண்டேன். குறிப்பாக ஐயா அவர்கள் பிறந்த மே 5ஆம் தேதியும், ஜனவரி குருமகராஜ் உற்சவத்திற்கும் சென்று வருவது என்று நிச்சயித்துக் கொண்டேன். சில சமயம் எனது இதய நோய் காரணமாகச் செல்ல இயலாமல் இருந்தாலும் எனது மக்கள் இருவரில் ஒருவராவது சென்று வருவார்கள். நான் 1989ஜனவரி 1ம் தேதி குருமகராஜ் உற்சவத்திற்குச் சென்ற போது ஐயா அவர்களைக் கடைசியாகப் பார்த்ததுதான். ஏப்ரலில் இதய அறுவைச்சிகிச்சைக்குப் பின் முற்றிலும் செல்ல முடியவில்லை. ஐயா அவர்கள் உடல் நலமும் பாதித்து எங்கும் செல்ல முடியாமை உண்டாகி இருவரும் பார்த்துக்கொள்ள இயலாமலே போய்விட்டது. இதற்கிடையில் மதுரை ஐயா அவர் களும் காலமாகி விட்டார்கள். அதைப் பற்றிய வருத்தமெல்லாம் எழுதுவார்கள். அவ்வப்போது கடிதம் மூலம் தைரியமும், உற்சா கமும் கொடுப்பார்கள். நினைவு தவறிய போது கடிதமே நின்றது. திடீரென்று ஒரு நாள் ஐயா அவர்கள் கடிதம் வந்தது. கொஞ்சம் நினைவு வந்திருக்கிறது. ஒரு கடிதத்தில் ஒரே வரி 'உன் உடம்பை நன்றாகப் பார்த்துக் கொள்' என்று தன் கையில் எழுத முடியாமல் எழுதி இருந்தார்கள். கையெழுத்து எழுத்தில் தெரிந்தது. அதுதான் கடைசி எழுத்து.

ஐயா அவர்கள் காலமாகும் முன் எனது தந்தை சர்தார் வேதரத்னம் அவர்கள் நினைவாக அவர்கள் பெயரில் ஒரு நிறுவனம் நிறுவச் சொல்லி ரூபாய் இருபதினாயிரம் அனுப்பி அந்நிறுவனம் தொடங்கிவிட்டால் மேல் தொகை அனுப்புவ தாகக் கடிதம் எழுதி இருந்தார்கள். அதை வைப்பு நிதியாக வங்கியில் வைத்திருக்கிறோம்.

இதய அறுவை சிகிச்சை உரிய பலன் தராமல் நாளுக்கு நாள் நலிவு அதிகரித்ததால் என்னாலும் ஏதும் செய்ய இயல வில்லை. ஐயா அவர்கள் காலமான சமயம் நான் சென்னை விஜயா மருத்துவமனையில் நலவாழ்வு மையத்தில் சேர்ந்து சிகிச்சை பெற்று வந்தேன். மனம் பெரிதும் பாதிப்படைந்தது. எனது மக்கள் இருவரும் கோவை சென்று இறுதிக் காரியங்களில் கலந்து கொண்டு, அஸ்தியையும் வேதாரண்யம் கொண்டு வந்து முறைப்படி கடலில் கரைத்தார்கள். ஐயா அவர்கள் மறைவுக்குப் பின் இரங்கல் பிரார்த்தனையிலும் கலந்து கொண்டார்கள். நான் மருத்துவமனையில் இருந்து பிரார்த்தித்துக் கொண்டேன்.

ஐயா அவர்களின் கடைசி விருப்பத்தைப் பூர்த்தி செய்து அப்பா அவர்கள் பெயரில் "சர்தார் வேதரத்தினம் இந்திய மருத்துவ மற்றும் ஆராய்ச்சிக் கழகம்" என்று ஓர் அறக்கட்டளை நிறுவி அதன் மூலம் அப்பா அவர்களுக்கு ஈடுபாடு உடைய இந்திய மருத்துவம் அனைத்தையும் இணைத்து ஆராய்ச்சி மற்றும் சிகிச்சை முறைகளை ஏற்படுத்த வேண்டும் என்பது எனது விருப்பம். ஐயா அவர்கள் கொடுத்த தொகையை, பாங்கில் வைப்புத் தொகையாக வைத்து, ஆண்டுதோறும் குடும்பத்தில் இருந்தும் ஏதாவது தொகை போட்டு அது பற்றி முயற்சி எடுத்துக் கொள்ள எனது மக்களைக் கேட்டுக் கொண்டு இருக் கிறேன். இதன் மூலம் ஐயா அவர்கள் விருப்பம் நிறை வேறுவதுடன், தந்தையவர்களுக்குப் பிரியமான ஒரு காரியம் பூர்த்தியாவதுடன், மக்கள் சேவையிலும் ஒரு தொண்டு செய்ய இயலும். இறைவன் இந்தத் திட்டத்தைப் பூர்த்தி செய்து வைக்க அருள வேண்டும். ஐயா அவர்களுக்குச் செய்யும் என் நன்றிக் கடனாக இது அமையும் என்பது என் நம்பிக்கைப் பிரார்த்தனை.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் அய்யா அவர்களும் தமிழ்நாட்டில் கதரும்

வி. ராமச்சந்திரன்

ஐயா, அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களை நான் முதலில் நேரில் சந்தித்தது 1947 அக்டோபர் மாதம் 2ம் தேதி. நான் சர்க்கா சங்கத்தின் தலைமைத் தலமான திருப்பூருக்கடுத்த காந்தி நகரில் பணிபுரிந்து வந்த ஓர் இளைஞன். ஆசைகளும், ஆர்வங்களும், ஏமாற்றங்களும் ஏராளம் மாறி, மாறி வந்து கொண்டிருந்த காலம். எனது கதர் வேலையில் ஏறத்தாழ ஏழு வருடங்கள் ஆகியிருந்த காலம், ஐயா, அவர்கள் மதராஸ் பிரசிடென்சி (MadrasPresidency) அமைச்சர்கள் அவையில் கல்வி அமைச்சர். காந்தி ஜெயந்தி விழாவில் கலந்து கொள்வதற்காக வந்தார். ஐயா அவர்களுடன் இன்னும் இரண்டு அமைச்சர்கள் வந்திருந்தார்கள். அவரில் ஒருவர் மாதவமேனன், பாலக்காட்டைச் சேர்ந்தவர். இந்த விழா அந்த அமைச்சர்கள் அவைக்கே ஒரு சோதனையாக ஆயிற்று. விழாவில் திரு. மாதவமேனன் தமிழ்நாட்டின் பஞ்சாலை களில் இயங்கும் கதிர்களின் எண்ணிக்கையை அப்பொழுது இருந்த அளவைவிடக் கூடுதல் ஆக்க விடமாட்டோம் என்று பேசினார். மாநில மக்கள் தேவைகளைப் பூர்த்தி செய்ய ஏராளமான கைராட்டைகளை விநியோகம் செய்து கையினால் நூல் நூற்க ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்படுவதாகத் திட்டம். அனைத்து பிர்க்கா (தாலுக்காவை விட சிறிது. சில பல ரெவின்யூ கிராமங்களைக் கொண்டது) அளவிலும் பிர்க்கா வளர்ச்சித் திட்டம். அதில் கதர் வேலைகள் மூலம் கதர் உற்பத்தி மூலம் வேலை வாய்ப்புகளுக்கும், தேவைப் பூர்த்திக்கும் திட்டமிடப் படும். அனைத்தும் மாகாண அரசின் வளர்ச்சித் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் செயல்படும். இந்த திட்டத்துக்கு காந்தியடிகள் அங்கீகாரமும், ஆசியும் இருந்தது. திட்டம் (Intensive Khadi Scheme) தீவிர கதர்த் திட்டம்.

காந்தி ஜெயந்தி விழாவில் திரு. மேனன் பேசிய பேச்சின் எதிரொலி சென்னை மாகாண அரசுக்கு ஆபத்தை விளைவித்தது.

பஞ்சாலைகளில் கதிர்கள் அதிகரிக்கத் தடை பற்றி எதிர்ப்பு சீற்றமடைந்தது. அமைச்சர்கள் அவை கலைந்தது.

கதரியக்கத்துக்கும், அரசுக்கும் இருந்த உறவு இப்படி வெளிவந்தது. மாகாண தீவிர கதரியக்கம் தொடர்ந்தது. 1953ல் மத்திய அரசு நாட்டில் கதர் வேலைகளைச் சீர்படுத்தி பரப்பவும், வளர்க்கவும் என்று "அகில இந்திய காதி மற்றும் கிராமக் கைத்தொழில் ஆயம்" என்றதோர் புது அமைப்பை உருவாக்கியது. பின்னர் கதர் ஆயத்துக்கு சுதந்திரமாக இயங்கத்தக்க சட்ட ரீதியான அதிகாரங்களை வழங்கி "கதர் கிராமக் கைத்தொழில் கள் கமிஷன்" ஆக்கியது. இந்த கமிஷன் வழி இன்று வருடம் தோறும் சுமார் ரூ.250கோடி பெருமானமுள்ள கதர் உற்பத்தியும் விற்பனையும் செய்ய நிதி உதவியும், மான்யங்களும் வழங்கி வருகிறது. நடைமுறை மூலதனச் செலவுகளுக்காக சுமார் ரூ.500 கோடி கடனாகவும் வருடந்தோறும் சுமார் ரூ.70 கோடி மான்யமும் வழங்கி வருகிறது.

நாடெங்கிலும் சுமார் 29 மாநில கதர் கிராமத்தொழில் வாரியங்களும், சுமார் 1500 பதிவு செய்யப்பட்ட லாப நோக்க மில்லாத நிறுவனங்களும், சுமார் 25,000 கூட்டுறவு சொசைட்டி களும் பணியாற்றி வருகின்றன.

தமிழ்நாட்டில் கதர் கிராமத் தொழில் வேலைகளில் ஏதாவது ஒன்று நடைபெறாத ஊரே இல்லை எனலாம். சுமார் 99 சதவீத கிராமங்களில் இவ்வேலைகள் நடைபெறுகின்றன. 13 கோடி மக்கள் வாழும் உத்தரப் பிரதேசத்திலும், 5 கோடி மக்கள் வாழும் தமிழ்நாட்டிலும் சற்று ஏறக்குறைய சம அளவு வேலை வாய்ப்பும், உற்பத்தி, விற்பனையும் நடைபெறுகிறது.

இந்த சாதனைக்கு முக்கிய காரணங்கள் இரண்டு. மாநில அரசுகளும் கிராம வாழ்மக்களுக்கு நேரடியாக உதவிட கதர் கிராமக் கைத்தொழில்கள் ஒரு முக்கியமான திட்டம் என்று பல்லாண்டு காலமாகவே ஒப்புக் கொண்டு அவைகளுக்கு தகுந்த உதவிகளையும், ஊக்குவிப்புகளையும் அளித்து வருவதும் அவைகளை நன்கு பாதுகாத்து வருவதுமே ஆகும்.

இந்த நிலைமை பல ஏற்றங்களுக்கும், தாழ்வுகளுக்கும் சங்கடங்களுக்கும் இடையே நடைபெற்றதோர் நம்பிக்கை தரும் சாதனையாகும்.

கதர் கிராமத் தொழில்களுக்கு மத்திய அரசு கதர் கிராமக் கைத்தொழில் கமிஷனை நிறுவியிருந்த பொழுதிலும் அது அந்த நிறுவனத்தின் மீது பரிபூரண நம்பிக்கை வைத்திருந்ததாகவோ, சீரான நிதி உதவிகள் வழங்கி வந்ததாகவோ கூற முடியாது.

இரண்டாவது ஐந்தாண்டுத் திட்ட காலத்தில் ரூ. 64.71 கோடி நிதி உதவி தந்தது.

மூன்றாவது திட்ட காலத்தில் அது ரூ.89.65 கோடியாக உயர்ந்தது.

அதைத் தொடர்ந்து திட்டமில்லாத மூன்று வருடங்களில் 1966-67 முதல் 1968-69 முடிய மொத்தம் ரூ.42.88 கோடியாக நிதி உதவி குறைந்தது.

நான்காவது ஐந்தாண்டுத் திட்ட காலத்தில் ரூ.46.55 கோடியாக சிறிது கூடுதல் ஆயிற்று (1969-70 முதல் 1973-74 வரை).

இந்த திட்ட காலத்தில் நாடெங்கிலும் கதர் வேலைக்கு முற்றிலும் நெருக்கடியாக இருந்தது. இந்த திட்ட காலத்தில் தான் கதர் வேலை வளர்ச்சிக்கான நிதி தட்டுப்பாடுக்கு உள்ளாயிற்று. வளர்ச்சிக்கு நிதி இல்லை. மான்யங்கள் மறுக்கப்படவில்லை. மான்யங்களாக ரூ.29.54 கோடி வழங்கியது. ஆனால் நடைமுறை வேலை வளர்ச்சிக்காக ரூ.17.01 கோடி வழங்கியது. சராசரி வருடத்திற்கு மான்யமாக ஏறத்தாழ ரூ.6 கோடியும், வளர்ச்சிக்காக ரூ.3.5 கோடியும் தந்து வந்தது.

இந்த மான்யங்களில் 95 சதவிகிதம் விற்பனை விலை தள்ளுபடியாக நுகர்வோர்களுக்கு அளிக்கப்படுவது.

வளர்ச்சிக்காக வழங்கும் நிதி தான் மூலப்பொருட்கள் வாங்கவும், உற்பத்திக்காக தொழிலாளர்களுக்கு ஊதியங்கள்

வழங்கவும் பயன்படுகிறது. அதைக் கட்டுப்படுத்தி விட்டால் காலம் போகப் போக, மான்யமும் குறைந்து விடும். உற்பத்தி யானால் தானே, விற்பனை மான்யம் வேண்டும்.

இந்தப் போக்கு ஏறக்குறைய ஐந்தாவது திட்ட காலத் திலும், ஆறாவது திட்ட காலத்திலும், ஏழாவது திட்ட காலத் திலும் கூட கடைப்பிடிக்கப்பட்டது.

ஐந்தாவது திட்ட காலத்துக்கும், ஆறாவது திட்ட காலத் துக்கும் இடையே இரண்டு ஒரு வருட திட்ட காலத்திலும், ஆறாவது திட்டத்தில் முதல் வருடத்திலும் தான் வளர்ச்சிக்கான புழங்கு நிதி மான்யங்களைவிட இரு மடங்கு, மும்மடங்கு வரைக் கூட கூடுதல் அளிக்கப்பட்டது ஒரு குறிப்படத்தக்க மாற்றமாகும்.

மீண்டும் 1981-82 முதல் 1991-92 வரை பழையபடியே மான்யங்கள் கூடியும், புழங்கு நிதிகள் குறைவாகவும் வழங்கும் பழக்கம் திரும்பியது. எனவே நெருக்கடி நிலை நாளுக்கு நாள் அதிகரிக்க காரணமாயிற்று.

இப்படி ஐந்தாவது ஐந்தாண்டு திட்ட காலத்தில் 1975-76 வருடத்தில் மட்டும், நாட்டில் நெருக்கடி பிரகடனம் செய்யப் பட்ட வருடத்தில், அன்று பிரதமராக இருந்த இந்திரா காந்தி அவர்களுக்கு கதர் ஊழியர்கள் மீது விசேட மதிப்புயர்வு ஏற்பட்டதாகக் கூற முடியாதிருந்த பொழுதிலும் ஒரே ஒரு வருடம் மான்யங்களை விட வளர்ச்சிக்கு வழங்கிய புழங்கு நிதி ஏறத்தாழ இரண்டு மடங்குக்கும் மேல் அதிகரித்தால், தமிழ்நாட்டில் தடைப்பட்ட வளர்ச்சி வேகமடைந்தது. இந்த சாதனைக்கு காரண புருஷர் திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் என்று மனமாரக்கூறி அவர் ஆன்மாவுக்கு பல்லாயிரக்கணக்கான கதர் பணியாளர்கள் சார்பில் நன்றி தெரிவிக்காமல் இருக்க முடியாது.

நாட்டில் மூன்று வருடங்களாக வறட்சி. வானம் பொய்த்து மழை தவறியது. விவசாயத்துக்கு நீரில்லை. விவசாயிகளுக்கும், விவசாயத்தில் பணிபுரிந்து வந்த நிலமில்லா வேளாண் தொழி

லாளர்களுக்கும் வேலையில்லை. ஒரு வருடமல்ல, இரண்டு வருடமல்ல, மூன்றாவது வருடமும்.

கதர் கிராமத் தொழில் தவிர வேறு நிவாரண வேலை கொடுக்க ஏதும் இல்லை. ரோடு போடுவதற்கும் தண்ணீர் வேண்டும். குட்டை கட்டுவதற்கும் திட்டங்கள் வேண்டும். ஆனால் அவைகளால் ஊருக்கே வேலை தரமுடியாது.

கதர் வேலை செய்ய பஞ்சு இல்லை. நூற்புக்கூலி கொடுக்க பணம் இல்லை. நெசவுக்குக் கொடுக்க நூல் இல்லை. நான் அன்று சர்வ சேவா சங்கத்தின் நிர்வாக அறங்காவலராக இருந்தேன். தமிழ்நாட்டு கதர் வேலைக்குப் பொறுப்புடைய வனாக இருந்தேன். மக்களுக்கு நல்ல காலத்தில் செய்த கதர்த் தொண்டு, அவர்கள் துயர்படும்பொழுது நிதியில்லா நிலையில் ஒன்றும் செய்ய முடியாத நிலை.

கதர் வேலை பற்றிப் பிரதமரிடம் எடுத்துக் கூறலாம். ஆனால் சர்வ சேவா சங்கம் பிரதமருக்கு எதிரான ஜே.பி. அவர்கள் இயக்கத்துடன் நெருக்கமுடையது. அதன் நிர்வாக இயக்குனர் எடுத்துச் சொல்லி நிதி உதவி பெறுதல் மேலே கூறிய வரலாற்று உண்மைகளாலும், அரசியல் கலப்பாலும் இயலாத நிலை.

எனது சங்கடத்தை ஐயா அவர்களிடம் சென்று எடுத்துரைத்தேன். புள்ளி விவரங்களைக் கூறினேன். மக்கள் துயரங்களையும் எடுத்து பகர்ந்தேன். ஐயா அவர்களுக்கும் நிலைமை பற்றி கவலை ஏற்பட்டது. மாலை வித்தியாலய வழிபாட்டு மண்டபத்தில் பிரார்த்தனைக்குச் சென்று திரும்பினோம். உடன் அமர்ந்தார். அன்று நிதி அமைச்சராக இருந்த, இன்று ஐயா அவர்களுக்கு பதில் ராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலய கல்வி நிறுவனங்களுக்கும், அவினாசிலிங்கம் அறக் கட்டளை, நிறுவனங்களுக்கும் தலைவராகவும் மகாராஷ்டிரா மாநில ஆளுநருமாக இருக்கும் திருமிகு. சி. சுப்பிரமணியம் அவர்களுக்குத் தம்கைப்பட ஒரு கடிதம் எழுதினார். கதர் வேலைக்கு உதவுவதை அன்றைய சூழ்நிலையில் பரவலான வறட்சி நிவாரணப்பணியாகக் கருதி அதைச் செய்யுமாறு

வலியுறுத்தினார். எனது அறிக்கைகள், விவரங்களையெல்லாம் எடுத்துக்கூறினார்.

ஒரே வாரத்துக்குள் நிதி அமைச்சர் கோவைக்கு விஜயம் செய்தார். வறட்சிப் பகுதிகளுக்கு நேரில் சென்று பார்வை யிட்டார். சென்ற இடமெல்லாம் பெண்களும், ஆண்களும் கதர் வேலைக்குப் பணம் கொடுங்கள் என்று ஒருமுகமாக வற்புறுத்தினார்கள். டில்லிக்கு பயணமாகு முன்னரே நிதி அமைச் சக அதிகாரிகளும் கோவை வந்தனர். வறட்சி நிவாரணத் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் திட்டம் தயாரானது. ஒரு வார காலத்தில் பிரதமர் அங்கீகாரம் பெற்றது.

பதினைந்து நாட்களில் நேரில் சர்வோதய சங்கத்துக்கு மத்திய நிதி அமைச்சகத்திலிருந்து ரூ.2 கோடி வந்தது. சென்னைக்கு மாநில கதர் போர்டுக்கும் அதற்கேற்றவாறு நிதி அனுப்பப்பட்டது. கதர் கமிஷனுக்கு இப்படி நிதி அனுப்பப் பட்டதை அதன் கணக்குகளில் வரவு செலவு செய்து கொள்ளும்படி நிதி அமைச்சகம் எழுதியது. வறட்சியால் பாதிக் கப்பட்டிருந்த குஜராத், ஆந்திர, ஒரிஸ்ஸா, உத்திர பிரதேசம் ஆகிய மாநிலங்களுக்கும் இதே போன்று நிதி உதவி கிடைத்தது.

ஒரே வருடத்தில் கதர் வேலை இரட்டித்தது. அந்த வளர்ச்சி பத்து வருட காலம் தொடர்ந்தது. இந்த வளர்ச்சிக்கு திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களின் நேரத்துக்கேற்ற உத்தியும், அவரிடம் திரு. சி. சுப்பிரமணியம் அவர்களுக்கிருந்த நம்பிக்கையும், பக்தியும், திருமதி. இந்திரா காந்திக்கு இருந்த தூர நோக்குமே காரணங்களாகும்.

இதை இந்த வேலைகளில் ஈடுபட்டிருக்கும் அனைத்து மக்களும் மறவாதிருப்பர். இன்றும் கதர் வேலை நெருக்கடிக் குள்ளாகித்தான் இருக்கிறது. ஆனால் அதைத் தீர்ப்பதற்கு அய்யா அவர்கள் போன்ற பெருந்தகைகளைத்தான் காணோம்.

THE INSPIRATION HE GAVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL

P. Somasundaram

I joined the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya started by Ayya at Perianaickenpalayam in June 1939 in III Form and continued my studies till he was arrested in the second week of August 1942 on his way back from Bombay after attending the All India Congress Committee meeting. I discontinued my studies in the middle of August and returned to my village in Madurai district and took part in the underground movement. After a year, I continued my studies in Virudhunagar and later at Madurai.

During the short period of three years I was with Ayya, I had the unique opportunity of being his Personal Assistant, attending to his personal work. He used to instil in us three things - 1) Devotion to God, 2) Devotion to one's country and 3) Devotion to one's mother tongue. He used to take weekly classes regularly on "Thirukkural" besides quoting from it quite often in his talks. He used to insist that the medium of instruction in schools should be one's mother tongue. Later, when he became the first Minister for Education in the composite Madras State in 1946, he introduced many reforms in the school curriculum which ushered in a new era for the Tamil language.

His main contribution towards the development of Tamil language and literature - both as a Minister and later - is towards the elevation of our ancient Tamil language into a modern one. He planned and executed three projects to achieve this object: The first one was to prepare an Encyclopaedia in Tamil. The second one was to bring in Tamil the complete works of Gandhiji and third one was to publish a scholarly research publication on "Thirukkural", the world famous Tamil masterpiece.

1. Tamil Encyclopaedia

To meet the needs of the present modern age it has become necessary that Tamil should grow as a modern scientific language so that the ordinary men and women can learn all branches of knowledge through their own language. This idea

prompted him to think about initiating work on an Encyclopaedia in Tamil, on the lines of British Encyclopaedia. Immediately after becoming the Education Minister, he wanted to take up the work under the aegis of the State Government. He soon realised the colossal nature of work and came to the conclusion that it cannot be achieved under Government agencies as the resources of the Government at that time were very limited. The cost of the project was estimated to be about Rs.18 lakhs. At that time the annual budget of the Composite Madras State was only about Rs. 60 crores. Hence, it was considered impossible to take up the work under the auspices of Government as similar amount has to be spent for Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam languages also. But he felt that the need to develop the Tamil language into a modern one containing within it knowledge in all possible fields of science, technology and modern development was imperative. If it could not be done by Government, he decided that it had to be done by the public, with possible help of Governments of Madras and India. For this purpose he started Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam (Tamil Academy) in the year 1946 and got it registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1861. His faith in Tamil people gave him the strength and courage to take up this mighty task.

The Tamil Academy was started under his presidentship in 1946. Sri C.R. Srinivasan, Editor of Swadesamitran and the great Tamil scholar Sri T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar were nominated as Vice Presidents and Sri Kalki R. Krishnamurthy the most popular weekly editor was nominated as Secretary. Messrs N.M.R. Subbaraman, Sa. Ganesan, T.P. Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, V.S. Thiagaraja Mudaliar and Dr. T.S. Thirumurthi besides others were nominated as members of the first committee. The Trust Board was also formed with Messrs. M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, O.P. Ramaswamy Reddiar and others. After the demise of one of the Vice Presidents, Sri C. Subramaniam was nominated as Vice President. After the demise of Kalki R. Krishnamurthy, Prof. K. Swaminathan was made the Secretary and later when he left Madras for Delhi, Sri M.P. Periaswamy Thooran was posted as Secretary and Editor. The Tamil Academy to start with, conducted annual Tamil Festivals on a grand scale in Madurai, Tiruvarur, Coimbatore, Jaffna, Madras and Delhi.

On the Independence Day of 15th August 1948, Ayya issued an appeal for funds for beginning the work of Tamil Encyclopaedia. The enthusiasm of people at that time was so great that the appeal met with ready response. The three Tamil Mutts in Dharumapuram, Thiruvavaduthurai and Thirupanandal responded with Rs.10,000/- each. Dr. Alagappa Chettiar and Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar gave similar sums each. Many others contributed liberally and within two months an amount of Rs. 1.5 lakhs was collected. The Government of Madras promised Rs. 5 lakhs in instalments and Government of India with Sri R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar as Finance Minister, promised Rs. 3 lakhs in four instalments.

The work was inaugurated on the Vijayadasami Day of 1948 by Dr. A.L. Mudaliar, Vice Chancellor of Madras University under the presidentship of Ayya. The University came forward to provide free accommodation to locate our office. Sri P. Thirukutasundaram Pillai was first appointed as joint editor and later Sri M.P. Periaswamy Thooran joined as editor. To prepare an Encyclopaedia in Tamil, the like of which had not been attempted in any Indian language previously was a colossal job and a very difficult job. Many important decisions had to be taken :

(1) Whether it should be subjectwise or in alphabetical order like the British and American Encyclopaedia. Tamil Academy decided after great discussion that it should be in the alphabetical order while the Telugu Encyclopaedia Committee opted for subjectwise type.

(2) It was a difficult task to evolve into Tamil thousands of technical terms, signs and phrases which are in vogue in the vocabulary of science and technology.

(3) The physical aspects of the encyclopaedia, its size, the number of pages per volume, the size of the pages, the number of volumes, the kind of paper to be used, the kind of binding, the cover design etc. had to be decided.

A separate Committee was formed with Dr. A.L. Mudaliar, Sri R.K. Shanmugam Chettiar, Sri T.S.S. Rajan, Sri T.K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, Sri T.S. Sadasivan, Sri R.P. Sethu Pillai and others as members to take decisions on such matters and to supervise day to day work. Surmounting all these problems, the first volume was released after seven years of hard labour in 1954. After that, one volume was published each year and the 9th volume was published in 1963. The 10th and final volume containing the supplement and index was published in 1968. With this Kalaikalanchiam work has been completed satisfactorily.

Another long cherished dream of Ayya was to present the Tamil children with books with beautiful and colourful pictures as we find in English and other foreign languages. He decided to publish a Children's Encyclopaedia, profoundly illustrated with at least 50 per cent of the pictures in colour and in simple language understandable by the children. The work was started with a sub-committee with Sri C. Subramaniam, Sri N.D. Sundara Vadivelu and Dr. Rajammal Devadas. Sri P. Thooran was the secretary and editor for this project also. The first volume was published in 1968 and the 10th and final volume came out in 1975. I was also appointed by Ayya as another Secretary for Tamil Academy during 1975.

Thereafter, an attempt was made to bring out a second edition of the regular Encyclopaedia in Tamil. A project with an estimated cost of Rs.75 lakhs was prepared and submitted to the State Government. It was approved and an initial grant of Rs. 5 lakhs was sanctioned. Later, the response from Government was not encouraging and hence the work was suspended. As the Children's Encyclopaedia in Tamil became popular and as it was less expensive, Ayya decided to bring out the second edition of Children's Encyclopaedia. During this period, Ayya due to advanced age could not visit Madras often to guide and supervise the work. He, therefore, nominated Sri C. Subramaniam as the President of the Tamil Academy. He continued as Founder Patron. The first volume was brought out in 1982 and the 10th and last volume was published in 1988 with assistance from Government of India. Thereafter, the Tamil Academy published two Science books in Tamil by arranging to

INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN (DEEMED UNIVERSITY) LIBRARY

translate the Science books published by Bharathiya Vidhya Bhavan and Madras Science Foundation. Meanwhile, Sri C. Subramaniam had to accept the post of Governor of Maharashtra. Dr. V.C. Kulandaiswamy was nominated as President while Sri C. Subramaniam continued as Patron.

The Tamil Academy is now engaged in another project of publishing comprehensive medical books in 10 volumes of 500 pages each at an estimated cost of Rs.10 lakhs. Many eminent doctors have come forward to contribute articles for this project. An editorial board has been formed with eminent doctors like Dr.M. Thangavelu, Dr. M. Natarajan, Dr. B. Ramamurthi, Dr. Lalitha Kameswaran and others. Preliminary work is in progress and proposals seeking financial assistance have been submitted to Government of India. It is proposed to complete the work in a period of three years.

The monumental work started by Ayya continues unabated with his blessings !

2. Publication of Gandhiji's Complete Works in Tamil

Besides the Ramakrishna movement, Ayya had immense faith in Gandhiji and his movement. He plunged into the freedom movement leaving aside all the comforts of life and courted imprisonment four times in 1930, 1932, 1940-41 and finally in 1942, under the direction of Mahatma Gandhi. He had close contact with Gandhiji throughout his lifetime and he got Gandhiji's advice before initiating action on any important matter. Therefore, it is no wonder that he wanted the Tamilians to know more about Gandhiji and his philosophy. He therefore took up the translation and publication in Tamil of Gandhiji's complete works.

After the demise of Mahatma Gandhi on 30th January 1948, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress resolved that a National Memorial Fund be started to perpetuate his memory and authorised Dr. Rajendra Prasad to take all the necessary steps for the purpose. It was resolved to constitute a trust under the name "Gandhi Smarak Nidhi" with headquarters at Delhi and branches in all States. One of the main objects of

this trust is collection, preservation and publication in various languages of Mahatma Gandhi's writings and teachings.

The State branch of Tamil Nadu was located at Madurai and Sri N.M.R. Subbaraman, a true Gandhian and closest friend of Ayya was appointed as Secretary of the Nidhi. An amount of Rs.13 crores was collected and our State was allotted a sum of Rs.65 lakhs. Ayya suggested to Sri N.M.R. Subbaraman that Tamil Nadu Gandhi Smarak Nidhi should undertake the great work of bringing out the complete works of Gandhiji in Tamil in 17 volumes. He and other members of the Nidhi readily agreed. They requested Ayya to undertake the work on their behalf and Ayya agreed. A meeting was convened on 5th May 1955 and a Committee was formed with Ayya as President, Messrs. N.M.R. Subbaraman, K. Kamaraj, Sardar A. Vedarathnam, C. Subramaniam and others as members and Sri G. Venkatachalapathy as secretary. The Government of Tamil Nadu was kind enough to give free accommodation to the committee in the old Governor's palace in the Government House Estate at Mount Road, Madras. Sri R. Venkatarajulu formerly editor of "Dinasari" was appointed as editor and the work began in right earnest.

A decision had to be taken whether the works should be in chronological order or subject-wise. Navjivan publications had published Gandhiji's works in English and it was adopted as model. Considering all aspects it was decided that the publication should be subject-wise. Some books were written by Gandhiji himself like **Satyagraha in South Africa** and his autobiography, **My Experiments with Truth**. For others, the materials had to be collected from the works published by the Navjivan Trust and others. Besides, Ayya wanted to bring the volumes as early as possible and so, while the major portion of the compilation and translation was done by the editors, some other friends, who were deeply interested in and devoted to Gandhian ideology were also requested to help.

The topics for the 17 volumes were : (1) Satyagraha in South Africa, (2) On Ahimsa, (3) Dharma, (4) Gandhiji's Experiments with Truth, (5) On Healthy Living, (6) Khadi and Village Industries, (7) Economic Relations, (8) Eradication of

Untouchability, (9) Satyagraha, (10) Communal Unity, (11) God and Religion, (12) Bhagavad Gita, (13) Letters to Government, (14) Letters to Political Leaders, (15) Grama Swaraj, (16) Letters to others and (17) The Chronological Account of Gandhiji's Life and Index forming the last volume. Of these, the first volume was written by Sri N.M.R. Subbaraman and Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas and Ayya, the 9th by Sri K. Arunachalam, 12th by Sri N. Ramarathnam, 15th by Sri A. Ramaswamy, 16th by Sri K. Diraviam and the rest by Sri R. Venkatarajulu and Sri Jayamani Subramaniam jointly or separately. Each volume consisted of about 750 pages and had numerous photographs depicting the various incidents in Gandhiji's life. It was decided that to make each volume available at low cost to the public, the price must be fixed only at Rs.7.50.

The first volume was published on 15th September, 1957. Due to the diligence, hard work and enthusiasm of the editors, Sri R. Venkatarajulu and Sri Jayamani Subramaniam, in some years even two volumes were brought out in a year. The whole work was completed within a record time of twelve years and the last and 17th volume was published in December 1969.

In this monumental work, Sri G. Venkatachalapathy as Secretary of the Committee played a major role and brought infectious enthusiasm, which caught the imagination of many who gave their whole hearted support. He was the founder of Gandhi Niketan Ashram in Madurai District and Sri O.P. Ramaswamy Reddiar, the then Chief Minister of Madras State, appointed him to be the head of the rural development work in Government as Additional Development Commissioner and Additional Secretary to Government. Sri Venkatachalapathy did wonderful work and was recognized as the Father of the Rural Development Movement in this State.

3. Research on "Thirukkural"

Yet another monumental work which Ayya did for the development of Tamil literature was bringing out a research publication on the Tamil classic "Thirukkural". He was very much impressed by its great thoughts compressed in small couplets each, containing so much practical wisdom to guide men and

women at all levels in their day to day life. It gave a manly message of strength, nobility and character. It laid down a code of ethics which is universal and eternal.

Many scholars have written commentaries in the past of whom the classical ten are famous while there are countless smaller commentaries written from time to time by others. Of these the commentaries of Manakudavar, Parithi, Pariperumal, Kalingar and Parimel Azhagar are alone available now. Of these only the one by Parimel Azhagar is in use now. Collection of these commentaries and comprehensive review of Thirukkural in its various phrases in modern light was considered by Ayya as a felt need of the time.

He selected Sri **Ki.Va.Ja.** (K.V. Jagannathan) as the most suitable man for this work for his erudition, training and scholarship in Tamil literature. But Sri Ki.Va.Ja. could not leave Madras and stay at Vidyalaya for doing this work. Hence, he was allowed to function from Madras. The work began in 1953 with a few assistants whom he gathered around him. The work was arduous, long, time consuming and Sri Ki.Va.Ja. had the perseverance and ample devotion necessary. It was edited and printed under his direct supervision and it was published in 1963. The contents include the Thirukkural text, commentaries by Parimel Azhagar, the different interpretations by the classical commentators namely, Manakudavar, Parithiyar, Pariperumal, Kalingar and others. The book contains collection of concordances and use of Thirukkural in all later literature upto the period of Kambar. It contains a separate index for Thirukkural and another for the whole volume separately. The research volume contains 1,020 pages and carries research articles on various aspects of the teachings of Thirukkural. The research work was inaugurated by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India and was brought out as the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Publication in 1963.

Ayya's name will remain green in the minds of Tamils for ever for the monumental work he has done for the development of Tamil language and literature.

SRI AVINASHILINGAM, THE PIONEER

K. Muniandi

Rock of Gibraltar :

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar affectionately called Kovai Ayya was a phenomenon by himself. Indeed he was the Tarzan among the constructive workers of Tamil Nadu for nearly half a century. His brahmacharyam added to his longevity despite his troublesome asthma. His strong will power together with his highly principled life helped him to tide over this physiological defect. His dedication to the institutions he had built with unique determination is proverbial. He uttered brave words, acted with rare courage and devotion and inspired his neighbours to become men of steel. In these days of top level vacillation he stood like the Rock of Gibraltar even in the teeth of opposition. He is a typical model to the present day youth.

Helping the Grassroot Worker :

Kovai Ayya was a humanist to the core. He had a soft heart for those who have worked for the uplift of the rural downtrodden. It was more or less a principle with him to help the sons and daughters of recognised grassroot level workers whenever they sought admission for them in any one of his institutions. He even went to the extent of giving them concessions in their hostel fees. I have heard Sarvodaya workers narrate their experiences of his help and compassion with great warmth and gratitude. I am proud of the fact that my daughter did her B.Ed., course in the Avinashilingam Deemed University. That he recognised the merit in the constructive workers of his time and boosted their morale through his timely support and encouragement is a quality seldom found in his contemporaries.

A Typical Education Minister :

The erstwhile Madras Presidency was fortunate enough to have had his services as the first Education Minister of the State. It was indeed the golden period for Tamilians. It was under his leadership that seeds were sown for Tamil Encyclopedia as well as the collected works of Mahatma Gandhi in Tamil. He boldly

introduced citizenship training in the then High Schools as an extension of Basic Education. It was he who upgraded the level of the Tamil pandits encouraging Tamil as the medium of instruction and paying them on par with the trained graduates. His Basic Training School at Perianaickenpalayam undertook the task of spreading **Nai Talim** through imparting retraining in Basic Education to the Government Servants. I had the opportunity to meet him and listen to his inspiring speeches in 1948 when I underwent retraining there for five months. His organising skill was fully revealed through the National Basic Education Conference conducted at the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya in May 1948 inviting stalwarts like Acharya Vinoba, Acharya Kripalani, Dr.Zakir Hussain and the Aryanayakam couple. On all those occasions he spoke out with courage and conviction on the issues discussed with great clarity and sincerity.

Man of Resolute Will and Robust Common Sense :

Some of our Gandhi Niketan Students were studying in his Arts College, when a students' strike broke out in that campus. The students in general indulged in hooliganism destroying valuable properties of the college and abusing him. He never uttered a word of anger but calmly watched their holocaust of destruction sitting in their view. He declared indefinite holiday for the college as well as the hostel and invited their parents to see for themselves the quantum of material loss and destruction due to their wards' vandalism. He readmitted them only when they compensated for the entire loss. What a fine disciplinarian he was, firm in his stand against indisciplined behaviour.

His Role as a Basic Educationist :

As the Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Basic Education Society I had very many opportunities of participating with him in deliberations and discussions individually and in groups. How can I forget his hospitality of eating with us under the shade of the huge banyan tree in his Vidyalaya playground ? His graciousness was reflected even in the way he entertained guests to a breakfast of iddlis and dosas, neatly served on the table. He profitably used even such occasions to enlighten us on topics of the day with his learned and thought provoking conversation. He was a member of the Executive Committee of Tamil Nadu Basic Education

Society and he often contributed his valuable advice on important matters during discussions. He had a special knack of selecting the right persons to serve in his various institutions and later, after recruiting them in eliciting their hearty co-operation in the fulfilment of his objectives. He was a Karma Yogi par excellence in the educational field, offering all round development, both to the staff and the students.

Blend of Austerity and Patriotism :

Bhagwan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda had a mighty hold on him. His association with Mahatma Gandhi and his immortal constructive programme made him a real nation builder. No wonder then that he was presented with several national awards for his meritorious work in social and educational fields. Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College now upgraded to a Deemed University is the standing monument for his laudable work in the sphere of women's education. May the modern youth take his life as a role model and follow his footsteps to make a happy, fruitful and patriotic existence in this ancient land of sages, saints and maharishis.

When shall we see again such a devoted soul!

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SOCIAL WORKERS

DR. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT

Sarojini Varadappan

Dr. Avinashilingam is among the great freedom fighters and the leading architects of new India particularly in the field of women's education and social welfare. He was a very close colleague of my late father, Sri. M. Bhakthavatsalam both in freedom struggle and politics.

I had many occasions to receive his kind hospitality, love and affection. I had been watching the development of his great Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women in Coimbatore which had now been deemed to be an University under the able guidance and leadership of Dr. Rajammal Devadas. But for Dr.Avinashilingam's great philanthropy, dedication and total commitment for the development of women, hundreds and thousands of girls from all over the country could not have gained the benefit of education today. He, being a great follower of Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother Saradamani Devi, believed in developing and harnessing the women's power. He sacrificed his entire life for the development of women. Women's development depends on their education. As rightly pointed out by our late Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, once the woman is awakened, the society is awakened and once the society is awakened, the state and the nation moves. Dr.Avinashilingam, a true follower of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, followed their footsteps in awakening the women's power. Dr.Avinashilingam always used to tell me that we are what our education has made of us. We are not what our education could not make of us. We shall be what our education will make of us. Education fashions us exactly as we fashion it. Therefore, he took the best possible care, when he started this women's institution. His time and energy were much too precious to be frittered away in sordid activities. A holy passion for dedicated service, not an aggressive desire for cheap heroism, was the guiding principle of his life. His was the sacred task to mobilize woman power, talents and experience to reform and reconstruct the personalities of young

women. Dr.Avinashilingam felt that education is not a spasmodic process, but a total activity, the ultimate purpose of which is the sublimation of the entire individual. It is a pervasive influence which touches all aspects of life. Only to the extent that educational institutions shed a synthetic influence on the provision of wholesome activities, conducive to the development of an integrated personality, do they fulfil their lofty mission. Dr.Avinashilingam made his educational institution a well knit community of which girls form the most important members. In the fullness of time they must ripen into citizens and take their proper place in the society.

Even in the formative period of their lives, youngsters must be trained to put their shoulders to the wheel of common work, so that when they grow up they may realise that it is neither proper nor profitable to get things done by a few. Thus the emphasis is on responsibility rather than on rights and on duties rather than on demands. Constructive programmes like nutrition education, child care, literacy, bio-gas and various other down to earth problems which women have to face in their daily life were introduced. Patriotism is also inculcated among the young women by introducing Swadeshi articles which gradually develops in them the love of the Motherland. The dailies, periodicals, and magazines in the reading room, and the bulletin board keep the budding citizens posted with knowledge of current affairs and help them follow events with intelligent interest. Various camps conducted off and on here, provide valuable opportunities for corporate life and co-operative effort.

The personality of Dr.Avinashilingam, had a distinctive quality which lifted him far above the other species of creation and gave him a peculiar power which was irresistible. Personality is the halo of the soul, the perfume of character, the aura that is shed by the cumulative influence of strength, beauty, wisdom, purity and service. In the presence of a man like Dr.Avinashilingam's personality, everyone instinctively feels reverence. What charm did he have that all those who came into contact with him should have doffed their hats? It was his personality, his character of great spiritual bent that exhorted the reverence of all alike. He wanted the women to grow to their fullest stature and to brighten the multi-faceted gem of their

personality, so that its scintillating brilliance may be a source of joy and inspiration to all around. They must rise to their fullest heights and give their very best to society. Vibrant dynamic social virtues like affability, adaptability, sympathy, serviceability and resourcefulness go a great way in determining that magnetic influence for good which personality possesses. He wanted to create an array of intellectual women, with initiative and qualities of leadership in them. He wanted to evolve a new society. In the wake of freedom's birth, the swing of the educational pendulum was naturally towards social activities and women's development. How can the activities ever help to develop the personality of women ? In the first place, they serve to discover, draw out and develop the dormant faculties of women and encourage them to grow along their own lines, affording them the joy that creative work or unselfish service can alone yield. They infuse in them a sense of self esteem and make them feel that they too have a share in enriching life in the society. They inculcate in them those desirable traits which make for complete life and enlightened citizenship.

There are two types of education; formal and informal. Formal education is the imparting of knowledge through schools and universities. Though instruction often ends with the school room, education ends only with life, just as it began also with life. "I learn as long as I live",said Sri Ramakrishna. Informal education continues throughout the whole life. Reconstruction of society is impossible without reconstructing ourselves. Only when we judge civilization by the souls and not the goods it produces, we are in a position to succeed. Otherwise a host of evils tend to invade the youthful mind and imprison it within the narrow walls of selfish motives. We need to liberate their minds from the domain of mere self interest and from the claims of egotism. Spiritual life, which is the pursuit of universal ends, is perhaps the best discipline to accomplish the end.

The Constitution of India guarantees equality of opportunity and status to men and women. It directs that women shall not only have equal rights and privileges with men but also that the State shall make provisions for the welfare of women. Despite the constitutional guarantee, women in India who constitute nearly half the population are still subjected to many

disadvantages, disabilities and inequalities in a patriarchal society.

The All India Women's Conference has from the beginning been in the vangaurd in the fight for women's equality and women's rights. Soon after its foundation in 1927, it took up the initiative to enact economic and social legislation for the betterment of neglected class. But enactment of laws itself can not help those who are neglected unless they understand it. If women have to fight for their rightful place in society, they must know the various laws viz., Family Law, Property Law, Procedural Law, Criminal Law, Labour Law, Constitutional Law etc. which affect them in their day to day life. Legal language is often difficult to understand. Women's organisations must try and explain these laws in simple terms so that even ordinary illiterate women can comprehend them. It is with this in mind that the Government has been giving grants for organising legal awareness camps. Some voluntary organisations are running legal aid centres for women. Government effort alone can not bring about significant results unless women themselves participate and respond to face the challenges for their development. Women should be aware of the legislative enactments relating to them, how they can protect and benefit and spread this awareness among their less educated and illiterate sisters in cities and villages. To make woman's struggle for equality a reality, compulsory reservation of minimum 30 per cent posts in all employment under the State and in private industry in favour of women be made. May be to start with, the reservation may be made for 20 years. Thus by providing ample employment to women, you would strengthen the position of women and this would also have a very salutary effect in our society, when more and more women are seen at work in all fields. I am sure that this move of making compulsory employment for women would stand the test of constitutional validity and it is possible for the state to come out with proper and befitting legislation. There is need to examine whether there is any relationship between women's right to property and her status in the family.

In spite of all these lacunae, the women of India have played their role in many spheres of nation building activities. For example, they would no longer take the wilful destruction of

their ecosystem lying down for they, more particularly, the poorest among them, are the worst sufferers in the wake of ecocide of the biosphere. Where would they go for their daily needs of fodder and fuel wood if the trees are wantonly destroyed for a variety of industrial uses in total disregard to the basic needs of the poor women whose survival hinges on the different species of precious flora. Women took the initiative in launching many of the crusades against the senseless deforestation which affects their ability to feed their family and livestock. The rural women bank on the forest produce for the survival of their families. Fuel wood and fodder apart, the forests do provide several species of medicinal herbs which come handy for the treatment of several ailments,the knowledge of which has been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth or by mere practice and observation. So, back to the wall, the women fought when they found that their trees and plants were being replaced by plants and trees which did not provide fruits, fuel and fodder, but which were utilised by major industries in the paper, pharmaceutical and industrial sectors. Chipko movement in Uttar Pradesh became world famous. It successfully focussed national and even global attention on the fragile ecosystem of the Himalayas.

The militant role played by women in fighting a last ditch battle for safeguarding the forests has compelled us to help women play a signal role in social forestry. We now find that women can raise seedlings and sell them to Government. It has been observed that women do excellent planting i.e. where survival rate is very good. The service of women can be utilised for making pits, planting, grafting, budding, weeding, manuring and guarding the plantations. Social forestry includes trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, fuel, fodder, household timber and vocations like sericulture, cane or bamboo growing for handicrafts, bee keeping, use of medicinal herbs and minor forest produce. Women have come to realise that growing a nursery does not interfere with their day to day work since a nursery requires only an hour's additional work. The inputs for nursery such as seed, fertiliser and polythene are provided free of cost for instance, under the social forestry project. In Himachal Pradesh and Bihar tribal women are encouraged to sell sal leaves directly to a voluntary agency so that they are not exploited by

unscrupulous traders of Patna. Similarly, voluntary groups in Utharkhand have succeeded in mobilising local people to actively join in massive plantation of trees. One such group is at Gopeshwar (Chamoli) where there has been afforestation of the denuded catchment areas of the Alaknanda river and fuel cum fodder plantations raised. The women of India also can play a very big role in the reclamation of the vast tracts of our wasteland.

The World Bank has several assistance programmes where women are involved. One has to be alert, aware and utilise all the assistance. We can not afford to relax and sit quietly. Our needs and demands are increasing. We have to put all our efforts, work hard to avail all the opportunities. Institutions like the Avinashilingam Deemed University are open to avail all the facilities for the development of women. They have exploited all the opportunities and with their rich experience, they can make very successful projects for the development of women.

Dr. Avinashilingam had provided ample opportunities in his rural projects, experimenting various schemes where he had involved women in large numbers. His contribution to women's development starting from pre-school education, literacy, nutrition education, modern technology in agriculture, alternative energies, income generating programmes and cultural and spiritual activities had made women of Coimbatore more confident, bold and enterprising. Hence in a memorial volume outlining his contributions to the various causes, education, social welfare, politics and rural development, it is befitting that we must recall his contribution to women's development. I have tried to bring out a few salient points in regard to women and development and pay my humble tribute to the late Dr.Avinashilingam on behalf of the women of Tamil Nadu who had benefitted a great deal by his contributions. I am one of those who was inspired by his selfless service, love and affection. May his soul rest in peace.

Jai Hind

AYYA - THE AFFECTIONATE GUARDIAN

Leila Diraviam

The great achievements of man which come into the pages of history, are merely viewed as great **epochs** or **ages** most often forgetting that these great events of history were very much associated with great people. These strong souls "whom a thirst, ardent and unquenchable fires - not with the crowd to be spent - not without aim to go round ...", compel the homage and reverence of posterity, not only by their teachings, but more so, by the dynamic excellence of their lives, not so much for what they were themselves - great as they were - as for what they did to further the progress of humanity. They have been, throughout history, torch bearers of light and truth, harbingers of new dawns, creators and guardians of all that is of permanent value in the cultural heritage of mankind.

We, in India, were fortunate in having had such a one, a great soul, a Mahatma, in our midst in this century. He guided our country to the new dawn of freedom and Independence. Mahatma Gandhi held up the ideal, and thousands upon thousands were inspired to make the endeavour. Among this select band of dedicated followers of the Mahatma was Sri Avinashilingam, affectionately called **Ayya** by all.

I met Ayya for the first time as a student in 1947. He, as the Education Minister in the first cabinet of the then composite Madras State, was the chief guest at Queen Mary's College at our first Independence day celebration held in the campus. The youth of the country then, in the first flush of joy and elation in the newly attained Independence was in a sort of suspended animation with much expectation. At that time, students, many of whom had been participants and supporters of the freedom movement, worshipped the leaders who had been in the forefront of our freedom struggle and had made tremendous sacrifices, as their heroes. So it was, with bated breath, we awaited the arrival of our Education Minister, Honourable Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (as he was addressed in those days). Just getting a close enough glimpse of the Minister would have made us happy, one could very well imagine our surprise

then, when a car stopped closeby where a group of us were standing to receive him and opening the car door himself, the Minister stepped out with folded hands, greeting us with a **Namaskaram**. First impressions are indelible! He was dressed in pure white khadi and wore a friendly smile. The simplicity of the Minister's clothes, his geniality, and the ease with which he put every one else at ease by his soft-spokenness, earned for him the instant esteem and respect of all those present. He stayed back with us for quite some time after the formalities of the function were over, and made kind enquiries as to what we expect him to do as Education Minister for the betterment of the college and hostel. "A Government College should be a model and pace-setter for other colleges", he told us. During this conversation, the Minister made us feel that our part of the conversation was of great interest and importance to him! How lightly did the high office of a Cabinet Minister sit on his shoulders then, and all the countless laurels and titles and awards later, I now ponder! Ayya had not changed a bit in all these years since then. He was the same when I last saw him just a few days before his death. This deep humility, unfeigned simplicity, genuine solicitude about others is what endeared dear Ayya to one and all.

History might variously assess Ayya as a great freedom fighter, nationalist, parliamentarian, politician, minister, administrator, scholar, sanyasin, educationist, philanthropist, master architect in institution building and so on... But to the ordinary person who came into contact with him, whether it be just one time or a few times or many times, Ayya would be all these and much more ... what would linger long in one's memory is Ayya's gentleness, affableness, kindness and his incomparable serenity.

Ayya treated every one as a person who counts. When talking to him, he almost made one feel as if he was directly posing this question to you, "Just one person ? But if one person is not important, how could a thousand be ?" Ayya focussed his attention and care more on the intrinsic value and worth of the human being rather than the external circumstances of one's background. Ayya's unparalleled method of discovering, unearthing, nurturing and enriching the human potential and

hidden talents in individuals, groups and societies, in both young and old, among his followers and close associates is something unique. This is what enabled him to venture into significant experiments - hitherto unknown which were magnificent in conception and marvellous in execution ! It is also amazing that these great experiments in nation building yielded glorious results even during his own lifetime.

Ayya was both a visionary and a missionary. Going beyond the rigidity of ideologies and hackneyed cliches, Ayya's creative mind, combined with the necessary dynamism and vision, could effectively overcome the challenges of materialistic trends of the times and make for growth and progress on the firm foundations of human values.

Ayya was a master architect in institution building and nation building. Like a great sculptor who conceives of the exquisite figure in his mind and imagination, long before he starts working with his hammer and chisel on hard rock, to sculpt out the beautiful statue, Ayya built beautiful edifices of learning, the **modern temples** with consummate skill and artistry. By his magic touch, barren lands got transformed into green pastures, groves of verdant trees, fruitful orchards and fertile fields. The rural areas got electrified with the bright rays of science, technology, vocational training, nutrition intervention and education. Long years of ignorance, superstition, poverty, illiteracy and disease disappeared, as if with a wave of a magic wand, in the villages in and around the project areas. We can scarcely believe that such a wonderful transformation was brought about by one man single handed, within his own lifetime. From small beginnings, Ayya produced monumental results almost like miracles !

The secret of Ayya's success lay in his deep faith in God and utter surrender to His Grace. Added to that was God's special gift to Ayya, the matchless trait of being an affectionate person, to one and all. Ayya's life was a God-inspired, God- guided, and God-controlled life. The richness of Ayya's life was directly dependent upon the depth of his personal conviction, commitment and consecration to serve God through service of fellow men. "In life, we shall find many men that are great, some men that are good and very few that are both great and

good" (Colton). Ayya practised in his personal life what he had inherited from the precepts of the Masters and what he preached to others was what he practised himself personally. What he gave to life was far more than money, which itself was splendidly generous. What he gave to life was himself. Thus, Ayya experienced the true richness of living and the joy of being part of God's work on earth. He graphically demonstrated by his exemplary life that greatness in the kingdom of God is found in serving others rather than in fulfilling one's own ambition; that greatness is not found in being high and mighty, but it is discovered in loving and serving humanity.

By these two simple words : **God's grace** (*"Andavan Arul"*) Ayya, usually, both acknowledged as well as warded off further tributes being paid to him personally. These words uttered by Ayya were beautific to the hearers. The **Eternal** in Man is, in essence, the yearning towards the Eternal, while living. Ayya's life was truly a blessed one, being a continuous yearning towards the Eternal.

Ayya who, in the midst of his multifarious activities took time to think of other people's needs, who warmed so many hearts with gentle words and thoughtful deeds, who sincerely tried to understand and sympathise with other people's woes, who put strength into sagging spirits with his words of encouragement has added something very special to the world and enriched the lives of thousands who were touched by his life's example.

Ayya will live for ever in those hearts who cherish the values he held so dear, and will be still their guide, guardian and counsellor.

SRI AVINASHILINGAM AND HIS DESIGN FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

T. Padmasini Asuri

If history could be the guide, events then are the land marks that one had traversed before one could assess what we had crossed ! All our experiences had been **here and now relationship**. We judge from our angle of what we see or worse what we understand. Our country is steeped and wrapped in the blanket of tradition, never stops to look back on the experiences of the past. But this cannot happen in the field of development. Development has certain attributes such as it is alive and active, people focussed and it is also participatory. Another important feature is that it takes time. Who visualises these in order to project into the future ? It is sad that our development now is project oriented and also the tasks end with the project. What project is planned, is implemented to the core after the project period? One need not answer this question as the situation itself is the witness.

Persons who participated in the early part of rural development process do feel happy that we were fortunate that we had thoughts, ideology, principles learnt from great architects of rural India, like Ayya Sri Avinashilingam. Our assessment of the progress, our approach to the problem and our ability to comprehend the problem, depend on the condition of the mind and experience. This was the exposure we have had, whenever the events were organised for the extension programmes by the Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women.

History becomes truth if one could see the facts that operated at that point of time. It was at the time when there was an awakening amongst the policy makers to do some tangible work for the rural areas, that Community Development was initiated. That the women need to be brought into the stream of development was a much later thought in the arena of **Development**. What is development ? What are the criteria of development ? What would be the cost involved? What does it mean to involve the women in development programmes ? There were many such questions for which answers were not available.

It was at that time Ayya had taken the responsibility of providing the training support to extension. This contribution by Ayya should go down in the history of rural development. He laid the foundation for the process which cannot be forgotten.

When I started the programme, the Chief Administrator whom I had just met, mentioned that he himself was not sure about what should be done. Yes, we were on our own, probing in darkness. Amongst us there was none who could tell us even the brief description of the village. Funnily even the administrators who went on criticising that we did not know the village conditions (which was true!) did not even know what the condition was ! At that time, the intervention of Ayya was a great relief.

It was Ayya who realised the need for the trainer's training. He had realised that mere academic education was inadequate to work with the rural persons, the women in particular. How true he was ! Though what had happened is history today, the picture is very vivid and clear. Time had not dimmed the situation and the scene. These days many theses are written, many profound speeches are made, many extol others to do rural development. But do these people ever look at the beginning? Sitting in the milieu as we were in the 50s, it was refreshing to receive two of the professors from Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College. The purpose was to enable us to share with them what we had seen, practised or even taught our trainees, the gramsevikas. It was Sri Avinashilingam who had agreed to provide the training support to the women's extension programme, rightfully mooted by the builder of this concept, Dr. Rajammal Devadas. After the training of gramsevikas, we realised the absence of guidance and supervision at the field level. This was the background against the college was given the Mukyasevikas training programme. One activity leads to various others such as training of the trainers, taking up studies in the rural areas to support the training programme, helping the extension workers to speak for themselves. It is Sri Avinashilingam who had steered the entire training content to be rural biased, village focussed. His imaginative directions and his concern for the rural community, had even made the college professors to look for facts from the rural milieu.

Thus it was not only the direct training of the extension workers but also the supporting activities, literature, workshops and other programmes became equality important to give fillip to the programmes. It is not an ordinary statement if I mention specially that Sri Avinashilingam College of Home Science did serve the rural community within the frame work of the college academic atmosphere. Even to this day other colleges are finding it difficult to have a mix of academics with linkages to serve the rural persons towards their development. This is the reason why the graduates of the college are able to accredit themselves in any situation. The staff are also working with the rural projects providing the necessary support.

Ayya and Dr. Devadas had organised a variety of programmes for the extension personnel. They gave the much needed respect for the field and the persons working therein. Many were and are also, under the impression that doing rural work does not require any scientific background and that it is easy to work with the rural people, as they would meekly accept whatever view is offered. Frankly, there was no one who could realise the difficulties of the field and provide the support except Sri Avinashilingam. He understood the difficulties of the extension staff working in rural areas and had always an affectionate smile for them. He made them feel as if they were part of one big family.

Again the process of rural development had seen many changes. Some of them are due to the change in policy, while others are due to the change in environment. Ayya was quick in responding to both these changes. He was never dogmatic in his approach. This had made the personnel also see the changes that are possible. This was one of the reasons why the Directorate of Extension had organised many refresher courses for the extension workers and the teachers of the training centres. The bondage that was established between the field and the college could never be cut off. These events had made the training centre staff take up the challenges that were thrown in changing policies. Many times, the Gramsevika training centres became the centres for training rural women, later the anganwadi teachers and associate women workers. The staff at the training centres stood up to the demand because of the training they had

received. Even to this day many of the departments are seeking the training centres to provide the training support even though earlier they never recognised the real value of these people or the centres.

Ayya could see the changes that the programme demanded and accordingly could take up the programmes, like Krishi Vigyan Kendra. His modules of training had given hopes for many to get into such programmes. Many more changes may come but one can never forget the foundation that Ayya had provided for rural extension for the women of this country. What others may see is only the superstructure of the programme, it is the foundation that holds the structure on the top. I am personally ever grateful for what he had done to the programme of extension, with due support from Dr. Rajammal Devadas.

A LIFE OF SELFLESS SERVICE - SRI T.S. AVINASHILINGAM

Tarlok Singh

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam's life-story has been a source of inspiration to numerous individuals and groups beyond Southern India. It is remarkable how he always looked for constructive opportunities for collective and community action. One recalls how, in the early fifties, at his instance, Ministers of all the States in the South and the Planning Commission's Deputy Chairman and other experts met together to consider how the west-flowing rivers could be utilised to common advantage. In the fifties, when he was in Parliament, with his scrupulous concern for facts, he often visited us in the Planning Commission or was in touch with us to make sure that he was in full possession of relevant data before he made up his mind on issues on which he was to speak.

In 1975, I took the opportunity of visiting Sri Avinashilingam at his Ashram and had the privilege of staying there. He was gracious enough to take me around all the institutions which had come into being over the years. Each institution had been built up with love and devotion and represented an aspect of the larger goals to which he had committed his life. To hear from his own lips the story of the growth of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya was a moving experience. During the same visit, I had the opportunity of visiting with him the Avinashilingam Home Science College in Coimbatore (now a deemed University) to which Dr. (Mrs.) Rajammal Devadas had devoted years of service. I came away deeply impressed with the cultural environment in which the students were being trained.

Until about three years ago, whenever Sri Avinashilingam visited Delhi, I used to visit him and spend some time with him. His mind was always on the future of the country and the well-being of the people. He inspired instinctive respect for the ideals for which he worked and for his utter selflessness. Unsought, many honours came to him through life. He was ever modest and sought nothing for himself. A rare example of

dedication to the highest values, inspired by Sri Ramakrishna, and Swami Vivekananda, Sri Avinashilingam lived altogether for the well being and advancement of the people, specially of those who had been left behind. He chose his coworkers with care, trained them, and trusted them to carry on the torch. Sri Avinashilingam's contributions to social work, education and national regeneration were unique and their impact has all the attributes of permanence. To his younger contemporaries, his work and ideas remain an abiding guide.

Real religion is dynamic humanism. In spiritual growth and development which is the product of the science of religion, crude energy gets transformed into compassion, spirit of service, high character and mighty strength. This transformation, of training the energy of youth, channelising it for the benefit of man, is what is needed in India today.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

தன்னம்பிக்கையின் வடிவம்

எம். எஸ். உதயமூர்த்தி

"ஐயா உங்களைப் பார்ப்பார்கள்" என்று சொன்னார்கள். உள்ளே சென்றேன். அமைதியான கோயிலின் உள்ளே செல்லும் ஒரு புனித உணர்வு. நம் ஆத்மாவை மேல் தூக்கி எழுப்பும் உணர்வு ஆட்கொள்ள உள்ளே சென்றேன்.

சிறிய உருவம், மிருதுவான குரல். வயதின் தளர்ச்சி இவை எல்லாவற்றையும் மீறி வந்த வார்த்தைகளை, மிக உன்னிப் பாகக் கேட்டேன். அவரது அனுபவங்களையும் உலகைப் பற்றிய அவர் அபிப்பிராயங்களையும் கேட்டுத் தெரிந்துகொள்ள வேண்டுமென்ற ஆவல் என்னிடம் எழவில்லை. அந்தப் புனித மனிதரின் முன்னிலையில் அமர்ந்திருப்பதிலும் அவருடன் பேசு வதிலும் நான் என்னை மறந்த நிலையில் இருந்தேன்.

தனது வாழ்க்கை அனுபவங்கள், மகாத்மா காந்தியைச் சந்தித்தது, பழகியது போன்ற விஷயங்களைக் கொண்ட புத்த கங்களை என்னிடம் தந்தார்.

என்னைத் தன்னுடன் தியான மண்டபத்திற்கு அழைத்துச் சென்றார். கோயிலுள் நுழையும் உணர்வை முன்பு மனத்தில் அனுபவித்ததை இப்போது பரவெளியில் மண்டபத்தில் நூற்றுக் கணக்கான மாணவச் செல்வங்களுடன் மீண்டும் அனுபவித் தேன்.

பிறகு கீழே வந்தோம். அந்த மாணவச் செல்வங்களுக்கு ஓர் உரை நிகழ்த்தினார். அவர் என்ன பேசினார் என்பதைவிட ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் எத்தகைய உணர்வைப் பிறர் உள்ளத்திலே அங்கு நிலவும் காற்றில் கூட எழுப்பியிருக்கிறார் என்பதை என்னால் உணர முடிந்தது.

ஐயா அவர்கள் இராமகிருஷ்ணரின் பாதையில் தன் வாழ்வை அமைத்துக் கொண்டவர். துறவியாக வாழ்ந்தவர் அரவிந்தர் போல அரசியலிலும் ஈடுபட்டு, தமிழ்நாட்டின் கல்வி

அமைச்சராக நாட்டுக்குச் சேவை செய்தவர். இந்தியாவின் எந்த மொழியிலும் இல்லாத கலைக்களஞ்சியம் என்ற தொகுப்பை முதன் முறையாகத் தமிழில் வெளியிட்டவர். சரியான மனிதர்களை பெ. தூரன், இராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் போன்ற வர்களைச் சரியானபடி புரிந்து கொண்டு நாட்டுக்கு நல்லது செய்தவர்.

மனையியல் பெண்கள் கல்லூரி என்று எளிமையாகத் துவங்கிய ஒரு கல்விக்கூடம் இன்று இரண்டாயிரத்துக்கும் மேற்பட்ட மாணவிகளைக் கொண்ட, தனித்துறை சிறப்புப் பெற்ற மனையியல் பல்கலைக் கழகமாக முகிழ்த்து மணம் வீசுகிறதென்றால் அதுதான் சாதனை.

ஆர்ப்பரிக்கும் கடல் அலைகள் போல தன் இளமைப் பருவத்தில் பொது வாழ்வில் புகுந்த அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் அமைதியாக, ஆழமாக, தளும்பாது நிற்கும் நடுக்கடல் போல, தன் வாழ்வை அமைத்துக் கொண்டவர். நடுக்கடலைப் பற்றி உலகம் அதிகம் அறிவதில்லை. ஆனால் அதுதான் எழுச்சிமிக்க அலை எழுப்பி தரையைத் தொடச் செய்கிறது. அதுபோல லட்சக்கணக்கான மாணவச் செல்வங்கள் மூலம் இன்று தமிழகத் தின் மண்ணை மட்டுமல்ல, அகில இந்தியாவையும் தொட்டு வருகிறார்.

மக்கள் சக்தி இயக்கத்தின் கிராம சமுதாயப் பணியாளர் பயிற்சி முகாமை நடத்த நாங்கள் இடத்தைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்த போது இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்தைத் தான் தேர்ந்தெடுத் தோம். காரணம், அது தந்த ஆன்மீகச் சூழ்நிலை. எதிர்பாராத விதமாக தள்ளாத நிலையிலும் ஐயா அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் கடைசி நாளன்று மாணவர்களைச் சந்தித்து ஆசி கூறினார்கள். உயர் உணர்வுகளால் தொடப்பட்டு வாழ்வின் பயனைக் கண்ட பெருநிறைவை அனுபவித்தோம் என்றால் அது உண்மை.

உயர்திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் உயர் வாழ்க்கை நெறிமுறைகளைக் கடைப்பிடித்தவர். கட்டுப்பாடு நிறைந்தவர். அதே கட்டுப்பாடுகளை பிறரிடமும் எதிர்பார்த்தவர். கட்டுப்

பாடும் நெறியும் இல்லை என்றால் வாழ்வில் எதையும் சாதிக்க முடியாது. இதைத்தான் நிர்வாகக் (Disciplined Focus) கட்டுப் பாட்டை ஒருமுகப்படுத்துதல் என்கிறார்கள்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களது வாழ்க்கையே யோகத்தி லும், ராஜ யோகத்திலும் அடங்கி இருந்தது எனலாம். ராஜ யோகம் எனப்படும் தியான மார்க்கத்தின் அடிப்படையே ஒரு நிலையில் - ஒரு எண்ணத்தில் மனத்தை நிறுத்தி எண்ண சக்தியை ஒருமுகப்படுத்தும் பயிற்சிதான். இந்தப் பயிற்சி கைவரும் போது அவர்கள் தாங்கள் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட லட்சியத்திலும் இதே முறையை அனுசரிப்பது எளிதாகிறது. இதன் விளைவாக லட்சியம் வலிமை பெறுகிறது; எளிதில் சாதனையாகிறது.

ஜீவனின் அடிப்படை இயல்புகளை அறிந்தவர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள். மாற்றத்திற்கு சதா ஆளாகும் இந்தப் பிரபஞ்சம், அறிவு, கல்வி, ஞானம் என்பதன் மூலம் தான் பரிணாம வளர்ச்சி பெறுகிறது என்பதை நன்கு அறிந்தவர். இல்லாவிட்டால் அறிவைப் போதிக்கும் உலக ஞானத்தைப் பரப்பும் ஒரு கல்விக் கோயிலை உருவாக்கி மாணவ மாணவி களுக்குப் பயிற்சி தர முன்படுவார்களா என்பதை நாம் கொஞ்சம் சிந்தித்துப் பார்க்க வேண்டும்.

பெண்கள் பின்தங்கி இருக்கிறார்கள், இன்றைய சமுதா யத்தில். ஆனால் அறிவிலும் திறமையிலும், சாதனையிலும் அவர் கள் யாருக்கும் இளைத்தவர்கள் அல்ல. ஒரு பெண்ணை உருவாக்கும்போது ஒரு குடும்பத்தலைவியை உருவாக்கும் குடும் பத்தலைவிகளால்தான் இந்த மனித சமுதாயம் பரிணாம வளர்ச்சி அதிகம் பெற முடியும் என்பதை உணர்ந்து பெண்க ளுக்கான பயிற்சிதரும் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தை நிறுவியவர் அவர்.

சிறிய உருவம் தான், உயரம் குறைவு தான், எனினும் அவர் சொற்களிலே செயலிலே தெறிக்கும் சக்தி அவரது தன்னம்பிக்கையைப் பிரதிபலித்தது. வாழ்க்கை நெறிகளை அவர் உபதேசம் செய்யவில்லை; வாழ்ந்து காட்டினார்.

தன்னம்பிக்கை எதிலிருந்து வருகிறது? தன்னைப் பற்றி அறிந்தவர்கள் மனத்தில் தன்னம்பிக்கை தானாக எழுகிறது. அவர்கள் ஆத்மாவை அறிந்தவர்கள். 'உள்ளே' சென்றவர்கள், உள்ளே பயணம் செய்தவர்கள், உள்ளே நிலையாக நிலைத்த வர்கள், நின்றவர்கள். பரவெளியில் இருக்கும் ஒரு மாபெரும் சக்தியுடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டவர்கள் அந்த மாபெரும் சக்தி தன்னுள்ளும் இருக்கிறது என்பதை உணர்ந்தவர்கள். அதை ஆராதித்து உபயோகிப்பவர்கள், ஞானிகள். அப்படிப்பட்ட ஒரு ஞானியாகத்தான் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் வாழ்ந்தார்கள். எளிமை, பற்றற்ற நிலை இவற்றின் உருவமாக அவர் வாழ்ந்தார்.

மனித ஜீவனுக்கு இன்று எது வேண்டும்? உயிர் வாழ உணவு தேவை என்று கூறக்கூடும். உண்மை. ஒரு வயது வந்தபின் ஆணோ, பெண்ணோ அந்த ஜீவ தேவையைத்தானே சம்பாதித்துப் பெற முடியும்.

ஆனால் 'நம்மால் முடியும், என்னால் எதையும் சாதிக்க முடியும்' என்கிற தன்னம்பிக்கை தான் உலக சாதனைகளின் ஆணிவேர். அந்த தன்னம்பிக்கையை இளம் உள்ளங்களிலே இன்று ஊட்டி விட்டால் நாளை அவர்கள் "இது என்விதி. என் தலையில் இப்படி எழுதப்பட்டு விட்டது." என்றெல்லாம் குறைப்பட மாட்டார்கள். "என் விதியை என் வருங்காலத்தை நான்தான் உருவாக்குகிறேன்." என்கிற நம்பிக்கையையும் நிறை வையும், மகிழ்வையும் மனித மனத்திலே தட்டி எழுப்பிவிடும் போது அந்த மனித ஜீவனை யாரும் தடுத்து நிறுத்திவிட முடியாது.

அதை எதன் மூலம் உருவாக்க முடியும்? எப்போது உருவாக்க வேண்டும்? இளவயதிலே; பிஞ்சு மனத்திலே, எதுவும் மனத்தில் பதியும் பருவத்திலே, அதைக் கல்வியின் மூலம் பயிற்சியின் மூலம் வாழ்க்கை வரலாறுகளின் மூலம் வாழ்ந்து காட்டுவதன் மூலம் பள்ளி கல்லூரிகளிலே போதிப்பதன் மூலம் சாதிக்க முடியும். அதைத்தான் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள் செய்தார்கள்; சாதித்தார்கள்.

நான் விவேகானந்தரைக் கண்டதில்லை; ஆனால் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்களைச் சந்தித்திருக்கிறேன். நான் தன்னம்பிக்கையைப் பார்த்ததில்லை. ஆனால் அதன் வடிவத்தைக் கண்டிருக்கிறேன், அவினாசிலிங்கம் என்ற பெரியவராக.

"தன்னலமற்ற ஒரு பொது நோக்கால் தூண்டப்படும் போது ஒரு மாபெரும் சக்தி துணைபுரிகிறது." என்கிறார் பதஞ்சலி முனிவர். அந்த மாபெருஞ்சக்தி உள்ளேயும் இருக்கிறது. வெளியேயும் இருக்கிறது என்பதை உணர்ந்து கொண்டவர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள். உள்ளே இருப்பதைத் தட்டி எழுப்பியவர் அவர். அதன்விளைவாக தனக்கும் பிறருக்கும் இந்த சமுதாயத்திற்குமாக வாழ்ந்தவர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் அவர்கள்.

அன்னாருக்கு அஞ்சலி.

A SILENT STRENGTH TO DISABLED PERSONS

P. Gnanadurai Michael

I first saw Ayya in 1948 immediately after our Independence. As a young boy, I was familiar with his outstanding role in the freedom struggle. His love for his country and his people, his sacrifices, his steadfast lofty services coupled with his simplicity and saintly life were all an inspiration to young persons like me. Since then on, I had the good fortune to see him occasionally, revel in his affection for our whole family and feel his influence on our thoughts and our lives. However, it was only in the decade 1981 - 1990 that I got closer to him. His concern for disabled children and his dyamic leadership in pioneering a programme for the Integrated Education of Visually Handicapped Children in the country gave me occasions to meet him very often, and feel the impact of his influence in my personal life.

This closeness, this working together, rather serving under him, all started with a question I posed him one day in 1981. "Ayya, how is it that you who had been the prime architect of Universal Primary Education for children of Tamil Nadu, have not done anything for the education of the disabled children ? Why have you left them out?" Ayya looked at me for a long moment and then asked "*Ippozhuthu Enna Seyya Vendum?*". "What needs to be done now?" ... Only ten years later, when helping a friend in assimilating and analysing materials on services to the blind in Tamil Nadu for a thesis, I realised what a prominent role that Ayya had played in the matter of education of blind in the State when he was Minister for Education for Madras Presidency! He could have easily retorted in 1981 to my question, telling me all that he had done earlier. But that was not Ayya. Even if some one else had pointed that out, Ayya would have simply said,"*Ellam Andavan Arul*" - "All are God's doing".

But my question did provoke him ! Ayya asked me to document what is the need and what I expect Vidyalaya and him to do. I gathered a lot of information and also made a proposal that Vidyalaya can initiate **the Resource Teachers' Training Programme** for integration of visually handicapped children in Tamil Nadu. Dialogue and discussions on this issue went on for

some time. There were prolonged periods of silence and in between, Ayya will write very short but sweet letters in Tamil asking me to provide information on some thing or other. I came to know that all his decisions were made only after knowing all that was available on the subject thoroughly. Before launching the Training Programme, he had called for many meetings with the key staff of Vidyalaya and Saradalaya to discuss at length all the issues. I remember those meetings vividly! Here was a giant of a leader sharing every information that he had acquired with every one of his colleagues who mattered and asking them for their opinion. Ayya has never been a loner. He had always been the head of a team. It was a great and thrilling experience for me to be a humble member of his team.

One day Ayya asked me what was the prime requisite for the success of the programme that we were launching. I was waiting for this question and promptly replied,"a young man of commitment to Vidyalaya and to the cause and one capable of developing the needed competence." Ayya did not say, "I have someone". Instead, as usual, he said "Come after a month". When I went after a month, there was this young man Mr.Mani - now Dr. M.N.G Mani, who was to emerge soon as the most prominent professional in the field of Integrated Education for the Visually Handicapped Children in India. Mani yielded to the call of Ayya and with the "sacred touch" of Ayya, this bud had blossomed so quickly and so beautifully.

It was Ayya Sri Avinashilingam and Amma Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who with their compassion and vision were instrumental in the institution of Graduate Teacher Courses for the first time in Asia for the promotion of Integrated Education. Those were days when there were many challenges and problems of greater dimensions and urgency for them. Yet, even today I recall those days with joy and gratitude when Ayya and Amma sat through many hours with us to discuss every single aspect of the programme, dialogue with every one on many issues to come to appropriate decisions. This had resulted in Tamil Nadu becoming the State with the largest number of visually handicapped children scientifically integrated in general schools for their education in India. In the process, scores of very dedicated resource teachers have been prepared who have

become shining examples on how teachers in general should view their role and discharge their duties.

In early eighties when the first of the visually handicapped children were **integrated** into the schools in Vidyalaya campus, Ayya kept watching their every move, growth and their progress. One day, after a delightful breakfast with Ayya under the banyan tree, I stood beside him when children in groups marched past him to their respective classes. Who among them is the visually handicapped child ? One could not say. They were all children, equal and happy. Suddenly Ayya turned to me and asked, "Babu, what will be the status of these visually handicapped children ten years hence?". Not knowing an answer, I kept my silence. "Shouldn't we be doing something now so that their future is also full of equal opportunities?" To Ayya, education was equality, equal opportunities and liberation. As answers to his own question Ayya encouraged Vidyalaya to launch many meaningful programmes including Community Based Rehabilitation Services for the blind in Perianaickenpalayam area, Integrated Vocational and Technical Training for them in appropriate institutions and placement services in open and self-employment.

Scores of resource teachers were flowing out of both Vidyalaya and Avinashilingam University campuses, and Ayya often asked me how they are functioning in their respective schools, what problems they are facing and what were the specific needs of the visually handicapped children. The result of these findings was establishment of a Resource and Development Centre of the Blind in Vidyalaya campus including perhaps, the most sophisticated, hi-tech computerised Braille Press in India. He saw the need for continuous interaction between the training centres and the service sites in the formative years of an innovative programme and was determined to see that they received all needed logistic support and moral boost. Truly he was a great pioneer.

When the news came of his being called to glory in on 21, November 1991, I was heart broken. A Guru who had instilled in me many values and many principles - not by teaching them, but by living them - has passed way. Dr. Rajammal Devadas

and I were wondering how we can break this news to our hundred years old mother Sornammal who loved and respected Ayya and looked upon him as her own younger brother. Eventually we did tell her, and as we did, we broke into tears.

Mother Sornammal received the stunning sad news in silence and after many long moments put her hands on our shoulders and said, "Ayya was a great man ... He did great things ... His memory should make us happy, proud and grateful ... His thoughts should not make us sad".

Yet the thoughts of Ayya are sweet, his influence on our lives is profound and his blessings are always with us and his vision for India before us. Let us be grateful to God for Ayya's life, the privilege of knowing him in his life time and be proud of the legacy he has left behind for us to carry on.

DEDICATION AND SOCIAL WORK

D.Paul Chowdhry

The concept of service to one's fellow men has been an integral part of Indian tradition. In ancient days the responsibility of meeting the needs of individuals and groups in difficulties was shared by the rulers, the rich and the benevolent members of the community. In providing service to the needy, socio-religious institutions also played an important role. We come across fine examples of men and women who devoted their lives to the service of the helpless. The source of motivation for such a service was a spirit of dedication, a large measure of good-will and a desire to use leisure-time for rendering welfare services. However, complexity of modern social problems and knowledge derived from social sciences has brought to fore the methods and techniques in social work which are being imparted through professional training.

Against this background, social work in India has branched off into several streams. Some of these are :

(1) Contribution of social institutions like joint family, caste system, self-sufficient village, etc;

(2) Contribution by Christian Missionaries, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission, etc;

(3) Gandhian constructive work as supplement to freedom movement;

(4) Traditional social work through local level voluntary groups;

(5) Development of professional social work since 1936 when Tata Institute of Social Sciences was established;

(6) State funding for programmes of voluntary agencies and organizing social welfare services with state resources;

(7) Social activism of young, educated and affluent with development oriented approach through empowerment of the people;

(8) Rural development and welfare services provided by industrial and business houses, as part of their social responsibility;

(9) Work done by political parties to influence the electorate; and

(10) Social service by college/university students.

It was in 1953 that the Central Social Welfare Board was established mainly to promote voluntary action in social welfare through grants-in-aid as practically there was very little work in this field in the government sector. Thereafter, the state also took direct responsibility of rendering social welfare services to the people but in the process, the dedication, which is crucial for social work, started getting diminished as the work expanded. It is believed that when operations become larger, the higher degree of bureaucratization reduces the degree of dedication.

Dedication to Social Work

The first half of the 20th century saw the growth of dedicated voluntary agencies. Voluntary social workers gave their time and money to social work without anything in return except satisfaction of serving the community. They worked under rather difficult circumstances characterised by hostile and suspicious foreign rules, insufficient funds, absence of professional tecnhiques but there was no dearth of human touch and dedication. It was the Central Social Welfare Board which helped in discovering such dedicated social workers. For instance in South India alone we had highly motivated social workers like Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, Dr.Mrs.Durgabai Deshmukh, Mrs.Mary Clubwala Jadav, Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, among others. Some of them who are still working are Smt. A.C. Krishna Rao, Smt.Jaya Arunachalam, Smt. Sarojini Varadappan and Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas.

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam was influenced by the freedom movement led by Gandhiji on the one hand and the spiritual movement led by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda on the other. His participation in the freedom struggle brought him into the political life of the country. When he became the Minister of Education in the composite Madras State, his main

contribution was promotion of Tamil as medium of instruction. He was also a Member of Parliament during 1951 to 1964. His spiritual exposure took him to social work. He founded Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya in 1930, followed by the Home Science College which has contributed significantly to the promotion of home science education for the girls. He also organized and supervised rural development programmes around Coimbatore which was the centre of his social work activities. Dedication, human touch, humility, love and compassion were the hall marks of his charming personality. These qualities were recognized by the several awards given to him, the last being the Jamnalal Bajaj award preceded by Padma Bhushan in 1970. He not only devoted himself fully to social work but utilized his personal property for social work institutions set up by him. As a bachelor, social work became his fulltime work.

Concept

The post-independence period saw emergence of new concepts of social work. It is now possible to clearly distinguish between concepts like social services, social welfare, social work and related concepts. Social service is the traditional concept of serving the people i.e. doing things for them as distinguished from social work which is characterized by self-help and working with them. Social services include basic services which promote human development such as health, housing, education, etc. Social welfare refers to a set of social services intended to meet the special needs of individuals and groups, who because of some handicap - social, economic, physical or mental, are unable to take advantage of these services or have been traditionally denied the use of such services such as Scheduled Castes (because of untouchability) and Scheduled Tribes (because of being cut off from mainstream of socio- economic life).

Fields of Social Work

The field of social welfare has undergone changes during the last 50 years. We have travelled a long way from milk distribution centres, orphanages, poor homes, schools for blind etc. to modern social welfare services where social work techniques are utilized such as child guidance centres, special schools for the handicapped, rural development, pre-school

centres, hostels for working women etc. Now the main fields of social welfare are :

1. Child welfare - destitute, delinquent, disabled and working children ;
2. Women welfare/development - institutions for employment, hostels for working women, legal aid, social and moral hygiene programmes, cases of dowry deaths etc;
3. Welfare of the handicapped - blind, deaf, orthopaedically handicapped, mentally retarded and leprosy affected cases;
4. Social defence - juvenile delinquency, prostitution, crime against women, begging, drug addiction, adult crime and correctional administration;
5. Community welfare services - rural and slum welfare - poverty alleviation; and
6. Medical and psychiatric social work.

Methods of Social Work

In rendering services in all the above and other related fields, methods of social work which are utilized are :

1. Case work - with focus on individual;
2. Group work - group process in social welfare;
3. Community organization - organizing community for their welfare;
4. Social action - to deal with issues requiring social reforms, social change, social legislation, etc;
5. Social welfare administration - process and techniques of administering social welfare programmes and services; and
6. Social research - collecting and utilizing social data for planning for social welfare services.

These techniques are acquired through systematic professional training at the post-graduate level but this training has to be supplemented by a large measure of dedication and human touch.

Voluntary Action

Voluntary agencies are the organizations of people set up by their own volition without any external control. They plan their programmes in accordance with the felt-needs of the members of the community where they are operating, raise their own resources and render service with certain amount of dedication and human touch. A voluntary agency may, by its definition, be an autonomous NGO but not all NGOs are voluntary. There may be autonomous bodies sponsored and monitored by the government and funded primarily with government funds but they are not voluntary in character.

The voluntary agencies were known and praised for their several virtues. It was in this context that a conscious decision was taken in 1953 to create an autonomous board to promote social welfare through voluntary agencies. It was in 1964 that the Central Government set up a Department of Social Welfare.

Virtues of Voluntary Action

Against this background of professionalism in social work, let us examine the status of old virtues or social value of voluntary social work. In the 50's, when it was decided that the voluntary sector be promoted by the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), we were conscious and proud of past virtues of voluntary agencies. These were dedication, human touch, flexibility, innovation and nearness to the community. Over the last four decades, having closely studied the working of voluntary agencies as an officer of the CSWB, ICCW, Ministry of Rural Development and NIPCCD, I have seen erosion of these virtues and values. A variety of factors are responsible for this state of affairs. The Government on the one hand sings praises of NGOs and on the other there is a decline in the measure of government trust in voluntary action.

Since voluntary agencies have become **agents** of government in running their Plan programmes, they have to follow their schemes (which does not call for innovation). It erodes the virtues of flexibility and nearness to the community as the Government sponsored programmes do not generally call for raising funds from community. Rather it has made voluntary

agencies dependent on government funds. Because of rigorous grant-in-aid rules, procedures and conditions, there is no room for flexibility. In fact, grant-giving process itself has encouraged the element of rigidity. Moreover, tailor-made government programmes with schematic budgets leave very little room for innovation for which NGOs were once known.

The motivation for voluntary work itself sometimes erodes the virtues of human touch and dedication. The motivation could be money, power, facilities (like house, telephone, car), ambition for climbing the political ladder etc. However, wherever motivation for starting social work is a social problem or a handicap existing in one's own family, there may a strong element of human touch and dedication. Moreover, since NGOs have now started copying the work style of the government with whom they work very closely, the human touch and flexibility gets adversely affected by this relationship. Professional concept of avoidance of over-involvement with the client also sometimes adversely affects the element of human-touch. In the context of social work being done and monitored in voluntary agencies by salaried personnel, the dedication element has also more or less gone into the background.

Mushroom growth of voluntary agencies sponsored and run by all types of persons with ulterior motives is also responsible for some kind of slur about voluntary agencies. The voluntary sector has thus become a breeding ground for self-seekers who perpetuate themselves in these agencies. They are like big banyan trees under which nothing grows. International assistance is yet another factor for this malady. It has created some element of elitism and an atmosphere and style of work in the voluntary sector which is more foreign than Indian, although they may be able to get better and quicker results, their approach to social work being developmental rather than welfarish in nature.

Thus the NGOs, by and large, do not possess their old virtues for which the government in the early fifties got attracted to them in promoting and utilising their services. Moreover, the autonomous societies (pseudo NGOs) sponsored and supervised

by the government is another factor which creates problems in the functioning of real NGOs.

There is, therefore, a need for having a close look at the whole gamut of our voluntary action, rather than continuing to deal with or depend upon it without taking into consideration not only erosion of its value systems but also the factors which have influenced its texture and status.

At Cross-Roads

The voluntary social work of the past with all its virtues and values is, therefore, now at cross-roads. On the other hand, the need for promotion of voluntary action in social development process is much more than ever before. Therefore, the question to be considered is as to how professional inputs by trained social workers and financial resources provided by the government together will shape voluntary action to be able to meet the social, economic and emotional needs of our population. However, some of the important inputs which need to be provided in our social welfare/development are :

social research on needs and problems;

evaluation of impact of ongoing social welfare services;

training and orientation of functionaries and voluntary workers;

review of existing social legislation and amendment and enactment of social laws;

a system of monitoring of social welfare programmes and services;

reviewing fund-raising methods and finding effective ways and means to find sufficient resources for social work activities;

exploring new areas where social work techniques and voluntary action can contribute;

working out of minimum standards in social welfare and creating machinery for their enforcement;

dove-tailing social security/assistance programmes with social welfare activities ; and

formulation of social policy in consultation with different Government departments and the leading NGOs, drawing from national policy statements on children, youth, women, rural development, scheduled castes/tribes, nutrition, education, health, population, labour, national integration and so on.

It is, therefore, hoped that the voluntary workers, political leaders, government functionaries, industrial and business houses, and social work trainers will put their heads together, review the value system of voluntary agencies and take suitable steps to strengthen this important sector of social development.

HIS CONCERN FOR RURAL INSTITUTES

K. Viswanathan

We, in Mitraniketan were really shocked when we heard of the demise of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the Founder of the Institutional complex in Coimbatore - Perianaickenpalayam, and ending up with the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, which is now a Deemed University of which he was the first Chancellor and Dr. Rajammal Devadas, first Vice-Chancellor,

I used to address him as **Anna** (elder brother). Anna lived a life of **tyaga** devoting his whole time and energy for the uplift of the common people and the welfare of the country. A freedom fighter and a respected political figure, he held top, responsible offices in the State of Tamil Nadu and the Centre.

My intimate association with Anna started in the year 1956 with my adventures in a village known as Vellanad, near the Western Ghats region in the Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala State. Vellanad is my native village and I took a decision to develop educational and socially progressive activities in this place of my birth, which was considered an extremely backward area.

A few of my well-wishers who belonged to the Gandhian tradition, though agreeing with my decision, could not approve my decision to select Vellanad as my work-spot. While involved in this programme, I had the good fortune to get acquainted with Anna through my **Guru** and inspirer, an eminent personality who was born in U.S.A., the late Dr. Arthur Morgan. It was under Dr. Morgan's guidance that I was able to formulate my schemes and give content to my ideas. Dr. Morgan was an educator with liberal views and progressive ideas. Dr. Morgan and Dr. Avinashilingam knew each other intimately when Dr. Morgan was invited to India by our late Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru to be a member of the University Education Commission headed by the late Dr.S.Radhakrishnan. The late Dr. Zakir Hussain was also a member of this Commission. While I was with Dr. Morgan, he told me about the contribution of **Ayya**

in Coimbatore, especially in promoting the Basic Education programme of Gandhiji. The Wardha Basic Education Committee set up by Gandhiji under the chairmanship of Dr.Zakir Hussain was the prime agency in those days to popularise the concepts of Basic and post Basic Education. The rural university concept to promote rural higher education took shape largely with the model scheme prepared in those days by Dr. Morgan and Dr. Zakir Hussain. This scheme was incorporated as a separate chapter, entitled **Rural University** in the second volume of the Radhakrishnan Commission Report. As I have indicated, my first introduction to Dr. Avinashilingam and Dr. Rajammal Devadas was by the late Dr. Arthur Morgan. I took the earliest opportunity to visit them to seek their guidance and also to see for myself the work being done at Perianaickenpalayam.

In 1957, I went to Coimbatore and for the first time I met Anna to share my dreams with him and other persons who came under his influence, like Dr. Rajammal Devadas. Anna gave me a very patient hearing. His reactions to my views and ideas were most encouraging to me. I met Dr. Rajammal Devadas, who at that time, was working as the Principal of Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College, located in the city of Coimbatore. I was introduced to all the different departments and the personnel in each. I could observe and get ideas about the working of the various units. Even though Anna was very busy, I could see that he was completely relaxed. His approach to problems was always positive and creative. I could also see the relationship in his intimate contact with the children in Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. I came back much encouraged and with a great deal of optimism about the working plans I had in my mind.

I remember now vividly Anna's first visit to Mitraniketan in the early period of Mitraniketan's existence, driving all the way from Coimbatore accompanied by Dr. Rajammal Devadas. I must say how great a source of inspiration it was for me and my small group of friends here. We were at that time confined to self- help activities to promote supplementary education programmes among school-going children and exposing them to work oriented- activities, like spinning, gardening, book binding, carpentry- work, poultry, handicraft etc. This association with

Anna had helped me to go ahead with more courage and confidence at a time when I was under all kinds of pressures and criticism to give up my idea of working in one's own village.

Anna and I had several occasions to meet and exchange ideas since then. We also used to exchange letters in those days. All along he was a source of inspiration and encouragement to me. And this came when it was most needed for me personally for my inner growth and maturity to face and deal with problems of different magnitudes in the field of education and development.

I felt at home with him as he also used to share with me the philosophy of integrated approach to promote all-round development through the education process. As a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and as an exponent of the educational and developmental thoughts of Gandhiji, his effort during his life was to synthesize their thoughts and to press them into action. He tried to interweave science, technology and spiritual values. He gave prime importance also to women's education and development. His was an attempt to blend the ancient wisdom of this land and its heritage with modern ideas in a Gandhian perspective.

Anna was kind enough to come and be here with us at Mitraniketan and bless us during our Silver Jubilee Celebrations in 1982. That was his last visit to Mitraniketan, even though we met since then on different occasions in Coimbatore, Delhi and other places during seminars and conferences.

I particularly recall with nostalgia my visiting him at Perianaickenpalayam in Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. I had breakfast with him in his campus residence in the company of Sri C. Subramaniam, the present Governor of Maharashtra. I was introduced to him by Anna. The main topic of our discussion at that time was education and rural development.

Anna was kind enough to send us, at our request, an article to be published in the Silver Jubilee magazine of Mitraniketan.

We, at Mitraniketan, can not help feeling that the world is surely the poorer by the passing away of a devoted follower of

Gandhian ideals in the fields of education and rural reconstruction.

May his soul rest in peace !

Today, the challenges the youth face are of different dimensions. They are, to make India great, united and prosperous. In spite of the differences in language, caste, creed, wealth and poverty, we are a mighty nation. Nothing can shake India if the people are united in thought and deed.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AYYA - HIS CONTRIBUTION TO FARMER'S DEVELOPMENT

P. Muthiah Manoharan

"Him I call a Mahatma, who feels for the poor. Let these people be your Gods. Think of them, work for them incessantly. The Lord will show you the way".

- Swami Vivekananda

The above saying of Swamiji was a favourite passage of our Ayya Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, who in his life time made all possible efforts for the uplift of the poor. He lived by the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda and contributed to the rural masses through his own practical approach which included integration, sincerity, honesty and dedication.

Ayya, who had built the temples of education, **Vidyalaya** at Perianaickenpalayam and **Saradalaya** at Coimbatore, took great efforts for the upliftment of the farm families in the dry tract of Karamadai Block in Coimbatore. The Rural Centre at Vivekanandapuram has developed into a multi-dimensional rural extension centre due to his continuous efforts and care for minute details.

Ayya had a broad vision and strong faith in the upliftment of rural areas. The outburst of Swami Vivekananda about the condition of the poor made a painful echo in every sensitive mind in India including our Ayya. It gave him an urge and strength in his endeavour for rural development.

Even after 45 years of Independence, nearly half of the population is below the poverty line, ill-fed, ill-clothed, sick, malnourished and steeped in illiteracy. There have been many schemes of rural development, some of them successfully carried out in small patches in the country. By and large the problem of poverty especially in rural areas remains unsolved, though there has been a great deal of development in the various sectors and agricultural production too has doubled in the last 30 years.

Revered Ayya had positive attitude and great faith in bringing rural reconstruction through holistic approach. He was seeking and looking forward to effective projects and programmes to channelise the benefits of research, so that the fruits of research and development could be enjoyed by all categories of people. He strongly questioned and analysed the contribution and modus operandi of government and non-government agencies who worked for the betterment of the living standards of the rural families. Based on the evaluation, he drew plans about what best can be done by the Rural Centre.

When the Indian Council of Agricultural Research came forward to launch special schemes for the benefit of rural poor in the year 1978, the activities of Sri Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra was initiated at the Rural Centre established by Ayya at Vivekanandapuram.

The concept of Krishi Vigyan Kendra basically aimed at

a) organising vocational training at gross root level;

b) imparting practical training to practising farm men, women and youth; and

c) serving as a link between the farmers and all centres of modern technology.

The training courses were organised in the areas of agriculture, animal husbandry, agricultural engineering and home science. Ayya's opinion was that mere training alone would not be sufficient to improve the condition of the target group and over all development through integrated effort would be possible only if the Krishi Vigyan Kendra worked in close co-ordination with the development departments so as to mobilise larger inputs and infrastructures for the benefit of the people.

Ayya was very clear in that people should be helped to realize that the entire effort was their own programme and that they should become partners in the planning, executing and evaluating processes and be involved in all the stages.

Ayya always insisted on the fact that rural infrastructure should take permanent roots. He deeply reflected on why the villages rarely developed into self sustainable units. Development efforts initiated in the villages gradually lose momentum once the government agencies withdraw their grants and provisions. So he reiterated that local people should continue their development efforts by strengthening infrastructures like yuvak mandals, mahila mandals and co-operatives.

Ayya gave much attention to research and evaluation which are essential components for continued growth and development of all well-structured programmes. His explanation was that while the findings on research provide the direction for our work, evaluation provides the opportunity for finding whether or not we are proceeding in the right direction and for reviewing periodically the work done with reference to the objectives.

Ayya realised the difficulties in implementing constructive programmes. The greatest difficulty in establishing developmental centres in rural areas is the paucity of qualified personnel. Cities have better educational, medical and all other necessary amenities and provide wider scope for educational and professional development.

Ayya laid special emphasis on programmes for women and children so as to create among the rural women awareness of their needs and potentials. He insisted on programmes which provide necessary knowledge to womenfolk to acquire skills necessary for improving their nutritional and health standards of living and to provide assistance to enable women to undertake certain socio-economic programmes to increase their incomes for economic betterment and self reliance.

Ayya had abiding faith in women's education. He was of the view that it was important not only for developing self actualisation but also a pivotal need for all round development of the family. It paved the way for better child care, nutritional improvement, modern ways of household management and awakened community living. Therefore, he directed the

extension workers to organise more women's groups with special emphasis on developing leadership qualities.

The significant role of Krishi Vigyan Kendra was highlighted by Ayya on many occasions. The areas where he concentrated his thoughts, plans and follow-up for successful implementation of programmes were :

a) Seed multiplication
b) Soil and water management
c) Dry land development
d) Farm forestry
e) Use of non-conventional energy sources
f) Integrated pest management
g) Use of bio-fertilizers
h) Bio-technology
i) Sheep, goat, cattle and poultry rearing with fodder development
j) Use of agricultural implements
k) Post harvest technology
l) Labour saving devices
m) Vocational courses for maintaining motors, pumpsets and other implements

He explored the possibilities of village and small scale industries and encouraged artisans to start self employment ventures and through his efforts he saw to it that a rural branch of the Indian Overseas Bank was opened at Vivekanandapuram to carry out the function of sanctioning loans to the priority sectors and thereby improve the economic background of the rural families. He carried out constant reviews of the work done by the rural centre under the programmes of lab to land, oilseeds and pulses promotion missions and gave concrete suggestions. He would monitor whether these efforts really reached the small, marginal and landless labourers for whom he had great concern.

Ayya laid stress on the methodology of more practical work during training programmes for farm families so that there

is greater retention of knowledge gained. Rather than mere explanations and lectures he gave weightage for demonstrations and field work as per the saying "Hearing is forgetting, Seeing is believing and Doing is remembering". He encouraged the popularisation and promotion of technologies in simple terms through small handouts in the vernacular, for the knowledge, development and initiation of adoption process among the rural community.

Ayya advised restructuring of programmes based on the experiences gained in the field of training and extension. Accordingly training courses were planned for short durations to suit the agriculture - dependent life style of the rural families. The growing interest of rural women in the fields of agriculture and home management has been promoted and developed through practical, simple, low cost technologies. Programmes on dry land agriculture, health and hygiene, child care, subsidiary occupation of sheep and goat rearing have been popularised among the tribals who are a neglected sector. One among the need based efforts encouraged by him was skill oriented vocational courses for drop outs, in the fields of house wiring, coil winding, maintenance and repair of plant protection equipments.

As the rich and educated sections in the villages have migrated to the nearby towns, there is lack of leadership in the rural areas. In addition, the village factions now being replaced by political factions makes the work of those involved in developmental activities very difficult.

Another fact of the scenario is, the absence of ethical and social values in rural and urban areas and the growing loss of faith in the leadership. Large scale corruption is prevalent at all levels and the people have almost lost hope that anybody would come to serve them without any selfish ends. In this present state of affairs, Ayya strongly believed and advocated that faith and confidence could be infused among the people only through dedicated unselfish service. To arouse people from their century old lethargy and to inspire them with the will and enthusiasm to work hard for progress is indeed an uphill task. The work at the rural centre continues to be carried out along the lines advised

and practised by Ayya Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam. With greater co-operation and strong will of the development staff much could be achieved to improve the conditions of the people in the villages. Even in governmental efforts priority should be laid in this direction of rural development to achieve national prosperity.

As the Father of our Nation said, "India is to be found not in a few cities but in the villages. Farmers and workers make India. Their prosperity alone can make India a country fit to live in." Improving the lot of rural people, especially the farmers and workers by our concerted efforts in rural villages will be the most fitting homage to Ayya's sacred memory.

The task before us is great : eradication of the curse of illiteracy and poverty. For that purpose let us use science and modern techniques to make our country one of the greatest in the world.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AYYA'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN'S EDUCATION

K. Jegathambal

The name of Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar will be printed in golden letters in the history of education in Tamil Nadu as one who lived and died for Women's education.

In those days when society, especially Hindu Society did not approve of women taking to profession and when the university did not cater to the special needs of women, the majority of whom became housewives, he realised that girls would not be sent to colleges unless they were trained to make better and happier homes and hence he started the College of Home Science for girls. He made the public realise that Home Science graduates could make nutritious meals delicious, or perhaps delicious meals nutritious; could run their homes economically ; could bring up healthy, happy and intelligent children; could decorate their homes without much cost; and above all could co-operate with their husbands and lend them a helping hand whenever necessary. No wonder, seats in Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College were in demand and it developed according to the changing trends of society and today it is a full fledged educational institution from Kindergarten to M.Sc.,M.Ed. and Ph.D. programmes. It has achieved the status of a Deemed University.

Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar devoted his full time for women's education. He lived in the campus and worked for the institution throughout his life. Although **Ayya** is no more, the institution that he built up will remain for ever. Monuments are built after people die. But this Institution itself is a monument for him.

He loved the students and the staff and it was duly reciprocated by them. Who can forget the way he used to address the students as "*நீங்க நல்ல பிள்ளைகள், தங்கமான பிள்ளைகள்*". Isn't that the way to make the children good ? The fact that the staff are contented and render devoted service to the institution is proof to show that they were also treated with love and dignity.

He sincerely wished that his students and staff should earn name and fame and that the university should be the pride of the nation.

His departure is an irreparable loss to the institution and to the nation, but his name will go down to posterity as a pioneer of women's education.

May his soul rest in peace!

Universities have to work towards academic excellence and build new knowledge by research. In addition to this, community service such as eradication of illiteracy, providing job oriented courses and solving the health and other problems of people are also the duties of all institutions of higher education.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AVINASHILINGAM A SILENT SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY

R.K. Bhan

It gives me great satisfaction to pay homage to record my bright impressions on the life of Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, a freedom fighter, a true Gandhian, a top social worker, a founder of many institutions of national character and a true educationist. I came to know Avinashilingam, known in Madras as Ayya when he became a Member of Parliament in 1950 while I was working in the Ministry of Education, where I had to deal with most of the voluntary organisations in India involved in the field of educational development working independently or in cooperation with the Government of India. In the beginning of the Planning era, the Government of India, in the Ministry of Education had promulgated several schemes with the cooperation and help of prominent voluntary organisations. Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Coimbatore was one of the leading educational institutions in the country which was thus helped by the Government of India, as a participant in its manifold activities. The organisation was not manned by monks like other Ramakrishna organisations but by Sri Avinashilingam who was living the life of a monk. His institutions were in Coimbatore but he was mostly in Delhi as a Member of the Parliament in Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha. I had ample opportunity of knowing Avinashilingam's ideology and his beneficent as also dedicated activities in the field of education. I met him very often not only in connection with the implementation of educational programmes initiated by the Government of India, but with the functioning of institutions which he had established numbering a score at Coimbatore.

Though he was not a professional educationist and had not obtained educational degrees, he had developed a keen insight in all problems of education. He established quite a number of institutions from primary school to University with courses in humanities, sciences and engineering. He invited me quite a few times to see his educational complex spread over a big canvas in the district of Coimbatore at Perianaickenpalayam. I found that

he had collected a number of highly educated, professional and dedicated teachers to man his institutions. He was a member of several high powered committees appointed by the Government of India in the Ministry of Education to consider various problems in the field of educational development. I felt the express of his contributions as an effective member of the committee on rural, higher education of India, secondary education, teachers education, adult education and women's education. Even after my retirement from the Government of India when I got interested in population education, I made a trip to pay a visit to Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya and found Avinashilingam a great supporter of the movement that I had launched forth to combat population explosion in the country through educational tools. He enrolled himself as a life member of the Indian Society of Population Education.

It was only through Avinashilingam that I came to know Dr. Rajammal Devadas, a great educationist by her own right, a Home Scientist and a leader of women's education. She was an adviser in the Government of India and after relinquishing her assignment, established the College of Home Science which has now developed into an institution of higher learning for women and a Deemed University.

After his retirement from the Parliament, Avinashilingam devoted himself wholeheartedly to the further development of his educational complex. He had no personal family but was the head of a big family of educational institutions comprising all teachers and students in various disciplines numbering thousands, whom he inspired with his selfless dedication to the service of the country in general and educational development in particular. His name will always shine as a resplendent star on the educational firmament of the country, as a thinker, planner and selfless reconstructor and activist in the history of education for future years.

I may add here a personal note. I always considered him not only a fellow educationist in whose company I got not only affection but discovered knowledge in the various practical dimensions of educational development. I will miss him in my years to come. His loss is very personal to me. Meanwhile, I pray

for peace to his soul and offer blessings to all the institutions that he nursed and nurtured all his life. I am sure those who man the institutions that he has left behind will be grieved and inspired by the beacon life of Sri Avinashilingam.

We have to strive for academic excellence, creation of knowledge by means of research and service to the community and the nation. This requires hard work and finding happiness and fulfilment in the pursuit of knowledge and participation in service.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

HIS LEADERSHIP FOR NUTRITION EDUCATION

Margy J. Woodburn

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam bequeathed a living legacy to all of India in the vital role of Founder-President-Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University) in Coimbatore. In its comparatively brief history under the direct guidance of its Vice-Chancellor Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, the University has demonstrated that high standards of academic excellence can be achieved with an added dimension of values and ideals of service to those who are illiterate, poor and malnourished, especially the infants and children who are the future.

The University and its faculty have an international impact. Faculties serve as consultants as well as the University providing short and longer term training.

As a nutritionist, I honor the scope of achievements made. Outstanding examples of improving the nutritional status of the community are the research-based low cost infant and weaning food mixes, the recommendations for using locally available foods to improve the diets of pregnant and lactating mothers and the major role in the nutritious meal programs for school children. There is an exemplary combination of research, action on the political level so that necessary support is available, and then taking education out to villages and tribal areas as well as in the city. As leaders are trained, the scope of activity ever enlarges.

The Oregon State University and Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women have a United States Information Agency University Affiliations Program Grant that has enabled six of our faculty to learn the integration of knowledge and service for students and faculty by being on campus. As a participant in 1991, I visited village and urban families, saw first hand the nutrition programs and talked with students. I had the very special privilege of talking with Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam and recognized his deep commitment

to this University but, more than that, to its ideal of education and community service.

The embodiment of the ideals of service combined with knowledge, which is the University, are a lasting monument to the humanity of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam.

We must have the conviction that we are born to do great things. The future of the country depends upon the people who have this conviction.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM: HIS HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO INTERNATIONAL GUESTS

Catherine R. Mumaw

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam was truly a man with uncommon dedication to the liberation of persons from the bondage of ignorance and to the empowerment of others to improve their communities and nation. This was particularly evident in the educational institutions he founded and through which I became acquainted with him and his contributions to the development of India. My introduction to this educational leader came in many and varied ways.

I first learned of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the Chancellor of the Avinashilingam Deemed University, when the opportunity came to apply for funding for a faculty exchange program with the Avinashilingam Deemed University which bears his name. I had encouraged the application and volunteered for participation, should it become a reality.

The next encounter came after the funding had been granted by the U.S. Information Agency for Oregon State University faculty scholars to link with Avinashilingam faculty scholars though an exchange program. Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, Vice-Chancellor, had come from India in the fall of 1990 to conduct several orientation sessions on the Oregon campus. She began the orientation with a thumbnail sketch of the history of the Avinashilingam Educational Institutions. Thus, my first impressions of Dr. Avinashilingam were associated with my consciousness of the origins of the Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women, the financial support base provided by him and his vision for the institution.

Avinashilingam's goals for establishing this institution were to help uplift women from their ignorance and to provide opportunities for women students to interact with the community in meeting some of their needs. Thus, the mission of education was service that would build up the community and thereby improve the quality of life in the community. I admired those goals that had served as the driving force behind the development

of the institution from a college to a deemed university. Thus, the name (Avinashilingam) and a philosophy had become familiar to me more than a year prior to my visit to India. Although I began to form an image of Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, in fact, the name was faceless for many months.

I arrived in Coimbatore for my faculty exchange visit at the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University) in August 1991. I soon learned of the occasional visits of the Chancellor to the campus for business or for participation in cultural events. As the impressions began to take on a recognizable face, the real understanding came only after a personal meeting with Dr.Avinashilingam.

Some weeks passed before I was privileged to meet the Chancellor in person in Coimbatore. Because of the fragility of his health, my contacts with Dr. Avinashilingam were quite limited. But one visit, in particular, stood out as a memorable event. On a sunny Sunday afternoon, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Rajammal Devadas, invited me to accompany her to his place of residence. In spite of his physical weakness, he received me warmly and engaged me in conversation. As we were about to depart, Dr. Avinashilingam presented me with an autographed copy of his autobiography, **The Sacred Touch.** For this he stood up, showed his respect for me and graciously handed the book over to me.

This gift came to me as I was nearing the end of my stay in Coimbatore. A glance at the contents convinced me that with the myriads of engagements just prior to leaving India, I should wait and read the book during my long journey home to the United States. In keeping with this commitment, as soon as I was airborne and headed eastward to San Francisco, I pulled out **The Sacred Touch** and began to read. In a matter of minutes I realized that I would be **living** the 20th century history of India. Avinashilingam was in touch with many great spiritual leaders of India, but was especially influenced by the writings and ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi. These great men provided models of thought for defining purposes of education,

for articulating a philosophy of education and for integrating religious and moral traditions in educational efforts.

Dr. Avinashilingam's educational idealism was further influenced by contacts made on a visit to the U.S.A. in the early 1960s. While there, he observed the manner in which land grant universities (such as Iowa State University and Ohio State University) were meeting the needs of people through their research, teaching and service mode of operation. Through his visit to smaller institutions, particularly Antioch and Berea colleges, he discovered an emphasis on meeting the educational needs of local people and on assisting students in financing their education through involvements with income generating activities. The impacts of his idealism can be observed today in the curriculum for students enrolled in the Avinashilingam Deemed University. This is especially evident in the extension activities associated with integrating the National Service Scheme programs into regular curricular programs.

His keen interest in educational models from other cultures no doubt contributed to his attitude of openness to international visiting scholars. As an international guest in his home, I was welcomed as a colleague and friend. His kind gestures were further evidence of his hospitality.

Today, as my understanding of the Founder broadens and deepens, my admiration grows for his sacrificial efforts in providing a solid foundation for the many educational ventures he has sponsored. His legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of faculty and alumnae who have been privileged to benefit from his benevolence toward education for women.

HIS INTEREST IN MODERN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

Willis H. Skrdla and Betty J. Skrdla

Modern India, like most other countries of the planet Earth, is concentrating on problems of meeting requirements of escalating population in all areas, including science and education. Without these, all other concerns become more complex if not insurmountable. This is recognized by those in power, but first, dedicated, hard working leaders, who will give generously of themselves to identify, step by step in learned and logical sequence, the rationale, development and implementation of new and useful ideas, are essential. Once identified, these goals must be infused into the scientific and educational systems.

India has been blessed by having had such a person in the great leader, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam. By precept and example, this dedicated man has provided the vision, guidance and means to bring about tremendous changes in his beloved country and endeared himself to multitudes of people.

We have personally witnessed many of the amazing results of the teachings from the prestigious institutions of learning made possible by his generous and unselfish gifts, along with his lifetime of dedication, affection and encouragement. Hundreds of Indian villages and rural areas attest to the results of the meticulous essential scientific research and technical training acquired by the thousands of well qualified graduates of the Agricultural and Engineering University for Men and Boys and its counterpart the Home Science Institute (Deemed University) founded by Sri Avinashilingam. We saw very successful examples of science, technology and education put into practice to improve the lives of countless common people. This enables families to continue to live in their home areas enjoying pure water from safe bore wells, living in permanent and clean houses with adequate food and fuel available, good health care, schools, banks and a greatly improved standard of living for all. Trades are being taught successfully, thus upgrading the economy. The end result is a happy, satisfied, self-sufficient and peaceful populace. This

must serve as a shining example for all of India as well as for nations everywhere.

For Sri Avinashilingam to have perceived the need to educate those less fortunate than himself, then to proceed to provide the funds and encouragement to facilitate the construction and staffing of two prestigious Universities and their satellites, has brought readily recognizable advancement of India's agrarian culture and in the human condition of innumerable rural and village residents.

In 1984 to 1986, it was my privilege to serve as Principal Scientist and Leader of the Plant Genetic Resources Unit for ICRISAT (International Centre for Research in the Semi-Arid Tropics) near Hyderabad, India. Later, I was consultant to the Government of India and the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources as part of the Indo-U.S. Project to assess the physical and scientific needs for collection, conservation and utilization of endemic plant germplasm. In May, 1985, as a participant in a "Pulse Workshop" at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, Mrs. Skrdla and I visited the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women when we were introduced to Sri Avinashilingam. We developed a tremendous respect and admiration for this man of great national stature in science and education.

While in India, Mrs. Skrdla was involved in establishing a small school and medical clinic for Harijan women and children as well as raising funds for lifesaving heart surgery for an Indian girl. Betty was a participant in the SAARC-UNICEF Conference for South Women and Children in New Delhi, October 1986.

It has been our pleasure to help supply books to stock the recently established Home Science Institute Library for Children and Youth. As scientists and educators, we both feel a tremendous sense of loss in the demise of Dr. Avinashilingam. This saintly gentleman has left a legacy which has enriched the history of his beloved India. To have had the rare privilege of making the acquaintance of such a man makes us feel very humble indeed.

"He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has enjoyed the trust of pure women, the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has left the world better than he found it, whether an improved maize, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who has always looked for the best in others and given them the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory a benediction."

Pursuit of human excellence is the most pervasive education that the nation needs today. Universities should not stop with producing engineers, doctors, lawyers and other functionaries. They should also develop them into human citizens trained to perform diverse social functions. They should imbibe the spirit of doing better and still better, keeping in mind the welfare of the society, in the context of which one develops one's own life.

- Ayya Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam

DR. AVINASHILINGAM I HAD KNOWN

Catherine Ed. Hakola

I did meet Dr. Avinashilingam and had him in our home that one time in 1962 and admired him for all his high aims and accomplishments. Through Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, I have heard wonderful things about him. He always sent me Christmas greetings just as I had sent greetings to him every year.

His work at Avinashilingam Institute was stupendous. How fortunate to have such a leader with such high aim ! His passing away is a great loss to all who came under his influence, particularly to Rajammal such a loss is sad, but his influence will be felt for a long long time. I am sure the students who came in contact with him were most fortunate.

Let us work hard, with interest and courage so that we will get personal fulfilment and joy in our efforts.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AN EDUCATIONIST WITH A TWINKLE IN HIS EYES

Yasmin Morenas

My association with Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar in the sixties was through extension education and rural development for the Home Science College he had founded. I always looked forward to his chairmanship in meetings and the informal gathering that followed. I could not avoid noticing the twinkling eyes, ready to laugh! For me he was so human that there was a constant repartee. He enjoyed a hearty laugh, whenever something captured his sense of humour.

Once I asked Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam as to how he viewed Indian women. The humane response was, "Indian women have a special niche in the present century and history. At Gandhiji's call how they came forward from their traditional homes! They had to first confront the opposition of their families; later because of political causes, they had to face several hardships. They overcame all the hurdles with courage. Our women are full of strength and power and yet retain an enlightened attitude. I have nothing but great respect for them and it is a joy to see you ladies taking such bold strides."

Will you then not agree with me that Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam really believed in - "The joy of service and the joy of inner growth through work are sufficient recompense of the selfless worker", (Sun Beams - selected writings of Sri Aurobindo).

THE AYYA WE SAW

Gunnar and Brigitta Jacks

When first meeting Ayya, it was somewhat difficult to connect him with his deeds as the Founder of the wonderful youth education institutions, the Home Science College and the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya. He was such a humble, low keyed and almost shy man about ten years ago. However, we met him outside his living quarters under the shade of a Banyan tree in the early forenoon hours.

The details of the discussions are no longer in clear memory, but the atmosphere very much so. It should be natural to be a bit stressed when talking to a man of his stature, anxious not to be a decent counterpart in the conversation. He was a close associate of Gandhi and a Freedom "Fighter" in Gandhiji's spirit. Nothing of stress, however. His sentences were breathing peace, carrying over confidence to us. It became so clear that he was in no need of manifesting himself with outside gestures. Still we can so clearly recall him for our inner eyes when he now and then was resting his eyes on the blue silhouette of the Western Ghats mountains.

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
FRIENDS AND WELL WISHERS

திருவாளர்கள் டி.எஸ். அவினாசிலிங்கம் என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன்

என். எம். ஆர். கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி

இந்திய வரலாற்றில் சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் முக்கிய பங்கு மேற்கொண்ட மதுரை என்.எம்.ஆர். சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் கோயமுத்தூர் அவினாசிலிங்கம் செட்டியார் அவர்களும் 1930 ஜூலை மாதம் 26ம் தேதி நடைபெற்ற கள்ளுக்கடை மறியலில் மதுரையிலும், கோவையிலும் கைது செய்யப்பட்டு வேலூர் சிறையில் வைக்கப்பட்டனர்.

"புணர்ச்சி பழகுதல் வேண்டா உணர்ச்சிதான்
நட்பாங் கிழமை தரும்"

என்ற வள்ளுவரின் சூற்றுப்படி தொடர்பு கொண்டிருந்தனர்.

ஒருவரை ஒருவர் நன்கு மதித்து காந்திய வழியிலேயே தத்தம் வாழ்க்கை முறையினை மாற்றிக்கொண்டு, பிரிக்க முடியாத கொள்கையில் வேரூன்றி நிலைத்து நின்றனர்.

திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் காந்திய வழியில் இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்ஸரின் போதனையிலும் கல்விப் பணியிலும் அதிக நாட்டம் கொண்டு தம் வாழ்நாள் முழுவதும் அதில் முழுமையாக அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்டார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் காந்திய வழிமுறைகளைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து, சமூகப் பணி, ஹரிஜன முன்னேற்றம், நிர்மாணத் திட்டங்கள் இவைகளால் ஈர்க்கப்பட்டு வாழ்நாள் முழுவதும் தன்னை முழுமையாக அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்டார்.

வேலூர் சிறை வாசத்தில் இருவரும் சேர்ந்து காந்தியடிகள் எழுதிய 'தென்னாப்பிரிக்க சத்தியாக்கிரகம்' என்ற நூலைத் தமிழில் மொழி பெயர்த்தனர். அது காந்தி நூல் வெளியீட்டுக் கழகத்தின் தொகுப்பில் இடம் பெற்று, பின்னர் காந்தி நினைவு நிதி, காந்திய இலக்கிய சங்க வெளியீடாகவும் அமைந்தது.

சிறைவாச நாட்களில் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் சககைதிகளுக்கு பகவான் இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர், விவேகானந்தர் பாடங்களையும், திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் திருக்குறள் பாடத்தையும் கூறுவார். திங்கட்கிழமை தோறும் மௌன விரதம் அனுஷ்டிப்பார்.

வேலூர் சிறைவாசத்தின் போது திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களிடத்தில் கலந்து போத்தனூரில் குருகுலம் ஒன்றை ஏற்படுத்த ஆயத்தம் செய்தார். விடுதலையடைந்ததும், மிகுந்த சிரமத்தின் பேரில் 4, 5 மாணவர் களுடன் அந்த ஸ்தாபனம் ஆரம்பிக்கப்பட்டது. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் முக்கிய ஆலோசனைகளைக் கூறியும், உறுதுணையாக இருந்தும் அந்த ஸ்தாபனத்தின் படிப்படியான வளர்ச்சிக்கு ஊக்கம் தந்தார்.

இன்று கோயமுத்தூர் பெரியநாயக்கன் பாளையத்தில் பிரசித்தி பெற்ற இராமகிருஷ்ண மிஷன் வித்தியாலயம் என்ற பெயரில் ஆல் போல் தழைத்து வியாபித்து அங்கு நர்சரி பள்ளியிலிருந்து ஆரம்பமாகி கலைக்கல்லூரி, மாருதிக் கல்லூரி (உடற்பயிற்சி) தொழில் கல்லூரி எனப் பலவகையான ஸ்தாப னங்கள் உருவாக்கியதுடன், கோவை நகர மையப்பகுதியில் பெண்களுக்காக சிறந்த முறையில் அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனை இயல் கல்லூரி தொடங்கப்பட்டு அவரின் விடா முயற்சியாலும் அதன் நிர்வாகிகளின் சிறந்த ஒத்துழைப்பாலும் குறிப்பாக திருமதி. டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அவர்களின் சீரிய, உன்னதமான, தன்னலமற்ற ஆக்கப்பூர்வமான சலியாத உழைப்பாலும் மனையியல் கல்லூரி குறுகிய காலத்தில் சிறந்த வளர்ச்சியடைந்து பல்கலைக்கழக அந்தஸ்து பெற்று முன்னை விட சிறந்து விளங்குகிறது. அதில் கோவை ஐயா அவர்கள் வேந்தராகவும், டாக்டர் ராஜம்மாள் பா. தேவதாஸ் அவர்கள் துணை வேந்தராகவும் இருந்தனர்.

இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்தியாலயத்தில் தலைவராக சில ஆண்டுகளும் அதன் காரியக்கமிட்டி அங்கத்தினராகவும் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தன் வாழ்நாளின் இறுதிவரை இருந்து

அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களுக்கு உறுதுணையாக இருந்து வந்தார். உடல்நிலை குன்றியிருந்தாலும் காரியக்கமிட்டிக் கூட்டத் தில் கலந்து கொண்டு தன் பங்கிற்கு ஆலோசனை கூறுவதிலும் உதவுவதிலும் தயங்கியதே இல்லை. அபரிமிதமான அன்புக்கு இது ஓர் எடுத்துக்காட்டு ஆகும்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களுக்கு உடல்நலம் குன்றியிருந்த போது அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களுக்கு எவ்வளவு வேலை இருந்தாலும் அவைகளை அப்படியே விட்டுவிட்டு உடனடியாக மதுரைக்கு வந்து அவரைப் பார்த்து ஆறுதல் சொல்வதுண்டு.

"முகநக நட்பது நட்பன்று நெஞ்சத்து
அகநக நட்பது நட்பு"

என்ற குறளுக்குச் சான்றாக இருவரின் நட்பும் அமைந்திருந்தது என்றால் அது மிகையாகாது. மதுரைக்கு வந்த சமயம் வித்தியாலயம், அரசியல், ஆன்மீகத்தைப் பற்றி மணிக்கணக்கில் பேசிக் கொண்டிருப்பார்கள். பிரமுகர்கள் போட்டி போட்டுக் கொண்டு தங்கள் இல்லங்களில் வந்து தங்கும்படி வற்புறுத்து வார்கள். ஆனால் அவைகளையெல்லாம் அன்பினால் மறுத்து ஐயா அவர்கள் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் இல்லத்திலேயே தங்குவார்.

1935ஆம் ஆண்டு மதுரை நகராட்சித் தலைவராக 30வது வயதில் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தேர்வு செய்யப்பட்டார். 1942 வரை பதவி வகித்தார். 1942ல் பாதுகாப்புச் சட்டத்தின் கீழ் கைது செய்யப்பட்டு வேலூர் சிறையில் வைக்கப்பட்டார். அது சமயம் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் கைது செய்யப் பட்டு வேலூர் சிறையில் இருந்தார். சில மாதங்களில் திரு. சுப்ப ராமன் அவர்களுக்கு உடல்நலம் குன்றியதால் தஞ்சாவூர் சிறைக்கு மாற்றப்பட்டார்.

1937, 1946ஆம் ஆண்டுகளில் நடைபெற்ற சென்னை மாகாண சட்ட சபைக்கு திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டனர்.

நிர்மாணத் திட்டங்களில் பெரிதும் நாட்டம் கொண்ட திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் காந்தி கிராமத்தில் ஊழியரகம் என்ற அமைப்பை ஏற்படுத்தி சிறந்த ஊழியர்களுக்கு பயிற்சி அளித்து ஆக்கப்பூர்வமான திட்டங்களில் அவர்களை ஈடுபடச் செய்தார்.

உப்பு சத்தியாக்கிரகப்புகழ் வாய்ந்த வேதாரண்யம் சர்தார் அ. வேதரத்னம் அண்ணாச்சி அவர்களுடன் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் ஓமந்தூர் ஓ.பி. இராமசாமி ரெட்டியார் அவர்களும் மிகமிக நெருக்கமா யிருந்தார்கள். அண்ணாச்சி அவர்கள் ஸ்தாபித்து நடத்தி வந்த வேதாரண்யம் கஸ்தூர்பா காந்தி கன்யாகுருகுலத்தின் முன்னேற் றத்திலும் வளர்ச்சியிலும் முக்கிய பங்கு கொண்டு ஆலோசனை வழங்கியதுடன் அதன் நிர்வாகக் கமிட்டியில் மூவரும் பல ஆண்டுகள் அங்கத்தினராக இருந்தார்கள்.

இராமலிங்க வள்ளலாரின் போதனையில் கவரப்பட்ட ஓமந்தூர் ஓ.பி. இராமசாமி ரெட்டியார் அவர்கள் வடலூரில் சன்மார்க்க குருகுலம் ஒன்றை ஸ்தாபித்து அந்த ஸ்தாபனத்தின் தலைவராக இருந்து நடத்தி வந்தார். அதன் நிர்வாகக் கமிட்டியில் வேதரத்னம் அண்ணாச்சி அவர்களும், அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களும் அங்கம் வகித்து திறம்பட நடத்த உதவி செய்தார்கள்.

நிர்வாகக் கமிட்டிக் கூட்டங்களுக்குத் தவறாது மூவரும் சேர்ந்து கலந்து கொள்வதுடன் இரண்டு, மூன்று நாட்கள் தங்கி பலதரப்பட்ட பிரச்னைகளையும் வித்தியாலயம், வேதாரண்யம் குருகுலம், சன்மார்க்க குருகுலம், அரசியல் நிலைமைகளைப் பற்றியும், ஆலோசனைகளைப் பரிமாறிக் கொள்வார்கள்.

டி. கல்லுப்பட்டி காந்திநிகேதன் ஆஸ்ரமத்திற்கு திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் பல ஆண்டுகள் தலைவராக இருந்து, கதர், கிராம கைத்தொழில் வளர்ச்சி, உற்பத்தி, விற்பனை முதலியவைகளையும் ஆதாரக் கல்வியையும், வளர்க்க ஏற்பாடுகள் பலவற்றைச் செய்து, சிறந்த நிர்வாகிகளைத்

தேர்ந்தெடுத்ததுடன், நிர்வாகக் கமிட்டியில் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களைப் பங்கு கொள்ளச் செய்து அவருடைய ஆலோசனைகளையும் பெற்று அந்த ஸ்தாபனத்தைச் சிறந்த முறையில் வளர்ச்சி அடையச் செய்தார்.

தமிழ்நாடு காந்தி நினைவு நிதியின் முதல் நிர்வாகியாக இருந்து சிறந்த ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்கியதுடன் தீண்டாமை ஒழிப்பு, மதுவிலக்கு இவைகளைச் சிறந்த முறையில் கண்காணிக்க விரிவான ஏற்பாடுகளைச் செய்ததுடன், கிராம வளர்ச்சிக்கும் அபிவிருத்திக்கும் பாடுபட்டார். வேலை மிகுதியாலும் உடல்நலம் குன்றியதாலும் அப்பொறுப்பினை அண்ணாச்சி சர்தார் வேத ரத்னம்பிள்ளை அவர்களிடம் ஒப்படைத்தார். அதன் தலைவராக திரு.க. அருணாசலம் அவர்கள் இருந்து செயலாற்றி வருகிறார். அதன் நிர்வாகக் கமிட்டியிலும் நால்வரும் இருந்து வந்தது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

தங்கள் தலைவரைத் தேர்வு செய்யும் பொறுப்பு மாத்திர மல்ல. தங்கள் நகராட்சி மற்றும் ஊராட்சியை நிர்வகிக்கும் முழுப்பொறுப்பும் மக்களிடமே விடப்படவேண்டும் என்பது காந்தியடிகளின் கோட்பாடு. ஒவ்வொரு ஊரும் ஒரு தன்மான முள்ள, சுதந்திரமான உள்ளாட்சி மன்றங்களாக இயங்க வேண்டும். இதனை காந்தியடிகள் 'பரவல்முறை நிர்வாக ஆட்சி' என்றும் விளக்கியுள்ளார். இதைக் கருத்தில் கொண்டு மதுரை நகராட்சியின் நிர்வாகத்தில் மிகுந்த அனுபவம் பெற்ற திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் 1941ல் ஆளுநர் ஆர்தர் ஹோப் அவர்கள் நேரிடையாகவும் மறைமுகமாகவும் நகராட்சியை அச்சுறுத்திய போதெல்லாம் அஞ்சாது எதிர்த்து நின்றார். மேலும் மதுரை நகராட்சியின் நிர்வாகத்தில் குறை கண்டு பிடித்து திரு. சுப்பராமன் பேரில் நடவடிக்கை எடுப்பதற்கும், ஆளுநருக்கு வாய்ப்பில்லை. எனவே நகராட்சி மேற்கொள்ளும் நல்ல திட்டங் களுடன் ஒத்துழைக்கும் பாவனை இல்லாத அதிகாரிகளையே தேர்வு செய்து மதுரைக்கு ஆணையாளராக நியமித்தார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் எளிமையும் சாத்வீக சுபாவமும் உடையவர் ஆயினும் அவருக்குள் எரிமலை போன்ற

புரட்சிக்கனலும் இருந்தது. அவர் மிக்க வீரமும் செயலாற்றலும் கொண்டவர். தண்ணீர் போன்ற மென்மையான சுபாவமாயினும் அதே தண்ணீர் கடல் அலையாக எழும்போது பேராற்றல் உருவாவதைப் போல் அவரிடம் செயலாற்றல் நிரம்பியிருந்தது. நிர்மாண சக்தி அவரது ரத்தத்தில் ஊறியிருந்தது. சத்தியம் உறுதிக்கும் வீரத்துக்கும் அஞ்சாமைக்கும் சின்னமாயிருக்க, அன்பு மென்மைக்கும் பணிவுக்கும் சின்னமாகிறது. இவ்விரண்டும் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களுக்கு இணைந்த பிறவிக்கூறு எனலாம்.

தந்தையைப் போன்ற மிகுந்த பாசத்துடன் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களைக் கவனித்து வந்த அவருடைய மூத்த சகோதரர் பாபு அய்யா என்ற செல்லப் பெயரால் அழைக்கப் பட்ட திரு. என்.எம்.ஆர். வெங்கிடகிருஷ்ணய்யர் அவர்களிடம் பொதுமக்கள் வந்து தம் சகோதரரை மந்திரியாக்கிப் பார்க்க வேண்டும் என்ற அபிலாஷையை வற்புறுத்தினார்கள். எனவே அரசியலில் குடும்ப நண்பரான திரு. டி. கே. ராமா அவர்களை ராஜாஜி அவர்களிடம் தூது அனுப்பி தெரிவிக்கச் சொன்னார்கள். அவ்வாறு செய்ததை அறிந்த திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் மிகவும் வருத்தமடைந்தார்.

ராஜாஜி அவர்கள் மந்திரி சபை அமைக்கும் பட்டியலில் திரு.சுப்பராமன் அவர்களின் பெயர் இருந்ததை நண்பர் திரு.டி.கே. ராமா மூலம் அறிந்தார். இந்த பெரிய பொறுப்பினை ஏற்றுக் கொள்ள திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் மறுத்துவிட்டார். ராஜாஜி மந்திரி சபையில் திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் கல்வி மந்திரியாக நியமிக்கப்பட்டு அனைவரின் அன்பையும் பாராட்டையும் பெறும் விதத்தில் சீரிய முறையில் பணியாற்றினார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் காந்திஜியிடம் ஆழ்ந்த பக்தியும் நெருக்கமான பழக்கமும் கொண்டவர். காந்தியடிகளைத் தரிசிக்க அடிக்கடி திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் சபர்மதி ஆஸ்ரமத்திற்கு தன் துணைவியார் பர்வதவர்தனி அம்மையாருடன் போவதுண்டு. அங்கு காந்திஜி அவர்கள் அம்மையாரைப்

பார்த்ததும் மிகுந்த பரவசத்துடன் பெயரைச் சொல்லி 'மகளே எப்படியிருக்கிறாய்?' என்று கேட்பார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தன் துணைவியுடன் ஹரிஜன சேரிகளுக்குச் சென்று சுகாதாரத்தைப் பற்றிக் கூறி சேரியினைச் சுத்தப்படுத்தும் பணியினைச் செய்யத் தூண்டுவார். திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் மனைவியும் அவருடன் செல்லும் பெண்களும் சேர்ந்து சேரியில் வாழும் குழந்தைகளைக் குளிப்பாட்டி தலைக்கு எண்ணெய் தேய்த்து நன்றாக வாரி விடுவார்கள். சேரி மக்களின் வேலைக்குத் தடை ஏற்படாதபடி பால்வாடிகளை ஏற்படுத்திக் கொடுத்தார். கோவையிலும் அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் இம்மாதிரியான பணிகளைச் செய்துள்ளார்கள்.

ஹரிஜன மாணவர்கள் தங்கிப் படிக்க மதுரையில் ஷெனாய் நகரில் "சேவாலயம்" என்ற ஹாஸ்டலை ஏற்படுத் தினார். ஹரிஜன சேவா சங்கத்தின் மூலம் மதுரை ஜில்லாவில் பல இடங்களில் ஹரிஜன மாணவர் இல்லத்தை ஏற்படுத்தி, அவர்கள் கல்வி பயிலவும் அரசாங்க உத்தியோகம் கிடைக்கவும் அரும்பணியாற்றியுள்ளார். தீண்டாமையை ஒழிக்க அரும்பாடு பட்டார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் பெண்கள் கல்வி அபிவிருத்-திக்காக தம் பெற்றோர் என்.எம். இராயலு அய்யர் காவேரி யம்மாள் (நினைவாக) என்ற டிரஸ்டை ஏற்படுத்தி தன் சொத்தில் ஒரு பகுதியைத் தானமாக சௌராஷ்ட்ர பெண்கள் பள்ளிக்குக் கொடுத்து, அதிலிருந்து வரும் வருவாயைக் கல்வி அபிவிருத்-திக்காகச் செலவிட வேண்டும் என்று எழுதி வைத்தார்கள். பள்ளியின் காரியக்கமிட்டி அங்கத்தினர்களின் வற்புறுத்தலால் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் பல ஆண்டுகள் தலைவராக இருந்தார். அவருடைய விடாமுயற்சியின் பயனாக மதுரை அருப்பரடியில் சுமார் 10 ஏக்கர் நிலம் ஆர்ஜிதம் செய்யப்பட்டு டிரஸ்டிலிருந்தும் மற்ற நன்கொடையாளர்களின் உதவியாலும் இடம் வாங்கப்பட்டு அதில் கம்பீரமான கட்டிடங்கள் எழுப்பப் பட்டன. இன்றும் அவை அவருடைய சேவையைப் பறைசாற்றிக்

கொண்டிருக்கின்றன. பள்ளியில் பயிலும் பெண்களுக்காக நிர்வாகிகள் நன்கொடையாக நான்கு பேருந்துகளைப் பெற்று நல்ல முறையில் பயன்படுத்தி வருகின்றனர். பல வருடங்கள் தொடர்ந்து இப்பள்ளி எஸ்.எஸ்.எல்.சி.யில் 100க்கு 100 சதவிகிதம் தேர்வு பெற்று முன்னணியில் விளங்கியது.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் மறைவிற்குப்பின் 4, 5 வருடங்களுக்குப் பின், அவருடைய இளைய சகோதரர் திரு.என்.எம்.ஆர். கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி அவர்கள் தலைவராகவும் பள்ளியின் ஆரம்ப காலத்திலிருந்து திருமதி. பி.கே.ஆர். லட்சுமி காந்தம் (எம்.எல்.ஏ) அவர்கள் தாளாளராகவும் இருந்து பள்ளியின் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களின் அடிச்சுவட்டைப் பின்பற்றி சிறந்தமுறையில் பணியாற்றி நிர்வகித்து வருகிறார்கள்.

ஒவ்வொரு ஆங்கிலப் புத்தாண்டின் முதல் வாரத்தில் வரும் ஞாயிற்றுகிழமை குருதேவர் விழா பெரிய அளவில் சிறப்பாக பல ஆண்டுகளாக வித்தியாலயத்தில் கொண்டாடப்படுகிறது. குருதேவர் விழாவிற்குச் சுற்று வட்டாரத்திலிருந்தும் கோவை டவுனிலிருந்தும் தமிழ்நாட்டில் பல பாகத்திலிருந்தும் மக்கள் திருவிழாக் கூட்டம் போல் கூடுவார்கள். விழாவில் பல அறிஞர்களும் கலைஞர்களும் பங்கு கொள்வார்கள். விழாவின் போது பத்தாயிரம் ஏழைகளுக்கு அன்னதானம் வழங்கப்படுகிறது.

குருதேவரின் அருளால் வித்தியாலய கல்லூரி தொழிற் கல்லூரி பயிற்சி மாணவர்களே சேர்ந்து விழாவிற்குத் தேவையான பொருட்களை நன்கொடைகளாகப் பெற்று, பந்தல், மின்சார விளக்குகள் அமைப்பு அன்னதான ஏற்பாடுகளையும் செய்து விழாவிற்கு வருகை தரும் பிரமுகர்களையும் பொது மக்களையும் வரவேற்று உபசரிப்பது எங்குமே கண்டும் கேட்டுமிராத நிகழ்ச்சியாக இருக்கும். இந்நிகழ்ச்சிகள் மாணவர்களே ஏற்பாடு செய்வதன் மூலம், மாணவர்களுக்கு வரும் காலத்தில் பொதுப் பணியில் சேவை செய்ய இது சிறந்த பயிற்சியாகவும் அமைகிறது. இதையெல்லாம் நினைத்து பூரித்து

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் இவ்விழாவிற்கு வருடம் தவறாமல் வந்து கலந்து கொள்வார்.

திரு.என்.எம்.ஆர்.எஸ். அவர்களின் மகத்தான சேவையைப் பாராட்டிக் கௌரவிக்கும் பொருட்டு மதுரை மாநகராட்சியில் அவருடைய திரு உருவப்படத்தை அவருடைய அன்பிற்கும் மரியாதைக்கும் உரிய இனிய நண்பர் திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் தம் திருக்கரத்தால் சுமார் 10,12 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன் திறந்து வைத்தார்.

காந்திய நிர்மாணத் திட்டங்களிலும் கொள்கைகளிலும் பெரிதும் நாட்டம் கொண்ட திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தன்னுடைய காலமான செல்வபுத்திரி சீதாபாய் (காந்தியால் சூட்டப்பட்ட பெயர்) நினைவாக அவர் பெயரில் தர்ம ஸ்தாபனம் ஒன்றை 9.3.70ந் தேதி துவக்கினார். திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களின் மனைவியார் திருமதி. பர்வதவர்தனி அம்மாள் 13.4.77ந் தேதியில் காலமானார்கள். அவருடைய நினைவாக அவருடைய பெயரையும் சேர்த்து "சீதாபாய் டிரஸ்ட்" என்று இருந்ததை "சீதாபாய் பர்வதவர்தனி அம்மாள் டிரஸ்ட்" என்று மாற்ற ஆலோசனை வழங்கியவர் திரு. அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள். அந்த டிரஸ்டில் டிரஸ்டியாக அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் தன் வாழ்நாளின் கடைசி வரை இருந்து சிறந்த ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்கி வந்தார்கள்.

1962ஆம் ஆண்டு பாராளுமன்ற தேர்தலில் போட்டியிடு மாறு அப்போது முதலமைச்சராக இருந்த திரு. கே. காமராஜர் அவர்கள் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களை வேட்பாளராக நிற்கும் படி கேட்டுக்கொள்ள, அவர் இல்லத்திற்கே வந்திருந்தார். அதற்கு திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் தான் அரசியலிலிருந்து ஒதுங்கி பல ஆண்டுகளாகிவிட்டது. எனவே போட்டியிடுவதில்லை என்று அழுத்தமாக கூறி விட்டார். எனினும் காமராஜர் அவர்கள் விடுவதாயில்லை. கம்யூனிஸ்ட் கட்சியின் தலைவரும் பிரபல வக்கீலாகவும் 1957முதல் 1962வரை மக்களவை அங்கத்தினராக இருந்த திரு.கே.டி.கே. தங்கமணி எம்.ஏ., பார்அட்லா மீண்டும் போட்டியிடுவதால் அவரை எதிர்த்து போட்டியிட்டு வெற்றி

பெற மிகவும் தகுதியானவர் திரு.சுப்பராமன் ஒருவரே தான் என்பதை எல்லோரையும் விட மிக நன்றாகவே உணர்ந்திருந்தார் காமராஜர். எனவே பிரதமர் நேருவிடம் சொல்லி நேரு அவர்கள் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களிடத்தில் போனில் கேட்டுக்கொண்ட பின் தேர்தலில் போட்டியிட்டு வெற்றி பெற்றார்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் ஓட்டு எண்ணிக்கையில் அதிக முன்னணியில் இருந்த போதே அவருக்கு எதிராகப் போட்டியிட்ட திரு.கே.டி.கே. தங்கமணி அவர்கள் முதன் முதலில் திரு. சுப்பராமன் இல்லத்திற்கு வந்து அவருக்கு மாலை அணி வித்து, தங்களின் மகத்தான தியாகத்திற்கும் சிறந்த சேவைக்கும் மக்கள் தங்களைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்திருக்கிறார்கள் என்று பாராட்டி தன் நல்வாழ்த்துக்களையும் மகிழ்ச்சியையும் மனதாரத் தெரிவித்துக் கொண்டார்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களும் அது சமயத்தில் ராஜ்ய சபா எம்.பி. யாக இருந்தார்.

அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்களின் அரசியல் பணியும் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களுடைய அரசியல் பணியும் அப்பழுக் கற்றது. வழிமுறை தவறாதது. தமக்கென புகழையோ, பதவியையோ நாடாதது. காந்தியடிகள் காட்டிய அரசியல் கோட்பாட்டில் ஒரு சிறிதும் பிறழாதது. தியாகமிக்கது. சுயநலம் சிறிதும் அற்றது. ஆன்ம நாட்டம் பொதிந்திருந்தது. இவ்வாறு சிறந்த அரசியல் பணிக்கு அவர்கள் இருவருமே சிறந்த உதாரண மாகத் திகழ்ந்ததால் தான் எதிரணியினரும் போற்றும் விதத்தில் அன்றைய அரசியல் நாகரீகம் இருந்தது.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் மீது அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் கொண்டுள்ள தூய அன்பு, பாசப்பிணைப்பால் உண்டானது. திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் பெருமையையோ, புகழ்ச்சியையோ, பதவிகளையோ விரும்பாதவர் என்பதை நன்கு உணர்ந்திருந்த அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களின் 70வது ஆண்டு நிறைவு நாளில் வாழ்த்து மலராக ஒரு நூலை வெளியிட்டார்கள். தன்னைப் பற்றிப் புகழ்ந்து பேசக் கேட்பதில்

அவர் மகிழ்ச்சி அடைவதில்லை. இறைவனை வாழ்த்துவதிலும் வணங்குவதிலும் தான் அவருக்கு மிகுந்த மகிழ்ச்சி. எனவே நாயன்மார்கள் பாடி அருளிய சிறந்த கருத்துக்கள் அடங்கிய பாடல்களையும் தேசிய கவிஞர்களின் கருத்தாழம் உடைய சில பாடல்களையும் "நூற்றெட்டு" மலர்களாகத் தொடுத்து அணிவித்து அன்பின் பெருமையை அடக்கத்துடன் தெரிவித்துக் கொண்டார்.

"இறைவன் மனிதனுக்குச் சொன்னது . பகவத்கீதை"
"மனிதன் மனிதனுக்குச் சொன்னது . திருக்குறள்"
"மனிதன் இறைவனுக்குச் சொன்னது . திருவாசகம்"

என்ற தத்துவத்தின் மகத்தான பொருளை அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் தன்னுடைய "நூற்றெட்டு மலர்கள்" மூலம் என்றும் வாடாது நிலைத்து மணம் வீசும் மாலையாகத் தொடுத்து அணிவித்திருப்பது இருவரின் இறை ஈடுபாட்டிற்குச் சிறந்த எடுத்துக்காட்டாகும்.

திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் 1977ம் ஆண்டு எழுதி வைத்த உயில் சாசனத்தில் தன்னுடைய ஜீவிய காலத்திற்கும் பின் தன்னுடைய சொத்துக்களில் பெரும் பகுதியை தாம் ஸ்தாபித்த சீதாபாய் பர்வதவர்தனி அம்மாள் டிரஸ்டில் சேர்க்கவும் மானேஜிங் டிரஸ்டியாக செயல்படவும் தன் இளைய சகோதரர் திரு. என்.எம்.ஆர். கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி அவர்களுக்கு அதிகாரம் வழங்கியுள்ளார். திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் மறைவிற்குப்பின் அவர் எழுதி வைத்துள்ள உயில்படி அவருடைய லட்சியங்கள் நிறைவேற்றப்படுகின்றன.

காந்திகிராம முன்னாள் துணை வேந்தர் டாக்டர் மு.அறம் அவர்கள் கொடுத்த யோசனைப்படி அதை முழு மனதாக திரு அவினாசிலிங்கம் ஐயா அவர்கள் ஆதரித்தபடியும் திரு. N.M.R. சுப்பராமன் அவர்கள் வாழ்ந்து வந்த பங்களா சுப்பராமன் நினைவு இல்லமாக மாற்றப்பட்டது.கல்வி அபிவிருத்திப் பணிக் காக மதுரை காமராஜர் பல்கலைக் கழகத்திற்கு 25 வருட ஒப்பந்த அடிப்படையில் அவ்வில்லம் கொடுக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது.

பெயரளவில் வாடகையாக மாதம் ரூ.1/-(ரூபாய் ஒன்று) மட்டும் வசூலிக்கப்படுகிறது. திரு. சுப்பராமன் அவர்களின் நோக்கம் நிறைவேறும் விதத்தில் திரு. சுப்பராமன் நினைவு இல்லத்தில் காந்திய தத்துவமும், அருட்பெருஞ்ஜோதி வள்ளலார் ராமலிங்க அடிகளாரின் போதனைகளும் கற்பிக்கப்படுவதுடன் பயனுள்ள இதர வகுப்புகளும் நல்ல முறையில் இயங்கிக் கொண்டிருக் கின்றன.

இலட்சங்களுக்காகப் பலர் வாழ்ந்து வரும் இக்காலக் கட்டத்தில் இலட்சியங்களுக்காகத் தம் வாழ்க்கையையே அர்ப்பணித்த, பாரத அன்னையின் இவ்விரு தவப்புதல்வர்களின் மகோன்னத தியாக சேவை அவர்கள் காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்து வரும் எம்மவர்களுக்கும் இளைஞர்களுக்கும் வழிகாட்டியாகவும் விளங்கும். நாட்டின் வருங்கால வரலாற்றில் கலங்கரை விளக்காக நீங்காத இடம் பெற்று, ஒளி வீசும் இவர்களுடைய நினைவு என்றும் நிலைத்துப் போற்றப்படும் என்று நம்புவோமாக.

A MEANINGFUL LIFE

K.S. Ramanujam

It was indeed a very rare privilege and great good fortune for me to have known Sri T.S. Avinashilingam for over five decades until his very end in 1991.

There are very many learned individuals who have worked with him closely in his deep and abiding involvement with education in general and fostering of Tamil language in an ever increasing measure in the school and collegiate curricula that I shall not attempt to dwell into that vast arena.

I shall confine myself to a few personal reminiscences.

My late revered father Sri K. Santhanam and "Ayya" (as Sri T.S.A. was affectionately called by all of us) were in the Central Assembly from 1937-1942. We were neighbours in Feroze Shaw Road in Delhi in 1938-39. I was only 12 years old then. However, I remember well the love and affection with which he used to treat us and the many stories he used to tell us about Sri Bhagwan Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. He presented to us small booklets of Bhagwan's noble thoughts and utterances.

What I remember even more is the fact that he used to buy and keep delightful rasagollas. He placed no restrictions on any of us visiting him and asking for many servings of this wonderful dish.

Both Ayya and my father were ardent enthusiasts for the imparting of school and collegiate education in Tamil medium. Their thoughts and ideas on this very much debated and controversial subject were identical. Hence was my father's great enthusiasm and involvement in the publication of the Tamil Encyclopaedia by Ayya in later years.

For almost seven years after 1940, I was not in touch with Ayya. But in 1947, I got close to him once again when he became the Education Minister in Tamil Nadu under the chief

ministership of Sri Omandur Ramaswamy Reddiar. During his rather brief tenure of only a few years as Education Minister, he served the cause of Tamil more than any one has done subsequently. He was indeed a champion of "Tamil everywhere, Tamil in everything and Tamil always." Like many other important issues, in which we have shown lack of true faith, we have neglected Tamil as well and this is no small loss to the people of Tamil Nadu.

There were numerous occasions when my father was invited to the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya in Perianaickenpalayam and I had the good fortune of accompanying him. On every one of such visits I was deeply moved by Ayya's love, affection, and compassion for one and all of the thousands of poor children who were students of the great Vidyalaya.

All his life, he preferred to stay in the Cosmopolitan club whenever he visited Madras city, since it was centrally situated. Quite a few were the occasions and opportunities for me to visit him there and take him to see my father.

Ayya's simplicity was amazing. He was a true sanyasi although he chose not to wear saffron cloth. In his later years, he became passionately interested in imparting value based education and vocational training for girls. He could see in the person of Smt. Rajammal Devadas a human dynamo who had the knowledge and capacity to give shape and substance to his ideas on this vast and difficult subject. He encouraged her in every way possible.

Kasturba Gandhi Kanya Gurukulam owes a great deal to Ayya's encouragement, guidance and support, from the moment it was founded by late Sardar Vedaratnam Pillai. He was of immense moral support to the project. Likewise hundreds of educational institutions owe a great deal to Ayya's direct and indirect help.

Ayya's many sided contribution for the progress of Tamil Nadu in the field of education will for ever be remembered gratefully and cherished. Ayya's great dream was to make the Avinashilingam College of Home Science into a deemed

university. It is of no small satisfaction to all of us that this was fulfilled by the University Grants Commission declaring it to be deemed university well before Ayya passed away. We now have the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University), Coimbatore. He was a true example of a noble soul whose passion was true and selfless service to humanity.

For us all, he will forever remain an inspiration to involve ourselves in ever increasing measure in the cause of education, especially to the poorer sections of the community.

Let healthy ideas and values be radiated all round; the rest can be left to the inherent goodness and educability of man, to the divinity ever present in the human heart.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

எனக்குத் தெரிந்தவரை...

எஸ். இராமசாமி

செல்வக் குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்து
விடுதலைப் போராட்ட வீரராகத் தொடங்கி
மிகச்சிறந்த கல்வியாளராகப் புகழ் பெற்று தம் மாணுட வாழ்வைச் சிறப்புறச் செய்தவர் 'அய்யா' அவர்கள்.

"செல்வத்துப் பயனே ஈதல்
துய்ப்போம் எனினே தப்புந பலவே''

என்பது புறநானூறு. இதற்கேற்ப தாம் பெற்ற செல்வத்தையும் செல்வாக்கையும் கல்விச் செல்வமாக மாற்றித் தமிழகத்துக்கு வாரி வழங்கிய வள்ளல், அய்யா அவர்கள்.

ஐயாவுடன் என் உறவு

எனக்கு அவர் உறவினர். ஆம். என் மாமனாரின் சொந்தத் தம்பி அவர். ஆனாலும் நான் அவரை ஆசிரியனாகவே காண்கிறேன். என் சமூக சேவைக்கு அவரே ஆதர்சம். அவரோடு அரைநூற்றாண்டு உறவினராகப் பழகினேன் என்பதைவிட ஒரு மாணவனாக இருந்தேன் என்பது மிகவும் பொருந்தும்.

அவருக்கு உறவினன் என்ற வகையில் பற்றும், பாசமும், என்னிடம் உண்டு என்றாலும் என்னை உருவாக்கிய ஆசிரியராகவே அவரை பக்தியுடனும், மரியாதையுடனும் காண்கிறேன்.

வகையான வாழ்வு

அவருடைய வாழ்வின் முதல் கட்டத்தில் அவரைக் கவர்ந்தவை காந்தியமும் இராமகிருஷ்ண தத்துவமும். காந்தி யடிகளால் கவரப் பெற்ற அய்யா அவர்கள் பலமுறை அவரைச் சந்தித்திருக்கிறார். 1944ல் அடிகளார் பூனா சிறையிலிருந்து விடுதலை அடைந்தார். வார்தாவில் அய்யா அவர்கள் அவரைச் சந்தித்தார். தந்திக் கம்பிகள் அறுத்தல், ரயில்கள் கவிழ்த்தல்

போன்ற வன்முறை மூலம் நாட்டை விடுதலை அடையச் செய்ய வேண்டுமென்று செய்தி பரவியது. அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு, காந்தியடிகளின் கருத்து இப்படி இருக்க முடியாது என்று தோன்றியது. நேரே அடிகளாரையே சந்தித்துக் கேட்டுவிட்டார். இதைக் கேட்ட அடிகள் 'கொல்'லென்று சிரித்து, 'அவினாசி, அஹிம்சையில் நம்பிக்கையுள்ள நான், வன்முறையின் மூலம் கட்டாயமாக எதையும் திணிப்பேன் என்றா நீ நினைக்கிறாய்? என்று திருப்பிக் கேட்டுவிட்டு தம் மனப் போக்கை விளக்கினார்.. இந்த நிகழ்ச்சியின் போது நானும் திரு. அப்பாக்குட்டி அவர் களும் உடனிருந்தோம். காந்தியடிகளின் சிரிப்பையும், அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு அகிம்சையில் எவ்வளவு அழுத்தமான பற்று உண்டு என்பதையும் இன்றும் என்னால் மறக்க முடியவில்லை.

பெண்கள் பெருமையே

பெண்களின் முன்னேற்றத்தில் - அவர்களது கல்வி வளர்ச்சியில் காந்தியடிகளுக்குத் தீவிர ஈடுபாடு இருந்தது. அதன் விளைவு தான் அவினாசிலிங்கம் மனையியல் கல்லூரி. 1955- ஆம் ஆண்டு அவினாசிலிங்கம் உயர்நிலைப் (இன்று மேல் நிலைப் பள்ளி) பள்ளிக்குக் கால்கோள் இடப்பட்டது. அந்த நிகழ்ச்சியில் 'அய்யா' அவர்களுடன் உடனிருந்து செயல்பட்ட பெருமை, எனக்கும், சுவாமி சர்வக்ஞானந்தா அவர்களுக்குமே உண்டு என்று சொன்னால் அது தற்புகழ்ச்சியில்லை! உண்மை!

செல்வம் எதற்கு?

செல்வர்களுக்குத்தான் பணமோகம் அதிகம். ஆனால், அய்யா அவர்கள் செல்வக்குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்தும் பணத்தைச் சமூக சேவைக்குச் செலவழிக்கத்தான் விரும்பினார்களே தவிர, மேலும், மேலும் செல்வத்தைச் சேர்க்க ஒரு போதும் விரும்பி யதில்லை! இந்தப் பண்பு அய்யா அவர்களின் தனிச் சிறப்பு! ஏறத்தாழ 50ஆண்டுகாலம் உடனிருந்து இந்தச் சிறப்புப் பண்பைக் கண்ணாரக் கண்டவன் நான்.

நல்ல நிர்வாகியாக...

அய்யா அவர்களின் தமையனாரும் என் மாமனாருமாகிய திருமிகு. டி.எஸ். திருஞான சம்பந்தம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் நிறுவியது ஓம் பராசக்தி நூற்பாலை. இந்த ஆலையின் தலைவராக 15 ஆண்டுகள் இருந்து திறம்பட நிர்வாகம் செய்தவர் அய்யா அவர்கள். அப்போதெல்லாம் தொழிலாளர் நலத்தையே முக்கிய மாகக் கருதி, வலக்கை செய்வது இடக்கை அறியாமல் அய்யா அவர்கள் செய்த உதவி ஏராளம்! அது எவ்வளவு தூரம் உண்மை என்பதை, அய்யா அவர்கள் மறைந்தபோது அந்த ஆலைத் தொழிலாளர்கள் செய்த நன்றி அஞ்சலி மூலம் நாமே பார்த்தோம்.

பகட்டு அற்ற வாழ்வு

பட்டம் பதவிகள் அவரைத் தொட்டு நின்றன. தேடிவந் தன. ஆனால் அய்யா அவர்களுக்கு இவற்றிலெல்லாம் நாட்ட மில்லை.

ஓயாத உழைப்பு, எப்போதும் நியதி தவறாமை, வீண் விவாதம் தவிர்த்தல், பேச்சைக் குறைத்தல், சமுதாயப் பணி மட்டுமே போதும் என்ற சிந்தனை, இவையே அவரின் இயல்பு. எனவே பட்டம் பதவிகளை அவர் ஒதுக்கித் தள்ளினார்.

தொடக்க காலத்தில் அரசியல் ஈடுபாடு இருந்தது. எனவே விடுதலை வீரராக அவரது இளமை அமைந்தது. போகப்போக அரசியலில் ஆர்வம் குறைந்தது. பெரும் ஆரவாரமும் பதவி மோகமும், அரசியலை மூடிக் கொண்டன. ஆதலால் தமது கடைசி இருபது ஆண்டுகளில் அரசியல் தொடர்பிலிருந்து தன்னை அறவே விலக்கிக் கொண்டுவிட்டார்.

தாம் நிறுவிய கல்வி நிலையங்களை வளர்த்துப் பெருமை பெறச் செய்வதிலும், இராமகிருஷ்ணர் கோட்பாடுகளைப் பரவச் செய்வதிலுமே அவருடைய கடைசிக்காலம் அமைந்துவிட்டது.

தனயன் வழிச்செல்லும் தம்பி

அவரது தம்பி திரு. டி.எஸ். தண்டபாணிச் செட்டியாரிடம் அய்யா அவர்கட்கு மிகுந்த பாசமும் நம்பிக்கையும் உண்டு. இல்லற வாழ்வில் ஈடுபடாத இவரைக் கலந்து பேசியே பல நல்லறங்களைச் செய்தார். இவரது சொத்துக்கள், அய்யா அவர்களின் கல்வி நிலையத்துக்கே இறுதியில் பெரிதும் பயன்பட்டன என்பதும் இங்கே குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

பாசத்தை வென்றவர் : துறந்தவரல்லர்

அய்யா அவர்கள் திருமணம் செய்து கொண்டு சராசரி இல்லற வாழ்வில் ஈடுபடவில்லை. எனினும், அண்ணன்கள், அண்ணிமார்கள், அவர்களது குழந்தைகள் பேரப்பிள்ளைகள் என்று அனைவரிடமும் மிகுந்த அன்புடையவர்கள். தன் பிறந்த நாளில் இவர்களுக்கெல்லாம் ரூ. 100-200 என்று அன்பளிப்பு வழங்கி குடும்பத்தோர்களுக்கு சேலை வேட்டி தந்து அவர்களை இன்புறச் செய்து அது கண்டு தாமும் இன்புற்ற நாட்கள் பலப்பல.

கல்வி நிலைய வளர்ச்சி பற்றி பலரிடம் கலந்து உரையாடி தன் கருத்தைச் சொல்லி பலர் கருத்தைக் கேட்டு... ஓ! அந்த நாட்களை மறக்கவா முடியும். இதேபோல் உறவும் நட்பும் உடைய திரு.டி.ஏ. இராமலிங்கம் செட்டியார், திரு. டி.எஸ். கந்தசாமி செட்டியார், திரு. டி.எஸ். கல்யாணசுந்தரம் செட்டியார் போன்ற உறவினர்களுடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டு பழகி, அவர்களின் யோசனைகளையும் அடிக்கடி பெறுவார்கள்.

தமிழைப் போற்றிய அய்யா

உணர்வு மிக்க தமிழர் என்ற முறையில், தமிழைப் போற்றிய சால்புடைமை அய்யா அவர்கட்கு உண்டு. கிள்ளுக் கீரையாய் எள்ளி நகைக்கப்பட்ட தமிழாசிரியர்கள் அந்தக் காலத்தில் ஆங்கிலப் பட்டம் பெற்ற ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு இணையாகப் போற்றப்பட்டது இவர் கல்வியமைச்சராக பணியாற்றி

யபோது தான். சட்ட சபையில் நூலகச் சட்டம் இயற்றப்பட்டது அவர் காலத்தில்தான்.

உலகப் பேரிலக்கியமாகிய திருக்குறள், பள்ளிப் பாடநூல் திட்டத்தில் இடம் பெற்றதும் அய்யா அவர்கள் கல்வியமைச்சராய் இருந்த காலத்தில் தான்!

தமிழில் கலைக்களஞ்சியம் எனும் அரிய தொகுப்பு நூலை இந்திய மொழிகளிலேயே முதன்முறையாகத் தமிழில் வெளிவரச் செய்த முழுப் பெருமையும் அய்யா அவர்களுக்கே உரியது.

தமிழில் குழந்தைகள் கலைக்களஞ்சியமும் காந்தியடிகள் நூல்கள் வெளிவரப் பெற்றதும் அதனால் தமிழுக்குப் பெருமை சேர்ந்ததும் அய்யா அவர்களின் அயரா முயற்சியால் தான்!

ஆங்கிலத்தில் தான் உரை நிகழ்த்த வேண்டும் என்ற ஓர் அடிமை நியதி இருந்த அந்தக் காலத்திலேயே தமிழில் அண்ணா மலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தில் பட்டமளிப்பு விழாப் பேருரை நிகழ்த்திய முதல் தமிழரும் அய்யா அவர்களே !

இறுதி நாட்கள்

அவர் மறைவதற்கு சில வாரங்கள் முன்பு என்னிடம் சொன்ன வார்த்தைகள் இன்றும் பசுமையாய் நிழலாடுகின்றன!

நான் நினைத்ததையெல்லாம் முடித்துவிட்டேன்
என் கல்வி நிலையங்களே என் செல்வக்
குழந்தைகள். அவை நன்கு நடைபெறுகின்றன
யாதொரு குறையும் இல்லை

இப்படி, நிறைவாழ்வு வாழ்ந்தவர்கள் அய்யா அவர்களைப் போல எத்தனை பேர்?

ஈன்றபொழுதிற் பெரிதுவக்கும் தன் மகனை
சான்றோன் எனக்கேட்ட தாய்

என்பது பொய்யா மொழி. அதை நினைக்கும்போது எங்கள் குடும்பத்தாருக்கு அனுப்பி வைக்கப்பட்ட 29.11.91 தேதியிட்ட

லோக்சபையின் தீர்மானம் புல்லரிக்கச் செய்கிறது. அன்று பாராளுமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் அவருக்காக சில நிமிடங்கள் எழுந்து நின்று அஞ்சலி செலுத்தினார்கள்.

நம் அய்யா அவர்கள்

டி. கே. சண்முகானந்தம்

"எது நடந்ததோ, அது நன்றாகவே நடந்தது. எது நடக்கிறதோ அது நன்றாகவே நடக்கிறது. எது நடக்க இருக்கிறதோ அதுவும் நன்றாகவே நடக்கும். உன்னுடையது எதை நீ இழந்தாய்? எதற்காக அழுகிறாய்? எதை நீ கொண்டு வந்தாய்? அதை இழப்பதற்கு எதை நீ படைத்திருந்தாய்? அது வீணாவதற்கு எதை நீ எடுத்துக் கொண்டாயோ அது இங்கிருந்தே எடுக்கப் பட்டது. எதை நீ கொடுத்தாயோ, அது இங்கிருந்தே கொடுக் கப்பட்டது. எது இன்று உன்னுடையதோ, அது நாளை மற்றெருவருடையதாகும். மற்றொரு நாள் அது வேறு ஒருவ ருடையதாகும். இந்த மாற்றம் உலக நியதியாகும்."

மேற்கண்ட இந்த கீதா உபதேசத்தின் தத்துவத்தை நன்குணர்ந்து, தனக்கென வாழாமல், தன்னிகரில்லாப் பெருமை யுடன் வாழ்ந்து புகழ் பெற்றவர் நம் அய்யா அவர்கள்.

அன்று நான் சிறுவன். பள்ளிப் படிப்பை முடித்துக் கல்லூரி வாழ்க்கையில் அடியெடுத்து வைத்த நேரம். எனது தந்தை அதாவது நம் அய்யா அவர்களின் தமையனார் திரு. கல்யாண சுந்தரம் செட்டியார் அவர்கள் திடீரெனக் காலமாகி விட்டார்கள். அந்த நேரத்தில் வயதில் சிறியவனாகவும், குடும்பத்தில் தலைமகன் என்ற பொறுப்பிலும் இருந்த எனக்கு வாழ்க்கையே இருண்டு விட்டது போன்ற உணர்வு. இனி என்ன செய்வது? அன்பு நிறைந்த என் தாய், என் ஐந்து சகோதரிகள், சிறிய குழந்தையான என் தம்பி, இவர்கள் அனைவரையும் எப்படி நல்ல முறையில் காப்பது என்று குழம்பித் தவித்தேன். அந்த நிலையில் எனக்கு, இருள் போக்கும் விளக்காய் தந்தைக்குத் தந்தையாய், ஆசானுக்கு ஆசானாய், நண்பனுக்கு நண்பனாய் நின்று, என்னை, எங்கள் குடும்பத்தை நல்வழியில் செல்ல வழிகாட்டிய எங்கள் சித்தப்பாவாகிய நம் அய்யா அவர்களின் பெருமையை, பண்பை, தனித்தன்மையை எங்கள் ஒவ்வொரு வராலும் வார்த்தைகளில் எடுத்துக் கூற முடியாது.

'நான், எனது குடும்பம்' என்ற சிறு வட்டத்திற்குள் இல்லா மல் நம் அய்யா அவர்கள் தனக்கென வாழாமல், கல்விப் பணிக்காக, பெண்கள் கல்வி முன்னேற்றத்திற்காக என்று உரு வாக்கிய இராமகிருஷ்ண வித்யாலயத்தையும், அவினாசிலிங்கம்

மனையியல் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தையும் பார்க்கும் போது எங்கள் குடும்பத்தில் உள்ள ஒவ்வொருவருக்கும் உண்டாகும் பெருமை யும் மகிழ்ச்சியும் அளவிட முடியாது.

என் தந்தையார் இருந்த பொழுது, அய்யா அவர்களுடன் இணைந்து வித்யாலயப் பணியில் மிகுந்த ஆர்வம் காட்டினார் கள். அதே போல், நம் அவினாசிலிங்கம் நிறுவனங்களின் நிர்வாகத்தில் எனக்கும் ஒரு உறுப்பினர் என்ற தகுதியளித்து, செயலாளராகப் பணி புரியும் ஓர் அரிய வாய்ப்பினை ஐயா அவர்கள் எனக்கு ஏற்படுத்தித் தந்தது என்றும் மறக்க முடியாத ஒரு நிகழ்ச்சி.

"குடும்பம் ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகம்" என்ற வாக்கினை மெய்ப்பித்து, "பல்கலைக் கழகம் ஒரு குடும்பம்" என்றும் கூறு மாறு நம் பல்கலைக் கழக நிர்வாகத்தில், அன்பு நிறைந்த அறிவுச் சுடராம் நம் அம்மா, பொறுமையின் திருவுருவாம் திரு குழந்தைவேல் அண்ணா, திருமதி கமலநாதன் மற்றும் ஏனைய ஆசிரியச் சகோதரிகள் அனைவருடனும் ஒருங்கிணைந்து சேவை செய்யும் வாய்ப்புக் கிடைத்ததில் எனக்கு அளவற்ற மகிழ்ச்சி. மேலும் என் இளைய சகோதரன் இராமகிருஷ்ணனின் மனைவி கௌரியும் நம் கல்லூரியில் பணிபுரியும் ஓர் அரிய வாய்ப்பினை அளித்து எங்கள் பணி என்றும் தொடர, ஐயாவின் அன்புப் பராமரிப்பு இனி இல்லையே என்ற ஏக்கம் ஏற்படா வண்ணம், இன்றும் நம் அம்மா, இராஜம்மாள் தேவதாஸ் அவர்கள் எங்கள் குடும்பத்தில் ஒருவராய் இணைந்து வழிகாட் டுவது மிகுந்த மகிழ்ச்சியைத் தருகின்றது.

"கல்விப் பணியே தெய்வப் பணி" என வாழ்ந்த நம் அய்யா அவர்கள் விரும்பியபடி என் மகன், மேற்படிப்பிற்காக வெளிநாடு சென்றுள்ளான். அவன் நன்முறையில் படித்து முடித்து, நம் தேசத்திற்குத் திரும்பி, சேவைபுரிந்து, அவர் கனவை நனவாக்க வேண்டும் என்பது எங்கள் அனைவரது விருப்பமாகும்.

நம் அய்யா அவர்கள் உடல் தான் இன்று நம்மிடையே இல்லை. ஆனால், அவர்கள் கூறிய அன்பு நிறைந்த, ஆழம் பொருந்திய, நல்ல கருத்துக்கள், என்றென்றும் நம் ஒவ்வொருவர் உள்ளங்களிலும் ஒளி வீசும் வைரமாய், மறக்க முடியாத பசுமை யான நினைவுகளாய், இனிக்கும் நினைவுகளாய், நம்மை என்றென்றும் நல்வழி நடத்தும் அரும் கருவிகளாய் இருக்கும். அவரது ஆசீர்வாதம் என்றென்றும் நம்மைக் காக்கும்.

பாசம் மிகுந்த தந்தை

டி. எஸ். பி. தனலக்ஷ்மி அம்மாள்

"நம் ஒவ்வொருவருடைய ஆழ்மனதிலும், நாம் ஏதாவது நல்லது செய்ய வேண்டும். அதுவும் மக்களால் போற்றப்பட வேண்டும். யாரும் எளிதில் செய்ய முடியாத ஒன்றை மற்றவர்கள் நம்மைப் பாராட்டும் வகையிலே, - செய்ய வேண்டும்." என்ற தணியாத ஆசை இருந்து கொண்டே இருக்கும். இயற்கையாக எல்லாருக்கும் இருக்கக்கூடிய இந்த நல்ல எண்ணங்கள் அடங்கிய ஆசையை, இவ்வுலகில் ஒரு சிலரால் தான் சாதனையாக மாற்ற முடியும். அந்த நல்ல நோக்கத்தை, மனதில் இருத்தி, அதை வளர்க்கும் பாங்கும், "நாம் எடுத்திருக்கும் இந்த பிறவியில் நமது பங்கு என்ற தொலைநோக்கு பார்வையோடும் ஒருவன் வளர ஆரம்பித்து விட்டால் பிரம்மிக்கத்தக்க சாதனையைச் செய்து விடலாம்" - என்ற இந்த பழம்பெருங் கருத்துக்கு, எடுத்துக்காட்டாக விளங்கியவர் நமது அய்யா அவர்கள். சிறு வயது முதலே செயல்படுமுன் நன்கு யோசித்து, பின்பு திட்ட வடிவம் கொடுத்து, நம்பிக்கையோடு செயல்பட்டவர் அய்யா. அவருடைய உள்ளமனதிலே ஆரம்பத்தில் இருந்து, கல்வித்தரம் உயரவேண்டும். அத்தகைய கல்விப் பணியிலே தனக்கென அழியாத சிறப்பை ஏற்படுத்தி, அதன் நல்விளைவுகள் மக்களைச் சென்று அடைய வேண்டும் என்ற அவரது எண்ணங்கள் சாதனைகள், நமக்கெல்லாம் பெரிய பாடமாக அமைந்துள்ளன.

அத்தகைய சிறப்புப் பெற்ற எங்களது சிறிய தந்தையார் அவர்களைப் பற்றி, ஏதாவது எழுதுவதற்கு எனக்கும் ஒரு சந்தர்ப்பம் கிடைத்துள்ளது மிக்க மகிழ்ச்சியான விஷயம்.

ஆங்கிலத்திலே சொல்வார்கள், "We believe that faith in God gives meaning and purpose to human life". *அதாவது "இறைவன் மீதுள்ள நம்பிக்கையே, வாழ்க்கையில் நமக்குள்ள பொருளையும் நோக்கத்தையும் உணர்த்தும்". நமது அய்யா அவர்கள் இறைவன் மீதும், இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சர் மீதும், அன்னை சாரதா தேவி மீதும் கொண்டிருந்த நம்பிக்கையே அவரின் வளர்ச்சிக்கு உதவியது என்று அடிக்கடி சொல்வார்கள்.*

1942-ம் ஆண்டு நடைபெற்ற "வெள்ளையனே வெளியேறு" (Quit India) என்கிற போராட்டத்தில், தன்னை முழுமையாக ஈடுபடுத்தி சிறை சென்றார்கள். வசதியான குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்த என் சிறிய தகப்பனார் படும் கஷ்டங்களைப் பார்த்து (அவர் சகோதரர்கள்) என் அப்பா, அம்மா,பெரியப்பா, பெரியம்மா, அத்தை, மாமா மற்றும் உறவினர்களும், கண்ணீர் விட்டுக் கலங்கினார்கள். அப்படியாக சுமார் மூன்று ஆண்டுகள் சிறை வாசம் செய்தார்கள். கல்யாணம் செய்து கொண்டு, சந்தோஷ மாக குழந்தை, மனைவி என்று வாழ வற்புறுத்தினார்கள், மன்றாடினார்கள். ஆனால் என் சித்தப்பா இவை ஒன்றுக்கும் மசியாமல் "தேச சேவை" ஒன்றே பிரதானமாகக் கொண்டு தியாக வாழ்வு வாழ்ந்தார்கள்.

நமது அய்யா அவர்கள், போத்தனூரில் வித்தியாலயம் அமைத்த காலத்தில் 10, 20 மாணவர்கள் 2, 3 ஆசிரியர்கள் தான் இருந்தனர். மற்றபடி விடுதிக் காப்பாளர், காவலாளி உட்பட எல்லா வேலைகளையும் மாணவர்களும் ஆசிரியர்களு மாக அவர்களே செய்து வந்தார்கள். சமையல் வேலை உட்பட சுற்றுப்புறமும் சுத்தமாக வைத்துக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். இந்த வேலைகளையெல்லாம் மாணவர்களே செய்து வந்தார்கள். பல சமயங்களில் அய்யாவும் சேர்ந்து செய்வார்கள். கிராமங்களுக்குச் சென்று கிராமவாசிகளுடன் இனிமையாகப் பேசி, அன்புடன் பழகி, எப்படி வீட்டையும், தங்களையும் குழந்தைகளையும் சுத்தமாக வைத்துக் கொள்ள வேண்டுமென்று சொல்லித் தந்தார் கள். அவர்களுடன் சேர்ந்து சேரிகளையும் சுத்தம் செய்வார்கள். கழிவு நீரை அப்புறப்படுத்தி, கொசுக்கள் வராமலிருக்கவும் அடிக்கடி மருந்துகள் தெளித்து நோய் வராமல் இருக்க அதைத் தடுக்க சொல்லித் தருவார்கள். தன்னலமற்ற இவரது சேவையை யும் அன்புடன் பழகும் இவரது பண்பையும் அறிந்து, கிராம வாசிகள் இவரிடம் நெருங்கிப் பழகி, தங்கள் கஷ்டங்களையெல்லாம் சொல்வார்கள். அவர்களது அறியா மையையும், பயத்தையும் போக்கி அவர்களுக்கு வேண்டிய உதவிகளைச் செய்வார்கள். ஆகவே, எப்போதும் வித்தியாலயத் திற்கு கிராமவாசிகள் தங்கள் சொந்த வீட்டிற்கு வந்து போவது போல் வந்து அய்யாவைச் சந்தித்துப் பேசி, ஆறுதல்

பெறுவார்கள். அப்போது, இராமகிருஷ்ண பரமஹம்சரைப் பற்றியும் விவேகானந்தரைப் பற்றியும் சொல்லி அக்கிராமவாசி களுக்கு தைரியத்தையும், பக்தியையும் ஏற்படுத்தி பண்போடு வாழவும் கற்றுத் தருவார்கள். இன்றும், வருடந்தோறும் குருமகராஜ் பூஜைக்கு சுற்றுப்புற கிராமவாசிகள் நிறையப் பேர் வந்து, குருதேவர் அருளைப் பெற்றுச் செல்கிறார்கள்.

ஒரு சமயம், அய்யா அவர்கள் தானே கார் ஓட்டக் கற்றுக் கொள்ள நினைத்து, டிரைவர் பக்கத்தில் உட்கார்ந்து, கார் ஓட்டக் கற்று கொண்டார். அப்போது எனக்கு நான்கு அல்லது ஐந்து வயதிருக்கும். அப்போது எங்கள் சின்னய்யா அவர்கள் எங்கள் வீட்டுக்கு வந்திருந்தார்கள். பள்ளி விடுமுறை யானதால் நான் வீட்டில் தனியாகயிருந்ததால் என் தாயார் சின்னய்யாவுடன் வித்தியாலயத்திற்குக் செல்ல அனுமதியளித் தார்கள். நான், அய்யா, டிரைவர் மூன்று பேரும் காரில் போத்தனூர் புறப்பட்டோம். அய்யா அவர்கள் கார் ஓட்டி னார்கள். கார் தவறுதலாக ஓட்டி, ஓர் மரத்தின் மேல் மோத விருந்தது. அப்போது டிரைவர் அய்யாவின் கால் மேல் காலை வைத்து (க்ளச் மேல்) நன்றாக அழுத்தி, ஸ்டியரிங்கைச் சுழற்றி, ஆபத்து இல்லாமல், மரத்தில் மோதாமல் தப்பிக்க வைத்தார். இருப்பினும் அய்யா கால் வலி தாங்காமல் துடித்தார்கள். கால் அக்கணமே வீங்கிச் சிவந்துவிட்டது. பயத்தால் செய்வதறியாது படபடத்து நின்றார் டிரைவர். இதற்குள் என் தலைபட்டு பின்பக்க கண்ணாடி உடைந்து மண்டையில் அடிபட்டு ரத்தம் வழிந்தது. இத்தனையும் ஒரு சில நிமிஷங்களுக்குள் நடந்து முடிந்தது. அய்யா அவர்கள் மிகவும் கோபக்காரர். இனி என்ன நடக்குமோ என்று பயந்த டிரைவர் அய்யாவின் கால்களில் விழுந்து, அழுது, பதறி, மன்னிப்புக் கேட்டார். உடனே அய்யா அவர்கள் சுதாரித்துக் கொண்டு எழுந்து, அவனை ஆறத்தழுவி, பயப்படாதே. நீ ஒரு குற்றமும் செய்யவில்லையே. உன் உத வியால் இன்று மூன்று உயிர்கள் காப்பாற்றப்பட்டது. நானல்லவா உனக்கு நன்றி சொல்ல வேண்டும் என்று அன்புடன் சொன்னார் கள். சீக்கிரம் கோபம் அடைந்தாலும், மறுபடியும் அவர்களை மன்னித்து, அன்புடன் அணைத்துக் கொள்ளக்கூடிய பண்பு பெற்றவர், அய்யா.

நமது அய்யா அவர்கள் பெருந்தலைவர் காமராஜ் அவர்களைப் போல் பிரம்மச்சாரியாகவே வாழ்ந்து தான் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட பணிகளுக்கு முற்றிலும் அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்டார்கள். இத்தகைய துறவியார், தேசப்பிதா, குடும்பத்திலும் பற்று வைத்து, எங்களையெல்லாம் ஆதரித்து பல சமயங்களில் பலவிதங்களில் உதவியுள்ளார்கள்.

ஒரு சமயம், தந்தையை இழந்த எனக்கு என் 60வது ஆண்டு கொண்டாடிய பொழுது, அய்யா, என் தாயாரிடம், "அண்ணன் இல்லையே? அவளுக்குத் தந்தை ஸ்தானத்திலிருந்து நான் என்ன செய்ய வேண்டும்?" என அன்போடு வினவினார்கள். அதற்குத் தாயார், "தந்தையாகிய தங்கள் அன்பும் ஆதரவும் தான் வேண்டும். வேறு என்ன வேண்டும்?" என்று சொன்னார்கள். அந்த வேண்டுகோளை ஏற்றுக் கொண்டு, கணவனை இழந்த எனக்கு, அவர் ஆயுள் பரியந்தமும் பெரும் உதவியாயிருந்து, ஆறுதலாகவும், அன்புடனும், பலவழிகளில் உதவி புரிந்து, என்னையும் மனிதப்பிறவியாக வாழக் கற்றுத் தந்த தந்தையாவார்.

A Searching look within ourselves reveals the presence of an Inner force. அந்த சக்திக்கு முன்பு, நான், எனது என்ற எந்தத் தன்மைகளும் நிற்காது. இந்த சக்தி ஒவ்வொருவரிடமும் உருவானால் அதன் அளவு எல்லையற்றது. அதன் பயன் மகத்தானது. நமக்கு உண்மையிலேயே நம் பணியைச் செய்யக்கூடிய பார்வை கிடைக்கும்.

This vision of PEACE within us helps to create a HAPPY WORLD without fear and want. Our mission is to translate that vision into reality through positive action of service. Our affectionate Ayya had that vision and a powerful prophetic glance to look beyond himself.

I am proud and grateful to God that Ayya was my affectionate father.

CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM
STAFF AND STUDENTS

Dr. T.S. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS ADMINISTRATIVE ACUMEN

K. Kulandaivel

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, the Founder of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Educational Complex at Perianaickenpalayam, the Founder-Chancellor of the Avinashilingam Deemed University, the Founder President of the Avinashilingam Educational Trust Institutions at Coimbatore and The Founder President of the Tamil Academy, Madras was a unique administrator of educational institutions and public offices. He administered all the offices he held with great distinction and managed them with utmost efficiency. He was considered by all as an able administrator, strict disciplinarian and scrupulously clean in all matters connected with the institutions he managed.

Administrative ability was a part of his very nature. His father was doing banking, he managed it ably and developed it. His uncle Sri T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar was a leading lawyer, an able and leading cooperator and was the President of the Coimbatore Central Cooperative Bank and the Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Perundurai for many years. He managed and developed them very well. He established the Coimbatore Murugan Mills and was its Managing Partner.

Dr. Avinashilingam's brothers also were connected with management of banking, industry and textile mills. So administration of institutions was in his blood and he developed this capacity very well and earned the name as a great and able administrator. He nursed all the institutions he founded with great care and developed them into mighty institutions.

As a young man Dr. Avinashilingam joined the Indian National Congress and soon became the President of the Coimbatore Town Congress Committee and later the President of the Coimbatore District Congress Committee during the entire freedom struggle period. He visited almost all the villages in Coimbatore district, established close relationship with the leading people and organised Congress work very efficiently and

methodically. Thousands and thousands of people used to speak about the glorious role the Congress played in the freedom struggle and later in the national development under his able presidentship. He was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly and later to the Madras Legislative Assembly and still later to the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. He won all the elections he contested and adorned the offices with great distinction.

He became the first Education Minister of the then Madras Presidency, in independent India and performed his duties with ability and courage and brought many lasting changes in education within a short period of time. Giving importance to Tamil and Thirukkural in the school curriculum, raising the status of Tamil teachers to the level of other teachers, introduction of social studies as a curricular subject, ushering in Library movement by enacting suitable legislation, founding Tamil Academy and publishing the Tamil Encyclopaedia and later Children's Encyclopaedia are standing testimony for his abilities.

He founded Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya in his twenty seventh year with one boy and Rs.5.75 as its initial capital. There was no big capital or man power behind his venture. He had to go round and collect donations throughout the year and face many difficulties and criticisms. But he braved them all with courage and administered the institution with a clear vision and efficient management techniques which made it grow steadily into a mighty educational complex with more than a dozen institutions in a spacious 300 acre campus. His financial management was such that he made each institution self sufficient regarding its maintenance and developmental expenses.

He endowed his personal properties and created the Avinashilingam Educational Trust which runs a variety of institutions for women in Coimbatore city. Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College was the biggest of all these institutions which has earned great reputation in India and outside. It was declared as a Deemed University in 1988 by the Government of India on the recommendations of the University Grants Commission and the Government of Tamil Nadu. This is an unparalleled achievement. He had so managed these institutions

that today they are safely and securely placed and will not have any difficulty for funds.

Dr. Avinashilingam lived a very successful life. Whatever work he undertook he did it very well and made it a success. All this is because of his administrative ability and the efficient management techniques which should be emulated by all those who want to succeed in their ventures. The following are some of the factors that led to his success :

1. He gave undivided attention and time to his activities. He thought constantly about them and planned meticulously all details. He discussed about them with the concerned people again and again until he was satisfied with the details. He used to visit the the building sites several times and was thorough with all their details. His mastery over the details were such that he remembered the dimensions of any building or any room in the buildings without referring to the plans.

2. He did not have any big industry or business to support his activities. Nor did he earn any money to support them. Income from his ancestral property, the donation collected from the public, the fees and the Government grants were the main sources of income. He managed the funds very economically and put them to the best possible use. He used to say, "We must stretch every rupee as much as possible". He cared more for utility in the buildings than for adornment. Every inch of space was put to maximum use and every bit of land was used to the best possible extent.

3. He was very careful with his time. Every morning he used to sit in solitude under a banyan tree in the open play ground and read spiritual literature and also plan about the day's programme. He would jot down his plan in a note book and do his work accordingly. Before calling any of his associates for discussions he would write down in detail all the points to be discussed and tick them one by one while discussing. "I never call any one to me without planning about what I want to discuss with them". He used to say, "Wasting your time is wasting my time". When he was a Member of Parliament, during the months when the

Parliament was in session, he used to be in his institutions for only a week in a month. He planned in detail the activities of the week in advance, the staff with whom he wanted to discuss, the time and the matter to be discussed and send copies of his programme to all the concerned people before his arrival. So people were ready with all details and had useful discussions without any wastage of time.

4. He took special care in selecting his co-workers and in testing whether they are fit for the job. Once he was sure that a person is good and trust worthy, he believed the person and gave him full responsibility for running the institution. He laid down policies and left the details for his colleagues to be worked out and never interfered in the details. He trained his colleagues carefully by having discussions, by organising workshops and seminars. He encouraged them to attend conferences and meetings and summer institutes at various places and update their knowledge. He saw to it that his colleagues were acquainted with latest developments by sending as many as possible to advanced countries for higher education and training.

5. He had understood the art of administration very well and knew what details he should look into and what details should be left to his colleagues. Though he was the head of big educational complexes, he decentralised his work in such a way that he kept himself free for thinking, reading latest books, writing, planning, discussing and guiding his co-workers. He never took up the secretaryship or correspondentship of the institutions which demanded a lot of routine work. He gave those responsibilites to his co-workers and guided them to perform their duties efficiently. He was a master in decentralised administration and centralised supervision. He kept himself informed of all the developments in the institutions without involving directly in their working. He used to meet the heads of the institutions every week and get information about all important correspondence and problems. He was in touch with the students through meetings

and staff and understood their problems and tried to solve them.

6. He had the vision and courage to take quick and just decisions when he faced problems. He was never in the habit of postponing decisions. He was also impartial and firm in his decisions and never changed them to satisfy the favourites or opposition. So the staff and students had always felt that once the matter is taken to Revered Ayya Avargal, they would get justice.

7. He planned everything meticulously in advance, discussed the plan with all concerned people and executed the plan efficiently. The Sri Ramakrishna's Birth Day celebrations held every year at Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya for which about 20,000 people gather, is a standing example of his planning and administration. Months ahead all the minute details are planned and all the two thousand five hundred students are involved in organising the function. Everything goes on with clock like precision from 5.00 A.M. to 10.00 P.M. This has been going on for the past 50 years smoothly without any problem.

8. He was very particular that when an activity is organised, its account and reports must be completed immediately. He never accepted any delay or reasons for the delay. "I am interested in getting the things done and not in reasons for not doing them", he used to say. He saw to it that all the annual reports and accounts of the institutions were completed, audited and published in time. He wanted to keep everything open to the public and never hide anything from the public. He was of the view that public institutions should not hide anything and should publish all the reports and accounts and make them available to all those interested and connected with the institution.

9. He was fearless and courageous in administering the institution. He never allowed anybody, official or non official, however powerful they were, to interfere in his administration. Once when a student was sent out for burning the national flag, the Chief Minister of the State sent word that the student my be admitted back. Ayya Avargal asked

the Chief Minister not to interfere in the matter and there the matter stopped. To put in Tagore's words he never bent before the insolent might and always stood firm like a rock.

All these made revered Ayya Avargal an able and efficient administrator. Let us follow his foot steps and prove our ability and efficiency in whatever work we are involved. That is the only way to make this country great and progress towards prosperity and peace.

The great teachers, social workers and saints of India have emphasised the need for selfless service, faith in god and in oneself, and hard work. Unless these principles are cultivated by the youth, progress cannot be achieved.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

INSTITUTE FOR HOME SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WOMEN (DEEMED UNIVERSITY) LIBRARY

A DOYEN OF EDUCATION, POLITICS AND SOCIAL SERVICE

S. Janakarathnam

I came under the influence of Sri T.S. Avinashilingam, **Ayya** to all of us, at a tender age of 10 years, when I joined Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya in 1940 and till his death he was an inspiration to me in every activity I undertook.

The discipline and sense of dignity of labour which he inculcated in us, still moulds my life. The extraordinary traits which struck me about this doyen among educationists, politicians and social welfare activists, are his intense affection for the people whom he came across in his life, his unbounded enthusiasm to do newer and better services in all the fields he dealt with and his courage in undertaking his tasks, inspite of an almost life-long health problem (asthma).

Ayya's faith in the divine guidance of Sri Gurumaharaj, was unbelievable and surely led to the success of his endeavours. In fund raising for the various institutions he built up, we see his extraordinary trait of giving importance to even the smallest donor.

Ayya's exemplary drive to motivate others to do service, has to be seen to be believed. His bubbling enthusiasm to achieve his goals, for the cause of the welfare of the people and the nation is an abject example for all of us to follow. His indomitable will-power prolonged his life through many crises in health, which we, ordinary people, should try to emulate.

It is in fitness of things that our beloved Ayya should have lived to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya which he founded. I had the good fortune to watch the phenomenal growth and development of Vidyalaya from a mere High School with about 100 students to the present sprawling campus and institutions.

In politics, Ayya's approach of goodwill to all and malice towards none earned him the respect and support of persons in

opposition parties, which I feel is a model to be followed by all. His affection for his colleagues, who suffered along with him in the freedom movement knew no bounds.

From Ayya's endeavour to advance women's education in our country, blossomed forth the unique Avinashilingam Deemed University, an unchallenged institution in the world of Home Science. His munificent donation of his entire property for the trust to run this institution is an example of his unparalleled generosity.

In administering the vast institutions, Ayya was an adept in choosing people to lead the units started by him, outstanding examples being Dr. Rajammal Devadas, Swami Somananda and Dr.K. Kulandaivel, who carried out their tasks and responsibilities admirably. His method of delegation of duties and encouragement to the persons whom he entrusted in managing the institutions, brought the best out of them.

Ayya's demise raises forth the question, "When will another star like him flash past this earth to emulate his feats in the varied fields of education, politics and social service ?"

We salute this national leader and all concerned should endeavour to continue to keep burning the torches which he lit to brighten the path of our people.

AYYA'S VISIONARY APPROACH TO EDUCATION TECHNOLOLGY

S. Purushothaman

I am one among those who had the rare privilege of getting associated in various capacities with a highly reputed educational institution for a fairly long period of my life. It is my good fortune that I was a student of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya High School and College of Education and later was a member of the faculty there itself, over a period of two and a half decades under the direct guidance of its Founder-Director, Padma Bhushan Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, whom we have always called with respect and affection as revered Ayya. I was influenced and shaped by Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam Ayya through his constant inspiration, and guidance, knew him intimately when I was a student and also when I was a lecturer. At every stage of my life he had impressed me and inspired me, he lived and continues to live as an Avathara Purusha in the minds of millions of young and old who came to know him either from a distance or from close quarters.

Audio-visual Centre in the Vidyalaya

Revered Ayya was not only known as a great builder of institutions but also as a pioneer in the introduction of innovative educational practices for the improvement of the quality of education. His innovative ideas were always aimed at improving the quality of education.

The quality of any course has to be judged by the nature of practices followed in the institutions. The practices followed in any educational institution largely depend on the institutional goals laid down by the builder or founder of the institution. Ultimately, it is the vision and philosophy of life of the Founder of any institution that shapes the institution to become an ordinary or an unique one. In terms of the institutional goals and practices, all the educational institutions founded by Ayya are unique and innovative. When the Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya College of Education was started by him as early as 1950, he brought into existence an audio-visual Centre as part of the

college. Teacher training should have a direct bearing on the application of audio-visual aids without which learning cannot be made realistic and meaningful, was his firm conviction.

Progress of Saradalaya

While the Vidyalaya Institutional Complex was growing under his direct guidance, a parallel development was taking place in the Sri Avinashilingam Institutional Complex for Women (Saradalaya) at Coimbatore founded by revered Ayya under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who has given right direction to all the efforts taken by him. Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas, the present Vice Chancellor of Avinashilingam Deemed University, a personality by herself, is a scientist of international repute who has an eye for perfection in any work that goes on under her dynamic leadership.

The Progressive Development

To strengthen the Audio-visual Centre of Vidyalaya, Ayya chose the right person as the Head of the College of Education,sent him in 1955 to the Ohio State University for specialised training in Audio-visual Education, under the guidance of the most well known Professor of Audio Visual Education, Dr. Edgar Dale. The A.V. Centre turned into an effective centre for continuous production of different AV aids like film strips, films, slides and other working models. Every year, as part of the B.Ed. practicals, a number of working models, filmstrips, OHP transparencies, CAI softwares, ETV programmes etc., are produced in different subjects involving the services of the professors and students in their respective disciplines. Ayya used to examine the quality of all the aids produced and offer suggestions and guidelines for further improvement in their standards. He used to suggest that every aid should be subjected to field testing for modification. It is this kind of direct involvement and encouragement that gave a lot of inspiration to all the staff and students to develop the A.V. Centre further.

Film projectors, Epidiascope, 16mm cameras, linguaphone records and record players, 8 mm loop projectors with film loops etc., were used regularly in the Vidyalaya College

of Education for the teachers of the Tamil Nadu State. Thus Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam laid the foundation for the A. V. education as early as 1950 and through persistent effort upgraded it into a centre for educational technology. Later this centre was developed, by installing computer for educational application. A series of activities for the teacher trainees towards computer application in education were planned and carried out. Many inservice programmes were organised on educational computing. In 1980 video camera, VCR and TV were introduced into teacher education. I was trained in the United Kingdom on TV techniques and educational applications and the responsibility for starting the Video Assisted Instruction was entrusted to me.

Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam encouraged me to prepare Educational Television programmes. He watched each one of the ETV programmes prepared by me from the point of view of the learners and suggested good modification for incorporation. The keen eye he had for quality and perfection in every academic production followed by constructive criticism everytime was something to be experienced to be believed. I had produced some biology Educational Television (ETV) programmes for +2 level. After viewing them, he questioned me about whether it will contribute for the teachers training situation. My eyes were thus opened by Ayya to the need for good ETV programme for teacher trainees.

This introduced me to a hitherto unknown concept called interactive video. Though it was not easy to introduce the concept of interactive video into teacher training, for want of the advanced and costly equipment, his suggestion made me apply my mind to an easier and cheaper alternative for the Indian classrooms. I started converting ETV programmes into interactive ETV programmes with the human interface. Later I experimented with this novel idea in different parts of the country, for different levels of target groups. Right from the university professors upto secondary school teachers, the concept of interactive video with human interface appealed uniformly. All those professors and teachers who were introduced to this concept, started attempting to convert any ordinary piece of ETV material into an interactive one through their appropriate planning and approach. Thus, Ayya made every member of the faculty working in his institutions

to think and achieve, use some novel and better ideas or techniques for teaching and learning. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam used to say that there is no end for perfection. Whenever others had appreciated my academic contribution, may be an ETV programme or a research report, he had always suggested improvements in everything that I did. There were many occasions when I felt quite frustrated because Ayya in my opinion, did not express enough appreciation for my efforts. But it was only after fairly long years of experience, I developed the maturity to understand the truth that I could grow everytime I met Ayya because he helped me to grow. If he had just stopped with mere appreciation, I am sure, I would not have attempted at all to grow further. Ayya always cautioned us the faculty against the danger of **complacency** setting in. Now, like many others, I have started fully realising the wisdom of Ayya's words that there is no end for perfection and sky is the limit.

Educational Technology and Extension Service Department

Ayya was instrumental for all the inservice programmes organised by the Extension Services Department of the College of Education. He used to be present at the valedictory sessions of all the inservice programmes when the participating teachers gave their views about the utility of those inservice courses. Whenever the feedback from the participating teachers was good, Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam appreciated his staff for the success of the course. If the talk was in the negative, he persuaded them to improve so that they get a good name in the next inservice programme. As a member of the team, I could realise like others, how Ayya was deeply involved and was always keen on maintaining standards in academics. It is because of his direct and dedicated involvement that all staff developed the habit of keeping abreast by equipping themselves with the latest knowledge and techniques. Thus, educational technology was put into practice to the best of their ability by all the staff under his inspiration.

Educational Technology for Rural Development

Rural development was one of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam's most favourable ideology. The villages around his educational institutions were adopted by institutions for implementing

various development schemes such as literacy, sanitation, school facilities, agricultural and technological practices. Ayya stressed that 16 mm film strips and video programmes should be used in extension work. This approach of Ayya gave opportunity to the members of the faculty and to me to have specific roles in planning and in the preparation of various media materials for application in the field. It is my pleasant duty to gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam for shaping me from the beginning. Because of his encouragement, I am presently employed as the Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Technology in the Bharathidasan University. I recall with respect and gratitude all encouraging words and guidance I had received from him.

Social and national integration is crucial to the creation of a strong and united nation and education alone can achieve it.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AYYA - THE CHAMPION OF THE DISABLED

M. N. G. Mani

It was my rare privilege to have worked with Ayya for more than a decade. Ayya to me is a phenomenon. He is not an individual but an institution by himself. His multifaceted personality is continuously inspiring many persons today. Ayya is no more with us physically. His demise has created a big vacuum in our lives. His monumental achievement in a few years shows that he was a rare soul on earth. But he is still living with us through his inspiring words and blessings. Swami Vivekananda said that books and lectures cannot inspire but a living soul can inspire another living soul. Ayya was a living embodiment in the Vidyalaya and a hero for many persons. Without his inspiration and guidance I would not have reached a respectable position in the society.

Ayya never lived for himself. He always lived for others. I know Ayya as a champion of the downtrodden of the society. His concern for disabled persons was so great that the Vidyalaya is recognised as one of the outstanding institutions in the country in serving the disabled, particularly the visually disabled persons.

The development of special education and Ayya's concern for the disabled are inseparable. The chronological development of services for the blind at the Vidyalaya symbolises Ayya's growing concern for the disabled brethren.

It was on the Vijayadasami day in 1979, when I met Ayya in his chamber to give my application for the post of Resource Teacher of the Blind in Vidyalaya, those powerful words of Ayya made me introspect my potentialities.

Ayya said :

> "Mani, you are young, you have a full life ahead of you. You are venturing on a new work called "Integrated Education For The Blind", which is new to Vidyalaya. Serving blind persons requires dedication, devotion and determination. I have

faith that young people like you can do wonders. If you give your heart and soul to the work, the service will grow. Persons with meticulous efforts and insights can always conquer the world".

Those powerful words of Ayya started lingering in my mind and I felt I was growing from strength to strength. The integrated education programme for visually disabled children was then implemented in the Vidyalaya High School in June 1980. I had several doubts in working with blind children because I was new to the profession but Ayya was always there to give me the moral support I needed. The special education programme at the Vidyalaya was started with the financial support of the Christoffel Blindenmission, a committed service organisation of West Germany and with the professional assistance of the International Council for Education of the Visually Handicapped (ICEVH). Besides Ayya, Dr. Stanley E. Bourgeault, Consultant of the ICEVH and Sri P. Gnanadurai Micheal, South Asia Representative of the Christoffel Blindenmission took immense interest in the growth of services for the blind in the Vidyalaya. During our planning meetings, we could only admire Ayya for his thought provoking ideas. The following incidents describe Ayya's concern for the disabled in different dimensions.

Evolving is better than Transplantation :

The Integrated Education concept was relatively new in India in the 80s. Professionals were trying to follow the success models of the West and often found them not matching to Indian conditions. Ayya's advice was that the special education programme should be indigenous. He was of the opinion that we should explore every possibility of generating resources, expertise and manpower locally before going for external sources. He said, "Any Western idea can't be transplanted in Indian conditions. It should evolve under indigenous circumstances". When referring to the standard of special education, he would say that we should give Indian education with American standard and not try to transplant American education in India. As a result, the integrated education programme for the visually disabled started at the Vidyalaya was conceptualised as an Indian model and its

value is evident from the fact that the Vidyalaya model has many replicas today in various parts of the country. The integrated education started with one teacher has now grown into 81 programmes serving about 1000 visually disabled children in Tamil Nadu alone. Ayya's message of evolving the programme still remains as the major strategy of our programme development.

Development of Multipurpose Professionals :

The first Masters' level course in the area of education for the visually disabled was started at the Vidyalaya College of Education in 1982. Most of us were of the opinion that we could offer a special course exclusively covering the areas of disability but Ayya disagreed with that approach. He said anything too special in education may not sustain the enthusiasm for too long. He further added that the course should be designed in such a way that the trained teachers are eligible for more than one job. Following Ayya's advice we designed our M.Ed., and B.Ed., courses in such a way that the trained teachers could become regular classroom teachers as well as special teachers for disabled children. We understood the message of Ayya only in the later half of the 80s when the teachers trained from the college found themselves competitive in the job market and had different options. This made more qualified teachers to prefer special education and as a result, the quality of services to children improved. Ayya also envisioned that specialisation can be more at the Masters' level but the bachelors' level education should focus on multipurpose skills in teachers. Thus Ayya became a great visionary and missionary of special education.

Quality and Equality of Services :

In the words of Ayya, disabled persons have every right to be equal with their normal counterparts. He always questioned why one should discriminate on the basis of disability ? Parents do not discriminate between one child who is fair and the other who is not fair in complexion. This should be true with disability too. Parents must be educated that disability is a physiological problem and not a sin or curse. In his Presidential Address of the UNESCO's Regional Planning Seminar on Special Education, held at the Vidyalaya in 1985, he said :

"Through a long span of time, mankind has been subjected to a myth that the disabled are useless, incapable of doing anything on their own, a species to be pitied on and looked after so long as they are alive. The myth has now been broken. Every country and every community is now realising that the blind, the hearing impaired or the crippled can stand on their own if society cares to give them a chance. Helen Keller with her great disabilities became a world figure inspiring thousands of people; many blind people like Surdas were poets and musicians who continue to inspire thousands. This only shows that they have a potentiality. As Swami Vivekananda said, each soul is potentially divine and the disabled are no exceptions. It is a good augury that the world - both the developing and developed countries - is increasingly aware of their duty for the disabled."

"Education for all" was emphasised by him in several discussions and seminars on special education. He wanted the concept of equality to be practised in spirit too. His vision is exemplified in the regular activities of visually disabled children in the Vidyalaya High School. They take part in campus cleaning, march past, washing the clothes, classroom leadership, etc. He envisioned that integrated education is the only way to realise the much cherished goal of universalisation of primary education.

Ayya also made his stand clear by stating that commitment to equality should not interfere with the objective of quality. He insisted that the curriculum meant for visually disabled children should not be diluted just for the reason that they are visually disabled. He expected visually disabled children to compete with sighted children and the visually disabled children who studied in the Vidyalaya High School made Ayya happy by securing top ranks in their classes. In short, Ayya emphasised both quality and equality in serving disabled children.

Special Education and Overall Development :

Ayya was not satisfied with the formal education for disabled children. He often questioned the credibility of education if it is not aimed at overall development of the individual. Vocationalisation, development of moral values, man making education, etc., were examples of Ayya's holistic approach to special education. His insights resulted in the

launching of rural based rehabilitation services for visually disabled adults in 1985. Rural rehabilitation service remains to be a boon in the total development of visually disabled adults. One such rehabilitated adult blind person, by name R. Nanjan won the State award for best self employee in 1987.

Ayya's joy knew no bounds whenever we reported about the achievements of blind individuals. Those who met Ayya expressed their gratitude for the services rendered by the Vidyalaya. Ayya never took personal credit for the achievement and always admitted it was God's work. Ayya felt that serving disabled persons is a profession which should give one a lot of professional fulfilment. He says that hard work and commitment are important requirements to be a worker with disabled children. His constant motivation gave us the tonic we needed for sustained professional interest.

Ayya's International Concern :

Ayya was very particular that expertise developed in the Vidyalaya should not only help India but other developing countries too which share similar characteristics. This objective was realised during 1985 when the UNESCO Regional office at Bangkok decided to hold its regional planning seminar and workshop on Special Education at the Vidyalaya. It was a prestigious event for the Vidyalaya and Ayya guided us very well in hosting that 15 day Seminar and Workshop. Delegates from Asian Countries took part in the deliberations. Mr.Ratnanayake, Educational Advisor to UNESCO characterised Ayya as a symbol of dedication in the services for the disabled. Dr. (Mrs) Rajammal P. Devadas, the then Director of Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College applauded Ayya for his pioneering work in special education in India. The delegates of the Seminar described Ayya as the leader of disabled persons. In continuation of the successful conduct of the regional seminar and workshop, UNESCO requested the Vidyalaya to prepare a Source book for teachers of visually disabled children. Ayya's encouragement and guidance helped me to develop the first handbook of its kind in Asia prepared by me and submitted to UNESCO on August 15, 1986. Thus the Vidyalaya had the

privilege of sharing the benefit and experience of services in special education with the third world countries too.

Disabled Persons as Role Models :

Ayya whenever he talked to students, always said that only people with great determination and gigantic will could achieve great things in life. Ayya had great admiration for disabled individuals who exemplified their courage and determination inspite of disability. We conducted a national Seminar at the Vidyalaya in 1986 and it was attended by over 10 blind persons. When I informed Ayya that they had come on their own, Ayya was very happy. During the dinner hosted on behalf of the Vidyalaya, Ayya met everyone of those individuals and congratulated them for the sheer courage and will power demonstrated by them in travelling alone. Thereafter Ayya used to cite these individuals as models for determination whenever he talked to students, saying "when these persons who can't see have this determination in life, is it not our duty to follow them as role models ?"

Ayya's greatness lies in his deep humility. He never hesitated to learn from young people too. Only a very few on earth have the greatness to accept the virtues of people irrespective of who they are. Ayya had this extraordinary trait in him. He would talk to young people for hours together and when some good ideas came up during discussion, he would say, "Very good, that is a wonderful idea; I am learning". This rare virtue of Ayya encouraged persons like me to get closer to him. No wonder, Ayya looked at disabled individuals as role models. At times, he admired the independent mobility skills of blind children of Vidyalaya High School and said that he had the feeling that he was becoming younger and younger by looking at them. When disabled persons are not even given their proper share in the present society, Ayya's treatment of them as role models is something unique.

Technology in Special Education :

Computerisation in braille production is the brain child of Ayya. In 1987, the University Grants Commission promised assistance to set up a braille press at the Vidyalaya. The

Christoffel Blindenmission envisioned that the set-up in the Vidyalaya should be a versatile one in order to serve more blind children. Ayya asked me to write to different countries of the world to collect literature. I did so and got enough literature. I explained everything to Ayya and then came his great inquiry with laughter, "Look, the whole world is going towards computerisation. I don't know much about computers but I can understand the spurt of computers in the modern world." He insisted that we should explore the possibilities of computerisation of braille production. This idea again took over two years to shape and the system started working at the Vidyalaya in 1989. At present, the computerised braille production system of the Vidyalaya is one of the most sophisticated equipments in the field. We would have gone for the conventional braille production system in 1987, but Ayya's vision about technological revolution helped us to opt for computerisation.

Ayya on services for the Disabled :

Ayya had the vision to design any new programme in a systematic manner. He picked up so well and so fast the nuances of the work. During seminars he would talk like a professional resource person. One of the rare qualities of Ayya was that he never started a programme with a vague idea. He studied in depth any project and convinced himself before launching any of the work. During our discussions, I always noted his concern for disabled children. Some of his salient guidelines are as follows :

* Always ask what a disabled person can do.
* Make the disabled person aware of his strengths and limitations.
* Expose the disabled person to more reality.
* As far as possible, let the child stay with parents.
* The service to the disabled child will be futile if parental involvement is not available.
* By making everything free, parents of disabled children always find themselves to be at the receiver's side. Let them also contribute whatever they can so as to develop the attitude of shared responsibility for the child.

* The material prepared should be on the basis of the end users' need.
* Commitment is more important for a specialist teacher rather than the presence of mere qualification.
* Treat services for the disabled as a professional work rather than a philanthropic activity.
* You will find teaching of disabled children frustrating if you have no patience.

In short Ayya lived as the champion of disabled persons. I always admire his great vision and mission in life. His vision is giving today a ray of hope for thousands of blind children. His mission is put into practice by hundreds of workers for the blind. Ayya was an amazing personality.

AYYA - AN IDEAL TEACHER

Mohan Devadas

Jesus of Nazareth was often addressed as "TEACHER". An ideal teacher is righteous, by that it is meant, that he is upright and free from wrong. It also includes such qualities as kindness, unselfishness, truthfulness and justice. Some teachers are saints, who are holy people, whose lives are consecrated to God. Visionaries are those who do not see through their eyes, but in their minds.

Ayya embodied all these sacred qualities. A witness is a person who has first hand knowledge of an event or a fact and tells about it. The greatest thing about Ayya is that not only did he achieve the highest but also left countless people to tell the world about the events or facts that led to such great achievements.

At 52 years of age, I have gone through various medical schools and establishments. I have seen and heard various teachers of various schools of thought. But to choose an ideal teacher who is a national leader and a saint among people, I will easily point to AYYA who is the best among I saw or witnessed, a gem of a teacher, the best and the brightest.

The first time I saw Ayya was in 1947, when he visited the Queen Mary's College for a function. He was the Minister for Education for the composite Madras Province. I happened to be present there because my mother was a lecturer there. When Ayya was returning, they offered him some fruits. Without any hesitation he called me and gave the fruits to me. For a little boy of seven, who had recently come to the city of Madras from the village it was a great surprise, honour and a great thrill in receiving something sweet straight from the hands of a Minister. He was spontaneous, simple and generous.

After many years I met Ayya at the residence of my uncle, late Sri K. Diraviam, I.A.S. He talked to me very kindly. Later I joined Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya at Perianaickenpalayam which was the permanent residence of Ayya. From 1951 to 1956 I was in Vidyalaya studying upto

S.S.L.C. when I came close to Ayya. During those five years at Vidyalaya, I saw many leaders and teachers - Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President Rajen Babu, Mr. Kamaraj, Mr.C.Subramaniam, Mr.M.P.Sivagnanam, Swami Ranganathananda and many more. But I always admired Ayya who could speak on any matter and tell the world openly without any fear what he thought. Even when he got angry, he never spoke ill of others. Ayya was an exemplary statesman, freedom fighter, social reformer, educationist, and above all a great and ideal teacher.

I quote the following lines from the Holy Bible for their appropriateness to Ayya's life and achievements :

> "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
>
> But his delight is in the law of the Lord God and His law, doth he mediate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brighten forth its fruit in his season, his leaf shall not wither and whatsover he doeth shall prosper". Psalm 1:1-3.

These words reflect my own respectful impression about Ayya as an ideal teacher. His inspiring teachings will ever be with us, his pupils. We feel with the President of India that **Ayya has ascended unto heaven to be with the Lord.**

The desirable qualities of a good teacher are :

1. emotional stability and sound mental health;
2. physical health and dynamic personality;
3. above average intelligence;
4. creativity, imagination and resourcefulness;
5. good presentation, poise, and refinement in voice and action;
6. courtesy, kindness, sympathy and tact;
7. patience;
8. sincerity and honesty;

9. firmness;
10. promptness, efficiency and ability to organise;
11. positive and encouraging attitude;
12. democratic leadership; and
13. professional status.

These qualities were inborn with Ayya. He had them in abundance. For Ayya, Vidyalaya was his family, a dear family that Ayya cherished most, cared for and nurtured all through his life.

Ayya's personality had an immeasurable impact on the students of Vidyalaya among whom I was proud to be one. Ayya had the power and wisdom to inspire the students of Vidyalaya, encourage and challenge them, implant a sense of responsibility and perseverance, catch their imagination and draw out the best in them.

The first fact that any boy who joined the Vidyalaya learned about Ayya is that he was one of the foremost disciples of Mahatma Gandhi. The second fact is that he was a man of GOD. The third fact is that he loved the children. How can I describe him and his many great qualities as a superb leader? He was

Totally professional
An enthusiastic educator
Was always there
Firm and consistent in discipline
Honest, fair and just
Instilling in us courage and confidence
Endearing and affectionate.

We will always remember Ayya, our humble matchless Guru, our best Counsellor, with love, gratitude and reverence.

AYYA - OUR BEACON LIGHT

Godavari Kamalanathan

The founding and development of Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust on the Holy Vijaya Dasami in 1951, is an unique expression of National Renaissance. Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam was deeply inspired by the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of West Bengal and his disciple Swami Vivekananda and spent his life time for the upliftment of the people in India. Ayya's mentor for national service was Mahatma Gandhi.

The seed for this mighty banyan tree was sown in the mind of Ayya even when he was a student. Fired by the Directive given by Swami Vivekananda, he wanted to raise the educational status of India. Hence the objectives of the Avinashilingam Education Trust as laid down by Ayya were :

* Advancement of education to women and children consistent with the highest ideals of Indian culture, such as purity, simplicity, devotion to God and all the qualities which constitute the highest spiritual tradition of Indian womanhood;
* Arrangement of non-formal and adult education courses, to undertake social welfare work for better family living, child care and nutrition with emphasis on our spiritual heritage and national solidarity;
* Augmentation of facilities such as balwadis and hostels for working women to enable them to have nutritional sustenance and knowledge; and
* Achievement of rural development and extension work including tribal welfare for improving the social, cultural and economic improvement of the deprived sectors.

The founding of the Trust itself was an wonderful event, when Ayya used the gift from his mother for education of women.

Ayya had the acumen to develop moral and spiritual values in the community, through conducting courses, classes,

seminars, workshops and festivals, which are the best methods to spread the spiritual message and culture of our country.

The first of the institutions was the High School in 1955 and the Home Science College in 1957, which subsequently, has been raised to the status of Deemed to be University. Nursery schools, primary schools, a rural centre, a Krishi Vigyan Kendra, a Shramik Vidyapeeth and an Industrial Institute are all the branches of the Banyan Tree - the Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust.

Under Ayya's leadership Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women has emerged as an outstanding institute in India for higher education and research in Nutrition, Child Welfare, Biochemistry, Rural Community Extension leading to the Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The Institute offers 22 major subjects at the Bachelor's and 14 at the Master's levels. Ayya always gave his considered opinion while starting a new course with due regard for its social benefit and community needs. But for his generous thought, thousands of girls would have been denied college education. Many educated young women would have wasted their talents in taking lesser jobs or having no employment. Every member of the institution remembers this with gratitude.

The institutions are fortunate to have the devoted, dynamic and distinguished, leadership of Dr. Rajammal Devadas as Vice Chancellor to plan their programmes and guide them. Dr. Devadas who is an outstanding academician and scientist has had several experiences with national and international dimensions. She received the Padmasree Award for her contribution to Home Science education. As said in Thirukkural, our beloved Ayya had the foresight to choose the right person for the right job.

For the children of Saradalaya, as our Ayya used to call the members of this institution, he had a special affection. Prayer holds an important place in the institution. Through readings from the teachings of the great religious leaders of the world and songs of devotion rendered by students regardless of caste, social

position and creed, the spirit of one God, one Religion emanate from the collective prayers.

Our Ayya was very decisive about observing Independence Day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanthi, and Sarvodaya Day by students and faculty. On such occasions, he shared his direct experiences with Swami Sivananda Maharaj and Gandhiji. He wanted all of us to read Ramayana, Mahabaratha, Thirukkural and the literature of the great savants of the world. We, who have heard his talks for three decades, are amazed that he could give a new thought every time he spoke !

Ayya was always for helping the poorest of the poor. Thus the Sri Avinashilingam Rural Centre Krishi Vigyan Kendra was established to transfer useful low cost technology to farm men and women. Sri Avinashilingam Shramik Vidyapeeth is rendering its service for the cause of poor, downtrodden, unemployed youth and school drop-outs drawn from among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe slum dwellers.

The institutions have had a phenomenal growth and taken up several pioneering activities such as training of Mukya Sevikas, Applied Nutrition workers, grass root level workers in the Integrated Child Development Scheme, personnel of National Adult Education Programme and leadership camps for women. Non-formal audult education has been continuously taken up in over 100 villages and 300 centres in the slums of Coimbatore.

Our Ayya gave much of his time, thought and talents for the development of the institution. Every building of the institution would speak volumes of his concern for safety, comfort and convenience in its construction.

Our Ayya would not permit his photograph to be put up in any of the halls. Yes, we do not need a photograph, when the work of this Karmayogi spoke out clearly and his inspiring image is enshrined in the hearts of thousands of his children - students, faculty and workers of Saradalaya.

THE AYYA I KNEW

Lakshmi Santa Rajagopal

To write about great people is at once both extraordinarily difficult and immensely inspiring. The task is difficult because of the magnitude and depth of such lives and inspiring because of the sheer force they transmit. To write about our revered and beloved Ayya Avargal is to acknowledge the effect of the example set by one man - his life and work - on the lives of individuals, institutions, the life of an entire nation. However, remembering Ayya is, to me, recollecting how he stood for everything humane amidst the great vision for which he lived and worked.

I vividly remember the day when the stone slab inscribed with sayings from our great scriptures were waiting to be installed in the shrine at Saradalaya. Ayya wanted both students and teachers alike to lend their hands for the installation : he wanted them to partake in the establishment and the fulfilment of the great goal that we were setting before ourselves. The inscribed sayings would be the pillars on which a great institution would blossom forth; the students and teachers would be the architects in this great task. A colossal lesson needs to be learnt from this event- no sublime task can be realised without translating its sublimity into practice in the ordinary daily chores.

Practice this, to me, seems to be the key word in Ayya's philosophy of life. The greatness of great thoughts resides in their practice. All those who have worked with Ayya have been spontaneously drawn to emulate the way he admirably turned ideal into action. There are precious lessons to be learnt from Ayya's way of planning things - his putting down a long list of things to be done each day in his diary whenever he came to Saradalaya in order to ensure the most meticulous execution of even the most minute activity. Things were never left undone in Ayya's diary: thought, speech and practice went hand in hand. Every moment in Ayya's company was inspiring on account of this practice. Every utterance is, even today, food not only for thought, but also for action.

Ayya constantly gave things away - books, thoughts, time and above all love, besides those of material nature. His concern for those around him emerged from his intense love for humanity. He believed that life is to be perpetually poured out and given away - shared. In Ayya one could always see the most enduring of human values - humaneness - being lived each moment.

Integral humaneness is what Ayya stood for, and in turn, worked towards. In him we have had **a grand visionary with a human face.** In working towards the goals that we have set, along with him, for ourselves, there is no other path except that he has shown for us, the path lived and shown by THE AYYA I KNOW.

There is a great deal of expertise amongst our scientists, writers, industrialists and agriculturalists. The material resources are also in abundance. The need is for the right use of the human resource for developing children.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

AYYA - THE GREAT TEACHER
HIS EXPECTATIONS OF A TEACHER

M. Chandramani

Himself a great teacher our Rev. Ayya Sri T.S.Avinashilingam valued greatly what Swami Vivekananda called **man-making education**. "Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life building, man making, character- making assimilation of ideas". To achieve this, committed and dedicated teachers are absolutely necessary.

Ayya had great faith and hope in the teachers and he kept them always at a high esteem. He beleived that the future of the nation is in the hands of teachers. He gave equal respect to teachers at all levels.

As a great educationist, our Ayya also emphasised that education to be worth while must serve the purpose of national development. Our schools and colleges must feel themselves as parties in this great endeavour of national development. It should strengthen social and national integration and cultivate the qualities necessary to make democratic living, the way of our national life. It must build the national character by cultivating social as well as moral values based on our own spiritual heritage. Subjects of practical and national significance such as health, nutrition and population education should find a place in the curricula at all stages of education, Science and technology must be increasingly utilised in daily life to increase productivity and fight diseases. Work experience should become an integral part of all stages of education and vocational education should be introduced at the secondary level to meet the needs of scientific agriculture, industry and trade. The teacher has a great role to play in these endeavours.

The teacher must also inspire the pupils under his/her care with love of the country, by his/her own example of hard work, devotion to the progress and uplift of children without expecting rewards, equipping himself/herself with the latest knowledge so that he/she gives his/her best to the students, safeguarding the

property of the institution so that it can continue to serve generations of people, absolute impartiality towards students and above all doing his/her duty effectively for the students under his care. The teachers must also conduct themselves with dignity and honour amongst the students, colleagues, management and public. They must prepare well and teach efficiently, they must be punctual and work with devotion and involvement, give maximum time for professional duties and be fearless and impartial in fulfilling their duties. He urged the teachers to become members of the various professional bodies, to take up research projects and contribute to the building up of new knowledge. It is very essential that the teachers take up extension work and make the people aware of the usefulness of their subject to the society.

The character and personality of a teacher influence the children very much. He/she must be perfectly pure and his/her function as the teacher is indeed an affair of the transference of something and not one of mere stimulation of existing intellectual or other faculties in the taught. No selfish desires should creep into the minds of teachers. Power of self control and endurance must be part of them. Sympathy for the taught is essential. The teacher must come down to the level of the student and transfer his soul to the students' soul and see through and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else.

Religion is the inner most core of education. The true eternal principles have to be upheld before the pupils. The teacher is the best person to do this. Ideal of service and fearlessness are indispensible for a teacher.

Teachers must be committed to the students. Welfare of the students must be upper most in their minds. The teacher must establish personal contact with each student and understand his/her aspirations, abilities and problems, treat each child with love and affection and deal with them equally, justly and considerately. Teachers must encourage the students to pursue self-study and must give time to students whenever they come for any clarification or discussion. Teachers should never expect any reward from the students. They must constantly improve the learning facilities and opportunities for students.

In teaching children, we should have a positive approach which is based on dignity and faith in human personality; negative thoughts will weaken the students.

However, for a successful educational programme, sustained hard work, an ethical atmosphere and cultivation of proper values by the entire academic community is indispensible. The teachers mainly will have to play a very major role in this endeavour.

Teachers themselves should lay down a code of the highest professional conduct themselves and enforce it rigorously through professional organisations. It is their responsibility to see that the highest standards are maintained in educational institutions, to identify themselves fully with the welfare of the students committed to their charge and also become closer to the community through programmes of mutual service and support.

The teachers must be committed to the Institution. He/she must understand the philosophy, rules, regulations and its customs and uphold its prestige by his/her words and deeds and instil in the students respect for the institutions, ideals and uphold those ideals in their lives.

It is again very essential for a teacher to identify the needs of the community and serve them in the most fitting manner. They must also instil in students a sense of pride and patriotism about ones' country.

Ayya had always been referring to excellence and he used to say that there is no limit for excellence. It is upto us teachers to achieve this excellence and get the best out of our students. To this, ultimately Ayya wanted teachers to be models and inspirers.

Dr. AVINASHILINGAM - HIS EXHORTATION TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Nirmala K. Murthy

"He who lives for himself is an animal
He who lives and helps others is human
He who lives for others is divine".

Dr. Avinashilingam, affectionately called Ayya had surpassed all these ordinary norms.

The study of educational ideas of any great man is of importance to academic communities. It is only by studying these ideas that we come to know what education really means and what is expected of teachers and educationists. It behoves us well then, to see the relevance of our beloved Founder's educational ideas to the present endeavours in the field of Higher Education in our country. Sri T.S. Avinashilingam had been throughout his life a Gandhian in thought, word and deed. In his life he exemplified the true educationist. His contribution, particularly to women's education has been a laudable service to the nation.

Indian university education, in the last few decades, has been moving steadily towards quality in input and excellence in outcome. Academic excellence in standards of teaching and learning have been emphasised at the university level, with the aim of enriching our human resources. The aim of education in a democracy should be the all round development of individual personality. More than any educationist of this generation, Ayya had emphasized the imbibing of citizenry spirit through education. Ayya considered that the prime function of formal centres of learning was the inculcation of the national spirit to uphold unity and fraternity, besides fostering the creative spirit and individual development.

Consequently, Ayya insisted on not only research based courses but also on extension programmes as part of co-curricular activities in the University. The thrust on extension programmes

was the result of his patriotic zeal to work for rural upliftment. Rural welfare and upliftment through voluntary services such as educating adults in rural areas on the elementary needs of life, evolving nutritious recipes for children and adults have been our meritorious achievements, enthused by this great visionary mind.

Ayya maintained that the research spirit is the vital factor in promotion and progress of higher education. The Avinashilingam Deemed University has become a network of Home Scientists who untiringly are involved in sustained research work on various innovative projects in textiles and clothing, child care, nutrition and other areas. We owe a great deal to Ayya for encouraging researchers among teachers and learners of this University and instilling in us the true spirit of research to **seek and strive** and not yield to defeat.

Equally great has been Ayya's contribution to women's education. But for his foresight and philanthropic enterprise, this University would not have been born or become a seat for women's higher education. Higher education for women is a dream that has come true. Higher education for women must make women fulfil the social demands made on them. Woman who in the Indian society, as in others, plays the multiple roles as housewife engaged in cooking, stitching, accounting, washing, educating children as a parent. academician, adminstrator and social worker, receives in this University a sound training. Ayya's conception of higher education for woman was that it should be highly relevant to her socio-economic scenario. It must endow her with the armour for facing the challenges in life. Therefore, it is obvious, that for him a centre for higher education, be it college or university, must be like a perparatory ground for the individual's whole life.

Higher education should also teach the individual the value of work. Planned, well-programmed, socially useful and productive work must be incorporated in the curriculum. For instance, we in our University departments have undertaken several national and international projects that lead to meaningful discoveries and results in simple but low cost nutritious, easy but tasty food items, income generating activities

for the unemployed and rural youth, community service and mass literacy and so on.

Ayya's concept of higher education was broad-based and encompassed all aspects of life. According to him, the objective of education was not to get a degree and then a job to earn a livelihood or to become just a bread winner. Ayya wanted the students to use science and technology for the cause of the nation's development, for the removal of the sufferings of the masses who are steeped in poverty. He wanted us to develop the student community intellectually and spiritually. He wanted them to apply science to practical and constructive use in solving the problems of the poor and downtrodden. He wanted our young girls to develop a strong and poised personality so that after the completion of their university education they could go to a higher life of service and spiritual attainment.

Ayya had a dream that the university education should make students develop a broad outlook. He wanted them to cross all the narrow geographical boundaries and march on for a universal approach. He wanted us to have a life-building, man-making, character forming education.

Ayya was the guiding star to thousands of young girls who studied in the Saradalaya campus. He always used very kind and affectionate words - always called everyone **kannu** meaning dear child or dear darling child. He made the kind enquiry **Nalla Erukkiya** (Are you doing fine ?). There was so much love in this enquiry. His all embracing love transcended the barriers of age, caste, creed and language.

Ayya himself was a very outstanding teacher. He had an immense and magnetic effect on his audience. To all meetings and public functions, Ayya would arrive punctually at the correct appointed time - he was always very punctual. Always his talks were crisp, to the point and brief - but very powerful and inspiring. Many times the audience were spell bound, astounded at his mastery over the various issues.

Ayya was a voracious reader. Through his wide reading, he was in constant touch with the latest developments in science and technology and more than this, he knew its relevance to us in

a very practical manner. He would raise such pointed and practical questions to us - that a great intellect he was. More than fundamental research, Ayya was interested in action research aimed at finding solutions to the problems of the poor and downtrodden in our rural areas.

Ayya's love for our motherland was very great. While he respected other nations for their advancement in science and technology, he was intensely patriotic, a nationalist to the core. He had a sense of pride in being an Indian.

Ayya thought that modern science and higher education should be development oriented. Students of higher education should develop technical and practical skills and efficiency. This should help in the building up of a healthy and progressive Indian society. He wanted spirituality and divinity to blend with modern science. He aimed at material well being and spiritual growth to be combined in university education. Thus, he wanted universities to play a big role in the regeneration and development of our motherland.

The great mission that Ayya had set before the universities was to train men and women of purity, strength and sacrifice. The students are to be trained to lead a life of dedication and service. He, time and again, exhorted us to seek God among the poor and downtrodden.

Ayya was of the opinion that if we have problems peculiar to our country, we should try to solve them ourselves; blindly copying the West will not help us. He always challenged us to carry out genuine and good quality research work without the use of sophisticated equipment. He used to cite the example of Washington Carver, a scientist who carried out research work using very simple techniques.

Ayya being a frugal person himself, was a firm believer in the waste recycling technology. He wanted us to practise economy in the use of all resources, avoiding waste which in turn will cause minimum disturbance and damage to the ecology and environment. He advocated the use of locally available foods for the improvement of nutrition of our rural poor, use of indigenous herbs and medicines and also relying on simple dietary practices,

regular practice of yoga, exercises and physical fitness combined with prayers and meditation for healthy living.

In Ayya's view, higher education is not a mere ornament to the individual man or woman nor is it a passport to social mobility. It should be freed from the bread and butter value. It must make the individual a national asset, a custodian of national spirit and social culture.

We receive but what we give (Coleridge). We should consider education as a social and national investment from which we draw resources for national development. There should be no compromise to **excellence** in curriculum, in teaching methods and evaluation techniques. And that was Ayya's dream of education. He founded **Saradalaya**, the temple of learning based on such high ideals. Let us pledge to work towards the fulfilment of his ideals.

ECONOMICS IN AYYA'S CONCEPTUALISATION

G. Ramathilagam

Economics as an enormously powerful discipline in social sciences has had a number of votaries among both the professional and non-practising groups. Undoubtedly it had been enriched as much by the searching questions and challenges posed by the latter category as by the strenuous effort made to answer them by the former. Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation was one such intellectual giant who evolved an alternative economic system through his emphasis on Khadi and Village Industries and challenged the mighty British Government wedded to the philosophy of individualism and market-based economic system. His concept of **Trusteeship**, managing the means of production in the interest of the larger social good, has won international acclaim as a sound alternative to the profit oriented self-centred business enterprises. All these contributions came from him with no scholastic training in economics or its formal methodology. Ayya, our Founder-President and Chancellor ranks along with him, in the uncanny insights he had about the working of the economic system and the role of the economists therein.

Ayya, unlike Gandhiji had been a graduate of Economics, before he went into Law. The perceptions that he had about the subject were developed from that stand-point in his life. Later as a Legislator, and as a Minister in charge of Government's policy making, Ayya became deeply involved in the subject. He used to throw such challenging posers and remarks about economic affairs of the day that we were constantly on our alert whenever we happened to meet him.

Ayya kept his interest in economic issues alive. Being an avid reader of journals, Ayya used to read the latest published literature on the subject whether it be the Club of Rome Report, the Report of the Independent Commission on International Economic Issues, the World Bank Staff Working Papers or the Memorandum on the Annual Budget. Whenever he met the faculty in Economics, he used to share the literature with them and invite their reactions on the viewpoints expressed therein.

He used to caution them against using outdated text-books in the classrooms. One of his frequent remarks was, "In my days, I studied Jather and Beri's Indian Economics. Are you still using that book ?" In fact, he stimulated the faculty to look beyond their narrow perspectives of the syllabus and examinations. He motivated them to acquire the state of the art in the discipline and apply it in both teaching and research endeavours.

Ayya would look for opportunities for organising national level seminars to debate on the crucial issues facing the nation, whether eradication of poverty or combating inflation or bank nationalisation. He used to assemble both the administrators and the academics to discuss the issue at hand and more often his keynote addresses on such occasions used to contain such wisdom and remarks that they would set the tenor of the entire proceedings and future actions. His points would command the undivided attention of the greatest scholars and practitioners alike.

In ideology, Ayya did not belong to the right or left of the centre. Yet he had some basic convictions about the kind of economic system he would like to see developed for Indian conditions and the institutions that would promote such a just and fair system. He was aware that neither unbridled capitalism nor centralised socialism held the key for India's economic growth.

In effect, Ayya conceived growth and development not in the narrow sense of the rate of growth in GNP but from the human point of view. For him progress is improvement in the state of persons. Everything else is an intermediate good. He knew that people would respond to development plans only when they are able to perceive and enjoy the fruits of their initiatives, in terms of higher incomes. He wanted to replicate the efforts in rual development as that of Anand in Gujarat, which is one of the most lively centres of village expansion. The starting point there was the recognition of a link between a first class dairy under highly skilled direction, the large milk market of Bombay and the farmers of Kaira district with their buffaloes. The whole district has profited from a creative and stimulating relationship with the market. Once the farmers acquired better incomes, they started expanding their investments in dairy animals as also in other

areas. In the absence of the market link, any amount of extension effort to induce them to have better cows would not have succeeded. Even so Ayya thought that our rural people were not resistant to change but only they needed agents of change. Hence the unique post graduate degree programme in cooperation which he inititated in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Rural College of Higher Education had trained almost the entire contigent of officers now manning the State Cooperative Department; the Vivekanandapuram Rural Development Centre and the Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Karamadai and the Shramik Vidya Peeth at Coimbatore which endeavour to provide such market links to rural and urban youth.

Ayya firmly believed that economics had a definite mission. That was to shed light on the actual dynamics of social systems and therefore on the alternative futures which may follow from particular decisions, courses of action and policies. He used to say that we need a constant critique of actual government decisions in the light of various policy ideals. Such critiquing when it comes from professional scholars tend to carry great, weight, in his opinion, since their images using scientific learning approaches contain a higher proportion of truth through conscious elimination of error. Ayya was also aware that the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, were more powerful than is commonly understood and that the world was ruled by little else. Hence his anxiety that as an advice giving profession, we economists should be ruled by our heads, rather than passion, as we do not know where our intellectual influence ends.

Ayya, as a seasoned administrator was involved in policy making even when he had quit politics. He served as a member of the Agricultural Prices Commission which recommended to the Government agricultural support prices. Ayya was aware that uncertainty in social policy could be very damaging. It may keep back from action the innovative and enterprising people, those who have the power to innovate, provide employment and increase farm output. He used to meticulously prepare himself, therefore, when participating in such deliberations, by taking opinions of all shades and having all the available information at his command.

As an individual, Ayya placed the public good above his individual well being and as a true Gandhian turned over his property to the Trust to work for the public cause of education. The Gandhian doctrine of trusteeship found in him one of the most exemplary adherents. He recognised that education was the most potent instrument of social change and the most significant anti-poverty policy in so far as it provides a public inheritance beyond the family and also increases the know-how leading to higher productivity. Hence we, in Ayya's institutions emphasise on human resource development with two basic tenets that individuals have unlimited potentials for growth and development and that they can be developed and multiplied through appropriate and systematic efforts.

Ayya was convinced that unless the society improves the production of persons, no matter what it may produce in terms of material artifacts and social institutions, what is going on is not progress. We can send scientists to Mars to explore the universe, can become richer; can get rid of war, disease and poverty until everybody dies at a ripe old age and with full possession of their faculties, but if in the interval we have not by well judged and well criticised human values, increased the quality of life of persons, it is not progress. Hence, his role in human resource development stands out among his other achievements in politics, administration and social service.

A BOUQUET OF THOUGHTS

R.K. Tharachandrika

All golden children of Saradalaya
and also those of Vidyalaya.
Pray in one voice for Ayya
who gave his love like Himalaya.

Ayya! at your divine feet,
we place this bouquet of thoughts.
To keep it fresh and fragrant
we sprinkle tears from hearts.

Your words were soothing and directing,
vivid, enlightening, thought provoking,
illustrating, encouraging and indicating
the right ways in life.

Your presence was cheering and satisfying,
the meetings with you are ever lasting,
high values you taught us are strengthening
our hearts are filled with **thanks giving**.

The prayers and strength of meditation
always we follow with dedication,
the world around see us with admiration,
all these we gained through your relation.

God directed your life for education
so precious your services to our nation.
In Amma we found great inspiration
we find no words for citation.

Your step was wise to start Home Science,
and made us feel the sweet essence,
The subject which reaches its excellence,
that adds to life in our homes a fragrance.

You call us all **Nalla Pillaigal**
and also **Thangamana Pillaigal**.
We'll try to be good and golden as you wanted
to hear this from heaven you'll be delighted.

You helped us to hear only the good,
and talk and see and sing only good.
Seeing the poor, young or old
gave us a heart to do only good.

The great need of our educational system and our educational institutions is inculcation of spiritual values along with technological knowledge. Give social purpose to education, so that educated people will not be exploiters of the not so fortunate but the friends and helpers of the poor, the weak and the downtrodden and be dedicated servants of our country and people.

- Ayya Dr.T.S. Avinashilingam

TRIBUTE TO REV. AYYA

P. Malligeswari

Our Revered Ayya was not just an individual, he was an institution by himself. Through his well integrated vision, his tenacity of purpose and his intense humanism, he was able to establish a prestigious seat of learning of high moral and educational excellence with impressive array of majestic institutions - Avinashilingam Deemed University besides Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya with pre-school to Ph.D. programmes.

The institutions founded by rev. Ayya stand as living monuments to his memory. As beacon lights they uphold and cherish his noble ideals in the cause of service to humanity. His life was a striking example of hard work, vision, and commitment to certain noble causes.

Education, particularly education of women was one of the great causes for which he dedicated his endeavour. The people of Tamil Nadu and also other states in India will always remember him ever for his great contribution in this field.

The Avinashilingam Institute stands as an example of secularism, humaneness and farsightedness of revered Ayya. His bold efforts and valuable messages to transform the lives of women will always be acknowledged with gratitude.

I send my good wishes to all those who are involved in furthering Revered Ayya Avargal's ideals. They will be living tributes to his noble life. I wish them all success.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EDUCATIONISTS, SCIENTISTS AND PROFESSIONALS (Continued..)

AYYA - THE DEDICATED LEADER

Dr. S. Krishnamurthi

In 1926, when I was 15 years of age, I joined the Government Arts College at Coimbatore for the then existing two year intermediate course. A son of Sri. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar who was a Dewan Bahadur in those British times, happened to be my classmate and friend. I often used to visit him and he used to take me to his father who was very kind to me. Sri Avinashilingam Chettiar, an ardent disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, a devout Congress worker and a dedicated patriot was very closely related to him. Sri. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar was the President of Coimbatore District Board under the British Government, who when they nominated a head to a local Board of this kind, had the knack of choosing the very best of men. In one sense, it was amazing that when persons of position like the District Collector, the District Superintendent of Police and other administrators of the district, who were all British, used to visit Sri. T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar at his residence, Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, who was then a young man in his twenties dedicated to the struggle for independence of India, used to stand at the entrance of Sri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar's residence and distribute to the British rulers of the country, leaflets criticising their policies. Neither Sri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar prevented this nor were the visiting British officials reluctant to receive whatever material Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar had handed over to them. I could watch first hand their lack of hesitation in reading through the material before they went in to meet Sri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar. In other words, Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar was willing to put his neck into the tiger's mouth for the sake of his country. So deep was his conviction of the righteousness of achieving swaraj that he determined to be entirely free from other attachments and chose to remain a bachelor throughout his life. This speaks volumes of his tenacity and dedication.

Sri T.S. Avinashilingam has not been just a fighter for independence of India but also a leader in shperes which would positively contribute directly to the development of the country, especially through rural development and education of women,

the two planks which are really the foundation for upliftment of this country. He established in a rural area like Perianaickenpalayam Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya which was oriented towards rural upliftment and education of the rural people. Side by side he established a college for women at Coimbatore since he was convinced that without education of women, no progress would be possible. The stress on home science in his college at Coimbatore was significant, since if women did not orient themselves to scientific management of homes, specially the role of nutrition in building up children from the young age, the country would be lost. He had concepts which were appropriate to the needs of the people, especially women on one end and rural families on the other. **Do or die** had been his motto. He was one unique personality whom I have met, who would fight and fight for the cause which he held close to his heart, for the sake of the people at large. As far as I am concerned my linkage was there with him in understanding him from as back as 1926 which is about nearly six and a half decades ago. This linkage was never lost. When I was 29 years old, I worked at Athipalayam not far from Perianaickenpalayam in a central government project. Sri Ramakrishna Naidu of Athipalayam became a great friend of mine and through him I became acquainted more deeply with the activities of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya.

Though serious and dedicated, Sri T.S. Avinashilingam had also a good sense of humour. I remember that when he was the Minister for Education in the then Madras Government after Independence, he presided over the Annual Day celebrations of the Government Arts College at Coimbatore, of which I was an old student. I was then at the Coimbatore Agricultural College. I was asked on behalf of the old students to address the gathering. I had to follow the Principal who had to make the introductory welcome speech and he started to read out his welcome address in English. Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar stopped him short and wanted him to speak in Tamil. But the Principal apologised and said he had already prepared the material in English and it would be extremely difficult for him to translate it into Tamil on the spot and requested to be excused. I had to follow him and here comes a very funny story. Though I am a Tamilian and Coimbatore was my district, for some years my schooling was in Kollegal District Board High School where there was no Tamil, being a Kannada area. I went through the school in English and

Kannada, though Kollegal was then a part of Coimbatore District. I mentioned this fact and said that I would have to speak in Kannada, rather than in Tamil and started speaking in Kannada. The audience roared with laughter. Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar who has always had a sense of humour got it and applauded with the rest of them. He was indeed a rare combination of courtesy and nobility.

A gentleman to the core; loyal to friendship, faithful to his principles, ready to sacrifice for a good cause - that was Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar whom we all called **Ayya** with great affection. I must add that I had the pride and pleasure of representing the Madras University Syndicate on the Board of Management of the then Home Science College for a number of years. I happened to be the Dean of the Agricultural College and Research Institute, Coimbatore and my closeness with the Home Science College and Ramakrishna Vidyalaya at Perianaickenpalayam grew even further.

Ayya had the acumen to choose the best to share his burden. It was by coincidence that I came into acquaintance with the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who was then at New Delhi, as a Home Economics Adviser in the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and was residing in Western Court in New Delhi, where I used to frequently stay whenever I went to New Delhi to attend meetings as member of several committees of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Development Committees of the Ministry of Agriculture or the Advisory Panel of the Planning Commission.

Whenever I used to return from my meetings in the ICAR late in the evening to Western Court, not far from my room I always heard the ticking of the typewriter till late in the night in the room which was occupied by Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas. I was impressed by her dedication to her subject of home science and nutrition and we used to have long talks whenever I was in New Delhi. Then came periodically tripartite conversations between me, Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas and **Ayya** who also used to stay in Western Court those days whenever he visited New Delhi. Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas has a personality which one cannot bridle and which cannot be confined to a limited place and a limited role. Through her talents and relentless sense of

dedication, she worked day and night for the cause of women's education. That is how the Founder Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar and the Home Science specialist who were on the same wave length came to join in the common effort to build up a college for women at Coimbatore which we may all applaud for being now a Deemed University.

It makes me wonder why the institution is **deemed to be an university** and not designated as just a **University** and given the full credit of being practically in all respects a university as good as any in the country and especially in the advancement of women for which we have proclaimed a decade for women. It reminds me of something that happened during the Chief Ministership of Mr. Kamaraj. Once a Secretary of a certain department showed Mr. Kamaraj a G.O. (**a sacred cow by all means**) on why some action for a certain justified progressive cause mentioned by the Chief Minister could not be taken. The Chief Minister shot back, **Who makes these rules**? Pat came the reply, "It is the Government". Mr. Kamaraj said, "In changing times, changes have to be made. Therefore, place before me a proposal for change in the G.O". I state not as an onlooker but as an active member of syndicate of universities that **there shall not be a caste system** in education such as **universities and deemed universities.** We need to break the hierarchy of bureaucracies who make the rules. Let them standardise the rules keeping workable principles and simplify procedures without shackles and without lowering standards of education.

I compliment the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas for being an eminent leader in women's education on the same wave length as that of our respected Ayya, the first Chancellor of the University. The expansion of what was a relatively small beginning into active faculties of home sciences, sciences, humanities and education with a variety of disciplines numbering about 30, with well equipped laboratories and teachers of eminence has been phenomenal. **Rome was not built in a day.** So was the Avinashilingam University for Home Science and Higher Education for Women. The community should be ever grateful for Ayya Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam for his abundant contribution towards the development of society though his varied educational and other efforts specially to women.

AYYA'S INTEREST IN TAMIL LITERATURE

R. Sengottuvelan

"The culture of my land transcends all Religions" said Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji felt exalted at the rich heritage of India. After being a victim to several assaults by way of foreign invasions, the ancient heritage is left untouched only in the Southern part of India. We come across the ancient Indian culture in Tamil Literature in very large measure. Our ancient Tamil Literature inspired people and made them imbibe noble ideals.

Revered Ayya is one such inspired soul. His determination to put an end to the foreign rule came not only from the leaders of his times but also from the following lines of the Thevaram:

நாமார்க்கும் குடியல்லோம் நமனை அஞ்சோம்
நரகத்தில் இடர்ப்போம் நடலை இல்லோம்
ஏமாப்போம் பிணிஅறியோம் பணிவோம் அல்லோம்
இன்பமே எந்நாளும் துன்பம் இல்லை
தாமார்க்கும் குடி அல்லாத் தன்மை யான
சங்கரன்நற் சங்கவெண் குழைஓர் காதில்
கோமாற்கே நாம் என்றும் மீளா ஆளாய்க்
கொய்ம்மலர்ச்சே வடியிணையே குறுகி னோமே.

People associated with Ayya would have heard him quote these lines in his OWN STYLE. Many a times he expressed how he was influenced by the above stanza which revolted against slavery of any kind.

Ayya was bold in his thoughts and deeds. The following lines of Subramaniya Bharathi:

"உச்சிமீது வானிடிந்து வீழுகின்ற போதிலும்
அச்சமில்லை அச்சமில்லை அச்சமென்ப தில்லையே"

was always on his lips. We rarely come across a speech by Ayya without repeating the above lines with a thrill which he derived from the poem of Subramanya Bharathiar. These lines helped

him to pursue his path unmindful of the criticism from his own people.

Ayya was born in a family known for its affluence. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. The Siva temple at Avinashi is the temple where Ayya's family worshiped for generations. The family had made several endowments to the above temple. The Siva temple at Avinashi is associated with the Saivaite saint Sundarar. When Sundarar passed through the streets of Avinashi, he heard Mangala Vathiyam in one house and wailing in the opposite house. Moved by the wailing, Sundarar ascertained that in both the houses there were two boys of equal age who played together. While playing on the banks of the tank at Avinashi a crocodile swallowed one boy while the other boy's upanayanam was performed on that day. Moved by the misery that had befallen on one of the families Sundarar went before Lord Siva at Avinashi and sung ten stanzas, at the end of which rains came fetching water to the dry tank and the crocodile came back and gave back the child as a grown up boy. This incident made the Siva temple at Avinashi a place of pilgrimage for all the people following Saivism. Ayya's parents named him after the Siva Peruman at Avinashi and used to take him to the above temple during his younger days. The ten stanzas of Sundarar sung in the above temple made a lasting mark on Ayya.

As a student Ayya pondered over this incident and resolved to work for the community. He decided to relinquish family life and chose to remain unmarried, a rare phenomenon in a prosperous family. Ayya, along with his hostel mate Thiru Chinnu (who later on became Swami Chidbhavananda) frequented Sri Ramakrishna Math at Mylapore. When other students sought to engage themselves in worldly acts, these two secluded themselves in prayer at Sri Ramakrishna Math. Ayya came under the influence of Swami Sivananda, the direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and imbibed the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

Ayya began his legal practice in Coimbatore under his uncle late Rev.T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar. When the call came

from Gandhiji, he plunged into the freedom struggle and was imprisoned. Early in his life he aimed at educating the children with emphasis on discipline and culture which were not present in the schools of those days. On these principles he started Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya and Gandhiji laid the foundation stone for the same.

Ayya found that Harijans were segregated by superstition and revolted against such a practice. He admitted Harijan students in the Vidyalaya to begin with. Those Harijans who got educated and came up in life remained faithful to Ayya and they maintained their link with the Vidyalaya for the rest of their lives. Ayya was firm in his conviction that only education will uplift the downtrodden.

"உற்றுழி உதவியும் உறு பொருள் கொடுத்தும்
பிற்றை நிலை முனியாது கற்றல் நன்றே
பிறப்போரன்ன உடன் வயிற்றுக்குள்ளும்
சிறப்பின் பாலால் தாயும் மனந்திரியும்
ஒரு குடிப் பிறந்த பல்லோ ருள்ளும்
மூடுதோன் வருக என்னாது அவருள்
அறிவுடையோன் ஆறு அரசுஞ் செல்லும்
வேற்றுமை தெரிந்த நாற்பாலுள்ளும்
கீழ்ப்பா லொருவன் கற்பின்
மேற்பா லொருவனும் அவன் கட்படுமே -

புறநானூறு

Ayya had firm conviction that the only way to uplift women is to give them higher education. He donated all his properties for the cause of women's education. It is not enough to donate the entire fortune without finding the proper person to carry out the noble cause. Ayya had the knack of finding out the proper person for realising his aims. With forethought Ayya entrusted the work to Amma (Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas) who with untiring zeal had accomplished what Ayya visualised.

Ayya's life was influenced in a very large measure by the ideas expressed in Tamil Literature about devotion. Ayya was of the view that if one had devotion to the cause which he called

Shraddha anything can be achieved. Whenever I visited the Home Science College in evenings, Ayya used to ask me to say a few words to the students at the evening prayer meeting. One day I mentioned two lines from Purananuru:

"யானை வேட்டுவன் யானையும் பெறுமே
குரும்பூழ் வேட்டுவன் வெறுங்கையும் வருமே"

One who enters life with noble and high aims will achieve it just as a person proceeding for hunting elephants will bring one, and whereas a person who goes to hunt a small bird may return empty handed. After the prayer meeting Ayya exclaimed how the two lines reflected his own thinking so aptly. Really Ayya brought many big elephants in his life time, the like of which cannot be achieved by anybody.

Ayya had the tenacity of purpose and his thoughts and deeds were all aimed at developing the institutions, founded by him. In short he had that rare quality which is not present in others. In the words of Konguvelir,

"உற்றது முழக்கும் உறுதி நாட்டத்துக்குக்
கற்றுப் பொருள் தெரிந்த காண்போர் காட்சி"

Ayya had superb analytical mind by which he used to analyse the pros and cons of any issue. The Sangam literature described this quality as follows:

"தன்னிலையும் தாழாத் தொழில் நிலையும் துப்பெதிர்ந்தார்
இன்னிலையும் ஈடில் இயல் நிலையும் - துன்னி
அளந்தறிந்து செய்வான் அரசமைச்சன் யாதும்
பிளந்தறியும் பேராற்றலான்"

Ayya had the capacity to analyse the problems and find out the essence of it, aptly described as *யாதும் பிளந்தறியும் பேராற்றல்.*

During my 30 years of association with Ayya I never saw him use a harsh word which will displease others. Ayya followed to the very letter the Kural which he quoted very often-

"இனிய உளவாக இன்னாத கூறல்
கனியிருப்பக் காய் கவர்ந்தற்று"

In conversation, Ayya descended to the level of those whom he addressed. In the company of children he uttered words understood and loved by them. In the company of the learned, his conversation was on a high plane.

"கேட்பாரை நாடி இளக்கப் படும் பொருட்கண்
வேட்கை அறிந்துரைப்பார் வித்தகர்"

- பழமொழி நானூறு

Ayya's success in his endeavours was mainly due to his capacity to converse with people.

"சொலல் வல்லன் சோர்விலன் அஞ்சாதான் அவனை
இகல்வெல்லல் யார்க்கும் அரிது."

Ayya never talked about others. He used to quote often the Biblical saying "There is so much bad in the best of us, so much good in the worst of us, it hardly behoves any one of us to talk about the rest of us".

Ayya's firm belief that senses can be controlled only by ardent devotion to God is due to his deep study of the lives of Nayanmars. His favourite stanza in Appar Thevaram which finds place in the daily prayer routine emphasizes this truth:

"பெருகலாம் தவம் பேதமை தீரலாம்
திருகல் ஆகிய சிந்தை திருந்தலாம்
பருகலாம் பரம் ஆயதோர் ஆனந்தம்
மருகலான் அடு வாழ்த்தி வணங்கவே."

Ayya was very much worried about the erosion of morals in public life. He firmly believed that the country will prosper only if people turned virtuous. This firm belief had its roots in the poem of Avvaiyar in Purananooru:

"நாடா கொன்றோ காடா கொன்றோ
அவலா கொன்றோ மிசையா கொன்றோ
எவ்வழி நல்லவர் ஆடவர்
அவ்வழி நல்லை வாழிய நிலவே."

Let the land be plains or forests or hilly tract or shallow land that does not matter. If the people inhabiting the land are virtuous, the country becomes prosperous. So Ayya strived hard in his life to make people good in thoughts and deeds.

Ayya often used to quote the Kural

"பண்புடையார் பட்டுண்டுலகம் அது இன்றேல்
மண்புக்கு மாய்வது மன்"

The world can be guided only by good people; otherwise destruction will be the result. Ayya emphasised intellectual learning but at the same time said that it must go hand in hand with good character.

"அரம் போலும் கூர்மையரேனும் மரம்போல்வர்
மக்கட் பண்பில்லா தவர்" - குறள்

Ayya shaped his life on Gandhian lines. He followed the twin tenets of simple living and high thinking. Ayya used to say very often how his association with Gandhiji shaped him. One incident is worth mentioning. Ayya and Sri Varadhachariar were asked to accompany Gandhiji during his Harijan tour of Tamil Nadu. The special train started from Madras and all the way there were lakhs and lakhs of people waiting for Gandhiji on the way side stations. Gandhiji used to come out at every station, and hold out a cloth, for collection of Harijan Fund which used to be full in no time. Gandhiji brought it to both Ayya and Sri Varadharachariyar and emptied it, so that it can be sorted and tied up. Both Ayya and Varadharachariyar felt hungry and nobody gave them food on the way, as no one can approach the compartment through the dense crowd. When the pangs of hunger became acute both of them purchased a Huntly Palmers biscuit packet and ate it. Gandhiji on seeing the biscuit packet, took them to task for buying it from the Harijan Fund. Ayya used to recollect this incident as well as the Kural which laid down

"சென்றாள் பசி காண்பானாயினும் செய்யற்க
சான்றோர் பழிக்கும் வினை"

Ayya's association with his fellow men is something unique. All the students of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, maintain their association with Ayya even in their later lives, and they have made it a point to see him, at the time of the annual Sri Ramakrishna birth day celebrations (Gurupooja) and seek his blessings.

Ayya had a firm belief that God's help is always there for persons who work for the betterment of the society. He used to quote very often the Kural.

"குடி செய்வல் என்னும் ஒருவற்கு தெய்வம்
மடிதற்று தான் முந்துறும்"

Whenever Ayya took leave of people, he never failed to bless them in the name of his Gurudev, *"குருதேவர் இருபையால் நல்லா இரு."*

Ayya's achievements are great, yet he never had the ego that he did it. He will ascribe it to *'குருதேவர் இருபை'.*

Ayya had a special attachment to the following stanza in Appar Thevaram which speaks of service to humanity.

"நங்கடம்பனைப் பெற்றவன் பங்கினன்
தென்கடம்பைத் திருக்கரக் கோயிலான்
தன் கடன் அடியேனையும் தாங்குதல்
என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே."

The last line *என் கடன் பணி செய்து கிடப்பதே* meaning the capacity to do good deeds without being conscious of it, is the one followed by Ayya.

Ayya's life can be summed in the following memorable words of Bharathiar.

"அறிவிலே தெளிவு நெஞ்சிலே உறுதி
அகத்திலே அன்பின் ஓர் வெள்ளம்
பொறிகளின் மீது தனி அரசாணை
பொழுது எல்லாம் நினது பேரருளின்
நெறியிலே என்று இவை அருளாய்
குறிகுணம் ஏதும் உள்ளதாய் இல்லதாய்க்
குலவிடு தனிப் பரம் பேரருளே."

Ayya was the authentic personafication of the culture found in Tamil Literature and Gandhian ideals.

Thiruvalluvar laid down that the riches of wisemen will benefit the entire community just as a village tank benefits all.

ஊருணி நீர் நிறைந்தற்றே உலகவாம்
பேரறிவாளன் திரு. - குறள்

Ayya's will bequeathing his entire properties, reads as follows:

"It has been my desire for sometime to make a trust of all my properties. The properties really do not belong to me. They are ancestral and belong really to my father and others who earned and held them. Even if they had been earned by me, the real purpose of money is to get maximum value for it. The rich man who hoards does not get the best value out of his money. His clinging to it gets him only the pain of clinging to it and the ever present fear of losing it. To him every one who asks for help is a material danger to his happiness. The result is, he suspects every body of plotting against him to deprive him of his cash. And suspicion in its turn creates anger, fear and hatred. And that is how the miser and the hoarder in course of time become unsocial and unhappy, withering away any little love and joy that he might have had in earlier days.

The real purpose of money is to use it. It is used well and to maximum purpose when it is used for people who need them. The value of money to people is in inverse proportion to their wealth. At the hands of the poor it gets its marginal utility. And again the benefit for money spent depends upon the purpose for which it is spent. Money can be spent for extravagances, or dress or going to races.'This cannot be claimed as the best way of spending it. It may also be spent for feeding the hungry, for giving medical relief, education or building temples. Feeding the hungry is good. Many choultries were established by our ancestors for that purpose. But as it has been said in our scriptures, feeding one does not give one any permanent relief. It has also in certain cases degenerated into encouraging laziness. Medical relief is also very valuable. But greater than these are education and spiritual values. Our sastras have said that of all giving, that which helps to give spiritual knowledge is the highest, for feeding for a day relieves one only for one day, relieving one from physical pain relieves him for the time being, but education and spiritual help do raise man permanently to a

higher level and help him to solve the problems of his life for all time.

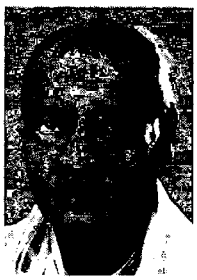
My father, grand fathers and others before them made a judicious use of their money. They earned well and led a good life. Their earnings were not made in a few years or even in a lifetime. It is difficult to acquire large wealth within a short time by only fair means. The wealth of my forefathers was built up slowly and with patience. They had no spectacular earnings. Many times I have heard my father say that the wealth of our family was built up by savings rather than any large earnings at any particular time. In addition to their duties to their own family, they did also their duty to the community. It makes me happy every time I see the choultry which my forefathers have built in Palladam, now a hundred and fifty years old. Our family has provided for puja every day in the Avinashi Temple and it makes one good to think that this has been going on for nearly a century. They have built choultries in many pilgrim centres like Avinashi, Perur, Thirumuruganpundi and provided for worship in many shrines. The choultry in Tirupur is the biggest of them built nearly three quarters of a century back and in it provision was also made for the feeding of Brahmin pilgrims who would pass that side. Our forefathers were great men who commanded great respect in their times and did good work according to the then prevailing notions. Even in this generation, it is gratifying to note that our family has been contributing well towards social services for public benefit".

There are only a very few who had lived upto the high ideals laid down in ancient Tamil Literature, and in our times by Gandhiji. That Ayya stood fore-most among such noble men, is evidenced by the sentiments expressed in his testament which he practised in his life. May his spirit guide the posterity for ever.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. K. R. NARAYANAN

Dr. K. R. Narayanan is the Vice President of the Republic of India; started his career as lecturer in English literature, University of Travancore; served as Reporter of the Times of India, earlier associated with the Editorial Department of The Hindu; joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1949; served in Diplomatic Missions in several countries; Ambassador to U.S.A. and Peoples Republic of China; Vice-Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University; elected to Lok Sabha in 1984; served as Minister of State for Planning, External Affairs, Science and Technology, Ocean Development, Atomic Energy; received awards : Jawaharlal Nehru's Fellowship for study of Nehru's Non Alignment, Honorary Fellow of the London School of Economics, Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science from University of Toledo, U.S.A.; published books: **India and America, Essays on Understanding, Non Alignment in Contemporary International Relations** (jointly with Prof. K.P. Misra), **Images and Insights.**



SRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO

Hon'ble Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao is the Prime Minister of India; took part in Vandemataram movement in former Hyderabad State; was the Vice President of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee 1956; was a Member of Andhra Pradesh State Legislative Assembly 1955-77; Minister for Law and Information 1962, Law and Endowments in 1964, Health and Medicine in 1967, Education in 1968 and Chief Minister in 1971; was the General Secretary of Indian National Congress from 1974 to 1977; Member of Lok Sabha from 1977 to 1979 and was re-elected during the elections of 1980, 1984 and 1989; was the Union Minister of External Affairs 1980- 84, Home Affairs 1984, Defence 1985, Human Resource and Health and Family Welfare 1986-88 and again External affairs 1988-89; an eminent scholar with proficiency in thirteen languages; well-known for his works in Hindi and has published several books.

SRI R. VENKATARAMAN

His Excellency Sri R. Venkataraman was the eighth President of India between 1987 to 1992; had served as an advocate in Madras High Court and Supreme Court; was detained during Quit-India Movement in 1942-44; a Member of the Provisional Parliament in 1950; a Lok Sabha member during the periods 1952-57 and 1977-84; served as the Minister for Industry and Labour in Tamil Nadu during 1957-67; a member of the Planning Commission 1967-71; Union Finance Minister 1980-82; the Vice President of India 1984-87; the Chairman of National Research and Development Corporation; was the recipient of the Soviet Land Nehru Prize for his travelogue on Kamaraj's visit to Russia.

SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM

Sri C. Subramaniam is the Chancellor of Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore and President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; received B.L. degree in 1932, University of Madras; active participant in the Freedom Movement; Member of the Constituent Assembly of India which framed the Constitution of the Republic; Member of the State Cabinet, and Leader of the House in the Madras Legislative Assembly during 1952-62; elected as Member of the Lok Sabha in 1962, and became Union Minister of of Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering and later Food and Agriculture; was Chairman of the Committee on Aronautics Industry 1967-69, Interim President of the Indian National Congress in 1969, Chairman of the National Commission on Agriculture 1970; joined the Union Cabinet in 1971, as Minister of Planning and also Deputy Chairman of the National Planning Commission; the Union Minister for Industrial Development in 1972, Minister for Finance, 1974 to 1977; and Defence Minister in 1979; Governor of Maharashtra 1991-1992; at the invitation of the U.N., heading a panel of experts to draw up a strategy for fighting malnutrition in the developing countries; has travelled extensively and is a prolific writer.

DR. BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH

Dr. Bhismha Narain Singh is the Governor of Tamil Nadu; entered public life at 19 years of age as the Joint Convenor of Youth Congress in the Banaras Hindu University; took active part in the development of Panchayat Raj instutions in Palamau district of Bihar; held key positions in Congress; Member, Bihar Legilstive Assembly 1967-1976; Minister for Education in the Government of Bihar 1971; Mines and Geology 1972-73, and Food Supply and Commerce 1973-74; elected to Rajya Sabha 1976-1982; Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, 1980- 82, Food and Civil Supplies 1983; Governor of Sikkim 1985-1986. Arunachal Pradesh 1987; recipient of the Rashtriya Shikar Samman Award 1991, Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa from Gandhigram Rural University 1992.

DR. C. ARANGANAYAGAM

Dr. C. Aranganayagam is the Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Government of Tamil Nadu; graduated in Education and Law, Member of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly since 1974; Member of All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam since 1972; former President of Bharat Scouts and Guides; Member of State Harijan Welfare Board; Leader of Indian Scouts Delegation to the World Scouts Conference, Birmingham in 1977; Tamil Nadu Delegate and participant in the II World Tamil Cultural Conference, Mauritius in 1980.

SRI V. APPAKUTTI

Sri V. Appakutti is the Managing Trustee of Kasturba Gandhi Kanya Gurukulam, Vedaranyam; son of late Sardar Vedarathnam Pillai, one of the Veterans of freedom struggle from Tamil Nadu; born and brought up in highest nationalist traditions; one of the early students of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya founded by Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam; and succeeded his father as the Managing Trustee of the Home for Destitute Women.

DR. CATHERINE R. MUMAW

Catherine R. Mumaw is the Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Economics, in Oregon State University, U.S.A.; Professor, Home Economics Department; has a Ph.D. Degree from Pennsylvania State University; Visiting Professor at Warsaw Agricultural University, Poland; Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore under USIA Faculty Exchange Programme, has rich experience in program development; has many publications to her credit; consultant to Solar Box Cokkers, International, Sacramento, California 1989, Curriculum Planning on Food Processing and Nutrition to Government of Jamaica, 1981; recipient of IHEA Leader Award in 1985.

DR. G. CHANDRAKANTHI

Dr. (Mrs.) Chandrakanthi is the Correspondent of GRG/Pioneer Group of Educational Institutions with 11,200 students from LKG to Ph.D. level, 500 teachers and 300 non-teaching staff; an executive member in a large number of industrial units in Coimbatore; member of Academic and Social Organisations; recipient of awards in education in India and abroad.

DR. (Mrs.) M. CHANDRAMANI

Dr. M. Chandramani is the Dean Faculty of Education, Avinashilingam Deemed University; received Master's Degree in Child Development from M.S. University, Baroda in 1965; Master's Degree in Education from the University of Madras in 1978 and Ph.d. from Madras University in 1988; served as Lecturer (1965-70) and Professor (1971-76) in the Department of Child Development at Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College; served as Principal of Sri Avinashilingam College of Education.

SMT.T.S.B.DHANALAKSHMI AMMAL

Smt. T.S.B. Dhanalakshmi Ammal is the daughter of Sri T.S. Thirugnana Sambandam Chettiar, the noted industrialist and Philanthropist of Coimbatore, hailing from the Illustrious family of Ayya; educated at Sri R.K.Rangammal Kalvi Nilayam; was married to Sri T.B. Balasubramanian, Banker from Tirupur; has involved in social work after the demise of her husband, since 1987; is the managing trustee of T.S. Balasubramanian Chettiar Trust which provides free medical service to the poor people and conducts free eye camps; interested in the growth of the educational Institutions founded by Sri T.S. Avinashilingam and also the one run by V.A.T. Charities, at Tirupur.

SRI P. GNANADURAI MICHEAL

Sri P. Gnanadurai Micheal has rich professional experiences; Extension Officer (khadi and village industries) Department of Rural development, Government of Tamil Nadu; Manager of Tourism promotion, a senior executive in a Travel Agency at Madras; is the Regional Representative for South Asia christoffel Blindenmission of West Germany for the past 14 years, does liaison work with nearly 160 ophthalmic Hospital/Departments and 100 educational and rehabilitation institutions for visually handicapped and other categories of Disabled in South Asia; has

been largely responsible for initiating and establishing training centres like Institute of Ophthalmology,Joseph Eye Hospital, Trichy, the Special Education Unit, Faculty of Education, Avinashilingam Deemed University, Special Education Unit, Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University, Nepal; has been the recipient of the "For the sake of Honour" award by Rotary Club.

DR. GODAVARI KAMALANATHAN

Dr. (Mrs.) Godavari Kamalanathan is the Honorary Director of Sri Avinashilingam Educational Trust Institutions, Coimbatore; Fulbright scholar in M.S. in Cornell University, U.S.A.; Doctorate in Home Science; received Governor Chancellor gold medal; served as Lecturer, Professor, Vice Principal, Principal in Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College since 1958; participated in and organised seminars and conferences at the national and international level.

SRI M. GOPALAKRISHNAN

Sri M. Gopalakrishnan is the most renowned banker and the Chairman and Managing Director of Indian Bank; has been the guiding spirit and architect for the multi-faceted development of the Banking Sector; interest in promoting the economically and socially backward sector through his persistent and tireless effort is commendable.

DR. C. GOPALAN

One of the world renowned nutritionists, Dr. C. Gopalan is the President of Nutrition Foundation of India, Fellow of the Royal Society of Physicians, Fellow of the Indian Academy of Science and National Academy of Medical Sciences, India; Former Director General of ICMR; Director of National Institute of Nutrition and President of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences, Chairman, Regional Advisory Committee on Medical Research WHO; Elected Honorary Member of the American Institute of

Nutrition, Nuffield Foundation; Fellow in Medical Research Council U.K.; Rockfeller Foundation Fellow Member; Nutrition Expert panel of the WHO and FAO; Chairman, Task Force on Nutrition of the Planning Commission National Committee on Drug Abuses; and Committee of Alternative Strategies in Delivery of Health Care, (ICMR, ICSSR), Recipient of many national awards and prizes like Basanti Devi Amir Chand Prize 1954, 1960, Amrut Mody Research Award 1972, Dr. B.C. Roy National Award 1974, Ambhuj Nath Bose Prize 1975, Ademola Prize 1976, Dhanvantri Award 1978.

DR. S. JANAKARATHNAM

Dr. S. Janakarathnam, a medical doctor by profession; had his basic school education in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya 1957-59; was working as Assistant Physician, Government General Hospital and Assistant Professor of Medicine, Madras Medical College, resigned the Government service; settled down in Gobichettipalayam for private practice in 1959; is a trustee in the Gobi Educational Trust and C.K.K. Trust and the Managing Director of Unity Mills Ltd., Gobichettipalayam.

DR. S. JAYARAJ

Dr. S. Jayaraj, the Vice Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, is a renowned expert in entomology; has to his credit several awards and distinctions; his Ph.D. thesis (1964) was adjudged as the best thesis of the University of Madras; had been awarded Fellowships from the Council for Scientific Industrial Research, India and German Academic Exchange Service; had served extensively in teaching, research, extension departments of the agricultural colleges in the state and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University; held positions as Agricultural Extension Officer, Professor, Director of Research and Registrar; had co-ordinated a number of research projects sponsored by national and international agencies such as ICAR, DST, CSIR, Ford Foundation, IRRI, USDA, etc; has several research papers,

bulletins and books to his credit; has served on a number of academic, professional and policy level committees at the state and national level; has visited several countries as a delegate and consultant.

MS. K. JEGATHAMBAL

Ms.K. Jegathambal, was the former Principal, Queen Mary's College, Madras, has served in various positions in School and Collegiate education; visited U.K. and France to study educational planning and administration; introduced New Maths in Indian schools; had published many books relating to teaching of mathematics in secondary schools and a number of articles in educational journals.

DR. JOHN ASIRVATHAM

Dr. John Asirvatham is Professor of Tamil at Madras Christian College, Tambaram, Madras; in addition to Ph.D. in Tamil from the Madras University has also passed some examinations in Hindi; won many awards such as Sahityarathna and Tamilmamani; the author of more than ten novels; has published 200 articles in Kalaimagal, Manjari etc.; has been contributing many articles for the past ten years in Vignana Chudar, published by Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore.

SRI M. KALAIVANAN

Sri M. Kalaivanan, I.A.S. is the Joint Commissioner of Revenue Administration, Government of Tamil Nadu; former District Collector of Coimbatore; had observed various social service activities of Avinashilingam Education Trust and Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya particularly in the area of literacy and adult education.

DR. KAMALA ANANDAM

Dr. Kamala Anandam is the Associate Dean of Educational Technologies in Miami-Dade Community College, the largest two- year college in the United States of America; prior to moving to the United States in 1967, was the Head and Professor of Child Development in the erstwhile Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College; received her B.A. in Chemistry and B.T. from the University of Madras and M.S. in Child Development and Ed. D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Tennessee, USA; serves as a Consulting Scholar for IBM in the USA; is a member of several Honor Societies and is listed in the **Who is Who among American Women Directory**; has published extensively about the role of technology in higher education.

DR. S. KRISHNAMURTHI

Dr. S. Krishnamurthi is the Founder-President of Krishnamurthi International Agricultural Foundation, Madras; graduated from the then Madras Agricultural College, Coimbatore in 1932; obtained Master's Degree in Horticulture at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1947 and awarded honorary D.Sc., degree by Michigan State University, 1990, served the Department of Agriculture in the composite Madras State; helped in establishing the Department of Agriculture in Annamalai University (1951-57); was the first Head of the Division of Horticulture of IARI, New Delhi (1958-63); served as the Dean and Additional Director of Agriculture in the Agricultural College and Research Institute, Coimbatore (1963-65); has many firsts to his credit; the first Technical Director of Agriculture in the Government of Tamil Nadu; the first Managing Director of Banana and Fruit Development Corporation of Government of India; Nominated by FAO for Dr. B. R. Sen Global award; and also was awarded Distinction in his Ph.D. by Michigan State University; was an advisor to UNO panel in Middle East and Africa; led to UNDP/FAO Expert Teams in Iraq, Middle East and Africa, (1969-75); Honorary visiting Professor at Michigan State University; has more than 100 research papers; his books include

Horticultural and Economic Plants of Nilgiris; Advances in Agricultural Sciences and their Applications; Influence of Mettur Irrigation and Hydro-Electric Project on Agriculture and Agro-Industry.

DR. V. C. KULANDAI SWAMY

Dr. V.C. Kulandai Swamy, is the Vice-Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University; held many eminent posts: Dean, Post-graduate studies and Research, College of Engineering, Guindy, Tamil Nadu; Director, Technical Education, Government of Tamil Nadu; Vice-Chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University and Anna University; U.N. Adviser Sri Lanka, President of AIU;member of Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, NCERT, Member of Board of Governors, TTI, and of State Planning Commission, Government of Tamil Nadu; was Chairman in Working Group on Education and Research and in Central Board of Irrigation; associated with Institution of Asian Studies, Madras and International Institue of Tamil Studies as its Vice-Chairman; recipient of many awards such as Gold Medal from the Ministry of Irrigation 1973; Leverhulme Fellowship in Hydrology, Australia 1975, Sahitya Academy Award 1988; developed a theory on rainfall - runoff relationship which is quoted in International Hydrologic Literature as "The Kulandaiswamy Model".

DR. K. KULANDAIVEL

Dr. K. Kulandaivel, is the Registrar of Avinashilingam Deemed University; with his higher education at Ohio State University, U.S.A., and rich experience of travelling abroad started his career as staff of Hindustan Tamil Sangh; held various positions at various levels in all the institutes of Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya; served as Dean, College Development Council, Bharathiar University; is one of the senior trustee of Avinashilingam Educational Trust; has been actively associated with a number of academic and non-academic committees like - Executive Committee, the Tamil Academy, Madras, Secretary of Non-minority College

Management Association; has authored a number of books **The Audio-visual Aids, Directions of National Development** and **Handbook on research Methodology.**

SMT. LAKSHMI N. MENON

Smt. Lakshmi N. Menon is a renowned Social worker and former Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India; President, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Indore; Chairman, National Committee on Eradication of Illiteracy; a teacher by profession and a proficient thinker; now the Chairman of the All India Committee for the Eradication of Illiteracy among Women by 2000 A.D., working hard for removing illiteracy among women by involving every literate person in India.

DR. LAKSHMI SANTA RAJAGOPAL

Dr. (Mrs.) Lakshmi Santa Rajagopal is Professor of Family Resource Management, Dean - Home Science at Avinashilingam Deemed University; graduated from the M.S. University, Baroda; joined Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College in 1958; received the Master's degree from the University of Tennessee, U.S.A. in 1961 under the TCM programme; specialised in Waste Recycling and Management for the Ph.D. programme in 1981 in Madras University; had served as Professor of Home Management and Principal; had organised several workshops, Seminars and the UGC Sponsored Refresher Courses in Home Science; attended the XVII Congress of the International Federation of Home Economics held at Hannover, Germany in 1992; has a number of research articles to her credit; served as Editor of the Indian Journal of Home Science, published by the Home Science Association of India 1966-1978; the current president of the Coimbatore Chapter of the University Women's Association.

SMT. LEILA DIRAVIAM

Smt. Leila Diraviam, the wife of late Sri K. Diraviam, I.A.S., who was the Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, is a home maker with wide interests in literature, art, science and social work; is actively involved in many development programmes for women and children at the grassroot level; participates in the programmes of the YWCA.

DR. N. MAHALINGAM

Dr. N. Mahalingam, the founder of Nachimuthu Polytechnic, and President of the Managing Committe of N.G.M. Arts College Pollachi is an eminent industrialist; graduated in Physics and qualified as Mechanical Engineer; was a member in the Madras Legislative Assembly 1952-67; Managing Director of Sri Sakthi Textiles, Indo-Swiss Synthetic Gem Manufacturing Co. Ltd., Sakthi Sugars Ltd., Sri Bhagavathi Textiles Ltd., Sri Chamundeswari Sugars Ltd., A.B.T. Parcel Service Sakthi Soyas among others; was Chairman of Madras Fertilizers Ltd.; Director of Neyveli Lignite Corporation, Cochin Shipyard Co. and HUDCO, a member in the Tamil Nadu Planning Commission; has sponsored charitable organisations such as Nachimuthu Gounder Trust, Sakthi Charities; was conferred the title **Aram Valarkkum Annal** by the Kanchi Kamakoti Peedam, 1983 and also the recipient of Indra Gandhi National Integration Award, 1989; was awarded the Honorary Doctorate in Law in 1984 by Bharathiar University; Doctor of Science in 1988 by Anna University; has authored more than 25 books : **Some Thoughts on Planning**, **Some Thoughts on Transport and Industry**, among others.

DR. MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH

An outstanding economist and educationist, Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah has been Chairman, Madras Institute of Development Studies since 1978; Vice Chancellor of the University of Madras 1975-78; nominated to the Rajya Sabha

in 1978; President of the Governing Board of the UNESCO; International Institute of Educational Planning in 1981; and was the Deputy Director General of UNESCO for sixyears; served as Member of the Tamil Nadu Planning Commission and of the Steering Committee of the Union Planning Commission; served as member of the Central Advisory Board of Education, the National Council of Teacher Education, President of the Indian Adult Education Association, the Vishwayuvak Kendra, the Family Planning Foundation of India and the Indian Economic Association 1973-74, Member of the U.N. International Committee of Consultants on Environment; Co- ordinator of the UNESCO working group on the New International Economic Order and President of the Asian Association of Social Science Research Council; visited 40 countries, Honorary doctorates conferred by 15 universities; has published extensively on Indian economic issues; awarded Padma Bhushan 1976.

DR. M.N.G. MANI

Dr. M.N.G. Mani is the Head of the Department of Special Education and also the Honorary Project Director of the Resource and Development Centre of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore; has two doctoral degrees-one from India and the other from the United States; has done pioneering work in the area of integrated education for the visually handicapped in India and abroad; served as a member of many national and international committees; has over 40 publications to his credit.

DR. MARGY J. WOODBURN

Dr. Margy J. Woodburn is the Professor and Chairman of the Department of Nutrition and Food Management and Associate Director of Agricultural Experiment Station, Oregon State University, U.S.A.; had her college education in Foods & Nutrition, from University of Wisconsin, Madison; is the recipent of many honours like Earl Price Award for Excellence in Research 1985, Award of Merit, for Home Science in University of Illinois Home Economics Alumni Association 1981 and Borden Award for Fundamental

Research in the field of Nutrition and Experimental Foods 1976; has nearly fifty publications to her credit; is the Director of the USIA Inter-University Affliation Programme between Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women and Oregon State University.

DR. K. M. MARIMUTHU

Dr. K.M. Marimuthu is the Vice Chancellor of Bharathiar University, since 1988; an eminent educationist, received his M. Tech. degree in Genetics and Plant Breeding from IIT, Kharagpur, Ph.D. degree in Genetics and Cytology in 1965 from the University of Mcmaster, Canada; a Post Doctoral Fellow in Botany at Michigan University; had worked as Director, Chromosoma Research Laboratory at the School of Medicine in Tufts University, Boston; had worked as the Head of the Department of Genetics, University of Madras from 1976; has special training in Electron Microscopy, research experience in the Bio-Satellite Programme at NASA in U.S.A.; member of national and international societies in Biology, Genetics, and Radiation; published a book on **Recent Trends in Medical Genetics**, 1986, and a Laboratory manual in Genetics, 1976.

SRI S. MOHAN

Sri S. Mohan is Supreme Court Judge of India, was a graduate from the Presidency College; a recipient of Lakshminarasa Reddy Gold Medal in 1952; passed M.L. Degree in 1954 and enrolled as Advocate in the High Court, Madras; assumed charge as Chief Justice, High Court, Madras in 1989; was the acting Governor of Karnataka, Bangalore during February 1990 to May 1990; sworn in as Supreme Court Judge in October 1991; author of many books in English and Tamil; the Chairman of Mylapore Arts Academy and the former President of St. John's Ambulance Association, Tamil Nadu; member of World Congress of Poets and the Patron of International Youth Hostels; had visited U.S., Far East, Europe, Morocco, Copenhegan, Cairo; was conferred Doctorate in Humanities (LHD) by World Academy of Arts and Culture,

Taipei, Republic of China, Doctorate in Literature (D. Litt.) at the 7th World Congress of Poets at Morocco.

DR. MOHAN DEVADAS

Dr. Mohan Devadas, the illustrious son of Devadas' family is a medical doctor practising in Baulkhan Hills, Australia; one of the early students in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya 1952-1957; came under the direct influence of Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam; has two M.S. degrees, one from the University of Madras and the other from the University of Minnasota; a member of the Australian and New South Wales Medical Association; was an executive member of Sydney Tamil Sangam and edited their Tamil Monthly, **Santhippu**; deeply interested in the growth of Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust Institutions.

DR. P. MUTHIAH MANOHARAN

Dr. P. Muthiah Manoharan, is the Director of Sri Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Vivekanandapuram; received M.Sc. and Doctoral degrees in the field of agriculture; started his career as Assistant Professor; has co-ordinated more than a dozen projects sponsored by Government of India, State Government, ICAR, SIDA, CAPART, DST etc. particularly for the upliftment of the rural community through self employment, income generation, improved agriculture, watershed and forestry programmes; has organised several training programmes for farmers, farm women, school and college teachers.

DR. S. MUTHUKUMARAN

Dr. S. Muthukumaran is the Vice-Chancellor of Bharathidasan University since 1988; served in the Public Works Department of the Government of Tamil Nadu for fourteen years; joined the faculty of College of Engineering, Guindy; held the position of Deputy Educational Adviser, Ministry of Education, Government of India; Registrar, Anna University; Chairman, Task Force on

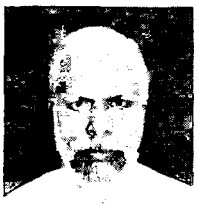
Technical Education, Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission; Chairman, Tamil Nadu State-level Review Committee on Autonomous Colleges and member of Review Committee of Self-Financing Engineering Colleges in Tamil Nadu; had drafted the Indian Standard Code on **Calculations of Settlements of Foundations**; Prolific writer, published a book in Tamil **Nenjil Niruthungal** and a book in English **Issues in Higher Education; Science and Technology** and numerous articles in Journals.

DR. NIRMALA KRISHNAMURTHY

Dr. Nirmala Krishnamurty, is Professor of Biochemistry, and Dean of the Faculty Sciences, Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore; received her B.Sc. (Hons) degree in 1957 from Annamalai University; had her higher studies in Iowa State University, USA; had varied experiences in other fields like research, training and participating in workshops, seminars etc.; member of many professional organisations; has a number of publications in Biochemistry and Nutrition.

SRI D.K. OZA

Sri D. K. Oza, I.A.S., is the Vice Chancellor of Gandhigram Rural University; Gandhigram; jointed the Indian Administrative Service in 1957;obtained B.A. (Honours) in Economics from Gujarat University in 1955; obtained additional post graduate degrees in History 1955 and Gandhian Thought 1986; served as Chief Election Commisioner of Tamil Nadu for 12 years; Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, 1971-1975; district administration, 1969-1971; deputed to the University of Wisconsin, U.S.A. for advanced training; an invited visitor of the British Council; fulbrighter author of **Voluntary Action and Gandhian Approach**; recipient of the Swedish Red Cross Medal and for the sake of Honour Award.



SRI V. PADMANABHAN

Sri V. Padmanabhan, is the Managing Trustee of Gandhigram Trust, Gandhigram, Anna District; Founder Secretary of the Gandhigram Institute; had training in village industries in All India Village Industries Association at Wardha; started khadi and a few village industries units in Gandhigram; involved actively in the publication of KVIC manual on construction, operation and maintenance of bio-gas plants; served both at state and national levels for rural development in general and khadi and village industries in particular; expert member in the reconstituted Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) since 1988; Chairman of the Patterns Committee of the KVIC; and visited the United States of America to attend a conference of the Committee of the Donor Agencies for Small Enterprise Developments to evolve a strategy for aiding the large scale introduction of micro enterprises in developed countries.

Ms. T. PADMASINI ASURI

Ms. T. Padmasini Asuri, is the Project Consultant to Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) which has its Head Office at Bangalore; serves in extension projects for women, youth in Karnataka; also steers various developmental programmes for women and youth at the national level; interested in community and extension work.

DR. S. PADMAVATI

Dr. S. Padmavati, F.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.R.C.P.E., F.A.C.C., F.A.M.S. is the President of the All-India Heart Foundation and Director of the National Heart Institute, New Delhi. She has been closely associated with Sri T.S. Avinashilingam as his physician, with the Avinashilingam Deemed University and Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya for many years.

DR. D. PAUL CHOWDHRY

Dr. Paul Chowdhry is the Director of Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute; holds a Doctorate degree in Sociology and Master's degree in Social Work; had been consultant to the Indian Council for Child Welfare and Ministry of Home Affairs; held senior positions in the Ministry of Rural Development, Central Social Welfare Board, and National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development; consultant to U.N. Organisations; member of Committees on Social Welfare and Development; is a member of Delhi Juvenile Welfare Board; has published more than a dozen books, visited different Universities abroad; participated in a number of national and international seminars.

SRI S.R.P. PONNUSWAMY CHETTIAR

Late S.R.P. Ponnuswamy Chettiar (SRP) was a leading industrialist of Coimbatore; started the Sivanandha Mills in 1952; later started Essorpe Mills, Sivananda Steels Ltd. and Sivananda Pipe Fittings Ltd. at Hozur (1980); Member of the Board of Directors in Kannapiran Mills Ltd., Permier Ltd., South India Viscose Ltd., Lakshmi Machine Works Ltd., Super Spinning Mills Ltd., Vice President of the Central Cooperative Stores, House Mortgage Bank, Indian Chamber of Commerce; Founder-President of Sri Ram Housing Co-operation Society; President of Handloom Cloth Merchants Association; Member of College committee of Sir. Thiyagaraja College, Madras; was Councillor of Coimbatore Municipality from 1947 to 1955; elected Chairman of the Chamber of Municipal Chairmen of Madras Presidency (1955-56); Member of the State Legislative Council of Tamil Nadu (1955-68); had donated liberally to educational institutions; had played a commendable role in the construction of Phase II Siruvani Dam and Nehru Sports Stadium.

DR. RAJAMMAL P. DEVADAS

Dr. (Mrs.) Rajammal P. Devadas, the Vice Chancellor of Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore, is a world renowned Nutrition Scientist; completed her education with excellent academic record and stood first throughout her studies, and was awarded merit prizes for her performance; took Ph.D. from Ohio State University USA in 1950 and D.Sc. from the University of Madras in 1978; was Principal, Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College Coimbatore, 1960-80; Assistant Director General- Nutrition, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi 1975-76; Chief Home Economist and Joint Director (Home Science), Directorate of Extension, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India 1955-61; Dean and Professor of Home Science, Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda; Dietitian and Professor, College of Nursing, Government of India, New Delhi 1951-53; holds many positions in national and international organisations like FAO, UNICEF, WHO, ICAR, ICMR, NCERT, UGC, NIPCCD; has published over 400 research papers, 200 articles, 39 books, has extensively travelled abroad, has been the recipient of several national awards, the latest being, the ICEER R and D Linker Award, Padmashri, Hari Om Ashram Award of UGC, Dr. B.C. Guha Memorial Lecture Award at 80th Indian Science Congress.

SRI V. RAMACHANDRAN

Sri V. Ramachandran is the Founder Secretary of Bharatiya Khadi Gramodyog Sangh, Coimbatore; participated in freedom movement in student days in Annamalai University; joined the All India Spinners Association in 1940; Founder, Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Sarvodaya Sangh in 1958; was the Managing Trustee of the Sarva Seva Sangh (1965-76); Member Secretary of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (1975-78); Secretary Bharathiya Khadi Gramodyog Sangh (1980-83); Chairman, Advisory Committee, All India Khadi and Village Industries

Commission, Bombay (1990); the first Honorary Director of Sri Avinashilingam Shramik Vidya Peeth, Coimbatore (1986-89).

SRI K.S. RAMANUJAM

Sri K.S. Ramanujam, a journalist by profession is the son of Sri K. Santhanam who renounced his personal career as lawyer responding to Gandhiji's call in 1920's and joined the freedom struggle, had served as a correspondent and representative for the Hindustan Times of New Delhi and also for Southern Economist covering Southern India during his entire career; his forte as a reporter was politics, economics and socio-economic problems; was invited by the U.S. State Department for a six week tour in 1964.

SRI S. RAMASWAMY

Sri S. Ramaswamy is the President of Coimbatore city Congress (East) Committee; came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi at Warda Ashram in 1944; associated with the Indian National Congress and Freedom movement, elected to Coimbatore Municipal Council in 1955, 1960, 1964 and 1971; a leading co-operator, had functioned as Director of Coimbatore District Co-operative Supply and Marketing Society Ltd., Madras, Trichy, Erode and Pollachi Co-operatives stores Ltd., Coimbatore Co-operative Printing Press Ltd., Coimbatore Industrial Workers Co-operative House Building Society Ltd., Dr. Sivananda Co-operative House Building society; associated in an executive capacity with several educational, Social Service Institutions and spiritual organisations.

DR. G. RAMATHILAGAM

Dr. G. Ramathilagam is the Professor of Economics and Dean, Humanities, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed University), Coimbatore; had her postgraduation in Economics at Stella Maris

College, Madras; joined the staff of the then Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women in 1967; received her Ph.D. on the topic **Female work participation as wage labour in Agriculture in Tamil Nadu**; had participated in many national and international seminars and workshops on Women's Issues; her overseas experience was at Oregon State University, U.S.A. in 1991 as a courtesy faculty member in the Agricultural and Resource Economics Department, under the USIA Institutional Affiliation Project between OSU and ADU.

SMT. SAROJINI VARADAPPAN

Smt. Sarojini Varadappan, the daughter of Sri. M. Bhaktavatchalam, is a renowned Social Worker; an active member of the Women's Indian Association since 1945; responsible for the construction of 303 mahila mandal buildings in rural areas of Tamil Nadu ; hold important positions in the State and Central Social Welfare Boards, was the Chairman of State Welfare Board 1964-67; honorary Magistrate in the Juvenile court; Director of the Metro Water Board; Member of State Planning Commission; has been the receipient of a number of awards for the contributions to women's welfare; received Padmashri in 1973; had travelled widely all over the world.

SRI R. SENGOTTUVELAN

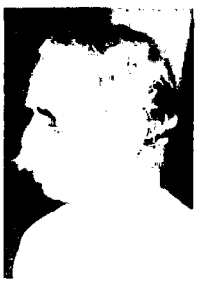
Justice Sri R. Sengottuvelan is the Chairman of the Tamil Nadu State Administrative Tribunal and one of the Senior Trustees of Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust; was enrolled in the Coimbatore Bar in 1951 after completing his apprenticeship under Hon'ble Mr. Justice P.S. Kailasam; his legal practice in Coimbatore extended over a period of 28 years; was the Judge of Madras High Court (1979-87); was President of Coimbatore City Co-operative Bank Ltd. for 14 years; has been connected with many religious and charitable institutions like Nanneri Kazhagam; has a deep interest in Tamil Literature.

SRI T. K. SHANMUGANANDAM

Sri T. K. Shanmuganandam is an advocate of the Coimbatore Bar and Notary Public since the past 30 years; Director in Madras Spinners, Sivananda Mills, Tirupur Lakshmi Vilas Finance Company, and Gajalakshmi Theatres; past President of Rotary Club West, and Cosmopolitan Club; served as Secretary of SPCA, Coimbatore; was Vice President, Indian Vegetarian Congress; is the Secretary of Victoria Town Hall Committee; Trustee of Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust; Secretary of Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust Institutions since the past 25 years.

SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

Swami Satchidananda is one of the highly respected spiritual teachers and Yoga masters in the world today; Author of many books viz. **Integral Yoga Hatha**, **To Know Yourself** and **Beyond Words**; taught at the Yoga Vedanta Forest University; Directed activities at Divine Life Society branches in India, Sri Lanka and Far East; invited by Almmaker Conrad Rooks and artist Peter Max to visit the United States, 1966; became a citizen of United States; received the Martin Buber Award for Outstanding Service to Humanity, title of fellow of World Thanks giving, Honorary Fellow of the World Vegetarian Congresses, Fellow of Concordia University, the B'nai B'rith Anti Defamation League Humanitarian Award and two honorary doctorates. His interfaith work is manifested, in the **Light of Truth Universal Shrine** (LOTUS), at the heart of Yogaville, Virginia, U.S.A.



DR. M.P. SIVAGNANAM

Dr. M.P. Sivagnanam popularly known as Silambu Chelvar Ma.Po.Si., is well known for his scholarship in the Epic - **Silappathikaram**; had been very active in the politics of Tamil Nadu as a member of Indian National Congress; and was the Chairman of erstwhile Tamil Nadu Legislative Council; a senior politician; held in deep respect by

leaders of all political parties in the state; has won the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award for his Work - **Vallalar Kanda Orumaipadu**; awarded Padmashri in 1972; received Honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of Madras; currently the editor of Tamil Weekly, **Sengol**.

SWAMI SOMANANDA

Swami Somananda is the Secretary of Sri Ramakrishna Mission at Salem; a true follower of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda; not only preaches their messages but also practises them; assisted Dr. Avinashilangam throughout his life in his endeavours; participates actively in the religious functions/ceremonies and the developmental programmes of the institutions founded by Dr. Avinashilingam.

SRI P. SOMASUNDARAM

Sri P. Somasundaram is the Secretary of Tamil Academy; has held many important positions in education, rural development and social work; started his career as a research assistant under the then Economic Adviser to Government of Madras 1949- 1953; was a Gazetted Block Development Officer at Tiruchi 1953-1957; served as Regional Officer, Deputy Director and Director of Khadhi and Village Industries Department, Government of Tamil Nadu; has dedicated 15 years of his service for the development of Kadhi and Village Industries in Tamil Nadu; interested in the development of Tamil language and literature from the year 1975.

DR. K.S. SOUNDARAM

Dr. (Mrs.) K.S. Soundaram, is the Member of Parliament from Tiruchengode Parliamentary constituency; graduated in Zoology, got her masters degree in Tamil; completed her doctorate in 1990 from the Bharathiar University; held the position of Assistant Professor in Tamil in Kongunadu Arts and Science College, Coimbatore; had the distinction of securing the maximum votes

with largest margin in Tamil Nadu Parliamentary Constituency; is a member in the Syndicate of Avinashilingam Deemed University.

DR. G. SOUNDARARAJ

Dr. G. Soundararaj, is a freelance artist, poet, short story writer, book reviewer, translator and journalist; his poems have appeared in prestigious magazines in India and abroad and have been translated into Finnish, German, French and Korean; published two books of poems **The Harvest** and **Second Symphony**; an associate Editor of **Tamil Pani** 1980 - 1991; won many awards : **International Eminent Poet** from International Arts Academy, **Micheal Madhusudan Award** for excellence in English Poetry, **Ethu Nallathu** novelette in Tamil for Adult Literacy Programmes from Government of India; awarded Rs. 1 lakh by Oriental Society, London, for translating Adiyar's novel **Manaivi** into English; has exhibited his paintings in Lalit Kala Academy, V.T.I. and Oviya Nunkalai Kuzhu; has travelled abroad widely.

THAVATHIRU SUNDARASWAMIGAL

Thavathiru Sundaraswamigal is the Head of Gowmara Math Trust in Chinnavedampatti; a gifted speaker; also the head of Patteeswarar temple, Avinashi temple, Vellingiri and other temples in and around Coimbatore City; has delivered a number of spiritual lectures at both the Avinashilingam Institute and Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya; well versed in composing poems in Tamil.

DR. B. B. SUNDARESAN

Dr. Bommaya Bala Sundaresan, served as Vice Chancellor of the Madras University during 1984-87; obtained Ph.D. degree in Environmental Engineering in 1963 from the University of Florida, U.S.A.; was the President of Indian Water Works Association; visited U.S.A., U.K., Denmark, Peru, Thailand, West Africa, Zambia as an expert under various international assignments; has over 90

technical papers and three books to his credit and has awarded the Institution of Engineer prize in 1965; was selected as the **Engineering Personality** at the Second Indian Engineering Congress held at Hyderabad in 1988.

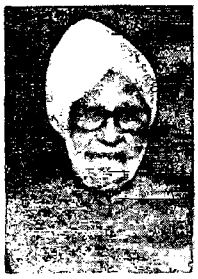
DR. M.S. SWAMINATHAN

Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, is an International leader in agricultural sciences; well-known for introducing dwarf wheat into India and initiating High-Yielding Varieties Programme; has held many eminent posts - Assistant Botantist, CRRI, Cuttack; Assistant Cytogeneticist, IARI; Cytogeneticist, Head of Botany division; Director IARI; Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Government of India; Member of Planning Commission and Director General of IRRI, Phillipines, Associated with many international societies such as Royal Society London; US National Academy of Sciences; Swedish Seed Association, National Academy of Science of Italy; Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences; won many awards such as Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award 1961; Ramon Magsaysay Award 1971, Albert Einstein World Science Award 1986; World Food Prize 1987, Honda prize 1991 for his leadership role in solving Asia's food problems.

SWAMI TANMAYANANDA

Swami Tanmayananda, the Secretary of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, after Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam, is a senior monk of Sri Ramakrishna Order; Manager of the Madras Math and its publication department; was the Assistant Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture at Calcutta; served at Advaita Ashram, Mayavati (Himalayas), Vivekananda College, Madras and Ramakrishna Mission Saradapitha, Belur; carrying on the rich spiritual traditions set by Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam in the Vidyalaya; organised a Padayatra from Coimbatore to Kanyakumari to mark the centenary of Swami Vivekananda's Bharata Parakrama, to raise people's awareness about

Swami Vivekananda; translated into Tamil **Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.**



SRI TARLOK SINGH

Sri Tarlok Singh, a well-known economist and a former member of Planning Commission; joined Indian Civil Service in 1937; was Private Secretary to Vice President, Interim Government and Prime Minister 1946-1947; visiting Senior Research Economist, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs; Fellow, Institute of International Economic Studies, University of Stockhalm 1967, 1969-70; Honorary Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science; Chairman, Indian Association of Social Science Institutions 1979- 81; Chairman, Programme Committee since 1981, author of books, **Poverty and Social Change, Towards an Integrated Society; Indian Development Expertise**

DR. M.S. UDAYAMOORTHY

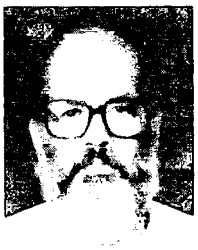
Dr. M.S. Udayamoorthy, a distinguished writer, speaker and the Founder - Leader of People's Power Movement in Tamil Nadu is a double postgraduate in Chemistry of Annamalai and Madras Universities; worked as Assistant Professor in Chemistry at Kumbokonam Government Arts College and Guindy Engineering College, Madras; had his Ph.D. in Medical Biochemistry at Wisconsin University and had worked at several American Universities; left academics to become the Chief Executive of a food processing industry in Wisconsin, U.S.A.; founded his own industry **Barclay Chemicals** in 1982; is listed in the Who is Who of America's Directory of Industrialists; is a Fulbright Scholar.

DR. R. VENKATESALU

Dr. R. Venkatesalu is the Managing Director of Sri Ramakrishna Steels Industries Group of Companies Coimbatore; Managing Trustee of Sri Ramakrishna Hospital, Coimbatore; recipient of Honorary Doctor of Laws of Bharathiar University in recognition of his service in the fields of industry, education and medicine and his deep committment to socially oriented projects.

DR. K. VENKATASUBRAMANIAN

Dr. K. Venkatasubramanian is the noted educationist, writer and speaker; closely associated with late Sri T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar as Director of Education, Tamil Nadu, Member of the State Planning Commission, Member of National Education Commission (Teachers); the first Vice Chancellor of the Central University, Pondicherry; led quite a few Indian delegations abroad and received the highest award the **Silver Elephant** in scouting Great Innovator in Education and organiser of School Improvement Conferences.



SRI K. VISWANATHAN

Sri. K. Viswanathan, currently Director of Mitraniketan, had his education at Viswabharathi, Santhi Niketan and undergone Basic Education Training Course at Sevagram, Wardha; had wide experience in many countries; founded Mitraniketan to promote education, indigenous culture and economic development; associated with Ministry of Rural Development, ICAR, and Universities; had served in various capacities in many state and national level committees like the Task Force Advisory Committee of NABARD; participated in national and international conference; recipient of the Jamnalal Bajaj Award, 1992.

WILLIS HOWARD SKRDLA and BETTY JEANE SKRDLA

Dr. Willis Howard Skrdla is currently Professor Emeritus at Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture; Agronemist by training and research, and worked on tropical agriculture in India 1984-86; was appointed as Plant Genetics Resources Leader in the International Centre for Research in Semi-Arid Tropics at Hyderabad; consultant for USAID in 1986; has several scientific and research publications to his credit; had made TV films and participated in radio interviews.

Mrs. Betty Jeane (Spalding) Skrdla, a retired Home Economist of Iowa State University; had served as consultant to several agencies including the National Bureau of Standards; along with her husband, Dr. Skrdla, had visited India during 1984-86 when she did volunteer work; member of The American Home Economics Association and the International Home Economics Association.

SRI K. ARUNACHALAM

Sri K. Arunachalam has served in Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya in various capacities as teacher, Headmaster, Professor and Principal since 1936; was the Vice President of Khadi and Village Industries Commission and President of Tamil Nadu Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

DR. C. BALASUBRAMANIAN

Dr. C. Balasubramanian, was Vice Chancellor of Tamil University, Thanjavur, 1989-1992; was the Head of the Department of Tamil in Madras University; had been closely associated with the development of Tamil language as a subject of study at the University level; an erudite scholar and gifted speaker; initiated work on the University Grants Commission project to bring out University level subject matter books in Tamil.

SRI R.K. BHAN

Sri R.K. Bhan is the President of Indian Society of Population Studies, New Delhi; was very intimately connected with Ayya, his ideology and dedicated activities in the field of education; implemented the educational programmes initiated by the Government of India.

MRS. CATHERINE ED HAKOLA

Mrs. Catherine Ed Hakola is a home-maker and ardent social worker in Columbus, Ohio State, U.S.A. Her love and friendship for people in general and individuals like Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas who was a student in Ohio State University in particular have endeared her to hundreds of human groups. Crossing her 90th birthday she is still active, visiting the old and sick bringing comfort and solace to them.

DR. S.V. CHITTIBABU

Dr. S.V. Chittibabu was the former Vice Chancellor, Madurai Kamaraj University and Annamalai University; Director of Collegiate Education; had contributed much towards the role of universities and colleges as agents of social change and national development; took active interest in finding solutions to the problems and dilemmas in the functioning of centres of higher learning, formal and non-formal and many special courses/women's education; gave concrete ideas and guidelines for shaping the right type of education for the youth of India.

GUNNAR AND BRIGITTA JACKS

Gunnar Jacks is Professor of Hydrology at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm and a humble disciple of the Indian culture. Mrs. Brigitta Jacks is an international worker in nutrition; her recent assignment under UNICEF was in Somalia; an ardent admirer of the Indian way of family living and sharing.

SRI V. KARTHIKEYAN

Sri V. Karthikeyan has held many important posts in Tamil Nadu as settlement officer, Collector, Secretary (Board of Revenue), Director of Agriculture, Director of Tamil

Development, Member, Board of Revenue and Second Secretary to Government, Chief Secretary to Government and Vigilance Commissioner; Advisor to Governor of Tamil Nadu; Chairman, State Planning Commission, Tamil Nadu; Chairman, Tamil Nadu Regional Branch of the Indian Institute of Public Administration and Chief Advisor, Institute for Techno Economic Studies, Madras.

SRI N.M.R. KRISHNAMOORTHY

Sri N.M.R. Krishnamoorthy is the brother of Sri N.M.R. Subbaraman; an active Gandhian and Constructive worker; is the Managing Trustee of Seethabai Parvathavarthini Ammal Trust, Madurai.

THAVATHIRU KUNDRAKUDI ADIGALAR

Thavathiru Kundrakudi Agigalar is well known for the construction of self-contained model village at Kundrakudi which caters to the needs of backward class and women of that area; a famous Tamil scholar, deeply involved in the development of Tamil Literature through his active participation in scholarly debates and functional literacy themes; known for his concerted efforts in spiritual movement.

DR.S. LAKSHMI

Dr. S. Lakshmi, the Vice Chancellor of Mother Teressa Women's University, Madras is a renowned educationist; has been member of SITU Council of educational research and training, Madras, the World Council for curriculam and instruction, Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi and Commonwealth Universities, UK; has been a recipient of the Best Principal Award from Tamil Nadu Government; published several research papers and guided a number of Ph.D. scholars.

DR. P. MALLIGESWARI

Dr. P. Malligeswari is working in the Department Family Resource Management, Queen Mary's College Madras; did her doctorate under Dr. Rajammal P. Devadas at the then Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women.

SRI K. MUNIANDI

Sri K. Muniandi is the Chairman of Gandhiniketan Ashram in Madurai district; involved in a variety of activities based on the principles of Gandhiji, specifically aiming at the upliftment of poor through community development; prolific writer and deeply interested in nation building activities.

Dr. S. PURUSHOTHAMAN

Dr. S. Purushothaman, is Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University, Trichy; held many eminent posts; Professor and Vice-Principal, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya College of Education, Coimbatore, Director, Academic Staff College, Bharathidasan University, Trichy; specialised in Educational Technology at Sheffield, University of London (U.K.); has guided many research scholars at doctoral level in various current areas such as Multimedia, CAI and VAI; is the member of AIAET, AIAER, INSEL, and AIAST; had also contributed much to the educational video programmes.

SRI G. RAMACHANDRAN

Sri G. Ramachandran is the Managing Trustee of Madhavi Mandiram Lok Seva Trust, Mahatma Gandhi Vidya Peedam, Neyyatinkara, South Kerala; a great constructive worker in the Gandhian tradition; had close association with Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam since the early days of the freedom struggle; and was Vice Chancellor of Gandhigram Rural Institute.

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

Swami Ranganathananda, an outstanding monk and spiritual leader of our times; joined the Sri Ramakrishna Order, its branch in Mysore in 1926; formally initiated into Sanyasa in 1933 by Swami Sivananda; Secretary and Librarian at the Ramakrishna Mission Branch at Rangoon, 1939 to 42; President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Karachi 1942 to 1948; Secretary of the New Delhi branch of the Mission 1949 to 1962 and Secretary of the Ramakrishna Institute of Culture, Calcutta 1962 to 1967, the Director of its School of Humanistic and Cultural Studies and Editor of its monthly journal; undertook extensive lecture-tours from 1946 to 1972 in Australia, USA,

Holland, West Germany, and several other countries; and author of many books such as **Eternal Values for a Changing Society, Vedanta and Modern Science, The Christ We Adore, The Call of Human Excellence.**

DR. SAROJINI MAHISHI

Dr. Sarojini Mahishi of Karnataka is a member of Central Social Education Board, Central Advisory Board of Education; a graduate in Law with a doctorate degree; was Fellow and Lecturer at Willingdon College, Sanli, Maharashtra, Assistant Professor of Law, Karnataka University; Member of Lok Sabha 1962-69; Parliamentary Secretary attached to Prime Minister 1967-69. Deputy Minister, Tourism and Civil Aviation 1971-74; Deputy Minister for Law, Justice and Company Affairs 1974-76; has published 15 books in Kannada and Hindi; recipient of Government of India Education Ministry's Award and Karnataka State Sahitya Academy award for **Atithi Satkar and Ye Hamare**

DR. S. SATHYA SEELAN

Dr. S. Sathya Seelan is the Professor and Head of the Department of Tamil and Principal of Urumu Dhanalakshmi College, Trichirapalli; started as a higher secondary school teacher; joined the National College, Trichi as Lecturer; a very talented speaker in Tamil; participated in several Patti Mandrams all over Tamil Nadu; recipient of the title **Navukkarasar.**

THAVATHIRU SHANTHALINGA RAMASWAMY ADIGALAR

Thavathiru Shanthalinga Ramaswamy Adigalar is incharge of the Thavathiru Shanthalinga Adigalar Mutt at Perur, Coimbatore; also the Trustee of Tamil College run by the Mutt at Perur which promotes Tamil Culture through teaching, research and extension activities; is associated with the activities of Gowmara Mutt at Saravanampatti; stresses on education with spiritual background; guided a number of Tamil Scholars in their doctorate work.

SMT. SOUNDARA KAILASAM

Smt. Soundara Kailasam is the wife of late Justice P.S. Kailasam of the Supreme Court of India; Philanthropist associated with Tiruchengode Gandhi Ashram, Pudupalayam, Salem; is a member of the Advisory Panel of All India Radio and Film Censor Board; member of the Hindu Religious Endowment Board, Madras; member of Second State Backward Classes Commission, Madras; undertaken lecture tours to Sri Lanka, Singapore and Malaysia to promote Tamil Literature; a reputed poet and writer; has composed several poems; had been awarded Asan prize for poetry, 1989 for the poetry collection **Soundra Kailasam Kavithaikal**, honoured by Islamic Literary Conference 1990 and Government of Tamil Nadu during Bharathidasan's Centenary.

DR. SUSHILA NAYAR

Dr. Sushila Nayar, a well-known freedom fighter, is the Honorary Professor, Social and Preventive Medicine and Director of Kasturba Health Society, Sevagram; courted arrest along with Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba; Medical Officer in Badshah Khan Hospital, Faridabad 1950; Member of Delhi State Assembly 1952- 56; Member of Lok Sabha 1957-70 and 1977-79; held many eminent positions in Health, Rehabilitation, Transport and Charitable Endowments 1952-55; Speaker 1955-56; Minister for Health 1962-67; associated with various other professional associations like AIMS, Tuberculosis Association, Indian Red Cross Society, etc. and her publications include **Hamari Ma Kasturba** - and **Karavas Ki Kahabai**.

SWAMI SWAHANANDA

Swami Swahananda is a Devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda; Inspired by their teachings he also entered into a very dedicated and selfess service to human being. A prolific writer, recalls the need to bring peace to man-kind in all his writings. He wants India to have a unique position in raising and upholding the banner of peace in today's world.

TMT. R.K. THARACHANDRIKA

Prof. (Tmt.) R.K. Tharachandrika, is working in the Department of Home Science, St. Teresea's College, Cochin; a former student and staff of the then Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women, Coimbatore.

DR. YASMIN MORENAS

Dr. Yasmin Morenas is the Senior Officer - Women in International Development at Food and Agricultural Organisation, Rome; serves the rural community and works out suitable strategies for their betterment.

INDEX

INDEX

Aberrations, 95
Abundance, 319
Academician, 321, 329
Academics, 222, 307, 334
Acceptance, 29, 30, 31
Accessible, 160
Accident, 168
Acclaim, 61, 333
Accommodation, 201, 204
Accomplish, 8, 64, 212
Accredit, 222
Acknowledge, 308, 323
Acquaintance, 103, 264
Acquitted, 79
Activism, 235
Actualisation, 249
Acumen, 296, 320
Adaptability, 212
Adept, 303
Adherence, 176, 177
Adherents, 336
Adi Shankara, 28, 88
Adiseshiah, Malcolm, 53
Administrative, 23, 61, 296, 298
Adminstrator, 329
Admirers, 79
Adolescence, 58
Adolescent, 60, 61
Adoption, 84, 251
Adornment, 298
Adulthood, 58
Advancement, 60, 158, 225, 264, 320, 331
Adventures, 243
Advertisements, 91
Adviser, 256
Advocate, 127
Aegis, 200
Affability, 212
Affableness, 217
Affiliations, 258
Affluent, 1, 74, 235
Affordable, 57
Afforestation, 215
Africa, 99, 204
Agenda, 61, 63
Agents, 84, 239, 335
Aggressive, 210
Agitation, 177
Agrarian, 264
Agriculturists, 37
Ahimsa, 204
Ailments, 214
Airborne, 261
Akbar, 30
Alagappa, 201
Alakijaa, Sharon Capeling, 64
Alaknanda, 215
Alienated, 86
Alleviation, 238
Allies, 17
Almighty, 112
Almora, 18, 69, 88
Alumnae, 262
Ambassadors, 30
Ambrosia, 72
Amelioration, 9
Amending, 81
America, United States of, 30
American, 63, 201, 310
Anand, 334
Anandam, Kamala, 114
Ancestral, 16, 126, 298
Andavan Arul, 219, 226
Anganwadi, 60, 222
Anguished, 86
Annamalai Chettiar, Raja Sir, 201
Anthyodaya, 64
Anti-poverty, 336
Antioch College, 262
Appakutti, V. 177, 179
Appar, 3, 158
Applauded, 313
Appraisal, 84
Appropriateness, 318
Approve, 4, 243, 253
Aptitudes, 83
Aram, M., 39, 124
Aranganayagam, C., 11
Architect, 113, 217, 218, 226
Arcot, North, 36, 110
Aristocracy, 112
Arrested, 69, 121, 137, 199
Articulating, 262
Artifacts, 336
Artisans, 250
Artistry, 218
Arunachalam, K., 39, 124, 170, 205, 236
Arya Samaj, 235
Aryanayakam couple, 208
Ascetic, 23
Ashoka, the Emperor, 30
Ashram, 2, 8, 35, 178, 205, 224
Asia, South, 310
Asia, South East, 32
Asirvatham, John, 156
Assessment, 220
Asset, 66, 77, 332
Assiduously, 40
Assimilation, 31, 325
Assistants, 206
Assurance, 33, 112
Assyria, 53

Asthma, 207, 302
Astounded, 330
Atomic age, 31
Attachment, 27, 54, 55
Attire, 177
Attitudes, 83, 95, 101
Attributes, 220, 225
Audio-visual, 304, 305
Audited, 300
Augmentation, 320
Aura, 211
Aurobindo, Sri, 267
Austerity, 32, 209
Autobiography, 22, 33, 39, 98, 99, 121, 129, 204, 261
Autonomous, 6, 56, 65, 75, 81, 239, 240
Autonomy, 76, 84
Avinashilingam Deemed University 23, 160, 207, 215, 260, 262, 296, 303, 305, 329, 339
Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, 1, 19, 56, 63, 64, 75, 78, 79, 86, 107, 155, 156, 243, 258, 261, 264, 283
Avocation, 100
Avvaiyar, 1
Awarded, 2, 3, 109, 157

Babylon, 53
Badrinath, 69
Balasubramaniam, C., 146
Bandwagon, 62
Bangkok, 313
Banyan tree, 7, 15, 35, 58, 74, 208, 228, 240, 268, 298, 320, 321
Bapuji, 108
Bar, 70
Barbaric, 94
Baroda, 9
Barren, 218
Barriers, 9, 75, 330
Battery, 74
Battle, 30, 214
Beacon, 18, 82, 257, 320, 339
Beams, 13, 267
Begging, 129, 238
Behaviour, 13, 16, 208
Behoves, 328
Belief, 30, 33, 54, 55, 100, 114
Belligerent, 17
Benediction, 98, 113, 265
Beneficiaries, 74
Benevolence, 1, 262
Benevolent, 235
Benign, 112
Bentinck, Lord, 94, 95
Bequeathed, 258
Berea College 262
Bhagavad Gita, 13, 27, 110, 205
Bhakthavatsalam, 210
Bhan, R.K., 255
Bharatavarsha, 32
Bhavani, 39, 40
Bhulabai Desai, 120
Bi-sexual society, 16
Bible, 318
Bihar, 214
Bio-fertilizers, 250
Bio-gas, 211
Bio-technology, 250
Biochemistry, 321
Biogas, 96
Biography, 22, 157
Biology, 306
Biosphere, 214
Birthday, 38
Blemish, 72
Blend, 61, 209, 245, 331
Blessed, 35, 113, 219, 263, 318
Blind, 226, 228, 237, 238, 309, 310, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316
Bliss, 24, 29
Blossomed, 35, 61, 168, 227, 303
Bombay, 199, 334
Bondage, 69, 222, 260
Boundless, 114
Bounds, 303, 313
Brahmachari, 168
Brahmacharyam, 207
Brahmanandaji Maharaj, 35
Braille, 228, 314, 315
Bridges, 176
Brilliance, 124, 212
Britain, 17
British, 5, 17, 94, 95, 168, 200, 201, 333
Brother, 123, 136, 229, 243
Buddha, 29, 30, 31
Budget, 14, 81, 200, 240, 333
Builder, 74, 108, 109, 113, 159, 209,
Buildings, 111, 122, 298
Bureaucracy, 75
Bureaucratization, 236

Cadres, 60
CAI, 305
Calamities, 31
Calcutta, 89, 94
Calibre, 86
Campuses, 75, 228
Candidate, 122
Canvas, 22, 255
Capitalism, 334
Capitation fees, 106
Career, 9, 79, 127, 169, 177
Caring, 70
Carpentry, 21, 109, 244
Carved, 63, 113
Carver, Washington, 331
Caste, 9, 19, 53, 75, 100, 128, 235, 321, 322, 330
Catherine Ed Hakola, 266
Catholicity, 78

Celebrations, 113, 123, 124, 245, 300, 302
Census, 64
Centenary, Vivekananda, 124, 206
Centralised, 8, 299, 334
Chadaiappa, 159
Chairman, 18, 120, 158, 176, 224
Chairmanship, 244, 267
Challenge, 95, 319
Challenges, 213, 218, 222, 227, 329, 333
Chamoli, 215
Champion, 282, 309, 316
Chandogya, 31
Chandramani, M. Dr., 325
Chandrakanthi Govindarajulu, 134
Channel, 35
Channelise, 248
Character-making, 92, 93
Charity, 32
Chauvinistic, 111
Chicago, 31, 88
Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, T.K., 200, 202
Chidbhavananda, Swami, 35, 112, 113
Chilambuchelvar, Dr. Ma. Po. Sivagnanam, 158, 163
Chinnappa, Chettiar, K.V., 136
Chipko Movement, 214
Chittibabu, S.V., Dr., 83
Choultries, 127
Chowdhry, Paul, D. Dr., 235
Christianity, 29, 30
Christmas, 266
Christoffel Blindenmission, West Germany, 310, 315
Chronicles, 110
Citation, 3, 337
Citizenship, 208, 212
Civil Disobedience Movement, 17
Civilization, 30, 212
Cliches, 218
Client, 240
Clubwala, Jadhav, 236
Co-curricular, 328
Co-operation, 101, 102, 209
Co-operative, 211, 249
Co-workers, 8, 299
Coleridge, 332
Collaborator, 56
Colleagues, 1, 114, 160, 177, 227, 299, 303, 326
Collectivity, 53
Collegiate, 1, 95, 281
Colombo, 18, 69, 88, 89
Colonial, 94
Colossal, 200, 201, 323
Colton, 219
Comfort,
Comforts, 13, 74, 128, 203, 322
Commands, 59, 334, 335
Commemoration, 88
Commentators, 206
Commitment, 54, 76, 114, 176, 177, 210, 218, 227, 258, 261, 312, 313, 316, 339
Company, 8, 20, 28, 80, 94, 111, 245, 256, 323
Compassion, 29, 68, 114, 177, 207, 227, 237, 282
Compassionate, 5
Competence, 59, 61, 80, 83, 227
Competitive, 311
Complacency, 307
Complacent, 81
Comprehension, 6, 16, 54, 60, 61, 85, 203, 206
Compressed, 205
Compromise, 82, 129, 332
Computerisation, 314, 315
Computers, 109, 306, 315
Concatenation, 53
Conceptualisation, 333
Concern, 31, 57, 73, 74, 78, 106, 129, 177, 221, 224, 226, 243, 250, 309, 310, 313, 315, 322, 324
Concerns, 32, 263
Concordances, 206
Concurrence, 6
Conduct, 21, 30, 69, 73, 86, 260, 313, 326, 327
Conferences, 7, 14, 15, 16, 57, 104, 105, 245, 299
Confidante, 56
Confidence, 70, 73, 159, 177, 245, 251, 268, 319
Conflicts, 69, 72
Conformed, 55
Congressmen, 121, 123
Consecration, 32, 218
Conservation, 56, 101, 264
Considerately, 326
Constitution, 65, 122, 212
Constitutional, 212, 213
Construction, 111, 136, 264, 322
Constructive, 81, 107, 169, 207, 209, 211, 224, 235, 249, 306, 330
Consultants, 264, 258, 310
Consultation, 242
Contemporaries, 207, 225
Continents, 81
Contribution, 2, 3, 4, 6, 13, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 59, 61, 62, 76, 88, 98, 103, 104, 109, 199, 210, 215, 221, 235, 237, 243, 247, 248, 253, 282, 307, 321, 328, 329, 339
Contributions, 5, 59, 66, 98, 99, 108, 161, 215, 225, 256, 260, 333
Controversial, 281
Conversation, 14, 208, 217, 261, 268
Convictions, 1, 83, 208, 218, 305, 334
Convocation, 71
Cooperation, 39, 255, 335
Cooperator, 296
Correspondence, 299
Correspondentship, 299
Corruption, 13, 81, 82, 177, 251
Corruption-free, 81
Cosmopolitan, 282
Counsellor, 10, 219, 319
Courage, 1, 7, 68, 70, 99, 102, 200, 207, 208, 245, 267, 297, 300, 302, 314, 319

Courageous, 300
Courses, 5, 15, 21, 65, 80, 84, 86, 109, 222, 227, 248, 250, 251, 255, 307, 311, 320, 328, 335
Courted, 3, 70, 203
Courtesy, 68, 318
Couselling, 100
Coward, 69
Coworkers, 225
Crafts, 66, 114
Creativity, 318
Creators, 74, 216
Credibility, 312
Critical, 60, 65, 84
Critiquing, 335
Crossfire, 120
Crusades, 214
CSWB, 239
Culture, 13, 37, 89, 92, 102, 106, 108, 169, 264, 320, 321, 332
Curriculum, 9, 63, 95, 96, 100, 199, 262, 297, 312, 329, 332
Custodian, 108, 332

Dalai Lama, 31
Dale, Edgar, 305
Dalhousie, 95
Deadline, 81
Decentralisation, 8
Decentralised, 299
Decision, 112, 204, 239, 243
Decisions, 16, 64, 201, 202, 227, 300, 335
Dedication, 4, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 75, 76, 80, 83, 94, 111, 113, 124, 128, 130, 177, 207, 210, 225, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 247, 256, 260, 263, 309, 313, 331, 337
Deforestation, 96, 214
Delinquency, 238
Delusion, 28
Democracy, 83, 328
Democratization, 20
Dependent, 218, 240, 251
Depression, 25
Deshmukh, Durgabai, 236
Despotism, 95
Destitute, 74, 107, 238
Detachment, 7
Determination, 20, 69, 177, 207, 309, 314

Devanga High School, 136
Development, 3-6, 8, 9, 15, 24, 39, 40, 53, 54, 56, 59, 61, 62, 64-5, 75-6, 80, 83-5, 93, 95-6, 98, 100-03, 105-09, 111, 124, 158-59, 176, 199, 200, 205-06, 209-13, 215, 220-22, 228, 235, 236-39, 241-42, 245, 247-52, 255-56, 260, 263, 267, 297, 302, 305, 307-09, 311-13, 320, 322, 325, 328, 330, 331-32, 334-36
Devotion, 1, 22, 38-9, 59, 75, 94, 124, 158, 169, 199, 206-07, 224, 309, 320-21, 325-26
Dhanalakshmi, T.S.B., 292
Dhandapani Chettiar, T.S., 123
Dharma, 13, 23, 30, 204
Dharumapuram, 201
Dichotomy, 92
Diets, 25, 62, 78, 258
Diksha, 35
Diligence, 205
Dinasari, 204
Din Ilahi, 30
Diraviam K., 205, 317
Diraviam Leila, 216
Directive, 320
Director, 9, 16, 64, 96, 157, 313
Disabilities, 213, 311, 312, 314
Disabled, 95, 226, 238, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316
Disciples, 1, 22, 29, 35, 36, 68, 98, 107, 113, 156, 319, 320
Disciplinarian, 8, 208, 296
Discipline, 8, 16, 20, 21, 87, 103, 104, 106, 177, 212, 302, 319, 333, 334
Disciplines, 21, 256, 305
Discrimination, 64, 159
Dissertations, 62
Distinction, 22, 55, 62, 81, 89, 90, 92, 93, 296, 297
Diversification, 66, 84
Divinity, 33, 331
Donations, 106, 129, 297, 298, 303
Doughty, 83
Downtrodden, 2, 9, 10, 37, 39, 68, 91, 106, 107, 207, 309, 322, 330, 331
Drop-out, 57, 61, 322
Drudgery, 66
Dualism, 91
Dynamism, 218
Dynamo, 282

Ecocide, 214
Ecology, 331
Economics, 20, 101, 333, 334, 335
Economists, 333, 335
Ecosystem, 214
Education Minister, 216
Educationists, 302, 328
Effulgence, 58
Ego-centred, 25
Egotism, 212
Elitism, 240
Emancipation, 68
Embodiment, 1, 7, 105, 169, 177, 259, 309
Employability, 55
Empowerment, 235, 260
Encyclopaedia, Britannica, 71, 108, 129, Encyclopaedia, Children's, 7, 71, 76, 123, 160, 202, 297, Encyclopaedia, Tamil, 6, 33, 71, 76, 123, 129, 158, 199-202, 207, 299 Enfranchised, 83
Environment, 28, 57, 95, 97, 157, 222, 224, 331
Environmental, 95, 96, 97
Environmentalist, 94, 97
Epidiascope, 305
Epochs, 216

Equality, 65, 83, 212, 213, 222, 228, 311, 312
Equanimity, 7
Equitable, 64
Eradication, 204, 334
Erosion, 239, 241
Ethics, 29, 82, 157, 160, 206
Ethos, 63
ETV, 305, 306, 307
Europe, 14
Evaluation, 62, 84, 241, 248, 249, 332
Evangelical, 176
Examinations, 80, 334
Excellence, 8, 39, 66, 75, 83, 84, 95, 112, 177, 209, 216, 258, 327, 328, 332, 337, 339
Exhortation, 328
Existentialism, 82
Extra-curricular, 21

Faceless, 261
Factions, 251
Famine, 39, 40
Fanaticism, 59
Farmers, 54, 66, 248, 252, 334
Farsightedness, 111, 339
Fearlessness, 7, 326
Feeding, 57, 62, 127
Felt-needs, 239
Fervour, 5, 178
Festivals, 40, 200, 321
Fighter, 3, 7, 19, 59, 78, 83, 126, 158, 217, 243, 255, 268, 318
Firmament, 256
Firmness, 177, 319
Flag, 5, 300
Fledgling, 33
Flexibility, 66, 87, 239, 240
Fluency, 102
Footsteps, 65, 161, 177, 209, 210
Fore-runner, 128
Forefathers, 127
Forestry, 101, 214, 250
Formalities, 217
Formative, 124, 211, 228
Founder-Chancellor, 86, 296
Founder-Director, 304
Founder-President, 79, 333
Founder-President-Chancellor, 107, 258
Founding, 35, 36, 71, 108, 297, 320
Foundry, 55, 56
Fragile, 214
Fragility, 261
Fraternity, 328
Freedom Fighter, 3, 7, 19, 59, 78, 83, 107, 126, 158, 217, 243, 268, 318
Freedom Movement, 17, 33, 70, 110, 168, 203, 216, 235, 236, 303
Freedom Struggle, 22, 71, 74, 109, 129, 210, 296, 297
Friends, 3, 7, 10, 14, 16, 23, 115, 121, 122, 124, 129, 168, 178, 204, 226, 244, 262
Frugal, 331
Frustration, 25, 86
Functionaries, 241, 242
Fund-raising, 241

Galahad, 13
Gamut, 241
Gandhi, Mahatma, 3, 15, 17-8, 29, 30, 33, 63-4, 68-9, 71, 83, 99, 103, 107-10, 121, 123, 126, 129, 168, 176, 178, 203-05, 207-10, 216, 247, 261, 268, 282, 319, 320, 322, 333
Gandhi-Irwin, 17
Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, 203, 204
Gandhian, 7, 10, 14, 17, 37, 64, 68, 73, 103, 107, 124, 169, 178, 204, 235, 243, 245, 246, 255, 328, 336
Gandhigram, 124, 169, 178
Gandhiji's, 7, 14, 16-9, 33, 58, 67, 68, 69, 107, 108, 109, 156, 160, 176, 199, 203-05, 236, 244, 245, 267-68, 322, 333
Gandhiniketan, 178
Gandhism, 156
Generations, 8, 58, 70, 86, 107, 124, 161, 326
Generosity, 169, 303
Genetic, 264
Germplasm, 264
Gibraltar, 207
Gnanadurai Michael, 226, 310
Gnanananda, Swami, 31
God-realization, 32
Goodwill, 4, 235, 302
Gopalakrishnan, M., 126
Gopalan, C., 59
Gopeshwar, 215
Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, 69, 176
Gramsevikas, 221, 222
Grants-in-aid, 236, 240
Gratitude, 169, 207, 227, 308, 313, 319, 321, 339
Gregarious, 53
Grigg Memorial Sports, 120
Guhappadalam, 157
Guide, 6, 10, 123, 124, 202, 205, 219, 220, 225, 321
Gujarat, 110, 334
Gurudev/Gurumaharaj, Sri Ramakrishna, 2, 3, 67, 113, 302
Gurukulam, 35, 36, 37, 105, 177, 282
Gurupuja, 38

Hakola, Catherine, Ed, 266
Happiness, 24
Harijan, 2, 35, 68, 74, 100, 107, 121, 122, 128, 264
Harmony, 1, 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 89, 91, 95
Hastings, Lord, 94
Headquarters, 78, 203
Health, 25, 33, 59, 61, 64, 101, 104, 111, 237, 242, 249, 251, 261, 263, 302, 318, 325
Heir, 15
Helen Keller, 312

Heritage, 58, 77, 85, 93, 98, 102, 216, 245, 320, 325
Heroes, 8, 216, 309
Hi-tech, 228
Himachal Pradesh, 214
Himalayas, 120, 214, 337
Himalayan, 69
Hinduism, 30, 89, 90
Holistic, 58, 248, 312
Holocaust, 208
Holy Grail, 13
Homage, 19, 59, 114, 252, 255
Homosapiens, 74
Horticulture, 101
Hospitality, 208, 210, 260, 262
Host, 7, 15, 79, 124, 212
Human-touch, 240
Humane, 14, 80, 113, 267, 323
Humaneness, 324, 339
Humanism, 1, 4, 30, 85, 339
Humanist, Humanistic, 207, 54
Humanitarian, 126
Humanity, 19, 40, 54, 72, 112, 126, 127, 216, 219, 259, 283, 324, 339
Humble, 6, 35, 215, 227, 264, 268, 319
Humour, 267
Hygiene, 64, 104, 238, 251

ICAR, 9
ICCW, 239
ICEVH, 310
ICRISAT, 264
Iddlis, 208
Idealism, 2, 111, 262
Idealists, 1, 13, 33
Identity, 70
Ideology, 103, 176, 204, 218, 220, 255, 307, 334
Illiteracy, 64, 78, 91, 218, 247
Immaculate, 177
Immanent, 54
Impartiality, 81, 326
Imphal, 17
Implementation, 60, 61, 62, 84, 250, 255, 263
Imprisonment, 3, 129, 203
Income-generating, 60
Inculcation, 102, 328
Indefatigable, 56
Indelible, 37, 70, 114, 217
Independence, 5, 37, 85, 91, 110, 121, 157, 158, 159, 201, 216, 226, 247, 322
Indian culture, 320
Indian National Congress, 3, 203, 296,
Indian Society of Population Education, 256
Indigenous, 62, 310, 331
Indira Gandhi, 99
Individualism, 102, 333
Indomitable, 302
Industry, 56, 80, 213, 296, 298, 325
Infrastructures, 248, 249
Innovations, 4, 104, 239, 240
Institution Builder, 113, 304 Instrument, 2, 25, 55, 336
Instrumental, 19, 71, 108, 227, 307
Insurmountable, 263
Integration, 65, 109, 111, 226, 242, 247, 258, 325
Integrity, 9, 54, 58, 59, 85
Intellect, 86, 331
Intellectual, 7, 19, 212, 326, 333, 335
Interactive Video, 306
Interface, 306
International, 39, 53, 61, 65, 240, 258, 260, 262, 264, 305, 310, 313, 321, 329, 333
Internationally-renowned, 86
Internship, 69
Intervention, 64, 218, 221
Iowa State University, 262
Islam, 29, 30

Jacks, Brigitta, 268
Jacks, Gunnar, 268
Jaffna, 89, 200
Jagannathan, K.V., 122, 206
Jail, 17, 33, 69, 70, 129
Jajal, 23
Jamnalal Bajaj Award, 3, 109, 157, 237
Janakarathnam, K.S., 302
Japanese, 17
Jather, 334
Jawaharlal Nehru, 99, 210, 243, 318
Jaya Arunachalam, 236
Jayamani Subramaniam, 205
Jayaraj, S., 107
Jegathambal, K., 253
Jesus, 317
Jews, 31
John Asirvatham, 156
Jutakawallas, 136
Juvenile, 238

Kaira, 334
Kalachakra, 121
Kalaivanan M., 116
Kalingar, 206
Kalki R. Krishnamurthy, 200
Kallupatti, 178
Kamala Anandam, 114
Kamalanathan Godavari, 320
Kamaraj, 3, 73, 204, 318
Kambaramayanam, 157
Kanyakumari, 110
Karamadai, 247, 335
Karma, 19, 27, 209
Karmayogi, 7, 322
Karthikeyan, V., 79
Kasturba Gandhi Kanya Gurukulam, 282
Kedarnath, 69, 120
Keller, Helen, 312
Khadi, 120, 158, 204, 217, 333
Know-how, 336
Kothari Education Commission, 84,

Kripalani, Acharya, 208
Krishi Vigyan Kendra, 9, 15, 39, 66, 223, 248, 250, 321, 322, 335
Krishna Rao, A.C., (Smt.), 236
Krishnamoorthy, N.M.R., 269
Krishnamurthy N., 39
Kulandaiswamy, V.C., 203
Kulandaivel, K., 39, 124, 296, 303
Kumarasami Gounder, C.K., 122

Lakshmi N. Menon, 13,
Lakshmi S., 112,
Lakshmi Santa Rajagopal, 323
Lalitha Kameswaran, 203
Large-hearted, 5
Laurels, 157, 217
Lawyer, 2, 296
Leadership, 59, 60, 62, 94, 100, 108, 168, 207, 210, 212, 226, 250, 251, 258, 305, 312, 319, 321, 322
Legacy, 63, 77, 114, 229, 258, 262, 264
Legend, 78
Legislation, 18, 101, 213, 238, 241, 297
Legislator, 55, 79, 333
Leila Diraviam, 216
Leprosy, 238
Liberation, 228, 260
Libraries, 3, 92
Life-building, 92, 93, 330
Linguaphone, 305
Linguistic, 99
Literature, 6, 78, 85, 94, 99, 156, 157, 158, 199, 205, 206, 222, 298, 315, 322, 333
Logistic, 228
Loner, 227
Loyalty, 114
Loyola College, 120, 121
Lyric, 9

Madras, 1, 3, 5, 9, 17, 18, 19, 35, 36, 68, 70, 74, 85, 89, 91, 94, 96, 103, 108, 121, 122, 130, 137, 157, 159, 168, 176, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 216, 226, 236, 255, 282, 296, 297, 317
Magnanimous, 88
Magnetic, 6, 68, 212, 330
Magnificent, 6, 87, 111, 218
Mahabharata, 23, 322
Mahalingam, N. Dr., 120
Mahila Mandals, 249
Malayalam, 200
Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, 53
Malligeswari, P., 339
Malnourished, 247, 258
Man-making, 4, 14, 36, 40, 92, 93, 325, 330
Management, 4, 16, 75, 79, 81, 106, 120, 249, 250, 251, 296, 297, 298, 326
Managing, 108, 122, 177, 296, 303, 333
Manakudavar, 206
Mani, M.N.G., 309
Manickavachakar, 158
Manifestations, 29
Margy J. Woodburn, 258
Marimuthu, K.M., 103
Market-based, 333
Maruthi College of Physical Education, 111
Masterpiece, 199
McNamara Robert, 64
Meal, 57, 62, 111, 258
Meditation, 7, 21, 332, 337
Medium of Instruction, 76, 85, 108, 121, 159, 176, 199, 208, 237, 281
Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, T.P., 200
Member of Congress, 33
Member of Central Legislature, 19, 120
Member of Madras Legislative Assembly, 19, 109
Member of Rajya Sabha, 13, 255
Member of Lok Sabha, 19, 109, 168, 237, 255, 298
Member, Tamil Nadu Basic Education Soceity, 208-09
Methodology, 250, 333
Meticulous, 7, 38, 111, 263, 310, 323
Michael, 226
Militancy, 86
Missionaries, 235
Mitraniketan, 243, 244, 245, 246
Modernity, 15
Moghuls, 30
Mohan Devadas, 317
Mohan, S., 68,
Monitored, 239, 240
Monks, 124, 176, 255
Monumental, 76, 99, 107, 203, 205, 206, 218, 309
Monuments, 23, 111, 253, 339
Morgan, Arthur, 243, 244
Motherland, 98, 211, 331
Mothers, 108, 258
Motivation, 40, 80, 235, 240, 313
Motto, 62, 70, 115
Mukyasevikas, 221
Mumaw, Catherine, 260
Muniandi, K., 207
Munroe, 94
Muthiah Manoharan, P., 247
Muthukumaran, S., 98
Muthulakshmi Reddy, Dr., 236

Nachimuthu, 120, 122
Nai Talim, 14, 208
Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai, 159
Nanjan R., 313
Natarajan, M., Dr., 203
National Builder, 7, 209
Nationalism, 94
Nattarampalli, 36
Navjivan Trust, 204
Nazareth, 317
Need-based, 86

Neighbours, 32, 207, 281
NGOs, 239, 240, 241, 242
Niche, 267
NIPCCD, 239
Nirmala K. Murthy, 328
Nobility, 13, 14, 40, 177, 206
Non-attachment, 26, 27
Non-violence, 29, 30, 54, 107, 176, 177
Nourishment, 15, 27
NSS, 9
Numeracy, 65
Nutrition, 5, 56, 59, 61, 62, 63, 86, 97, 211, 215, 218, 242, 258, 320, 321, 322, 325, 329, 331
Nutrition-related, 61
Nutritionist, 258

Oak Tree, 2
Obeisance, 178
Objective, 158, 312, 313, 330
Observation, 92, 177, 214
Obstacles, 27, 58, 94
Off-farm, 66
Ohio State University, 5, 262, 305
OHP, 305
Omandur Ramaswamy Reddiar, 282
Ooty Ashram, 35, 112
Opposition, 2, 5, 207, 267, 300, 303
Oppression, 81
Optimism, 73, 244
Oregon State University, 258, 260
Organisations, 16, 158, 213, 239, 255, 327
Organiser, 86
Oriental despotism, 95
Ornament, 76, 332
Orphanages, 2, 36, 237
Orthopaedically handicapped, 238
Outspokenness, 1
Owen Meredith, 71
Oza, D.K., 110

Pace-setter, 217
Pachaiappa's College, 1, 17
Padmabhushan, 2, 83, 109, 157, 237, 304
Padmanabhan, V., 176
Padmashri, 86, 88, 157
Padmasini Asuri, 220
Padmasree, 321
Padmavathi, S., 78
Palaniappa Mudaliar, M.S., 122
Palanisami Gounder, V.K., 120
Pandian King, 72, 77
Parimel Azhagar, 206
Pariperumal, 206
Parithiyar, 206
Parliamentarian, 59, 79, 217
Patanjali Maharishi, 26
Patriotism, 22, 69, 98, 107, 156, 209, 211, 327
Paul Chowdhry, D., 235
Peace-loving, 31
Periaswami Thooran, M., 76, 121, 123-24, 160, 200-01
Permanence, 92, 225
Perseverance, 20, 75, 206, 319
Perspectives, 55, 65, 245, 334
Phenomenon, 15, 207, 309
Philanthropic, 127, 316, 329
Picturisation, 53
Poet-Laureate Chair in Tamil, 159
Ponnuswamy Chettiar S.R.P., 136
Prakasam, T., 121
Pre-school, 6, 35, 57, 75, 108, 215, 237, 339
Professional, 6, 9, 100, 103, 129, 227, 235, 236, 238, 240, 241, 249, 255, 256, 310, 313, 315, 316, 319, 326, 327, 333, 335
Professionalism, 239
Psalm, 318
Publications, 38, 99, 204
Purananooru, 156
Purushothaman, S., 304

Qualities, 1, 7, 26, 58, 83, 177, 212, 237, 250, 315, 317, 318, 319, 320, 325
Queen Mary's College, 5, 9, 130, 216, 317
Quit India Movement, 17, 121, 168

Radhakrishnan S., Dr., 124, 243,
Radhakrishnan Commission Report, 244
Rajagopalachari, C., 110
Rajammal P. Devadas, 1, 16, 18, 20, 39, 56, 61, 62, 63, 75, 86, 88, 108, 123, 130, 157, 160, 169, 202, 205, 221, 223, 224, 228, 236, 244, 258, 261, 266, 282, 303, 305, 313, 321
Rajan, T.S.S., 202
Rajaram Mohan Roy, 15
Rajendra Prasad, 123, 157, 203, 206
Rajiv Gandhi, 3
Ramachandran, G., 168
Ramachandran, V., 193
Ramakrishna, 1-4, 14-5, 18-9, 21-3, 29, 31-40 55, 68-9, 74, 84, 88, 90, 93, 98, 100, 102-03, 107, 109, 112-13, 120-24, 126-28, 168, 176-78, 199, 203, 208-10, 212, 224-25, 235-37, 244-45, 255-56, 268, 281-82, 296-97, 300, 302, 304, 317, 320, 335, 339
Ramakrishna's, 29, 30, 34, 121
Ramakrishnanandaji, Swami, 36
Ramalingam Chettiar, T.A., 13, 296
Ramamurthi, B., Dr., 203
Ramanujam, K.S., 281
Ramarathnam, N., 205
Ramaswamy, A., 205,
Ramaswamy, S., 284
Ramathilagam, G., 333
Ramayanam, 6, 69, 99, 105, 157, 158, 159, 322
Ranganathananda, Swami, 22, 318
Realisation, 1, 15, 29, 89, 107, 168
Recompense, 267
Rectitude, 59, 87
Recycling, 96, 331
Reddy, C.R., 120

Redoubtable, 75
Regeneration, 225, 331
Reminiscences, 112, 281
Renaissance, 159, 320
Repartee, 267
Research, 5, 6, 8, 9, 55, 57, 63, 66, 75, 96, 98, 101, 104, 122, 199, 205, 206, 238, 241, 248, 249, 258, 262, 263, 264, 307, 321, 326, 328, 329, 331, 334
Residence, 120, 245, 261, 317
Residential, 18, 33, 120
Resourcefulness, 212, 318
Resplendent, 256
Revolutionary, 74, 96, 255
Roman Empire, 53
Rosary, 26

SAARC-UNICEF, 264
Sadasivan, T.S., 202
Sadhana, 26, 27
Salt Satyagraha, 17, 168
Santhanam, K., 281
Santiniketan, 14
Saradalaya, 4, 6, 34, 39, 114, 227, 247, 305, 321, 322, 323, 330, 332, 337
Saradamani, Holy Mother, 109, 210
Saradananda, Swami, 32
Sardar A. Vedarathnam, 204, 282
Sarojini Mahishi, 20,
Sarojini Varadappan, 210, 236
Sarvakrunananda Swami, 124
Sarvodaya, 207
Satchidananda Swami, 24
Sathiaseelan, 153
Satyagraha, 17, 121, 168, 204, 205
Satyamurti, 120
Savants, 88, 158, 322
Scenario, 16, 251, 329
Scheduled Castes, 237, 242, 322
Scheduled Tribes, 237, 242, 322
Scholastic, 177, 333
School-meal, 62
Scientists, 7, 66, 256, 264, 305, 321, 329, 331, 336
Scintillating, 212
Scriptures, 31, 53, 127, 323
Scrupulous, 224
Sculptor, 110, 218
Secularism, 339
Self-actualisation, 85
Self-conciousness, 111
Self-development, 108
Self-employment, 109, 228
Self-restraint, 86
Self-surrender, 33
Sethu Pillai, R.P., 202
Shankaracharya, 28
Shanmugam Chettiar, R.K., 201, 202
Shanmuganandam, T.K.S., 290
Shramshakti, 65
Silappadhikaram, 99
Silhouette, 268
Simplicity, 16, 40, 54, 58, 68, 100, 156, 157, 159, 217, 226, 282, 320
Sivagnanam, M. P., 157, 158, 163, 318
Sivananda, Swami, 1, 22, 35, 68, 98, 124, 322
Slum, 39, 96, 238, 322
Sobriety, 86
Soft-spokenness, 217
Solicitude, 217
Somananda, Swami, 41, 124, 303
Somasundaram, P., 199
Sornammal, 229
Soundara Kailasam, 138
Soundaram, K. S., Dr., 118, 178
Soundararaj G., 162
Soundararaja Rao, Dr., 113
Spartan, 177
Spirituality, 29, 31, 37, 85, 91, 331
Sri Avinashilingam Education Trust Institutions, 6, 15, 18, 20, 60, 108, 260, 296, 297, 320, 321
Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College for Women, 6, 9, 16, 18, 20, 56, 61, 62, 75, 108, 209, 220, 221, 222, 224, 244, 253, 260, 282, 297, 313, 321 Sri Avinashilingam Krishi Vigyan Kendra, 248, 322, 335 Sri Avinashilingam Shramik Vidya Peeth, 39, 109, 321, 322, 335
Sri Kumaraswami Raja, 121
Sri Ramakrishna Math, 134
Sri Ramakrishna Mission/Movement, 21, 22, 36, 39, 40, 123, 127, 203, 208, 235
Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, 4, 15, 18, 23, 33, 40, 74, 84, 107, 112, 120, 121, 122, 128, 168, 177, 178, 199, 224, 237, 244, 255, 256, 268, 282, 296, 297, 300, 302, 304, 317, 335, 339
Sri Ramakrishna Naidu, 36
Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa 1, 2, 3, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 55, 68, 69, 88, 90, 93, 109, 126, 168, 176, 209, 210, 212, 225, 236, 245, 281, 320
Srinivasan, C.R., 200
Stanley E. Bourgeault, 310
Statesman, 14, 318
Stature, 62, 63, 124, 211, 264, 268
Staunch, 3, 21, 68, 129
Steadfast, 226
Stewardship, 123
Strategy, 60, 311
Student-days, 94
Subanna Gounder, K.K., 122
Subbaraman, N.M.R., 178, 200, 204, 205
Subbiah, C.P., 120, 121, 136
Sublimation, 211
Sublimity, 323
Subramania Chettiar, 137
Subramaniam, C., 120, 129, 200, 202, 203, 204, 205, 245, 318
Sundara Vadivelu, N.D., 202
Sundaresan, B.B., 94
Surdas, 312
Surrender, 218
Survives, 72, 77

Sushila Nayar, 17
Sustainable development, 64
Swadesamitran, 200
Swadeshi, 211
Swahananda, Swami, 29
Swami Somanandha, 41
Swaminathan, M.S., 64, 200
Swaraj, 5, 205
Syllabi, 96, 102, 334

Tagore's, 67, 105, 121, 301
Talisman, 14
Tamil Academy, 6, 7, 18, 71, 76, 99, 108, 158, 200-03, 296, 297
Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam, 99, 158, 200
Tamilians, 102, 107, 158, 203, 206, 207
Tanmayananda, Swami, 35, 124
Tarlok Singh, 224
Tarzan, 207
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, 235
Techniracy, 65
Tenacity, 20, 75, 339
Testimony, 3, 30, 156, 176, 297
Thangavelu, M., Dr., 203
Thanjavur, Tamil University of, 160
Thavathiru Kundrakudi Adigalar, 52
Thavathiru Santhalinga Ramasamy Adigal, 47
Thavathiru Sundara Swamigal, 51
Tharachandrika, R.K., 337
The Sacred Touch, 38, 39, 68, 111, 261
Theses, 62, 89, 221, 226
Thevaram, 6
Thiagaraja Mudaliar, V.S., 200
Thinker, 85, 256
Thirukkethara Yathra, 69
Thirukkural, 6, 69, 70, 98, 99, 122, 157, 158, 160, 199, 205, 206, 297, 321, 322
Thirukutasundaram, 201
Thirumurthi, T.S., Dr., 200
Thirupanandal Madam, 201
Thiruppavai, 6
Thiruvasagam, 6
Thiruvavaduthurai, 201
Thiruvembavai, 6
Thumbnail sketch, 260
Titan, 178
Tolerance, 4, 29, 31, 87
Totalitarianism, 4
Toynbee, Arnold, 30, 31
Trainer's, 221, 242
Transformation, 75, 108, 218
Tribal, 214, 251, 258, 320
Trusteeship, 333, 336
Tuladhara, 23

Udayamoorthi, M.S., 226
Undernutrition, 59
UNESCO's, 311, 313
UNICEF, 65
Universalisation, 312
Unrelenting, 6
Upanishad, Isha, 22
Upanishads, 31
Update, 299
Utharkhand, 215

Vaishnavite, 99
Valiant, 71
Value-based, 102
Value-oriented, 37, 98, 102
Vangaurd, 213
Veda, 23, 93
Vedanta, 29, 31, 32, 91, 176
Vedaranyam, 177
Vellanad, 243
Velocity, 2
Veneration, 30
Venkatachalam K., 39,
Venkatachalapathy G., 204, 205
Venkatarajulu, R., 204, 205
Venkataraman, R., 157, 169, 178
Venkatasamy, R., Dr., 177
Venkatasubramanian K., 88
Venkatesalu R., 131
Verdant, 218
Veteran, 7, 19, 75
Victoria Hall, Madras, 89, 91
Vijayadasami, 6, 201, 309
Vireshwarananda, Swami, 124
Virtues, 16, 212, 239, 240, 241, 314
Viswanathan, K., 243
Viveka Choodamani, 88
Vivekananda, Swami, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 29, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 69, 83, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 105, 108, 109, 110, 112, 124, 126, 127, 129, 156, 176, 206, 209, 225, 236, 245, 247, 261, 281, 309, 312, 320, 325
Vivekanandapuram, 9, 15, 109, 247, 248, 250, 335
Vocationalisation, 84, 312

Wardha, 69, 244
Wasteland, 215
Well-being, 59, 224
Wellington, 17
West-flowing Rivers, 224
Willis Howard Skrdla and Betty Skrdla, 263
Womanhood, 85, 320

Yasmin Morenas, 267
Yoga, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 332

Zakir Hussain, 208, 243, 244
Zeal, 2, 14, 26, 61, 176, 329
Zealously, 14
Zone, 80
Zoroastrianism, 30
Zoroastrians, 31