

**A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.**

# A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

DEWAN BAHADUR

V. NĀGAM AIYA, B.A., F. R. HIST. S.

*Retired Senior Dewan Peishcar and Acting Dewan,  
Travancore*

BY

A WEST-COAST FRIEND AND BROTHER-ALUMNUS.

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"It would be a species of savageness to reject indifferently all sorts of praise; one ought to be alive to that which comes from men of honor and sense, who praise from the heart things which are worthy of praise."

LA BRUYERE.

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"Your respect for him would probably be increased, as you found it was agreed upon by those who should know that he could do something well. Honors, you see, not only reward merit, but also declare its existence."

SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

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"The true test of a man, and the true test of a class, and the true test of a people, is power. It is a small thing as long as he has not power, as long as temptation is kept out of his way—that he should be tolerably just in his judgment, but it is when power has come into his hands that his trial comes."

GLADSTONE.

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"It is not titles that reflect honor on men, but men that reflect honor on titles."

MACHIAVELLI.

## PREFATORY NOTE.

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The subject of the following sketch is a rare instance of officialdom in Native States bringing out to a wider public view some of the best men among them. Dewan Bahadur Nagam Aiya, though he was an official in Travancore, has been as well known outside—not merely as an official, but also as a man of culture and literary accomplishments, of liberal sympathies and an interest in the wider affairs of the world. It is rarely that Native States produce such men who are capable of interesting themselves in public questions outside their own sphere. There is no necessity here to speak of his excep-

tional merits and talents as they are fully evidenced by the appreciative references and testimonials printed in the following pages, but it may be remarked here that for a man who as an official was long accustomed to exercise autocratic power, it is a creditable feature that he should have been so full of sympathy with popular aspirations in British India. He has served for over forty years in Travancore, yet he retains the energy of youth and immense capacity for sustained work as his numerous contributions to the Public Press will show. He has the same interest in and enthusiasm for the people's welfare, and in spite of his long official life is still jealous of the subject's right of independent judgment and opinion. Though he has been an autocrat for years, there is nothing of the autocrat in him, and he has always been known to be suave and courteous in his relations not only with his Royal masters, but with the

public at large. He enjoys in Travancore a measure of popularity which cannot be said to belong to any other official, and his generosity, his warmth of heart, and his readiness to be helpful to others are the secrets of his great personal influence and popularity. He has many more years of active life before him, and let us hope it may still be possible for him to obtain work which is not only congenial to his training and temperament, but also calculated to promote the public weal in every way.

C. K.

*Madras September 1913.*

Diwan Bahadur  
Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, B.A., F.R. Hist. S.,  
Retired Acting Diwan of Travancore.

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*(By a West-Coast friend and brother-alumnus.)*

Diwan Bahadur Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, B.A., F.R. Hist. S., of Travancore was born in the neat little village of Veeraraghavapuram on the banks of the Tambrapurni river, Madras Presidency (Tinnevely), in December 1850. He is a Telugu Brahmin of the *Aruvelu Niyogi* clan, originally belonging to a village (Boppudi) in the Kistna District, but the family must have migrated into South India several centuries ago. His parents permanently settled down in Trivandrum (the Capital of Travancore), when Mr. Nagam Aiya was 3 years old. He is the fourth born out of a family of 5 children. His youngest brother, Mr. V. Sundararamayya, also a Graduate of the Madras University, first entered the service of the Travancore Government but left it for the British service, where the last post he held was

the District Registrarship of Madras. Mr. Nagam Aiya was wholly educated in the Maharajah's High-School and College at Trivandrum, where his ancestors held high office since the middle of the eighteenth century. After passing the Matriculation Examination in 1866, he took service as a clerk in the Educational Department, where he rose to be Assistant Professor of History and Mathematics, teaching the F.A. and Matriculation classes, under the late John Ross, M.A., Principal and Director of Public Instruction, Travancore. Meanwhile he passed his F.A. and B. A. Examinations of the University, and after passing the B.A. in 1870, he joined the Revenue Department of the State, as a clerk under the late Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row, K.C.S.I., the great Native Statesman who was Dewan of Travancore, Indore and Baroda successively. In two years, his work in the Revenue Department seems to have marked him out as a young man of conspicuous talents and ability. His rise was rapid. He was appointed a Tahsildar in 1872, then Superintendent of Census in 1875, and wrote the *first* Census Report of Travancore in 1876, which received the high appreciation of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India (the Marquis of Salisbury). To be entrusted with the duties and responsibilities of a Tahsildar in one's twenty-second year, and then in another three years to conduct a Census is, indeed, a marvellous recognition of merit and both the duties fell to Mr. Nagam Aiya, and both he performed in a



manner to merit appreciation from quarters which he could not have dreamt of. The "Boy-Tahsildar" must have been a marvel and the "Boy-Census Superintendent," a prodigy. He was Police Sheristadar and Marahmut Sheristadar in the Huzur for short periods, apparently because it was either necessary that one should pass through such an office or because there was no higher office then vacant. He had also meanwhile qualified himself for the B.L. Degree Examination of the Madras University. In any case it is worthy of note that he was appointed Dewan Peishkar in 1880, which office corresponds to that of Collector and District Magistrate in British India—the highest Executive office in the State under the Dewan. He held this office for 12 years and subsequently was appointed Settlement Dewan Peishkar in succession to Mr. Shungarasubbaiyar, C.I.E., when the latter was elevated to the Dewanship. As Settlement Dewan Peishkar, he was for 12 years the highest Revenue Officer of the State—a position which corresponds to that of Revenue Minister in other Native States. His success in the service was brilliant. He was Tahsildar when twenty-two, and Dewan Peishkar when thirty. And his higher education in the meantime he acquired while he was working in the College. In the Revenue Settlement his policy was one of light taxes and large revenues—a result which while it gratified the ryot, also satisfied the Government. The rates were in no case

materially increased—the increased revenue being due to *increased* areas brought under cultivation, to *accurate* measurements, to *greater* plantings and a thoroughly reliable *classification* of soils and trees. During these years, he conducted the Censuses and wrote the Census Reports of 1881 and 1891—with conspicuous ability and great literary success. His Census Reports have been highly commended both by the authorities and the Public Press in England and India. From the Revenue Settlement, he was placed on special duty for writing the Travancore State Manual, which he brought out in 3 massive volumes in 1906. This was his *magnum opus* and has received the highest encomiums from all quarters. The Encyclopædia Britannica (11th Edition) bases its article on Travancore wholly upon Mr. Nagam Aiya's State Manual, and quotes his authority for the same. During his long service he has been several times placed on special duty in several important undertakings, in all of which he won distinction and the appreciation of H. H. the Maharaja's Government. It was in appreciation of his admirable Census Reports that the Royal Historical Society (London) elected him as one of their Fellows, on the recommendation of Sir M. E. Grant Duff, a former Governor of Madras and a personal friend of Mr. Nagam Aiya. He has been President of the Travancore Regulations' Committee, of the Chuckram Coins' Committee, of the Accounts' System Committee, &c., in all of which

his work was highly appreciated. During his long official career, he acted as Dewan on five occasions, in which capacity he secured the special approbation of his Royal Master, the present Maharajah of Travancore. He had served under three Maharajahs and was associated in the administration of the State with ten Dewans, beginning with the illustrious Statesman, Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row. After a long and distinguished career of 42 years, he retired in February 1903, without attaining to the highest position which, as Sir J. D. Rees says, should have been legitimately his. His brilliant career in the early period of his service, his rapid rise, his striking successful performance of his duties, all clearly pointed to his certain elevation to the highest position in the State, and he had in an ample measure the appreciation not only of his Sovereign but of all who were able to judge of him, of successive British Residents and successive Dewans. Though he acted as Dewan five times, he did not permanently succeed to the office. This is the only disappointing feature in a life which, within its limits, achieved the highest distinctions.

As already remarked, he was wholly educated in Trivandrum, which at first was known as the Maha Rajah's Free School and then became the High School, and latterly the College. In these institutions, the European school-masters under whose direct influence he came, were the

late Mr. John Bensley, Mr. John Ross, M. A., and Dr. Robert Harvey, M. A.; the last-named two gentlemen directed his studies for the F. A. and the B. A. Degree Examinations. These three Educationists, themselves good men and true, have been very successful tillers of the Native intellect of South India and are looked upon as ideal teachers holding a warm place in the affections of modern Travancore. Still earlier, he had received instruction for short periods, under Messrs. Shungrasobier, F. M. U., C. I. E., and F. Watts, both of whom, like himself, began life as teachers in the Rajah's Free School at Trivandrum and subsequently rose to eminence in His Highness' service, the former as Dewan and the latter as Chief Secretary. His career as a student was bright and successful and he secured prizes in all the Classes or Forms he passed through, between the years 1860 and 1870. And as the penultimate Maharajah took interest in personally giving away the prizes to the school-boys, as His Highness the present Maharajah has done during these 27 years, the young boy early attracted the notice of that Maharajah, under whom, later, Mr. Nagam Aiya served for many years as an officer of State. The boy's smart appearance added to his intelligence and diligence in studies soon made him a general favourite in the School—both with his masters and his mates. He passed his Matriculation in December 1865 and his F. A. in December 1866. The poverty of his parents—the

one stumbling-block in the early career of almost all Indian youths who have subsequently distinguished themselves in the service of their country compelled him, as soon as he passed his Matriculation examination, to enter Government service as a clerk on a pay of Rs. 7, under the late Mr. John Bensley, Head Master—and it was while working as a clerk and then as a teacher in the High School, that he passed his F. A., and went through the greater portion of his B. A. course. Just before leaving the Educational Department he acted for about 6 months as Assistant to Mr. John Ross, M. A., teaching History and Mathematics, to the students of the Matriculation and F. A. classes. He took his B. A. Degree in February 1870 and received the Cullen's Prize of Rs. 80 awarded to the Travancore student, who stood first in the highest University examination of the year. In 1868, when His Excellency the Governor of Madras (Lord Napier of Ettrick and Merchiston) visited the Maharajah's College at Trivandrum, Mr. Nagam Aiya was presented by the College Principal to His Lordship, as the only student being trained to appear for the following year's B. A. Degree examination. He was accordingly sent up and passed the B. A. examination of that year. At the Viva-Voce examination held by Mr. Wigram, one of the B. A. examiners of that year, His Excellency Lord Napier accompanied by 2 members of his staff happened to walk into the Examination Hall that morning

(the new Presidency College buildings), and seating himself by the side of Mr. Wigram, asked him to go on with the examination of the boy (Mr. V. Nagam Aiya). At the end of the Viva-Voce examination, Lord Napier was pleased to observe :—

“ I hope you will give the boy full marks for his answers— he has answered much better than most English boys of his age can.”

Next year when Mr. Wigram visited Travancore, he spoke in very complimentary terms of Nagam Aiya's answer-papers to Mr. John Ross, M.A., the Principal.

At the Convocation for the conferring of Degrees in 1870, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh and His Highness the penultimate Maharajah of Travancore were present when that eminent Educationist of India, the Hon'ble Dr. W. Miller of the Madras Christian College presented the young Nagam Aiya to the Chancellor, as the Travancore Maharajah's student to receive the Diploma from His Excellency's hands. This circumstance added to the Secretary of State's (the late Marquis of Salisbury) highly complimentary Despatch on Mr. Nagam Aiya's first Census Report tended to the penultimate Maharajah's entertaining a warm personal regard and high estimate of Mr. Nagam Aiya's worth as an Officer.

After he took his B. A. Degree he attracted the notice of the then Dewan, Bajah Sir T. Madhava

Row, K.C.S.I., who appointed him to a clerkship in the Huzur English Office on Rs. 50. This was in April 1870. In this humble capacity he afforded satisfaction by his intelligence and industry, and Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row was pleased to notice this fact in his Administration Report of Travancore (for the year 1045 M. E. 1869-1870), in the following words :—

“One candidate went up for the B. A. Degree in February 1870 and was successful ; the first whom we can claim as a student entirely trained in the School. This young man (V. Nagam Aiya) has since been employed in the Dewan's Office where he affords satisfaction in the discharge of his duties.”

In April 1872, Sir T. Madhava Row himself wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya on the eve of his retirement from the Dewanship of Travancore, in the following handsome terms :—

“I have much pleasure in stating that during the two years you have been employed in the English Office of the Dewan's Cutcherry, I have had every reason to be satisfied with your services. Mr. Watts, your immediate official superior, has always expressed a most favourable opinion of your diligence, punctuality, precision, intelligence and willingness to do your utmost. My successor in office, whoever he may be, is certain to owe much to education, the cause of which must therefore be naturally dear to him. You may therefore safely calculate upon his recognising your talents and acquirements and bringing you forward in the service as opportunities offer. I hope you will pursue your legal studies with your usual perseverance as they have an important bearing on your future destinies. Your career is only just begun ;

but I hope it will prove long and highly prosperous and that you will ere long have opportunities to render useful and distinguished service to the State which has educated and employed you."

In May 1872, he was appointed to the responsible post of Tahsildar of Kottayam, he being the first Graduate who was appointed to that situation in Travancore. He was then just 21 years old. Though extremely young and altogether new to the Revenue and Magisterial work of a Taluk he justified his selection by the diligence, honesty and ability which he brought to bear on his duties. The Europeans of the station which was the Head Quarters of the C.M.S. in Travancore always spoke of him, 'as the Boy-Tahsildar of Kottayam.' His old Professor and Principal, Mr. Robert Harvey, M. A., LL. D., F. M. U., was the first to congratulate him on his success as a Tahsildar, for he wrote in October 1873:—

"I have long proposed to write a line to you to enquire how you were getting on. I do not like to lose sight of my old pupils altogether, and I always hear with especial interest anything touching the welfare of those whose higher studies I have had the pleasure to conduct. I have not heard from you direct for a long time, though, indirectly I have, and it has given me much pleasure to learn that the way in which you are discharging your duties is giving much satisfaction. I thought I shall like to write you to tell you this, for though undoubtedly one's own consciousness of doing right must ever be the highest reward one can have, still it must also stimulate us greatly in our endeavour to do the right, to have the sympathy or appreciation of those whose good opinion we value."



In a public speech delivered on the occasion of a public reception given him by his students several years later (December 1881), Dr. Harvey referred to Mr. Nagam Aiya thus :—

“ He had noted with pleasure the references made in the remarks of his friends that evening to truthfulness and devotion to duty. He had watched with interest and pride, the diligence, conscientiousness and integrity with which many of his past pupils were endeavouring to discharge their duties of their various offices. He was sure they were making this endeavour under heavy temptations which probably he did not adequately understand. He was glad to see Mr. Nagam Aiya, his oldest pupil, there that evening. His career they know, had been an honour to the College.”

The Rev. Henry Baker of Kottayam, the oldest Missionary of the C.M.S. in North Travancore, wrote to him in March 1874 :—

“ I never expected your stay at Kottayam to be long and I am glad that your promotion has come in the same line of public duty you began life in. However, I must congratulate you and trust God's blessing will be with you. You certainly have often been in difficult positions during the years you have been here. But you have been enabled to pass through with much success and credit in every way to yourself. I wonder often that with such inefficient means, all the various duties, a Tahsildar has to superintend, can be carried on.”

The Rev. J. H. Bishop, late Principal, C.M.S. College, Kottayam, wrote in March 1874 :—

“ Mrs. Bishop desires me to thank you very much for your kind help and assistance in establishing the Kottayam ‘Hindu Girls' school.’ Its future prosperity will be, to a great degree, owing to your indefatigable energy and determination in overcoming the difficulties at its commencement.”

His Highness the late Maha Rajah (then First Prince), writing to Mr. Nagam Aiyar in July 1872, observed:—

“ I am in receipt of your interesting letter. Its earnestness and warmth have very much gratified me. I do not wonder at the impression which your *debut* into official life has produced in you. Every young man of intelligence, education and good moral principles, must feel similarly. I well remember twenty years ago, Sir Madhava Row's complaining of evils of the same type when he was first appointed Deputy Peishcar and was of your age.....I am sure that your steady principles, your zeal and notions of public justice and morality, will exert a palpable and salutary influence in due time.....While tolerant to the weakness and ignorance of others, let your own high character and wisdom be a standing model.”

Dewan Sir A. Sashiah Sastri, K.C.S.I., wrote much in the same strain, in August 1872, observing:—

“ The feelings, the impressions and the sentiments conveyed in your note are just what were mine when I entered public life, now 25 years ago, quite fresh from school and animated by a laudable (at this distance of time it appears to have been almost quixotic) desire to set everything to right.”

In June 1873, the late Maha Rajah wrote to Mr. T. Rama Row, C. I. E., Dewan, then Dewan Peishcar of Quilon:—

“ I think if you steadily have it in view, you can get in your Division gradually the best *Tahsildars* we have, and I fully consider some of our *Tahsildars* are very worthy. I would instance Nagam Aiyar of Kottayam.”

About the beginning of 1874, finding that the pay and position of a Tahsildar in those days were inadequate and uncongenial, Mr. Nagam Aiya seriously thought of quitting the Government Service and qualifying himself for the Bar. He was to have settled down in Madras, which then offered a bright field of usefulness and distinction to young men of intelligence and ability. Some of his school-fellows had gone there and attained to eminence in the Bar. With that object he took a month's preparatory leave before retirement. Just then, the Census operations were started for the first time in Travancore, and the then Dewan Mr. (since Sir) A. Sashiah Sastri, K. C. S. I., was looking about for a competent person to conduct it.

On the recommendation of the late Maha Rajah (then First Prince, Rama Varma, F. M. U.) for whom Sir Sashiah Sastri entertained high regard and esteem, Mr. Nagam Aiya was appointed as the Travancore Census Superintendent in 1874. Sir A. Sashiah Sastri writing to Mr. Nagam Aiya said :—

“Having brought to the notice of His Highness the want of a competent person to assist me in devising and carrying out the Rules and Returns for taking a Census of the population of this State, His Highness the Maharajah was pleased to select you for that office. Your salary, while on this duty, will, perhaps, be something between Rs. 100 and 150. I hope you will be of great service in this special work, and it may lead to your permanent advancement if you give satisfaction to His Highness, which I have no doubt, you will.”

Sir Sashiah added :—

“ I casually learnt from some quarter or other that you had arranged to take a year's leave to study Law and pass the B.L. test. I wish to know how you like the proposed special employment of you as said above, in connection with your plans, and whether you have any objection to being so employed.”

In his letter of the 17th February, 1874, Sir Sashiah had already written to him :—

“ Do not think you are neglected. This, as you must know, cannot be while I am Dewan, and I dare say you are aware that His Highness the Maharajah has a high regard for you.....His Highness the First Prince wrote to me regarding you the other day in very flattering terms indeed :”

H. H. the late Maha Rajah (then First Prince), writing to Mr. Nagam Aiya on the 17th February, 1874, said :—

“ I have put a word in your favour privately to the Dewan, but you need not expect much from him or his Royal Master. I cannot think much of a Government which is indifferent to a young man of your stamp and promise.”

This was a turning point in Mr. Nagam Aiya's affairs and he altered his plans accordingly. Mr. Nagam Aiya has ever since felt thankful to the circumstances which enabled him to stick to His Highness' service. Sir Sashiah, one of the greatest Indian Statesmen of the last century, was one of the earliest to recognise and to use his own words “ to profit by Mr. Nagam Aiya's worth.” The acquaintance thus casually begun between the two gentle-

men, as official chief and subordinate, ripened into a strong tie of friendship and mutual admiration, which continued undiminished for about 30 years until the earthly career of Sir Sashiah came to a close 10 years ago. Some of Sir Sashiah's letters quoted in this Sketch will bear testimony to that fact.

The Census was carried out with great care and ability, and Sir Sashiah, in officially reviewing Mr. Nagam Aiya's Report on the Census, wrote :—

"This able report itself will, I am sure, bear testimony to the admirable manner in which such a novel work as a Census has been conducted by a young officer (V. Nagam Aiya, B.A.) of His Highness' own service, born and educated in the State, who, in the course of executing the work entrusted to him, has displayed superior intelligence, great tact for organising, instructing and controlling a large and special agency which the necessities of the work called for."

Mr. Athol MacGregor, M. C. S., British Resident of Travancore and Cochin, in forwarding the Census Report, wrote to the Madras Government :—

"The results of the Census have been exhibited in detail in the very able and interesting report drawn up by the Superintendent, Mr. V. Nagam Aiya."

These high eulogies from Sir Sashiah and Mr. MacGregor were followed by even a higher one from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India (the late Marquis of Salisbury, K.G.), who observed in his Despatch to the Madras Government No. 213 dated 8th February, 1877 :—

" I have also to request Your Excellency to convey to the Maharajah of Travancore, my appreciation of the manner in which this important measure has been carried into effect and of the very intelligent Report that has been written on the subject."

Thus Mr. Nagam Aiyar became early known to fame and was long looked upon as the coming man in Travancore. That he soon earned an Indian reputation is clear from the following extract of a letter from the younger Sir Salar Jung, K. C. S. I., Prime Minister of Hyderabad :—

" Your name is of course well known to me in connection with the State of Travancore, and it would give me much pleasure at any future time to show you on the spot the methods of administration in Hyderabad which were modelled by my late father."

In one of his letters (6th November, 1875), to His Highness the late Maharajah, while First Prince, Sir Sashiah Sastri thus wrote of him in connection with some special work Sir Sashiah had entrusted him with :—

" I always feel much indebted to Your Highness for having brought Nagam Aiyar to my notice or I should not have learnt or profited by his worth which is every day increasing in my estimation. He does everything entrusted to him most thoroughly and well."

On the day of his retirement from the Travancore Dewanship (14th August, 1877), Sir Sashiah wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiyar himself thus :—

" What opinion I have formed of you, in connection with the Census which you have conducted so admirably, is

already on public record, and the great confidence I have in your character and abilities has been further shown by my entrusting you with work of a much more important character, in the performance of which, I hope you will be afforded all encouragement and support.

His Highness the late Maha Rajah wrote on the 15th July, 1876:—

“I took upon myself to pen a line about you to our Dewan and the following I quote from his reply for your information:—‘The every excellent manner, in which Nagam Aiyar has done the Census, has raised him much in my estimation. He cannot suffer neglect at my hands. He will shortly be put at the head of the Kandeluthu Department of which a beginning will be made.’ I may further mention to you that Mr. MacGregor, whom I saw on Thursday, alluded to the Census Report, which, I believe, is under his perusal. He asked me who wrote it. Feeling at first some delicacy to mention your name, I told him, the Dewan himself might mainly be concerned with the paper. But Mr. MacGregor rather searchingly repeated the question, adding that the Dewan could hardly find time to write so lengthy a paper on a special subject or have the details of the data at his fingers’ ends. Then I mentioned your name and what opinion I have always had of you. Mr. MacGregor asked ‘what is his name’ and I repeated it. He also enquired what your permanent appointment was, and I told him that you were Tahsildar of Kottayam, when you were called to the Capital to perform special duties. From all this you may augur good prospects ”

Dr. Edward Green Balfour, a former Surgeon-General of Madras wrote to His Highness the late Maharajah (then First Prince), in his letter dated London, 12th January, 1877, thus:—

"I have been greatly interested in the Report on the Census on account of the great extent of information in it, all of a novel character, and for the great knowledge of the English Language displayed in it by the Superintendent, Mr. V. Nagam Aiyar, B.A."

On the 15th December, 1876, Rev. Henry Baker, Kottayam, wrote thus:—

"I trust you know me sufficiently to be assured that I most sincerely congratulate you on your appointment as 'Revenue Settlement Officer.' I am indeed rejoiced at the appointment and trust your helpers will be honest and good men of business. I have had much pleasure in reading the Census Report. You have been wonderfully successful. I hope to see Mr. Ballard\* soon in England and I know he will be delighted for he thought very highly of you always."

Meanwhile he had devoted extra hours to the study of Law, attended the two years' course of Law Lectures under Dr. W.E. Ormsby, M.A., LL.D., Barrister-at-Law, and passed the periodical class examinations in the subjects prescribed for the B.L. Dr. Ormsby certified that "V. Nagam Aiya, B.A., has creditably passed the examinations held from time to time in the subjects prescribed by the Syndicate."

On the 23rd January, 1877, Dr. W. E. Ormsby, Esq., M.A., LL.D., again wrote:—

"I certify that V. Nagam Aiya has completed a course of two years' attendance at lectures in the subjects required for

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\* Mr. G. A. Ballard, M. C. S., was then British Resident of Travancore and Cochin.



the B. L. examination, at the Madras University, and that he has passed the examinations held periodically in the above subjects."

He had for short periods acted as Maramut Sherastadar and Police Sherastadar in the Huzur Cutcherry.

In recommending him to the Settlement Superintendentship in 1876, Sir Sashiah Sastri, Dewan, wrote thus:—

"Although this Kandeluthu is a different kind of work from the Census, still I have confidence that, at any rate, at the preliminary stage, V. Nagam Aiya, B.A., will be able to do justice to it. I beg therefore to submit his name for His Highness' gracious consideration to be appointed Superintendent of Kandeluthu on a beginning salary of Rs. 150 per month (with same travelling allowance as he drew as Census Superintendent)."

In his letter (dated 25th November, 1876), His late Highness wrote:—

"Permit me to congratulate you warmly on the important appointment conferred on you by His Highness the Maharajah and of which your note has just given me the very pleasing intelligence.....I am very glad that the Madras Government has given to your Census Report so flattering a reception."

He was promoted to the Deputy Peishearship of Settlement in July 1880. He owed this promotion to H. H. the late Maharajah soon after his accession to the Musnud in June 1880. His late Highness had now known Mr. Nagam Aiya for 10 years and had always thought highly of him, as will be

seen from His Highness' numerous letters quoted in this Sketch. His late Highness was known as the 'learned Maha Rajah of Travancore' and his high character and scholarship were universally acknowledged and admired.

In a letter dated 23rd July, 1880, addressed to the Dewan, the late Maha Rajah observed :—

"If I were to make a choice between.....and Nagam Aiyar, I will certainly select Nagam Aiyar. I have known him thoroughly. His intelligence and abilities are far beyond his years and equally beyond several of his grade. He has liberal and enlightened views of public matters. He writes excellent English. His character for fidelity and truthfulness is above suspicion. Mr. MacGregor, judging from the manner in which he carried through the last Census has entertained a high opinion of him.....I have alluded to the Census and Survey Departments. These may be permanently united in the hands of Nagam Aiyar and a respectable consolidated pay and respectable title given him. I would propose Rs. 300 and the title of Deputy Peishcar."

In connection with this appointment, Mr. Athol MacGregor, M. C. S., British Resident of Travancore and Cochin, wrote to the Dewan :—

"I have received your note with reference to the appointment of Nagam Aiyar as Deputy Peishcar and to control the Census operations. I think the appointment is a most judicious one, both as to the office constituted and as to the Officer selected."

In congratulating Mr. Nagam Aiyar himself Mr. MacGregor wrote to him on the 2nd July, 1880 :—

"I should have been glad to congratulate you personally on your new appointment which, I consider, one calculated to secure much advantage to the public."

In his memo, dated 26th June, 1880, addressed to the Dewan of Travancore, H. H. the late Maha Rajah observed :—

"I would name Nágam Aiyá, as the Head of the Committee. I have known him as a most intelligent and upright young man of honour and high principles. The manner in which he carried out the Census work is simply admirable."

He was appointed the Acting Dewan Peishcar of the Trivandrum Division in August 1880. In January 1881, he was appointed to act as Dewan Peishcar of the Southern Division and in September of the same year, he was transferred again to the Trivandrum Division, where subsequently he was confirmed as Dewan Peishcar, and the Royal Neet or Commission of appointment was given him by His Highness the late Maha Rajah in May 1883. He was then the first Graduate-Dewan-Peishcar of Travancore, as he was the first Graduate-Tahsildar of Travancore. When 20 years later, Dr. Harvey congratulated him as Acting Dewan, he wrote to him thus (February 1903):—

"I was pleased to get your letter a few mails ago announcing that His Highness had been pleased to appoint you to the charge of the Administration during the absence of Mr. Krishnaswamy Row on duty. I presume the charge carries with it the title. If so, I must congratulate you on being our first Dewan as well as our first B.A."

When he left the Trivandrum Division, the Vakils and inhabitants of Trivandrum, in a public address presented to Mr. Nagam Aiya in May 1885, said :—

“ We, the Vakils and inhabitants of Trivandrum, avail ourselves of this occasion of your transfer from this Division to express our deep veneration and hearty love for you, both in your private and public capacities. Of Magistrates, you are one of those select few who possess the rare good fortune of being loved by all parties and sections of the community. A Magistrate is rarely an object of universal love. In every case decided by him there is a losing as well as a gaining party, and while the gaining party may, perhaps, speak well of him, the losing party is sure to tax his impartiality or discernment. But with regard to you, both the winning and losing parties join hands in praising you and blessing you.”

As District Magistrate, he was under the old system, the Head of the District Police too, and as such had often to take part in the detection of crime. With regard to one of such detections in which he took part, His Highness the late Maharajah was pleased to write to him on the 18th January, 1881:—

“ Your Telegram of yesterday conveyed to me really gratifying news. You will have received my reply telegram. I am doubly glad—glad that a daring crime has been brought to light, and glad that complete success has attended the first important action in an administrative capacity, of one for whose selection to the high trust of Division Peishcar I am specially responsible. That success is a happy augury of your future.”

The Dewan (Mr. V. Ramiengar, C.S.I.), telegraphed: "Great credit is due to you. Prosecute the case to a successful conclusion."

It may be as well to point out here that the Division Peishcar under the old system was in touch with every part of the administration and exercised a wholesome control on all the Departments of the State—especially when he was an officer of experience, zeal, ability and unimpeachable character. He contributed to maintain the dignity and high tone of the service which has somewhat suffered in recent years, owing to the creation of a number of parallel officers for the different branches of the administrative work of the Division—resulting in a considerable increase to the cost of the staff without a proportionate benefit gained.

With regard to another item of his work, the Dewan, Mr. T. Rama Row, C. I. E., F. M. U., wrote thus:—

"It gives me the greatest pleasure to convey to you the thanks of His Highness' Government for the timely and very efficient assistance rendered by yourselves, your officers and men in putting down the fire which unfortunately broke out in the Fort yesterday, and which would have been far more destructive but for that assistance. They deserve the highest commendation working as they did in the heat of the day utterly regardless of personal convenience or safety led by the example set by yourself."

With regard to one of the Public ceremonials of the State which Mr. Nagam Aiya conducted as the

Trivandrum Peishcar, His Highness the late Maharajah wrote to him on the 5th May, 1885:—

“It is a source of true gratification to me that the *Tulabharam* ceremony, one of the greatest religious dues of my reign, has gone off to the universal satisfaction of all concerned. You have performed your part in it with unremitting assiduity, judgment and alacrity.”

Of the Murajapam ceremony of 1057 M. E. (1881-82 A. D.) which also Mr. Nagam Aiya conducted, His late Highness wrote on 11th January, 1882:—

“The Murajapam ceremony is approaching to a close, and it would be amiss on my part were I to let go this occasion without certifying in this manner to the extreme satisfaction which its excellent management has given me and all concerned. In that management you have taken a most prominent part and the vigilance, discretion and assiduity, which you have uniformly brought to bear on it have contributed essentially to its unqualified success, and have fully justified my long formed opinion of your devotion to public duties and your abilities. I heartily wish you a long career of success in public usefulness of which this is an early though by no means an inconsiderable instalment.”

The outside reader can form no idea of these huge feeding ceremonials of Travancore, involving great trouble and anxious care on the part of the officials concerned, not to speak of the cost which they entail or the religious importance which is attached to them by the people of the State. The residents of the other coast look upon these ceremonials only as old-world customs unknown in

their own country and impossible to celebrate in this iron age. Mr. Nagam Aiya described the Murajapam ceremony of 1057 M. E. (1881-82 A. D.), which he himself superintended in one of his official Reports thus:—

“ Since the narrative of the last Census was written I have had better opportunities of studying the character and customs of the Malayala Brahmins of Travancore of whom nearly 90 per cent were present in the last Murajapam ceremony at Trivandrum. The tidings of a new regime inaugurated with the accession to the throne of His Highness the present Maharajah who, as First Prince, was the idol of their affections; and the innocent curiosity of seeing a new Dewan (Honorable V. Ramiengar, C. S. I.) added to the usual attractions of a Murajapam ceremony brought in hordes of Namburis from all parts of Malabar. The numbers were unusually large, about 4,000 of them were fed daily for 8 weeks. In the last week; the number daily fed increased to 8 or 10 thousand (including foreign Brahmins). I roughly estimated that about 7,25,000 meals were given in all during the whole course of 8 weeks. This gigantic feeding enterprise is, I think, unparalleled anywhere in the world and the arrangements made, though of a primeval fashion, were nevertheless equal to the necessities of the occasion.

“ We in Travancore have no companies like Messrs. Ritter and Clifford of the Guildhall Tavern to arrange for State dinners as in civilised England. On such occasions the State appoints its own special agencies and I think it may be said without a doubt that the arrangements, though simple, are nevertheless perfect in their own way. It may, perhaps, be of some interest, were I to attempt here to give the result of my observation of these Namburis during the two months of the last Murajapam ceremony, in the conduct of which I took a part, for instance, to tell the outside world how these Brahmins bath and say their

prayers standing in knee-deep water every day, how after ablutions crowds of them go from the tank into the temple and sit there in groups for at least 3 hours every morning reciting without a fault either in manner or expression, the Vedas handed down to them by word of mouth from a remote and venerable antiquity, to state what table arrangements are made and how instead of covers being laid thousands of plantain leaves are spread on the bare floor from which to eat off, how they sit in parallel lines facing each other in long and magnificent stone-galleries in which the vista opens as one walks along; to describe the meal itself which is a strictly vegetable diet; and how fastidious they are in appreciating the nice differences in the preparation of the meal as it varies from day to day or from one Murajapam feast to another, some veteran eaters among them carrying their memories back to even the details of the dishes served half a century ago; what perfect silence prevails during the meal owing, I suppose, to the absence of the battle of 'forks and knives;' what contentment sits on the face of these innocent people after meals, how they spend their afternoons; what recreations they like best; when they meet again in the holy tank for evening ablutions, what Vedic hymn is then recited, its meaning and object, what respect is shown to them by the Sovereign and members of the Royal family, what money rewards they get during their two months' stay, how they go on shopping in the town mistaking brass rings for gold ones, their opinions of officers of State, their gross ignorance of the world, and in some cases their unpardonable excesses, their notions of other castes, their accommodation into large temporary sheds in which hundreds of them spend their nights together without molesting each other, all these no doubt would be additional information not contained in the former Report and perhaps not uninteresting; but even a brief description of them, such as I can give, would take more time and space than now available, granted that the matter will not be considered foreign to the scope of this Report."



The responsibility attaching to the efficient management of such a ceremonial can now be fairly gauged. That Mr. Nagam Aiya successfully managed this and several other equally important Sircar ceremonials is a well-known fact.

During his charge of the Trivandrum Division, he was entrusted with the duty of carrying out the Census of Travancore for the *second* time—a work which he accomplished with much credit to himself as well as to his Government, as will be seen from the following extract from the Proceedings of the Travancore Government dated 15th May, 1884, in which Mr. V. Ramiengar, C. S. I., F. M. U., the Dewan, wrote:—

“ His Highness notices with satisfaction the energy and diligence with which Mr. Nagam Aiya has carried out the laborious work of the Census entrusted to him in addition to his ordinary duties as Peishcar of the Trivandrum Division and resolves to confer upon him an honorarium of Rs. 1,000 in recognition of his services on this occasion.”

He had also often been appointed to make arrangements for the tours, outside Travancore, of Their Highnesses the present and the late Maha Rajahs, a work which received fitting recognition from both of them in the form of flattering letters and valuable presents of diamond rings, gold watches, shawls, silks and other tokens of royal favour. On one of these occasions His Highness the present Maha Rajah was pleased to write to him thus (7th April, 1888):—

"I have been desirous, since my return from the long but pleasant tour to Bombay, Madras, and other places to express in writing what I have already expressed to you personally at Erode, how entirely satisfactory were the arrangements made by you and those acting under your orders for my comfort and convenience throughout my tour. I know the difficulties you have had to contend with in making suitable arrangements in some of the stages. But you have spared no pains or trouble in making every thing as comfortable as circumstances would permit. I feel also gratified to think that having myself asked you to undertake this duty that every thing in connection with the tour has passed off so successfully. I hope you will wear the ring I gave you at Erode as a small token of my appreciation of the services you rendered to me during this tour."

On a similar occasion, His Highness the late Maha Rajah wrote (Courtallam, 8th March 1884):—

"My dear Nagam Aiya, I cannot allow this occasion of my safe return from the Rameswaram tour to pass without saying a word to convey my entire satisfaction at the arrangements made all along the route under your thoughtful and able supervision with the aid of British Officials and your own sub-agents. I shall long retain a lively and very pleasing recollection of the whole tour. As a memento of the tour I have to request you to wear this ring. Yours very sincerely,"

(Sd.) Rama Varma.

On the 15th April 1881, His late Highness wrote:—

"My dear Nagam Aiyar, I have despatched by this day's Anchal-post a seal charm with your initials engraved thereon and trust that it will reach you safely. I have to request you to keep and use it as a memento of our very pleasant visit to Ponmudi and likewise as a symbol of my regard to you. I

trust that you have taken charge of the Southern Division and continue in good health and good work. Believe me, Yours very truly, (Sd.) Rama Varma."

It may be of interest to note here that Mr. Nagam Aiya's ancestor (his great-grand-father) who served the great Rama Raja of Travancore once received a magnificent present of 24 shawls and an ivory-veneered palanquin, for services rendered in 1799 A. D. against Tippu Sultan, in the Hon'ble East India Company's siege of Seringapatam.

His Highness the present Maha Rajah wrote in his letter, dated Trivandrum, 30th July, 1890 thus:—

"You are doubtless aware of my desire to visit Rameswaram in the early part of the next Malabar year...I feel the arrangements will not be satisfactory and conducive to my comfort unless they are made by yourself in the same manner as they were made for His late Highness.....It will be great satisfaction to me if you could undertake the management of the Rameswaram tour. As there is not much time to lose, I would like to know your views soon."

Again His Highness wrote after the Tour was over, in his letter dated Madura, 6th December, 1890:—

"My dear Peishcar, I am really gratified to hear that owing to the strict supervision exercised by you, the expenditure of this Tour has been considerably less than that of the former one to Rameswaram and every economy has been observed. The result is due entirely to your care, forethought and personal attention to details. The arrangements have been at the same time perfectly satisfactory in all the stations, and I have never travelled with more comfort and ease."

In connection with one of the annual 'Onam' \* presents which H. H. the Maha Rajah gave to Mr. Nagam Aiya, Sir Sashiah Sastri, K.C.S.I., wrote to him (September 1900) :—

"It is your good fortune to receive the Onam present from His Highness' hands. It is a still greater fortune to you to have your old mother living to rejoice at every good thing which falls to the lot of an able and virtuous and dutiful son."

In April 1888, he was promoted to the more important Division of Quilon with an increase of pay. In communicating this transfer to him, the Dewan (M. R. Ry. T. Rama Row Avl., C. I. E., F. M. U.) wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya on 23rd March, 1888 :—

"I hasten to congratulate you on your transfer to a more important Division with an increase of salary. This is a substantial recognition of your merits and services by our Sovereign which must gratify you."

Mr. J. C. Hannington, M.C.S., British Resident, wrote on the 28th March 1888 :—

"I trust you will like Quilon and have no doubt you will fulfil with zeal, energy and ability, the duties with which you are entrusted."

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\* NOTE. The *Sravanam* (onam) Star in the month of *Sravanam* every year is the birth-day of Maha-Vishnu, and is celebrated with special rejoicings throughout Malabar when the Maharajah makes presents of clothes to the Royal family, to his Officers and dependants, the Landlord to his servants and tenants, the employer of labor to his workmen, the merchant to his clerks, and the uncle to all the members of his household. The clothes are newly purchased ones and are given as tokens of regard and good-will and vary in value from 150 Rupees to 2 annas. C.K.

He administered the Quilon Division for 5 years with much success and ability and won the golden opinions of the people and the authorities. In one of his tours, the Dewan wrote to him thus :—

“I am much pleased with the progress which Education is making, and it is very gratifying to observe contentment pervading the bulk of the people in your Division.”

Again the Dewan telegraphed, “Government congratulate you and those concerned on the success of the Exhibition.”

In April 1889, His Highness the present Maha Rajah was pleased to write to Mr. Nagam Aiya :—

“I have also duly received your several letters about the ‘Dwaja Pratishta’ at Ambalapulay, and also about the results of your administration of the Quilon Division for the last nearly one year. Nothing could be more gratifying to me than to hear that the division under your charge is in such a prosperous condition. I know you are sparing no pains in making the administration alike popular and beneficent to Government. I have also read the statements you have sent me from time to time about the revenue collections and other works since you went to Quilon. They are indeed very satisfactory and merit the cordial acknowledgments of the Government. I am sure the condition of the Quilon Division will continue to improve under your care, and it will always afford me great pleasure to hear of the success of your administration.”

His old Professor Dr. Harvey, writing on the 2nd April, 1888, observed :—

“It is a great pleasure to me to find my old students advancing in position and a special pleasure when I know

that this advancement is due to a strict and honorable performance of all engagements public and private.... You will forgive the freedom with which I have spoken. You see I still claim it on the ground of our relationship of master and student."

The Hon'ble Sir S. Subramony Aiyar, B. L., K. C. I. E., referring to the success of one of the Quilon Agricultural Exhibitions wrote, in September 1888 :—

" I read with great interest your speeches some time back. I hope this policy of consideration to the wishes and representations of the governed will become an established thing. I think a very decided change is being quietly effected in Travancore on lines which cannot but commend itself to every well-wisher of Native Governments."

As Dewan Peishcar of the Trivandrum and Quilon Divisions he had to make arrangements in connection with the tours of Their Excellencies, the Governors, and the Commander-in-Chief and of His Royal Highness the late Duke of Clarence and Avondale. This work too received commendation from His Highness' Government from time to time. The following extract of a letter from the Dewan, No. 6399 of P, 498, dated Huzur Cutcherry, 20th December, 1899, speaks for itself :—

" I am commanded by his Highness the Maharajah to place on record His Highness' high appreciation of the good services rendered by yourself, the Tahsildars of Kottarakerali, Shencotta and Pathanapuram and all those who worked under you in making the arrangements for the visit of His Royal Highness Prince Albert Victor. The duties devolved on you were of a varied description and the notice given was

sometimes short. Yet the arrangements were carried out so satisfactorily that they worked without a hitch or break down anywhere. The illumination of the Residency grounds and the waterfall at Courtallam were particularly effective and attracted much attention. And when it is considered that all this had to be done in addition to your ordinary work and to the duties devolving on you in connection with His Highness the Maha Rajah's tour to Courtallam and back, the credit due is not a little. I have much pleasure in conveying to you chiefly and through you to the Tahsildars and others who worked under your orders, the thanks of His Highness' Government for the excellent services rendered on this important occasion. His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor of Madras having heard from His Royal Highness that he was much gratified by his reception in Travancore has written to the Resident desiring to congratulate the Travancore officials upon the admirable arrangements made upon this occasion under the orders of His Highness the Maha Rajah, and the Resident requests me to convey to all the officers concerned this expression of His Excellency's satisfaction."

In October 1887, the Dewan wrote :—

"The Government are gratified to learn that all the arrangements ordered in your Division for the tour of His Excellency the Governor, have been satisfactorily carried out, and that the journey has been accomplished without a hitch anywhere. I have much pleasure in conveying to you the thanks of His Highness' Government for all the trouble you have been at in carrying out the arrangements."

Three years later, the Dewan again wrote :—

' I send herewith a copy of Mr. Rees' work 'H. R. H. the Duke of Clarence and Avondale in Southern India' which His Highness the Maha Rajah requests you to kindly accept as a *souvenir* of the Prince's visit to Travancore in the arrangements for which you took a very active part.'

In 1890, he was for the *third* time appointed to conduct the Census operations of Travancore, without prejudice to his own duties as Dewan Peishcar and District Magistrate of Quilon. The result of his labours in this connection is embodied in the two stout volumes of his very interesting Census Report for 1891, containing a mine of information regarding Travancore and its people. H. H.'s Government highly commended this work observing in their Proceedings, No. 5489 M. 1906, dated 18th October, 1893 :—

“This Review is appropriately concluded by acknowledging the services rendered by Mr. Nagam Aiya; the Commissioner, whose intelligent direction coupled with his previous experience has contributed mainly to the successful issue of the Census operations and Government cordially congratulate him on the result attained which, on the whole, is very creditable to himself and those associated with him in this important work. The Report itself is highly interesting and readable and is all that could be desired. To mark his recognition of the work, His Highness the Maha Rajah has been pleased to award to Mr. Nagam Aiya an honorarium of Rs 2,000.”

This work received commendation also from such eminent personages as the late Marquis of Salisbury, the Marquis of Ripon, Sir M. E. Grant Duff, the Right Hon'ble A. J. Balfour, Sir Edwin Arnold, Mr. Lecky, Sir S. Subramony Iyer and others who wrote very complimentary letters to him. The late Marquis of Salisbury wrote on 5th September 1894 :—

“I am much obliged to you for sending me a copy which I have just received and I shall take the earliest oppor-



tunity of making myself fully acquainted with its contents. I have a lively recollection of the admiration with which I read of the good work that has been done in Travancore as exhibited in your first Census Report some 20 years ago, and it is a great satisfaction to know that under the wise guidance which presides over its counsels the loyal State of Travancore has continued in a course of unabated prosperity since that time."

Mr. W. E. H. Lecky, M.A., M.P., (The Historian) wrote :—

"I must thank you very sincerely for your kindness in sending me your Census of Travancore. It is most comprehensive and instructive, and I have been reading it with keen interest. The pictures of religious and social life which you give have particularly struck me and helped much to make me understand a country where I have never been."

Mr. H. B. Grigg, M. A., C. I. E., late British Resident of Travancore, wrote on 7th November 1894 :—

"My dear sir, Mr. Grose, who is staying with me, has been reading your Census Report, and would be very glad to see you, if you find it convenient to call at the Residency to-morrow between noon and 3-30 P. M. Mr. Grose is a distinguished Oxonian and is brother of the Member of Council, Yours very truly, (Sd.) H. B. Grigg."

Mr. T. Chellappa Pillai, B. A., B. L., a former Chief Justice of Travancore wrote in November 1894, thus :—

"Since our acquaintance began at Alleppey you have risen higher and higher and now you hold a position by no means unenviable. Higher honours still await you. Your abilities have attracted the attention of British Statesmen, and have drawn forth encomiums from them.....I was very

much delighted to read in the papers of the increase to your pay given by H. H. the Maha Rajah. I am sure you deserve it and more."

Mr. K. C. Bedarkar, Dewan of Indore, wrote on the 23rd June, 1894 :—

"I am glad to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of two volumes on the operations of the results of the Census of the Travancore State for the year 1891. The Report is full of interest and valuable information, and I feel pleasure in saying that it does credit to the author and the State of which he is so distinguished a servant."

The Rev. J. Duthie, writing of this Census Report in July 1896, observed :—

"By the way, I had the *great* pleasure of hearing in a large meeting of ladies and gentlemen at Kodaikanal, an American gentleman—a most able and eloquent speaker—quote with most marked approval your sentiments regarding the value of Mission work amongst the poor. I felt proud that we had in Travancore an officer capable of uttering—and with such real eloquence, sentiments such as you have given expression to. Your words have all been quoted all over England and the United States."

Dewan Bahadur Sir S. Subramony Aiyar, B.L., K.C.I.E., F.M.U., wrote on the 25th June, 1894 :—

"Kindly permit me to thank you for the Travancore Census forwarded to me by Messrs. Addison & Co., under your instructions. I have spent a couple of hours over it this morning and I consider it a most valuable publication doing the greatest credit to you as the head of the Census establishment. After the great commendations it has received from the authorities it would be superfluous on the part of such of its readers as myself to bestow praise on the work so thoroughly and ably done."

Sir Edwin Arnold 225, Cromwell Mansions, Kensington, S. W., wrote in his letter dated 23d August, 1894 :—

“ I thank you very sincerely for the two volumes of your Census Report which you have had the kindness to send me. Although very busy I have found time to peruse much of their contents and I derived from them valuable and interesting information. I offer you my warm congratulations upon the original skill and admirable vivacity and perspicuity with which the voluminous labour has been accomplished.”

The Right Hon'ble Sir M. E. Grant Duff, G. C. S. I., wrote :—

“ I have to thank you very much for your valuable contributions at once to the Government and the contemporary history of Travancore which I found here after my return to England. The Royal Historical Society, of which you are a member, is occupied at present in doing honor to the great historian, Gibbon, who died a hundred years ago, and has got up an exhibition connected with him in one of the rooms of the British Museum. I propose to present to the Society a copy of your Census Report.”

The Right Hon'ble A. J. Balfour 4, Carlton Gardens, S. W., wrote in his letter dated 12th June 1895 :—

“ Pray accept my very sincere thanks for the very interesting Report on Travancore which you have been good enough to present to me. No scientific observations are of more importance and value than such contemporary studies of customs, manners, &c., as you have just completed. Their value moreover is permanent; for they serve as landmarks for estimating the nature and extent of future progress.”

Dewan Bahadur Sir S. Subramony Iyer, B.L., K. C. I. E., F. M. U., wrote again on 7th February, 1895:—

“I was very glad to find your very able Census Reports have received in the highest quarters the encomium they richly deserve.”

Mr. D. E. Wacha, C. I. E., Bombay, wrote on the 12th August 1895:—

“It is exceedingly kind of you to send me a copy (in 2 volumes) of your elaborate Census Report which I mean to go through at leisure. But so far as I have glanced at the contents and the introduction, I find the Report most elaborate, interesting and instructive, and I congratulate you on the assiduity and the ability with which it has been prepared. To find so enlightened a Government as that of Travancore issuing such a Census the value of which is immense, is most creditable to His Highness and his advisers.”

The Hon'ble J. D. Rees, C.I.E., C.S., wrote from Ootacamund, in his letter dated 20th October, 1895:—

“It was a pleasure to me to notice the excellent work you have done in reviewing the Travancore Administration Report and to mention your census Report, from the perusal of which I obtained much pleasure and profit.”

Mr. John Tatham Esq., M. D., Statistical Superintendent of Great Britain, wrote in his letter dated 31st January 1896:—

“Sir,—I am desired by the Registrar General to acknowledge the receipt of the following publication:—Census of Travancore, 1891, vols. 1 & 2 ' and to express to you his thanks

for this valuable contribution to the Statistical Library of this office."

Mr. Shungrasobier, C.I.E., F.M.U., Dewan, wrote on the 20th August 1895 :—

"Further, as a record of interesting information about the State, Government would like to have in stock as many copies of the book (Census Report of Travancore, 1891) as possible for presentation to distinguished visitors, &c."

The Press of India and England received the Report in one chorus of praise.

Mr. Rochfort Davies of the Bombay Civil Service wrote in July 1894 :—

"Having read a review in the 'Pioneer' newspaper of your most interesting Report of the Census of Travancore, I applied to my book-sellers at Bombay for a copy and have heard in reply that the Report is not procurable there. In my anxiety to read the entire Report, I take the liberty to apply to you to put me in the way of getting one which I will gladly pay for, if it is sent by V.P. Post."

He wrote again in his letter dated 17th August, 1894 :—

"The Review of the Report in the 'Pioneer', was a very highly laudatory one."

Mr. Prosanocoomar Ghosal, Dewan of the State of Moubhanj, wrote in February 1895 :—

"In the 'Statesman' and 'Friend of India' I am glad to read that your very valuable Report of the last Census of Travancore State has been completed and it contains matters which will be interesting to read and useful for other State Offices. I shall be thankful to you if you will please spare me a complete copy of your State Reports."

Mr. John Adam, M.A., F.M.U., Barrister-at-Law, writing from London 12th September 1894, says:—

“I should esteem it a great favour if you would cause to be forwarded to me a copy of your Census Report which has been so widely and favourably noticed in the Indian Press.”

Highly commendatory notices of the book appeared in the Madras Mail, the Pioneer, the Times of India, the Bombay Gazette, the Hindu, the Madras Times, the Indian Mirror, the Statesman, the Indian Daily News, the Friend of India, the Athenaeum (London), the Indian Magazine and Review, (London), India (London), and several other Newspapers and Magazines. His English friends have told Mr. Nagam Aiyar that portions of his Report have been quoted in the Village Newspapers of England and Scotland. A few extracts will be quoted here.

The Madras Mail of 4th July 1894 observed:—

“We have received the Report on the Census of Travancore, compiled by Mr. V. Nagam Aiyar, Settlement Dewan Peishcar and Census Commissioner. The Report is divided into 15 chapters with an Introduction, and is, to adopt the words used in the order passed by the Dewan on it ‘highly interesting and readable and all that could be desired.’ To mark his recognition of the work, the Maharajah of Travancore has been pleased to award to Mr. Nagam Aiyar, an honorarium of Rs. 2,000, which in our opinion has been thoroughly deserved. Not a little interest is added to the Report by the fact that it comes from the pen of a Native gentleman. To exemplify our meaning we will quote the encomium on missionary efforts which appears in the chapter on Education.

'By the unceasing efforts and self-denying earnestness of the learned body of the Christian Missionaries in the country, the large community of Native Christians are rapidly advancing in their moral, intellectual and material condition.....

'Those who have directly come under their influence, such as Native Christians, have nearly doubled the number of their literates since 1875. But for them these humble orders of Hindu Society will for ever remain unraised. Their *material* condition, I dare say, will have improved with the increased wages, improved labour market, better laws, and more generous treatment from an enlightened Government like ours; but to the Christian Missionaries belongs the credit of having gone to their humble dwellings, and awakened them to a sense of a better earthly existence. This action of the Missionaries was not a mere improvement upon ancient history, a kind of polishing and refining of an existing model, but an entirely original idea, conceived and carried out with commendable zeal and often times in the teeth of opposition and persecution. I do not refer to the emancipation of the slave, or the amelioration of the labourer's condition; for these always existed more or less in our past humane Governments. But the heroism of raising the low from the slough of degradation and debasement was an element of civilisation unknown to ancient India. The Brahmin community of Southern India are not doing to the lower classes what the casteless Britisher is doing to them. The credit of this philanthropy of going to the houses of the low, the distressed and the dirty, and putting the shoulder to the wheel of depraved humanity, belongs to the Englishman. I do not think the Brahmins or even the high caste non-Brahmins, can claim this credit. It is a glory reserved to this century of human progress...the epoch of the happy coming ling of the civilisation of the West with that of the East.' We venture to state that higher praise than this has never been bestowed on the Missionary enterprise in India, and coming as it does from the pen of a Brahmin

gentleman it is divested of all suspicion of prejudice of creed or race. The same liberal spirit is manifested throughout the whole Report, and Mr. Nagam Aiyar, ever eulogistic of the Native Administration of Travancore, never hesitates to award commendation to any system or method borrowed from British rule if he thinks it deserved..... The present Report is fuller and more complete than any of its predecessors and it concerns itself not only with statistics concerning the population, but describes the country and details the habits, manners and customs of the people..... Here we must leave the Report. It is, as we have already said, in every respect interesting."

The Times of India, Bombay, said :—

" Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, the Census Commissioner for the Native State of Travancore, is a philosopher and a man of wide reading ; and he has taken the opportunity afforded by his task to strike a blow in favour of that much maligned institution, the 'Hindu Home.' Mr. Aiya is right in thinking that too many authorities in the present day are disposed to deny that the Hindu has any healthy home life at all..... These speculators have it too much their own way at present ; and we are delighted to meet with a Native gentleman who will say a good word for the Hindu home. If he is able to drive home his comparison between our ideal and his by damaging extracts from Miss Braddon, that is, Miss Braddon's fault. If that accomplished and versatile author will make an English bride say, ' I won't have a honeymoon at all if I can't have it at Cheriton.' can any one expect a Hindu to listen with that admiration of the English character which we would fain believe is habitual to him ? The young lady who has attracted Mr. Aiya's notice goes on to say, ' I want to feel what it is like to have you all to myself in my own place. Godfrey : I shall feel like a Queen with a slave ; I shall feel like Delilah with Sampson.' This shocks Mr. Aiya much. We wish we knew



how to persuade him that it shocks us a little too, and that young English girls, looking forward to marriage, do not, as a matter of fact, speak in this way except in Miss Braddon's novels. But he is after all using weapons we have put into his hands, and is as much entitled to convict us out of our books as we are to convict him out of his. We make him a present of this wonderful young woman, and turn with interest to the maiden he contrasts with her. For, says Mr. Aiya, if the Hindoo home is a reality, and a potent reality, the Hindoo wife is the centre of that home. She is not the goddess of the shrine, worshipped as the English wife is but she is undoubtedly the main factor there, the central pivot upon which the whole household turns. She is the chief comfort and companion of her husband, the dutiful sharer of his joys and sorrows, the only help of his old parents, the ready and obliging friend to his sisters and brothers, the bringer-up of his children, and their preceptor in caste observances and domestic duties; above all, she is the most hard-worked and least thanked servant of the household.' Mr. Aiya assures us that such a spectacle is not presented by any other nation in the world."

The Indian Magazine and Review (London) wrote:—

"At the date of the last Census taken in British India a Census on similar methods was sanctioned by H. H. the Maha Rajah of Travancore, as also by other rulers of Native States. At Travancore, Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, Dewan Peishcar, who had already had experience in this line, was appointed Commissioner for the occasion, and the above two thick volumes were the result. The work involved much anxiety and many trying difficulties, although the people of this State, having already been enumerated and scheduled in 1875, in 1881, and even earlier, had less objection than those in other parts of India to the mysterious process, and there was in consequence no need to enforce the penal clauses

inserted in the Order.....It is evident that, from the full details in each schedule, a valuable amount of information was received in regard to the social condition of the people. Mr. Nagam Aiya, with praiseworthy diligence, has constructed out of the Census papers a very complete account of the Travancore State not merely in the form of statistics, but in interesting chapters under the different headings that had been adopted. He has, moreover, given the ground necessary to enable a foreigner to have a pretty full comprehension of the facts obtained by the Census, for he tells briefly the history of the State; describes the general features of the land and the peculiarities of dwellings. He also characterises the sects of religion and their beliefs, picturing minutely the forms of worship; he gives the lists of the various occupations, some of which are very curious, and of the 180 castes, with 578 sub-divisions; and he explains the social life, marriage customs, and educational standard and methods. The first volume (the second is of statistics only) is most instructive and readable. There is difficulty in extracting from such a mass of interesting information."

The Bombay Gazette observed;—

"The Report of the Census of Travancore by V. Nagam Aiya, the Dewan Peishcar of that State, to whose competent hands was entrusted, for the third time, the arduous duties of Census Commissioner, is one of the most suggestive of the valuable reports of the enumeration of the people of India on the 26th February, 1891. Travancore has been designated the epitome of India owing to the remarkable manner in which every variety of the scenery, soil, and vegetation of the Peninsula is reproduced in the ancient State, which constitutes its south-western extremity. This volume consisting of some 800 pages is full of information bearing on the life, avocations, habits, and ways of thought of a Native State, which, as the Census Commissioner observes, was enabled by its comparative isolation at the far end of the

Peninsula, walled in by the ghauts and the sea to escape from the worst effects of the waves of invasion which successively submerged nearly all the rest of the country. There has thus been perpetuated many of the features of the old Hindu polity which elsewhere were effaced or modified by contact with Mahomedanism. It is to this circumstance that Mr. Nagam Aiya attributes the superiority which he claims for Travancore in respect of the liberty and education of females—'precious relics of the ancient Hindu civilisation which have survived in the little Malabar kingdom undiminished unto this day.' He proudly asserts that through this cause 'we have here more educated women than in any other part of India'.....Nevertheless, the work of the Census was successfully accomplished, and with a completeness beyond that achieved in the two previous enumerations... Nevertheless, the Census work elicited from the Imperial Commissioner the high praise that it was trustworthy and complete."

The India (London) remarked :—

"The two solid volumes containing the statistics and the Report of the Census of 1891 in Travancore do marked credit to the intelligence and enterprise with which the whole intricate business has been carried out. They testify to the vigour of His Highness' administration and to the capacity of the Census Commissioner and the indefatigable energy of his assistants ..... The experience of Mr. Nagam Aiya on two previous Censuses has stood him in good stead on the recent occasion. He was appointed Census Commissioner only 9 months and 10 days before the final enumeration, and during that time he has also performed his ordinary duties of the Dewan Peishcar and District Magistrate of Quilon, . . . . .The Imperial Census Commissioner himself was the first to greet it as a 'trustworthy and complete Census.' To all appearance, the recognition is thoroughly well deserved. The Report is one item in the

remarkable catalogue of progress of Native States under the inspiration of English example, and rivalry with the English achievement. Mr. Nagam Aiya's Report need not fear to challenge comparison with any of the Provincial Reports, or even with that of the Imperial Census Commissioner himself. It is ample, lucid, and liberally illustrated with maps and diagrams.....The details in every department are of extreme interest, and the historical matter throws much light on the progress of the country. The information about castes, tribes, and races as well as about occupations and languages, is of especial interest and value. The Commissioner and his assistants have taken very particular pains on these parts of their duties. The facts they have given here, highly important as they are, represent only a selection from the masses of material they accumulated. The information on castes alone will suffice for a *separate* treatise by itself. We shall look with impatient interest for the publication of that treatise, and we trust that not a scrap of fact on the subjects will be thrown aside as unimportant. We have only touched on a few outstanding points in this admirable Report, but we hope we have said enough to send every one interested in the matters with which it deals to Mr. Nagam Aiya's most able and valuable pages."

The Athenaeum (London) wrote :—

" We have to thank the Census Commissioner of Travancore for a Report on the Census of Travancore taken in 1891, by command of the Maharajah at the same time and on the same plan as the Census of India. It is published by Messrs. Addison and Co. of Madras. The authorities of Travancore set up the claim to be in advance of the other Native States in the accuracy and completeness of their statistics.....The Travancore Census is extremely interesting.....A great deal of information with regard to caste is to be obtained from it."

The Indian Daily News (Calcutta) said :—

“ Travancore, as seen through the pages of the Government Report of the Census of 1891, appears in singularly attractive guise. The picturesque nature of its scenery, the pleasant warmth of its climate and the not infrequent extreme longevity of its people, would seem to mark it as a kind of Eldorado—to say nothing of the variety and value of its agricultural products. Its history, moreover, is not a little interesting.”

The Indian Mirror (Calcutta) said :—

“ Under its ancient name of Kerala, Travancore was one of the 56 Kingdoms into which India was divided of old. Its existence is traced to the mythological period when Parasurama was credited with having colonized it. Any account of this country though it may be given through a Census Report, cannot but prove of immense interest to the Hindu reader. And Mr. Nagam Aiya, Dewan Peishcar of the Travancore State, who was entrusted with the supervision of the Census of the State which was taken on the 26th of February, 1891, along with, and on the lines of the Imperial Census, has rendered the account considerably pleasant reading by the interesting, learned and instructive remarks with which he has presented the inevitably dry figures. It is impossible within the dimensions of a single Article to do justice to the contents of the Report which is composed of 796 pages of closely printed matter—not to speak of the Appendices which make a separate volume of still greater bulk.....We now take leave of Mr. Nagam Aiya and his exceedingly interesting Report, and with the Government of Travancore to whom he submitted it ‘ cordially congratulate him on the result attained which, on the whole is very creditable to himself and those associated with him in this important work’.”

The Hindu (Madras) said :—

“Travancore was peculiarly fortunate in having secured for the conduct and supervision of its Census operations, the services of such an able and experienced officer as V. Nagam Aiya, the Dewan Peishcar of the Revenue Settlement in the State.....This has been achieved in a manner that reflects great credit at once on the Government of Travancore and the officer charged with this difficult work and that has elicited the warm appreciation of the Imperial Census Commissioner, who observed that judging ‘from the orders and instructions issued and the system adopted, the Travancore State seems to have secured a trustworthy and complete Census.’ We congratulate Mr. Nagam Aiya on the ability and industry evinced in the compilation of the Report, which, besides embodying with perfect accuracy and thoroughness the statistical results of the Census of 1891, is in itself a mine of information, extremely interesting and useful, almost encyclopædic in its nature, on the physical features, agricultural condition, history, castes, occupations, creeds, education, manners and customs, of the two and a half millions of people that inhabit it. Mr. Nagam Aiya has considerable experience of the work entrusted to him as he was in charge of the 2 previous Censuses of 1875 and 1881 and he has so fully utilised the results of the previous Censuses for comparison and discussion of statistics that the portion of the Report leaves nothing to be desired. The statistical portion of the Report, which is no less exhaustive than the descriptive, is embellished with reflections and speculations of considerable shrewdness and value bearing on the state of the people, and Mr. Nagam Aiya’s method of treatment and style of writing is so felicitous and attractive that it lends interest to the driest figures..... Mr. Nagam Aiya’s Report will ever remain, for the earnest student of the beautiful country to which it relates, a standard book of reference having more than a passing or ephemeral

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ral interest and containing an inexhaustible treasury of valuable information."

The Madras Times observed:—

"For the third time, in 1891, M. R. Ey. V. Nagam Aiya, B. A., F. R. HIST S, was intrusted with the conduct of the Census operations in Travandore. Practice makes perfect, it is said; and the practice that Mr. Nagam Aiya has had has certainly helped him to make his Report valuable..... In achieving speed the Census Commissioner has not allowed any of the work to be carelessly done. The whole Report tells of care and diligence, and reflects the highest praise on the gentleman responsible for it as well as upon those who assisted him in its preparation.....It contains a wealth of information. The framer's predilections for history have caused him to throw in many a bright little bit of comment, and have enabled him to make the Report something more than a dry record of statistics. It is eminently what a Census Report should be: accurate, comprehensive, detailed and yet very interesting withal, from the manner in which facts are stated.....These, however, are among the most valuable portions of the Report."

In the early part of 1892, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, London. He owed this honour to the good offices of the Right Hon'ble Sir M. E. Grant Duff, G. C. S. I., the then President of the Society, who wrote to him in his letter dated York House, Twickenham, 25th November 1892, thus:—

"We are delighted to have you as a Fellow at the Royal Historical Society."

His Highness the present Maha Rajah was pleased to write on the 18th December 1892:—

"I most heartily congratulate you on being elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, of which such a distinguished personage as Sir M. E. Grant Duff is the President."

He had now completed 12 years' service as Dewan Peishcar of 3 out of 4 Divisions in Travancore, the duties of which correspond to those of a District Collector in British India. As Peishcar, he had the collection of revenue and had superintendence over all Oottupurahs, Devaswoms, Marahmut works, Customs, Abkari revenue, Salt, Tobacco and other miscellaneous items of the public Revenue of Travancore, and was besides District Magistrate—in all of which multifarious capacities he gave satisfaction to His Highness' Government. He was often in charge of two Divisions at a time, and those who know Travancore well, know also what the additional charge means. By his great capacity for work and uncommon perseverance, he rose equal to his responsibilities and won golden opinions from the authorities and the people all round. On one occasion when he was in charge of 2 Divisions, owing to the absence on leave of the Dewan Peishcar of the neighbouring Division, the Executive Engineer of the State, Mr. Horsley, M. Inst. C. E., wrote to him on the 10th July 1887, thus:—

"I must thank you as well as congratulate you on the disposal of so many outstanding references connected with my work. The arrears was getting truly mountainous and I can only hope Mr. .... will remain on leave for some time longer."

The Dewan (M. R. Ry. T. Rama Row Avl., C.I.E., F.M.U.) acknowledged his work thus on the 15th July 1887:—

“ I am very glad to peruse your letter of the 11th instant, and to learn that you have disposed of a considerable portion of the arrears of the work in the Padmanabhapuram Division. This is very creditable to you indeed, more especially when it is considered that you have done so much in addition to your own duties.”

M. R. Ry. N. Nanoo Pillai Avergal (Dewan of Travancore) wrote from his retirement in November 1885 thus, of his work as a Magistrate :—

“ The justice done by you on the ‘ road encroachment case’ at my neighbourhood is such as has had no small tendency in securing the confidence of the people in your impartial and sound judgment.”

It is not necessary to add to this record of valuable testimonials. As Dewan Peishcar he took special interest in all matters that went to increase the comforts of His Highness’ subjects, whether in the improvement of Chuttrams or repairs to wells and tanks, or the opening up of village roads, or mending of temples, or the putting up of additional buildings for the comfort and convenience of travellers, or the planting of avenues, or the founding of clubs and recreation grounds, or the construction of schools, bridges and new roads, the lighting and cleansing of towns and villages—in fact all matters which show a keen appreciation of public needs and the promotion of public comfort and convenience.

In August 1892, H. H. the present Maha Raja promoted him to the more important office of the Dewan Peishcar of Revenue Settlement and granted to him a Neet or commission of appointment, in succession to Mr. Shungrasobier, F.M.U., C.I.E., who was raised to the Dewanship. This is the highest Revenue appointment in the State, next to the Dewanship. He held this high office for 11 years and a half and won the confidence of His Highness the Maha Raja and his subjects by his integrity, diligence and devotion to duty and by the moderation and justice of his Settlement rates which have given universal satisfaction. The following extract from the Resident's (Sir J.D. Rees, K.C.I.E., M.P.) Review of the Travancore Administration Report for the year 1069 M.E. (1893-94 A.D.) shows the esteem in which his work as Settlement Dewan Peishcar was held. The Resident wrote:—

“From this statement it will be seen that considerable progress was made in the work under all but two heads. It is understood to be due partly to the efficient control of a large staff of subordinates employed, partly to the simplification of the method adopted and partly perhaps to the slight increase in the staff allowed during the year. In any case much credit is due to M. R. Ry. V. Nagam Aiya, the Peishcar in charge of the Department for this excellent result. It was this officer who conducted the Census Operations and compiled the excellent Census Report of 1891.”

Of his Memorandum on the Settlement of the Shencottah taluq, the following extract from the

Proceedings of His Highness the Maha Rajah's Government may be quoted :—

“The Taluq of Shencottah has been from various causes considered as needing special treatment. Its land tenures and taxes, its grain measures and coins and its system of accounts and Revenue administration generally are peculiar. The Settlement Dewan Peishcar has in the interesting memorandum read above, gone into the subjects at considerable length and submitted definite proposals for the orders of Government on important points.....In conclusion His Highness' Government note with pleasure the great care taken by the Dewan Peishcar in collecting the necessary materials for decision elucidating the several difficult points connected with the settlement of the Shencotta Taluq.”

From the time of his appointment as Settlement Dewan Peishcar, he was a Member of the Travancore Legislative Council to which he was repeatedly nominated by Government, until the time of his retirement. And he will be long remembered as the father of the Travancore Hindu Religious Endowments' Bill, the only piece of *original* legislation ever brought before that Council. He is, as a rule, averse to too much legislative activity, as he believes that simple societies suffer from over-legislation more than from want of numerous legislative enactments. But when however he was pressed by the Dewan, Dewan Bahadur Mr. K. Krishnaswamy Row, C.I.E., to associate his name with some important piece of Travancore legislation, he introduced this Bill and as usual with him he put his whole heart and strength into it until all

opposition to it was overcome and it became law. The protection and conservation of the enormous temple wealth in Travancore was with him a sacred duty which commanded his full sympathy and zeal, and the idea itself was in his mind for several years before, as he himself explained to the Travancore Legislative Council in his first speech of the 2nd December 1899, from which the following extracts are here reproduced, as they so ably and clearly expound the pitiable condition into which these valuable institutions have fallen and the paramount importance of resuscitating them in conformity with the intentions of their benevolent donors. Mr. Nagam Aiya said :—

“For several years past, I have had it in my mind that some action should be taken by this Council for the better protection and management of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments in Travancore—such as are not already under the management of the Sircar. But the necessary information was not in the first place available, and in the second place it was a difficult task, there being no British Indian enactment as a guide to copy from, and thirdly, the needful stimulus was wanting, until our President, the Dewan, wrote to me thus two months ago :—

“Sometime ago, you told me that you had an intention of introducing a Bill in the Legislative Council for the better management of Hindu Pagodas and other institutions. Every day I receive complaints of mismanagement of

private Pagodas. Now there is no written law empowering any authority to assume management and prevent waste. Necessity for legislation on this subject is becoming very pressing.'

"That I have had this question in view for many years past, will be clear to the Council from the following extract of a letter, which I wrote four years ago, to an official member of His Excellency the Viceroy's Council. I wrote to him thus:—

'During the time you sit in the Supreme Legislative Council, I wish that something would be done to the Religious Endowments of British India. They represent vast wealth, most of which is squandered away. They should be conserved and regulated discharging the trust which the British Government have inherited from their predecessors faithfully to some extent, at least, like what the Native States do with regard to similar endowments within their territories.'

'To which he replied on 15th January 1896,

'I have little hope of being able to effect an improvement in the administration of Religious Endowments, but it is a most important subject.'

"In the result however, the condition of the Hindu Devasthanoms throughout the British Indian Empire, I regret to observe, remains in the same unsatisfactory state still, or as the Madras Government wrote in their letter to the Government of India, No. 73, dated 26th May, 1894:—

'It is unnecessary to discuss the question whether the existing law embodied in India, Act XX of 1863 is sufficient for the purposes for which it was designed; that point was settled more than twenty years ago, and every year merely adds to the overwhelming mass of testimony to the inade-

quacy of the law and the necessity for the speedy application of a radical remedy. Nor is it essential to narrate in detail the history of the efforts which this Government has made to meet the wishes of the Hindu community, which views with the utmost dissatisfaction the well-nigh unrestricted opportunities for peculation afforded by the law to those who are entrusted with the administration of the great wealth belonging to the numerous religious institutions in the Presidency of Madras.'

"I will not trouble you now with the details of the Bill I propose to introduce, the object of which is only to enable Government to take power to interfere in the management of such institutions, whenever in the interests of such institutions themselves, such interference is called for; but on the present occasion, I will address myself to two important points in connection with the question, *viz.*

- (i.) Whether Government may interfere in matters of this kind, and
- (ii.) Whether if such interference is unobjectionable, there is any *real* need for such interference.

"In reply to the first question, it will be admitted on all hands that it is the duty of Government to interfere in the case of these endowments and protect them from the wholesale misappropriation and shameful mismanagement, now going on, in direct contravention of the intentions of the original grantors of the endowments, and further, that in regard to religious trusts, it is the duty of every Government to protect and safeguard them, and



fully promote, as much as possible, the benevolent and charitable intentions of their donors.

“For this purpose, it is not necessary to invoke the aid of ancient Hindu or Roman law-givers, as the principle itself has been again and again fully admitted and practised in more recent times. I will quote the following words of Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer’s Hindu Religious Endowments’ Committee of 1893, a Committee composed of the then best native talent in the Madras Presidency, which succinctly describes the relationship that existed in India between the Rulers and these institutions, in the Hindu, the Mahomedan and the early British periods of Indian history :—

‘Under Hindu rule, the Rajahs exercised through their officers real and direct control over all religious institutions and endowments. Many of these institutions had been founded and endowed by their ancestors, and most, if not all, of them continued to receive periodically pecuniary contributions from the State. Even under Mahomedan rule, this duty of the State was not completely ignored. Except during periods when religious intolerance was at its worst, the Mahomedan Rulers of India considered it expedient to make some provision against the deterioration or decay of Hindu Temples by neglect or peculation, and in some instances even added to their endowments. Under British rule, there was for many years no enactment or regulation bearing on the management of Hindu temples. Regulation VII of 1817 had the obvious intention and effect of continuing and maintaining the policy that had been in vogue under Hindu and Mahomedan rulers. Not only was there a distinct recognition of the principle that it was a duty incumbent on Government to keep a strict watch over religious trusts and

endowments but practical effect was given to this principle by the exercise of efficient and stringent control over the management of Hindu temples, through the instrumentality of the Revenue Officers of the State. From 1817 to 1842 there was general satisfaction that Hindu temples were being properly managed, and that the danger to temple funds being misappropriated by the managers had been reduced to a minimum. The supervision exercised by Government over the management of Hindu temples during the period referred to was one of the many acts by which Government endeared itself to the hearts of its native subjects.'

"The principle was distinctly admitted in the preamble to the Regulation VII of 1817 itself, which recited:—

'Whereas considerable endowments have been granted in money, or by assignments of land, or of the produce, or portions of the produce of land, by former Governments of this country, as well as by the British Government, and by individuals for the support of mosques, Hindu temples, colleges, and choultries, and other pious and beneficial purposes; and whereas there are grounds to believe that the produce of such endowments is, in many instances, misappropriated, contrary to the intentions of the donors, to the personal use of the individuals in immediate charge and possession of such endowments; and whereas it is the duty of Government to provide that all such endowments be applied according to the real intent and will of the grantor; and whereas it is moreover expedient to provide for the maintenance and repair of bridges, choultries, chuthrums, and other buildings which have been erected, either at the expense of Government or individuals for the use and convenience of the public the following rules have been enacted.'

"Though the British Indian Act XX of 1863 repealed this excellent Regulation there is a spirit of

reaction again setting in now, in favour of aiding in the management of Hindu Temples and endowments in the minds of the British Government itself—as I gather from the following extract of a resolution of the Madras Board of Revenue, dated 8th September 1893, No. 524 on the Bill submitted by Sir T. Muthusami Iyer's Committee:—

'The real cause of the present unsatisfactory state of things is the strict policy of non-intervention in temple management which Government has adopted for the last half-century. But so long ago as 1876, the Government of India receded from the position of rigid non-interference originally taken up and went so far as to observe with reference to a proposed Central Temple Committee at Madras, that 'it would probably be better that the members should be appointed and removed by Government.' This observation is equally applicable to the local Committee now proposed; and though the present Bill contains provisions for nomination of members in part by Government agency, it is defective in not providing for their removal except under s. 7 or by suits instituted by persons interested. The Board would remedy this defect by accepting and acting upon the principle laid down by the Government of India and would accordingly suggest (1) that the Local Government should take power under the Act to remove members of the local committees for such mismanagement, or other misconduct as, in its opinion, shows them to be unfit to administer the endowments; and (2) that the Collector should also be empowered, on complaint made by (say) six or more persons qualified to be elected members of committees, to enquire into the working of any committee, and if necessary, to recommend to Government the removal of any member or members for notorious wrong doing or for neglect of duty. The Board is however fully convinced that the control of local Officials holding influential and responsible positions

is absolutely necessary and that it is inevitable that Government through one of its Departments, should interfere in the matters above referred to. The Board would however leave the Bench undisturbed and exercise the necessary control through the ordinary administrative machinery of the Revenue Department.'

" Sir George Campbell, a former Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, writes in his 'India as it may be':—

'I think that all such endowments should be supervised by Government, that the conditions of tenure should be distinctly registered, that their fulfilment should be annually ascertained, and that Government should retain a power of putting them from time to time into proper hands, and when necessary, redistributing the funds.'

"The Ceylon Government has a very complete ordinance, providing 'for the better regulation and management of the Buddhist Temporalities in the Island,' according to which clear and detailed rules are laid down for the conduct of trustees, the checks upon them by District and Provincial Committees, powers to suspend and dismiss Trustees, and in some cases for subjecting them to criminal prosecution, thus showing a very considerable difference in the treatment of temples and their funds from what the British Indian Government has recently adopted in the Indian Empire. This ordinance is No. 3 of 1889.

"In our own country, the principle has been again affirmed in the Royal Court of Final Appeal, Case No. I of 1062 M.E. in which our learned President sat as Chief Justice. It was held in that case, that

the Sircar has the power of interfering in the affairs of public Religious institutions, under the control of hereditary trustees, in cases of gross neglect of duty, or misconduct, and of assuming the management of such institutions, without recourse to law, if that course is necessary in the interests of such institutions. In the course of the decision, the Judges observed :—

' We are not prepared to hold with the learned Judges of the High Court that the Government, in the first instance, are bound to seek the aid of the Civil Courts, to exercise this power. Any member of a community to which a religious institution belongs, has the power to remove even an independent *hereditary trustee with the aid of the Civil Courts*. (I.L.R. III Bom. p. 27 ; III All. p. 636 and I.L.R., Vol. VIII p. 63). Reason points to the conclusion that the Government which is *parens patriae* must possess higher powers than those of its subjects. We think that the executive on being satisfied of the existence of strong grounds for its interference, may assume the management of public trusts without prejudice to the rights of the aggrieved parties to obtain redress for wrongs committed upon them by an appeal to the Judicial tribunals in due course of law. The best interests of public trusts require that the Government should possess this summary power. If it is obliged to remove by suit every defaulting trustee, the consequence would be very serious to the interests of the religious institutions—For instance, if divine service is discontinued in a Hindu shrine held in great veneration, the serious consequences that result therefrom, cannot, from a religious point of view, be remedied by any relief granted by Courts; and prompt action would be necessary to secure the continuous performance of service. Who should take such action? None

but the Government can be safely entrusted with the power of interference on emergent occasions. The position of the Government demands that every presumption should be made in favour of the fairness and justice of their proceedings. The parties aggrieved by any unwarranted or unjust action of the executive can obtain redress by Civil action.'

"It is thus clear that it is the duty of the State to look after these endowments and regulate and control them from time to time, their welfare being thus made an object of its constant care and solicitude. I will go further, and say that it is not only the duty of the Government but their *interest* as well to regulate them, for in times of famine or general distress, these endowments, if well managed, will become sources of enormous help and might enable Government to tide over difficulties otherwise insurmountable.

"The next point for consideration is whether there is in the present condition of private Hindu temples and charities of Travancore, any real need for such Government interference as is contemplated, and whether the present trustees and managers of those institutions are not themselves alive to a sense of duty and responsibility, so as to make enquiry into their condition by Government an unwelcome interference and a wholly superfluous and gratuitous task from their point of view? In answer to this question I can boldly say that Government interference is absolutely essential.

"One of my valued correspondents, in suggesting a full inquiry writes 'there is, no doubt, a prevailing

notion that religious and charity endowments have been mismanaged by private agencies.' The result of my best enquiries goes to show that the prevailing notion is well-founded in the opinion of private gentlemen as well as some of our best men, who have seen different branches of the public service and who have moved closely with the people, living in their midst, and concerning themselves in their affairs, their interests and their aims, and knowing from very considerable local knowledge their wishes, their difficulties and their shortcomings. These gentlemen who have favoured me with replies to my queries on the subject, are unanimous in declaring that mismanagement and malversation of temple and charitable funds are the rule, while the faithful and honest fulfilment of the benevolent intentions of the original donors as a sacred duty, is the exception. Permit me, therefore, to quote some of their letters which will satisfy the Council how real the evil is and what baneful effects it has produced and will produce on the population, if unchecked, not to speak of the blight which it will lead to and chill all light and warmth from the hearts of future donors of pious and beneficial endowments, if any, in this age. I have no doubt that you will come to the conclusion that legislation is necessary.

"One of our most experienced officers, a gentleman who has served in the Revenue, Police and Judicial Departments of the Public service, writes:—

'I beg to inform you that legislation is necessary to protect private Hindu temples and other charities..... By an act like the one you propose, you would be doing a service to the country and to the cause of charity by putting down endless malversation of useful and valuable funds and the litigation consequent upon it.'

'Another of our high officers writes :—

'Such being the case it becomes very necessary that such charitable funds and institutions have to be placed on a satisfactory footing by introducing proper management, guaranteeing to carry out the object of the charity..... Hence arises the obligation on the part of the Government to frame such laws and regulations for the proper management of the institutions throughout the State and to carry out as much as possible the intention of the donors.'

'One of our most experienced Tahsildars, now a first class Magistrate, writes :—

'The Government not having a direct interest in the matter and the existing law being defective, there seems to be no check against the malpractices in respect of the trust property and consequently the evil is growing day by day. The nominal interference of the State under the principle that the sovereign is the protector of all charities does not carry the desired effect. Measures for the proper conduct of the misappropriations, should be adopted. I, therefore, think that legislation on the subject is highly necessary

A retired Educational officer of ripe experience and great knowledge, writes :—

'Unless Government interfere in these temples and regulate their affairs, the arrangements made by the people themselves from time to time will be never satisfactory, as can well be seen from the present condition of these temples.'



"Another of our retired officers, but young and highly educated, and a former member of this Council, writes :—

'Considering this fact as well as the extent of the properties concerned and of the proportion of the general population whose prosperity is closely connected with these properties, I have no hesitation in urging that the Legislature should lose no time in providing an instalment of its help for the protection of these Devaswams.'

"One of our Judges writes ;—

'I may assure you I am satisfied that legislative interference is imperatively called for, for regulating the administration of these endowments.'

"Another experienced Judge writes :—

'To be brief, the evidence adduced in several cases that came before me relating to the Devaswams and their endowments for the last 24 years, has convinced me that most of the Ooralens and the Samudayams have rendered themselves quite unfit to be the trustees and managers of the Devaswams, and that it is hopeless to expect that the interests of the several sacred temples can be properly safeguarded by them who allege freedom from responsibility to any one but themselves.

'It is very seldom that the devotees and worshippers of the religious and charitable institutions avail themselves of the wholesome provision contained in section 511 of the Civil Procedure Code.'

"One of our Noblemen in North Travancore writes :—

'I think it highly desirable that we should by legislative interference put a stop to the misappropriation of the temple funds.'

“ One of our best Munsiffs writes :—

‘ In my opinion, legislation on the subject is necessary and I have on several occasions mentioned the desirability of the Government making at least some provision for the better management of private charities to some of my friends and even to the late Dewan.’

“ Another experienced Munsiff writes :—

‘ I am, therefore, in favour of a Bill being introduced in our Legislative Council for affording proper protection and management of the affairs and the funds, particularly of the private Hindu religions and charitable institutions.’

“ A third Munsiff writes :—

‘ I think with others whose opinion I have ascertained, that Government should extend its protecting arm to remedy such state of things. It recognized the principle in Colonel Munro’s time but in giving effect to it, it selected those temples which while their support would not entail any cost on it, would be a source of public revenue.’

“ A young and energetic Tasildar writes :—

‘ I think a Regulation for the protection and better management of all religious and charitable institutions both public as well as private is necessary.’

“ An experienced Vakil of South Travancore writes :—

‘ On the other hand it must be admitted that nothing will go straight, if there is not some sort of Government interference. Our people are not sufficiently educated to regulate the autonomy of their institutions and if anything is rotten, those interested have neither the will nor the inclination to set matters right’ ... ..

‘ I therefore submit that Government interference is necessary and legislation must be resorted to.’

“ A Manager of one of the Brahmin Jenmis, near Trivandrum, writes :—

‘ If Government were pleased to undertake the supervision of these temples, not only will the anarchy at present prevailing in them disappear, but the original intention of the donors will be properly fulfilled, malversation of funds be removed and their properties will increase, the temples themselves repaired, thus resulting in prosperity and reputation to the people, the donors and the Government.’

“ One of my Assistants (Revenue Settlement Department), writes thus :—

‘ As regards question No. 1. *vis*, whether there is any considerable misappropriation of private temple funds or mismanagement of private charitable endowments, I feel no doubt that Pagodas which are exclusively managed by private individuals are not the models of what they ought to be in the view of their original founders. ... ..

‘ Abuses in these endowments often arise from a few causes. The most prominent of these are mismanagement by incapacity, fraud and lack of interest in the temple affairs. ... .. ‘ I, therefore, sum up that a reform is urgently called for to place them on a satisfactory footing and that the formation of Local Boards with ample executive powers and subject to the orders of the state would be a means to obviate existing evils.—’

“ A very intelligent Supervisor in the Settlement Department writes :—

‘ As the present condition of these temples and the charities is unsatisfactory and matter of general complaint as shown above, an enactment for their preservation and improvement is absolutely necessary and will give to the people at large greater satisfaction than all other regulations conserving public interests.’

“ Another intelligent Supervisor also writes :—

‘ The management of all Public Charities should at once be assumed by Government. Regarding private charities if the donors so desire in writing, Government may take them; or if the family of the donor be large and if its members quarrel amongst themselves and consequently mismanage the Charity, Government can, after inquiry and proof, interfere.’

“ A retired Tahsildar of ability and experience writes :—

‘ I have mentioned here only the names of a few temples and Samubathu madoms which are on the high road to ruin. I believe that a close examination will show that more than a thousand private temples and charitable institutions are in this miserable condition. There is sufficient reason to infer that the present condition of the management and conduct of such institutions is rotten and unsatisfactory and that such a state of affairs greatly affects the public well-being and advancement of the Hindus. The people are gradually growing more selfish; so no one troubles himself about the common weal. If Government also remain silent, the interests of the public at large will be wholly unprotected.

‘ Thus the charities are not only not properly managed, but they do not remain even in name; and in these days most of the people are indifferent and devoid of all love of charity. Hence if a regulation be passed enabling Government to assume *melkoinma* over and to regulate the conduct of, these charities, the private charities above mentioned as well as those incorporated with the temples having *Eluthitheervai* such as *namaskarams*, (*Kalkalukichoothu*) will thrive well; if not, there is no likelihood of their proper conduct and better preservation. We say all this from our own personal experience.’

It is not necessary to trouble the Council with the names of the temples or charities where, at present, management is declared to be very unsatisfactory in the opinion of my correspondents, who have personal experience of them. It is enough to state that every important endowment whether of temple or charity is torn by dissensions amongst the managers, or disfigured by litigation in the Civil Courts.

“ Before concluding I will say one or two words on the magnitude and importance of the interests at stake. The State had no concern with the management of any temples before the year 987 M. E., when the landed properties of 378 temples were assumed by the State and the management taken over. 1171 minor temples which had no property were also assumed either before or at that date. The expenditure, establishment and the routine of ceremonies, rules of management, all were settled for these 1549 temples on this occasion by Col. Munro, the Dewan-Resident, on a permanent basis. But this number, 1549, represents only a fraction of the temples of the State. According to the census of 1875, there were returned 9307 temples throughout the State. Deducting the number under Sirkar management (viz., 1549), we get 7758 temples beyond the pale of Government management. That is 17 per cent. of the total temples of the State are under Government management while 83 per cent. are outside it. This number

is exclusive of 'Kavcos' and 'Thekkathoos' of Malayali houses whose number is legion. Lieutenants Ward and Connor give 22,900 'religious temples and places of worship' independent of churches, Musjeeds and Synagogues. But in the statistical table appended to their report, one of the columns under which alone 15000 are returned, is temples, and groves dedicated to minor divinities? The groves and Thekkathoos have been excluded in the census, and hence the difference between the two results.

"The property owned by these 7,758 temples is also vast. According to the settlement of 1012, which comprised only a settlement of garden lands, these private Devaswams owned 54,155 gardens tax-free. The temples within the boundaries of *Adhigara Olivu* and *Desa-Olivu* tracts are excluded from this calculation. The assessed rental of these 54,155 gardens came to 79,496 Rs. It can be safely estimated that the present assessment on them will come to one and a half lacs of Rupees. Multiplying this sum by 25, we get the figure 37 and a half lacs of Rupees—the capitalised value of those gardens. The paddy lands of the same may be estimated to be worth about 60 lacs of Rupees—in all, the landed property of the Devaswams whose welfare it will be the object of this Bill to promote may be put down as worth I crore of rupees.

"The moveables of these temples may be valued at one-third of crore, excluding the buildings almost

all of which are indifferent stages of decay throughout the country. These are the properties known to the public accounts before 1012. Properties purchased since then in the name of those temples or properties dedicated to them, or to other charities before that date if paying Sircar tax, cannot be discovered from the Sircar accounts. These also will swell the property of these institutions. It may not be far wrong if I estimate that the total value of the endowments meant to be dealt with is about 2 crores of Rupees. I trust this will give the Council an idea of the magnitude and importance of the question we are dealing with.

"If you permit I shall introduce a Bill at an early date. With regard to its scope, I will only state that it is intended to be very limited, that Government seeks no profit by the proposed legislation, that the well-being and prosperity of the institutions are our only aim, and the satisfaction of the public our best reward. No radical changes are contemplated, no vested interests will be rudely disturbed. Dishonest managers will be watched and corrected. Honest trustees will be helped and encouraged. In every way, the intentions of the original donors will be followed and fulfilled."

In his speech six months later, (June 1900), Mr. Nagam Aiyar added:—

"With your permission, Sir, I will offer a few

remarks in introducing this Bill. My initial difficulty has been the absence of an authoritative piece of British legislation on the subject, which would not only have considerably lightened the labours of a member of this Council undertaking a similar measure here, but would have created in the minds of random critics a sense of respect and responsibility and thus obviated a deal of needless and reckless criticism. It will, I trust, be patent to the Council that the Bill has been the result of considerable labour, thought, and consultation. The public have been taken into confidence and no pains have been spared to canvass their views or benefit by their local knowledge and experience; but nevertheless I fear the Bill is not sufficiently immuned from the attacks of critics of sorts, coming from all points of the compass. There is nothing however strange in this. It is the common lot of those who are engaged in the refreshing work of putting things to rights, or as one who holds a foremost place amongst the original thinkers and word-painters of this century said: 'If no other happiness is to be had, the mere war with the Lord of Decomposition, the old Dragon himself, St. George's War, with a princess to save and win, are none of you, my friends, proud enough to hope for any part in that battle?'

"One class of critics I can summarily dismiss from consideration, though unfortunately they cannot be included in the uneducated portion of our population.



These are the critics who have been favouring the public with their objections and remarks on the Bill, several months before the Bill itself was framed and published. As their views are not founded on the provisions of the bill, but on pre-conceived notions of what it might contain, no explanations can be given to them here, nor do they deserve any. But there is another class of critics, by far the largest portion of those whom the bill will affect, who entertain entirely wrong notions of the object and scope of the measure, who fancy that this Bill is conceived in a spirit of opposition to their vested rights, and whom it is therefore our duty and interest to correct and conciliate. In the following remarks, I will endeavour to remove their misconceptions.

“There is yet another class of critics, the vast majority of our population, who form the *cestui qui trust* as it were of those endowments and are directly interested in their welfare and benefited by their proper administration. They hail the measure with delight and have welcomed it as glad tidings of great joy. These good folk tell me that the gods in temples enveloped so long in mist and gloom under the baneful influence of malevolent planets, are now approaching their day of deliverance and are about to enter the period of prosperity known in popular language as ‘Sukaradesa.’ The sympathies of this large class of people are with us and are a source of strength and encouragement to the promoters of this Bill. The opinions of experts I

quoted in this council 6 months ago in my preliminary speech, faithfully reflected the views of this large section of the public.

“ To Government itself, the task undertaken is only a labour of love. It is not a question of fiscal policy or acquiring new rights. Legislative sanction is now sought for an undoubted right which Government already possesses and which is inherent in it as *parens patriæ* of its people. No well organized Government can divest itself of responsibility in the matter of the administration of public trusts, in which so immense a quantity of wealth is involved and upon the proper administration of which so much of the public welfare depends. The judicial tribunals of the country have declared such to be the right of the Government, and the legislature is now invoked to ratify the case-made law on the subject.

“ The case-law has already been referred to in my preliminary speech, and will be touched upon only briefly here, before proceeding to the Bill itself.

“ In No. 1 of 1062 of the Royal Court of Final appeal, it was held that the Sircar has the power of interfering in the affairs of public institutions under the control of hereditary trustees, in case of gross neglect of duty or misconduct and of assuming the management of such institutions without recourse to law, if that course is necessary in the interests of such institutions—In the course of the decision,

the Judges observed:—"We are not prepared to hold with the learned Judges of the High Court that the Government, in the first instance are bound to seek the aid of the Civil Courts to exercise this power. Any member of a community to which a religious institution belongs has the power to remove even independent hereditary trustees with the aid of the Civil Courts (I. L. R. 111 Bom.; page 27 111 All., page 636 and T. L. R. Vol. VIII page 63). Reason points to the conclusion that the Government which is *parens patriæ*, must possess higher powers than those of its subjects. We think that the executive, on being satisfied on the existence of strong grounds for its interference, may assume the management of public trusts without prejudice to the rights of the aggrieved parties to obtain redress from wrongs committed upon them by an appeal to the Judicial tribunals, in due course of law. The best interests of public trusts require, that the Government should possess this summary power. If it is obliged to remove by suit every defaulting trustee, the consequence would be very serious to the interests of religious institutions.

"This power declared by the Highest Court in the land to belong to Government is now taken under S. 5 of the Bill. The cases in which Government may assume management of an endowment under the Bill are detailed in that section. Excepting the most dishonest and the most reckless trustees or managers, no one can take exception to the

conditions imposed by the section. So far as the interests of the present Managers of the endowments are concerned, the grounds for the Government interference and assumption of management are most reasonable and fair. Gross negligence or misappropriation of trust funds has been the *raison detra* for Government interference in the past, a customary law which has since been recognized by Courts and is now made the basis of action for the present Bill. The other cases pointed out in the section are equally valid grounds for Government interference and action, viz., where an application is made in that behalf by the trustees or donors, where Government already exercises a partial control in the management of the endowments by the appointment of certain officers or servants in them and lastly where Government has succeeded to the right of management wholly or in part by reason of escheat of trustees.

“ The propriety of these conditions being taken as justifying grounds for Government interference and assumption of management will, it is hoped, receive universal assent. But I have heard it stated, to my great surprise, as a dogma of what I should designate as fashionable ignorance, that Government institutions themselves are not perfect, that Government management of their own temples and charities are not unexceptionable, that Government management of the religious and charitable endowments comprised by this bill will not be a

panacea for all ills, that the present management by private bodies of these institutions is very excellent and should be taken as models for Government officers to follow in the management of Sircar temples and Sircar charities. It would have been hard for me to believe, knowing as I do from long personal experience the condition of Sircar temples and non-Sircar ones, I say impossible for me to believe in the possibility of such a statement being made by any one acquainted with the country, if I had not actually heard and seen such statements made to me by some of my correspondents. Pause for a moment to consider what is the real condition of Sircar managed institutions and those managed by private bodies. Take any temple assumed in 983 M. E. by Colonel Munro, the then Dewan-Resident. There was a settlement of gardens in 993. M. E., Another in 1012 M. E., and a full settlement of gardens and lands now going on throughout the State, since 1060 M. E. In almost every case, the rental of the properties of every endowment has increased by either 25 P. C. or 50 P. C. or more. The properties themselves are intact and are increasing in value every year. They are in the hands of ryots regularly paying dues to the Devasvams, as upon Government lands to Government itself, and there is no likelihood in all human probability of either the properties or the rental diminishing in value in the near future. But on the other hand take any temple managed

by private bodies. In the majority of cases most of the properties have been alienated, sometimes the *michavaram*—rents have been sold and even the right of trusteeship itself is mortgaged or heavily encumbered. The collection of the rents is a tardy and cumbrous procedure requiring the aid of civil Courts and hence seldom satisfactorily done, and where the tenants are honest and law-abiding, as is often the case in our country, the rents if paid, do not reach the temple coffers, as they are generally divided between disputing *oovanmakars* or the temple trustees and servants. The ceremonies in such temples are never gone through systematically or regularly. There is no fear of check or control. The public opinion of the village is ineffectual. The temple doors are seldom open, and *nivadyoms* and *poojas* are defunct. Even the officiating *santicaren* is not paid his wages. Sometimes the temple properties are attached by Civil Courts and sold for payment of servants' wages. As if all these were not sufficient evil unto the day, there is the element of wrangling and strife, continually going on between the managing trustees, and a constant stream of litigation flowing into Courts, both of which causes act as a permanent drain upon the temple revenues. I have in my hand a list of 51 temples and charities in Travancore, owning much wealth where mismanagement and deterioration of the kind depicted above have been going on for years, and it is the opinion of

well-informed people that the condition of these institutions will be past rescue if Government action comes too late.

“ On the other hand what is the worst thing that can happen in a *sircar* managed institution? Some petty speculation within the sanctioned '*Paditharam* (*ditom*) of the day's or monthly expenditure. I do not mean to say that it would not be better if such speculation and corruption were altogether abolished from our temples and charities but such perfection, however, is seldom reached in human institutions, or as the Hon'ble A. Sashiah Sastriar wrote in the Travancore Administration Report of 1048 and 1049 M. E. (Para 485): 'It is impossible all the world over to prevent abuses creeping round charity institutions whether they be in the nature of lazarettos, hospitals or poor houses, (chut-trams). Though the Oottupuras are primarily intended for the relief of the poor and way-worn travellers, they have come in some cases to be regarded as feeding houses for the poor of a resident population. This of course, is abuse of an otherwise useful institution, and abuses, though every measure should be taken to correct and keep them under, would not surely justify their extinction.'

“ I will illustrate the truth of my statement:— Take one of the *Ooralma* temples in the neighbourhood of Trivandrum, the Trivikramangalam Devasvam, for instance, a lovely shrine on the banks of the Karamanai river, known to me since boyhood.

It owns properties in the Taluqs of Trivandrum, Neyyatunkarai and Nedumangad, and according to the *kariasthan* of one of the *Ooralans* there, its total Ayacut revenue per year is about 2,340 parabs of paddy, 400 fanams, and quantities of ghee, coconuts, plantains, cadjan (*ola*), etc. Out of this Ayacut total, the temple has now lost almost 900 parabs of paddy, owing to disunion, laches and neglect of its Ooranmakars and servants, the collections not exceeding 400 parabs of paddy per year, or 60 per cent. of its annual dues. Out of the balance of 40 per cent. remaining uncollected every year, 21 per cent. is more or less permanently lost to the Devasvams as that proportion of the *michavaram* dues has been either mortgaged or sold in satisfaction of Court decrees. When we go deeper into the details of the transactions, we shall find that the trustees of the temple or their *kariasthans* have directly or indirectly some interest in the mortgages created or brought about the Court sales of the Michavaram and Jenmon right. An alienation of a *michavaram* of a Devasvam Trust is as serious a matter as the sale of our Government taxes would be in us for the purpose of raising a fund. Will any one now ask for more proof of mismanagement than this? And yet, numberless instances of a similar nature exist throughout the State.

“Take per contra a Sircar managed temple, say the Kalakuttom Devasvam in the Trivandrum Taluq.



Its former revenue is shown in the account as 2,885 parahs of paddy and 655 fanams, per year. According to the present settlement, the revenue of the temple is 2828 parahs of paddy and 1147 fanams, *i.e.*, a loss of 57 parahs or 2 per cent. in paddy and an increase of 75 per cent. in garden money.—Take all the 26 Devasvams of the Trivandrum Taluq together, the old revenue was in kind 21,388 parahs of paddy and 13,140 fanams in gardens. According to the present settlement the paddy amounts to 18863 fanams or an increase of 43 per cent. The loss in paddy, it must be remembered in these Sircar Devasvams, is due to an equitable settlement of rates on the wet lands and not to mortgage or sale of *michavaram* or *jennom* rights. It is useless to press the argument further, as the comparative condition of the two sets of institutions, Sircar and non-Sircar, managed is very widely divergent.

“It cannot be doubted then, that Government interference is both justifiable and necessary, and if it were at all desirable to add further testimony to the weighty evidence already presented to this Council on the point, I beg to refer you to the following opinion of Sir Alfred Lyall who has made a life long study of Indian questions. He writes:—“The immediate authority and close supervision of a monarch over the powerful religious interests with which he has to reckon at every step is a matter of political expediency, not an affair of doctrine or opinion, but a recognized duty of the State.” This

salient principle received emphatic support at the hands of the Madras Government in their letter No. 73 of 26th May 1894, in which they observed :—  
“ His Excellency the Governor in Council has no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the policy of severing all connection between Government and the religious institutions of the country which was enunciated in 1839, given practical effect to in the following three years and invested with legislative authority in 1863 was a grave error.”

“ I am aware that the Government of India hold a different opinion. In their order of 7th February 1900, they disallowed the Devasthanam Bill submitted by the Madras Government on the ground that it departs from the principle laid down by the Government of India in their letter of the 7th September 1894 and still maintained by them.” It is not for us to question the wisdom of the policy of the august Government of India as laid down in that despatch, or to controvert the arguments which have found favour with them for sticking to their long-formed resolution of strict non-intervention in the management of the religious institutions of the nation ; but I need not say more than this, that this Hindu Government of Travancore are managing certain Hindu religious and charitable institutions, that this Bill simply seeks the extension of the benefit of the existing policy of the State to other institutions suffering from neglect or mismanagement. No departure from any established

usage or principle of this Government is intended. There is no analogy, therefore, between what was attempted to be done in British India and what this Bill proposes to do.

“ In concluding these remarks, I beg to point out that it is only an *enabling* measure that is attempted here, under which Government may act as necessity arises ; let us hope that the necessity may never arise for Government interference under this law, that erring trustees will take the hint and administer the important and valuable endowments under their charge with an eye to their prosperity and the welfare of the beneficiaries under the trusts, that the honest and well-conducted trustees will see in this piece of legislation a recognition and a reward for their past meritorious services and a legislative commandment to their neighbours to follow their noble example and do likewise, that the souls of the departed donors may rest in peace in the satisfaction that their beneficence is maintained and perpetuated, that future benefactors might feel prompted and encouraged to follow in the wake of the illustrious dead and help their lesser countrymen, in the firm confidence that trusts once created will remain, intact and cared for, for all time to come, and that thus the general prosperity of the nation might develop and increase in every way.”

The Bill, as was to be expected, received a large

share of public attention both in and out of Travancore.

Mr. T. Chellappa Pillai, B.A., B.L., late Chief Justice of Travancore, wrote from Jaffna, on the 18th December 1900 thus :—

“ I have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the most useful measures ever brought before the consideration of the Travancore Government. I myself felt the necessity for one and made a draft in 1054 M. E. but could not carry it through. I trust that the Legislative Council will recommend it to the most gracious Sovereign with such amendments as their wisdom might suggest.”

He added :—“ Mr. Nagam Aiyar has at great pains done what a Royal Commission in England did in 36 years at a cost of £240,000 (17 Jur. Part II, p. 113). Any further enquiry will, I think, be a mere waste of time and money. Mr. Nagamayyar's enquiries have elicited the fact of gross abuses prevailing in many of the temples.”

In connection with this Bill, Mr. Nagam Aiya had to make a series of speeches in the Council, not only to explain the scope and objects of this new piece of Legislation but also to meet the strong opposition and misapprehensions, which it evoked both in and out of the Council, and his speeches attracted notice on account of the ability, eloquence and scholarship which characterised them. The measure however received warm support from eminent authority.

To Mr. Nagam Aiya's power of public speaking even as a young man, Dr. Harvey his old School-Master and the Principal of H. H. the Maharajah's

College, had borne the following high testimony  
September 1872 :—

“ I have a very high opinion of his abilities and have had frequent opportunities of judging of them elsewhere than the Class. For some time he was a member of a Debating Society here which I was in the habit of attending. I was often struck with the clearness and pointedness with which he expressed his thoughts, and the intelligence and good sense which they displayed. I have every reason to hope that he will still do his best zealously to cultivate these qualities.”

In the same letter, Dr. Harvey testified to the success of Mr. Nagam Aiya's collegiate and early official career in the following terms :—

“ I have much pleasure in certifying that V. Nagam Aiya was under my tuition for one year, while preparing to pass his examination for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, which he passed successfully.

“ His attendance was most regular, his diligence exemplary, and his behaviour gentlemanly.....

“ His services, I know, were highly appreciated in the first post he held, and as a proof of this he has lately been promoted to the more important one of Tasildar.

“ I have never seen or heard anything that would lead me to doubt he was a young man of integrity and principles.”

The Hon'ble Sir S. Subramony Iyer, B.L., K.C.I.E. wrote on the Bill, in January 1900 thus :—

“ I need scarcely say that we are very much interested your forthcoming Religious Establishments' Bill. I should not only like to read your speech which is sure to be a valuable one, but also any other important paper on the m

after the Bill becomes Law. We are hoping that the example to be set by Travancore will make us to press for similar legislation here."

In October following, he again wrote :—

"I read the speech in the newspapers with pleasure. I would say very little as the question has been so fully dealt with by you. I am glad to learn that a Travancore Gazetteer is to be written by you. Many that know your great capacity for such literary work will look forward with eagerness for the completion of the book."

In his letter dated Nagercoil, 26th December 1899, the Revd. J. Duthie wrote :—

"May you long be spared to render great service to the State. Your recent action in the Legislative Council is fraught, I fully believe, with much good. All power to your arm."

Of a former Bill before the local Council, in reference to which Mr. Nagam Aiya made a singularly able speech, he received the following complimentary letter (dated 24th June 1896) from Revd. J. Duthie, L.M.S., the oldest Missionary of Travancore, who had resided in it for about 45 years. Mr. Duthie wrote :—

"Will you just allow me to send you a line of sincere and warmest thanks for what Mr. Osborne reports to me was a noble speech of yours at last meeting of the Legislative Council, when the question on which the Missionaries memorialised came on for discussion. Except yours not a voice was raised, I am told, on the side of all that makes for true progress in the State—Liberty and Justice, Religious toleration and freedom to the subjects.....Yet it is left to yourself—a gentleman of another faith to make this bold stand for what you judged to be right and justice and also

what is for the honour of Travancore itself .....meantime the member who had the manliness, —the courage—the fearlessness to stand alone for the right and the truth shall have, for all time to come, a warm place in our regard and esteem.”

The Venerable Archdeacon, J. Caley, wrote on the 6th July 1896 :—

“I am certain that if you were empowered to draw up a Regulation, you would do it in such a way that not a word would be raised against it.”

The speech in the Council which received these encomiums may be quoted here with advantage as showing Mr. Nagam Aiya's courage of convictions and independence of thought. He said (20th June 1896) :—

“I do not wish to vote on this question. I will make however a few observations in support of my position. I consider it unnecessary to legislate on the matter just at present. The time is not yet come for legislation. There seems to be perfect accord on one point between my learned friend, the mover of the Bill, and the Christian Missionaries whose feelings have been embittered by the proposed legislation, *vis.*, that, until now, there has been no *collision*, no *strife* and no *bloodshed* in the country for want of legislation. The reason, however, of this perfect peace and concord between the different religionists in Travancore is not, in my view, the existence of the Royal Proclamation of <sup>1004 M. E.</sup> 1829 A. D., to which reference has been made in the course of the debate. That Royal Proclamation issued 67 years ago, by the then Maha Rajah of Travancore, then barely 16 years old, contained in it words of wisdom and tolerance, so characteristic of this ancient Government. His Highness therein laid

down with perfect impartiality and an equal eye to all his subjects that, though he was anxious that their religious worship should proceed according to their respective persuasions and consciences, it was however his wish that no new place of worship, whether Hindu Temples, or Christian Churches or Mahomedan Mosques, should be built in his kingdom without the previous sanction of his Government. I admire the perfect impartiality of this old Proclamation. It was exceedingly creditable to the boy—Maha Rajah, who issued it. But, gentlemen, lawyers found out long ago that this Proclamation contained no penal clause in it and that it was therefore a perfectly innocuous document. The knowledge of this defect in the law came of course to the people also, soon after it was known to the lawyers. So you may rest assured that whatever may be the reason of the existence of peace and good will between the different religionists in Travancore, it was certainly not owing to the existence of this innocuous Royal Proclamation. It is now proposed to strengthen this Proclamation by adding a penal clause to it and thus make it operative. I say that the necessity for doing so has not arisen. When it does arise it will be time enough for us to take action. Then it may be proper to attach penalties for the infringement of Government orders. Until then we should not move. This is why I do not wish to vote on the question to-day."

With regard to another section of the Penal Code in the same day's debate he said on the subject of offences against the Maha Rajah's person :—

"I fully agree with Mr. Bensley. This section is unnecessary. His Highness the Maha Rajah is already well protected. The person of the Sovereign is holy. Divine respect is paid to him. This is the estimate formed of His Highness by His loyal populations. It is therefore practically impossible that His Highness could be 'assaulted,' or 'wrongly restrained,' or 'wrongfully confined,' or 'hurt' in any other



conceivable manner. There is not the slightest danger. We need not therefore legislate on this point. For the same reason, I oppose the amendment to the section also. I am sure my friends in the Council will grant that I am as loyal and devoted to His Highness the Maha Rajah as any of them here."

Returning to the Hindu Religious Endowments' Bill, Mr. R. C. Dutt, C.I.E., (Late of the Bengal Civil Service) wrote :--

"Your very able speeches—and especially the speech of June last are exhaustive and thorough, and leave nothing to be desired. You have acted in a statesman-like manner in ascertaining the wishes and the concurrence of the people before proceeding in the matter. I do not wish to go into the details of the Bill, but I cannot conclude without adding one word in appreciation of the very commendable moderation with which you are proceeding. You make it clear that the Travancore Government only seeks to exercise power in case of necessity, and the hope that you express that the necessity may never arise for Government interference in any case, is the most admirable thing you have said in your very admirable speech."

The Right Hon'ble Sir M. E. Grant Duff wrote on the 22nd August 1901 :—

"I ought ere this to have thanked you for your kind letter and for the three speeches on your Endowments. I think they would have done honour to any Legislative Assembly with which I am acquainted—so clear and full are they in statement, so cogent in argument, so skilful in presenting the case they desire to establish. I congratulate you most heartily upon them."

Sir A. Sashiah Sastri wrote in May 1900 :—

"I read with much admiration your speech in the Legislative Council of Travancore on the Devasthanam Bill for the

introduction of which you were applying for permission. It puts the whole question in as plain a way as possible and seems to be almost an answer to Lord Curzon's arguments in the Governor-General's Legislative Council."

Again in February 1901, Sir Sashiah wrote :—

"I have received your letter of the 12th and the Proceedings of your Legislative Council on your Devasthanam Bill. The latter I have glanced, re-read through and found that the debates were worthy of any Legislative Council in India, especially your Introductory speech and reply, both of which I admire as reflecting much credit, vast research and lucidity of expression."

Again he wrote on one of Mr. Nagam Aiya's subsequent speeches :—

"I read with admiration your speech in your Legislative Council. It would have done honour to any Legislative Body whether in India or elsewhere. I am proud of you. Your style always superior, has now become mellow,—*elegant, no, eloquent.*"

In September 1900, the Hon'ble C. Jambulingam Mudaliar, M.L., C.I.E., wrote :—

"The extent of corruption and degeneracy in the whole atmosphere of the institutions in such cases, far outstrip the corruption and decay in the institutions, where the supervising committees formed under an Act of the Legislature maintain the semblance of control and subordination, powerless though they may be for much good work. One of the richest temples in South India whose sanctity attracts devotees from all parts of India, and the plunder of whose wealth by its ascetic-trustee formed the subject of interesting Criminal trials in recent years, is an instance of the kind. I have no personal acquaintance with the state of Religious and

Charitable institutions in Travancore and know nothing about their control and management. But from the speech delivered at the introduction of the Bill, I gather that they divide themselves into two classes, considered from the point of view of their arrangement—those under the direct supervision of the State and those without any supervision whatever, but under the absolute management of the individual trustees. Taking the information afforded in the speech of Mr. Nagam Aiyar, I find a fair parallel in Travancore to what obtains on the East Coast, as to the condition and management of the two kinds of institutions. The State-supervised temples of Travancore are said to be infinitely better in condition than the other sort of temples and charities. Temples and charities in the Madras Presidency are said to have fared well when they were under the supervision of Government under the Regulation of 1817. The temples and mutts under the uncontrolled management of individual trustees on the East Coast have their parallel in the institutions of Travancore which are now intended to be brought under control. Judged therefore from past experience whether in British India or Travancore, an efficient supervision and control over the management of trustees seem to be essential to keep them straight ..... A close adherence to the forms and models of British Government in all matters, without consideration of subjects and circumstances is not by any means essential to the progress and well-being of Native States. I fully appreciate the force of reasoning in the following sentences of Mr. Nagam Aiyar. 'The Hindu Government of Travancore are managing certain institutions, that this Bill simply seeks the extension of the benefit of the existing policy of the State to other institutions suffering from neglect or mismanagement. No departure from any established usage or principle of this Government is intended. There is no analogy therefore between what was attempted to be done in British India and what this Bill proposes to do.' I would go further and say that

even if the Hindu Government of Travancore were not already managing some such institutions, and they now contemplated to assume jurisdiction for the first time, they would be within the sphere of their proper functions, as they would be acting in consonance with the best and time-honoured traditions of all Hindu Governments."

Mr. V. P. Madhava Row, B.A., C.I.E., Senior Councillor and Revenue Commissioner, Mysore State, wrote on 4th April 1901 :—

"I made it a point to read your speech in the Legislative Council and some of the other speeches also. They were interesting and afford an object-lesson to other parts of India."

In a recent letter H. E. Sir Arthur Havelock, Governor of Tasmania, wrote :—

"I have looked over your speeches on the subject of Hindu Religious Endowments in Travancore. During my tenure of office in Madras, the matter of the administration of the temple property came prominently under my notice. There was a strong consensus of opinion that the existing machinery for managing the property was inefficient. The result of the enquiry, made both by reports and correspondence and by personal investigation was that there existed a strong and wide-spread desire among the people, that the Government should, by legislation, endeavour to provide means for reforming the condition of affairs. It was represented to me that action of this nature on the part of the Government would be in harmony with practice and tradition in that part of India ; for it seems certain that it had been one of the functions of Native Rulers to govern and direct in religious affairs. Under these conditions the Government of Madras were anxious to moot a measure for improving the management of the temple property. The Government of India, however, were not satisfied of the soundness of the policy advocated

by the Government of Madras ; and our proposals therefore came to nought. If the conditions of Travancore resemble those in the Madras Presidency, and I conclude that they do so...I am personally of opinion that legislation such as that introduced by you is desirable."

His Excellency was pleased to add :—

"I have a most agreeable recollection of my interview with you at Trivandrum in October 1897. You were one among many able and thoughtful men, whom it was my privilege to meet in Southern India."

The Bill afterwards received the approval of the Madras Government, and the public of Travancore therefore owe Mr. Nagam Aiya a deep debt of gratitude, for as the *Madras Mail* remarked :—

"On the whole, the Regulation may be said to be a distinct advance on the practice hitherto prevailing, and if properly worked and applied, it ought to prove effective in checking misconduct in the administration of these important Trusts. In a Hindu Native State like Travancore such legislation is happily more feasible and proper than it is considered to be apparently, in the British Provinces of India. But even in these latter there is ample justification for further legislation of some kind to reform abuses, and amend the law that has been proved so defective in preventing them."

On this, Mr. Rao Bahadur C. Jambulingam Mudaliar, B.A., M.L., C.I.E., wrote in October 1903 :—

"I was very happy to read in the papers that the Bill over which you spent so much labour and time has been approved by the Madras Government. It is an achievement for which one can feel legitimate pride and satisfaction. It will no doubt be very beneficial in the Province where it will operate.

I value it more for its indirect effects in that it sets an example to other Governments in India and especially to the British Indian Government, whose timid and indifferent policy in the name of neutrality, in the matter of our social and other evils has contributed in no small measure, to the perpetuation and accentuation of most of the evils that beset our society. All the great reforms in the early days of the British administration were helped and effected with a considerable amount of Government support and wise and timely legislation. Some such incentive to progress seems necessary to Indian people, and it is refreshing to see that enlightened Native Governments such as Travancore, Mysore and Baroda now and then demonstrate how such measures could be appropriately dealt with. I wish your act to run a long and useful career."

The Bill was finally passed by the Travancore Legislative Council at its sitting of the 5th December 1903, when Mr. Nagam Aiya summed up the whole course of legislation in regard to the matter in the following words:—

"The Bill in its present form continues to be a potent agent for remedying the ills we had in view. I must emphatically tell them that the original objects of the Bill have all been attained; that what we have adopted is a comprehensive instalment of legislation sufficient to protect all the valuable Hindu Religious Endowments in the country; that while the provision to *assume management* in all cases of misappropriation, malfeasance and gross negligence has been given up, power has been taken instead to exercise such *superintendence* over the Endowments as to secure the same object without causing the unpleasantness incidental to assumption, and I have myself repeatedly informed the Council that assumption is not our object but only the prosperity of the trusts and the well-being of the beneficiaries.

That the *superintendence* provided will be effective will be clear from the fact that power is taken to *dismiss* wicked trustees when such an extreme step becomes necessary..... Power has also been taken to call for inventories of jewels and vessels and other temple properties and to secure them against malversation or misappropriation: to call for and scrutinize periodical statements of accounts and to go into every necessary detail of administration regarding these Endowments."

The Dewan-President Mr. Krishnaswamy Row, C.I.E., at the conclusion of the day's Proceedings remarked :—

"The real object of these measures is to induce those who come within their scope to discharge their duties in the manner expected of them by their intelligent, level-headed and disinterested countrymen and neighbours. If the trustees of the Religious Endowments work with half the spirit that animated their pious founders, and if journalists edit their papers on the exemplary lines on which the *Madras Mail* is conducted, the coercive and penal provisions of these two enactments will be a dead letter. The movers of these Bills (Messrs. Nagam Aiya and Raja Ram Row) are veteran officers of this State, and they yield to none in the knowledge of the needs of the country and in their solicitude for the protection of individual rights and liberty. The great body of adverse criticism evoked by these measures especially the Religious Endowments Bill, naturally led, as rightly observed by Mr. Nagam Aiya to the closest scrutiny in the select Committee and in Council of their provisions in all their details and to the introduction of several important amendments to safe-guard the interests of the parties likely to be affected. A careful study of these Bills, as now passed, will convince unbiassed critics that the Council has spared no pains to protect private rights as much as possible."

On the day he bade farewell to the Travancore Legislative Council (27th February 1904), Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Row, F.M.U., C.I.E., Dewan (President) referred to Mr. Nagam Aiya's Endowments Regulation thus :—

On the perusal of the proceedings of this Council connected with the much contested Religious Endowments' Bill introduced by our friend, Mr. Nagam Aiya and carried out successfully, a very competent authority complimented the Council on the high level of debate maintained by the official and non-official members. The Council has fully justified its establishment under the auspices of H. H. the Maha Rajah, who, with his characteristic foresight and solicitude for the public good has provided the State with a regular constitution for enacting laws."

Mr. Paul Knight of the Calcutta "Statesman" wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya on the 9th August 1900 :—

"If they should have the effect of inducing the Government of India to re-consider their attitude towards the proposal to adopt similar legislation in British India, the example you have set in Travancore will have borne excellent fruit."

Mr. T. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar, the retired Judge of the Travancore High Court and the G. O. M. of Travancore wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya, on the 12th December 1903 :—

"I saw the Proceedings of the Legislative Council and was delighted to see the Bill has passed through all the stages. The opposition was so great that I was afraid that it would not meet with success. Your perseverance has succeeded and brought it to a favourable end."



Mr. T. Ananda Row, B.A., Director of Statistics, Mysore State, wrote on the 13th December, 1903 :—

“ Allow me to congratulate you most heartily upon the passing of your Religious Endowments' Bill into law. It will not only have a wholesome influence on the administration of Religious Endowments but will also have a value in teaching and cultivating habits of local self-government.”

The British Indian Government will make their rule best synchronize with the spirit of the ancient Shastras under which these valuable trusts have been created throughout India, if they could see their way to pass a similar law for the protection of the vast temple wealth in the Indian Empire. As His Excellency Lord Curzon observed at Jey-pore,

“ The existence of Native States is a blessing to Indian society. Amid the levelling tendency of the age and the inevitable monotony of Government conducted upon scientific lines, they keep alive traditions and customs. They have that indefinable quality endearing them to the people that arises from their being born of the soil ; and they provide scope for the activities of the hereditary aristocracy of the country and employment for native intellect, and ambition.”

At the sitting of the Travancore Legislative Council (27th February, 1904), Mr. Nagam Aiya sought leave to introduce a Bill for the protection of 'Charitable Endowments' in Travancore. Permission was granted. This Bill is a twin-sister to the Hindu Religious Endowments' Bill and as that has been passed and become law, this became a

necessary supplement ; but the Charitable Endowments' Bill is a more comprehensive one as it includes Charities of all religionists whether Hindu, Mahomedan or Christian. In his speech asking for leave, Mr. Nagam Aiya however made it clear that "only those charities which are *wholly unconnected with* religious teaching or worship would be covered by the Bill."

He added :—

"This will satisfy the public that the utmost care is taken to avoid even the appearance of interference with the religious feelings of the different communities concerned. The object of the Bill is to provide in Travancore an Officer, who is a Corporation Sole, corresponding to the Treasurer of Charitable Endowments under Act VI of 1890. The Officer appointed will be a bare-trustee and will have nothing to do with the administration of the property. He will be in charge of the income of the Endowments which he will hand over to the persons administering them. He will be required to keep regular accounts and publish them annually. I beg to add that this is intended to be only a *permissive* Bill, and Government will not make a vesting order or frame a scheme for the administration of any charitable Trust except on *application* for that purpose, and may, if it sees fit, decline to take action."

On the 14th August 1899, the Dewan, Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Row wrote to him thus :—

"I am fully aware of the arduous nature of the Settlement work. His Highness the Maha Rajah will, I trust, substantially appreciate your work at no distant date."

Sir A. Sashiah Sastri himself seems to have felt sanguine of Mr. Nagam Aiya's future, for he wrote on the 10th October, 1899 :—

“Your long and interesting note of the 6th September has, I am sorry, been left too long unthanked for, and let me congratulate you on the increase of salary which His Highness our Gracious Maha Rajah has been pleased to grant to you and I trust...in fact—I am sure the last increment will follow ere long. His Highness is very discerning and does everything in proper time.”

In November 1901, Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Row thus acknowledged Mr. Nagam Aiya's services to the State on the occasion of his receiving the honor of the C.I.E.:—

“I cannot take the whole credit for the honor, as it is earned by the work of the administration to which as the head of a most important department you have largely contributed. It is my sincere wish that I should have the good fortune of congratulating you on such distinctions.”

In December 1902, when the Dewan accompanied His Highness the Maha Rajah on a tour to Upper India in connection with the King-Emperor's Coronation Durbar at Delhi, His Highness marked his confidence in Mr. Nagam Aiya by appointing him to the charge of the administration, which he conducted for about 2 months with marked ability, integrity and energy. The very cautious and thoughtful manner in which he discharged the Dewan's duties, when His Highness was far away from the country and the administration of the State became very trying owing to the difficulties

connected with the Chuckram Proclamation, fully justified the wisdom of His Highness' choice.

On his nomination to the Acting Dewanship, Mr. Krishnaswamy Row, C. I. E., F. M. U., the Dewan, wrote to him thus :—

“ I heartily congratulate you on your appointment to the charge of the administration during my absence on duty. I have no doubt that this is a sure indication of what is in store for you at a date not far off.”

Sir A. Sashiah Sastri, K. C. S. I., wrote thus congratulating him :—

“ My dear Nagam Aiyar, Wire never brought me such good news as your last telegram. Though I myself had little doubt in the matter, still it was not certainty. My congratulations go without saying and I do trust that it augurs realization before long of the climax of your good fortune. I feel confident that, during your temporary tenure, you will so conduct yourself as to secure His Highness our Gracious Sovereign's entire approval. Vacancies which chance to arise, should be left open for H. H.'s confirmation. All urgent matters must be reported and His Highness' commands obtained by wire. The administration, I mean, the routine portion, must go on as smoothly as sailing on the 'Kayal' and then H. H. will be mightily pleased. If occasion arises which I hope may not, you must show that you have an iron hand concealed in a silken glove. All this is quite superfluous advice to one like yourself—but old people ' will do it when they come to it.' With kindest regards, Yours affectionately, (Sd.) A. Sashiah Sastri.”

The Puthenchandai Reading Association, which has on its rolls some of the best educated citizens of Trivandrum, wrote :—

“ The Association sees in your elevation the proper reward of a long term of meritorious service rendered to the State. The special pleasure that must attach to the appointment of a Native of the land to its highest administrative post is enhanced by the reflection that the appointment has fallen to one of the best cultured and most liberal minded of the country's officers.”

When 15 months later, Mr. Nagam Aiya was appointed Officiating Dewan on the retirement of Mr. K. Krisbhaswamy Row from Travancore, this same Association addressed him another highly complimentary letter of congratulations thus :—

“ It is once again our privilege to be able to congratulate you on your appointment to officiate for the Dewan. The Trivandrum Reading Association, which we have the honor to represent, has just cause to be peculiarly proud and gratified, as this is the second occasion when one of its most distinguished, talented, cultured and polished members has been chosen, though only temporarily, to the highest office of trust in the State service. Allow us to offer you our sincere felicitations on his fresh proof of His Highness' gracious regard for and confidence in you, and to express our earnest hope that the present distinction is but the earnest of higher honors in store for you.”

The Chalai Reading Club composed of highly educated, intelligent and promising young men of that suburb of Trivandrum wrote :—

“ The oldest graduate from the Trivandrum College, a citizen of the Travancore State, imbued with sound knowledge of all departments of life, an ornament to the State, one who rose to the high position of Settlement Dewan Peishcar by sterling honesty and untiring labour for the good of the people, a stern yet kind disciplinarian trusted by three

illustrious Sovereigns of Travancore, it is perfectly fit and bespeaks the wisdom of our Gracious Maha Raja that you should have been chosen, as the best person to be in charge of the administration of the Model State. A Model man for a Model State."

The Setupathi Rajah of Ramnad telegraphed from Madura thus:—

"Pray accept most sincere congratulations on most highly deserving recognition by Travancore's enlightened sovereign of your services by your elevation to highest office in State, though temporarily. It shows and indicates which way the wind blows and fills the minds of your friends with present and prospective bliss.....I am not behind others in my love, admiration and respect for you contracted in Ramnad during His Highness' Rameswaram trip. I have ordered Abhishekam, &c., at Rameswaram in your name and as I am here, I am personally arranging Abhishekam, Archanai to Sree Meenakshi for the long life, prosperity and happiness of yourself and family and pray that when the time comes you will be the next minister of the Land of Charity. We have very few men like you to uphold the prestige of Indian statesmanship and lovers of India and patriotic Hindus cannot do better than pray for your continued prosperity."

After His Highness' return from the Delhi Durbar, a Committee was formed to discuss the Chuckram question and Mr. Nagam Aiya was appointed its President. In acknowledging the Committee's Report the Dewan wrote:—

"I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your report dated the 10th instant on the Chuckram question and to convey to you the thanks of His Highness' Government for your valuable services in that connection."

Mr. Nagam Aiya was the President also of the Travancore Accounts' Committee—a work in

which he was engaged for about a year and his labours resulted in a comprehensive Account Code for Travancore, which is the basis of the present Account Code, and which has set at rest a long pending question of reform in the matter of State Accounts.

He was also entrusted with the writing of the 'Travancore State Manual' after the model of the District Manuals in the Madras Presidency. Owing to the continued pressure of other heavy duties, he took time to complete the work. But when a good portion of the book had been written—as much as would cover an average-sized volume of the Madras District Manuals, Mr. G. T. Mackenzie, I.C.S., F.M.U., British Resident, expressed satisfaction with some of the chapters shown him. He wrote on 9th October 1903 :—

“ I have perused the MSS of the first portion of the Manual and it seems to me to be excellent.”

Again he wrote, on 8th February 1904 :—

“ I return these draft chapters with many thanks. They are really very good.”

In his heart of hearts, Mr. Nagam Aiya is a literateur, but he has had at no period of his life, time enough to devote to his favourite literary pursuits. But all the same, he is a voracious reader of books and papers and magazines of all sorts and owns a good library of about 2,500 excellent volumes on a variety of subjects carefully selected and well arranged. His is perhaps the best private library

in the country. Almost every week, additions are being made to this stock of valuable books. He considers a day ill-spent, if he could not manage to snatch half an hour at least out of the 24, from his pressing official duties, to spend in the company of his books. Such is his genuine love of reading. In addition to being a member of the well-stocked Public Library at Trivandrum, he orders on his own account a number of valuable journals from "The Daily London Times" downwards. This is not the place to refer to his numerous official reports and despatches, nor to his voluminous private correspondence all of which are characterised by clearness, elegance and high literary finish.

He is a *Persona grata* with the high and the low. M. R. Ry. Kerala Varma Avergal, C. S. I., F. M. U., F. R. HIST. S., M. R. A. S., the Valia Coil Tampuran of Travancore (Senior Rani's Consort) bore the following testimony to the excellence of his manner in a letter dated 19th November 1888:—

"What afforded me the greatest pleasure was the visit which the Dewan Peishcar kindly paid me. Mr. Nagam Aiya is a thorough gentleman and his manners are calculated to endear him to all those who come in contact with him. He is loved and feared by his subordinates and much liked by the people in general."

The Venerable Archdeacon J. Caley wrote on the 12th October 1897, (re the treatment of Christians):—



"If a man of your conciliatory turn of mind had the reins of Government you would stop all their complaints by ceasing to goad them and by just treatment."

The Dewan, Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Row, C.I.E., F.M.U., wrote on the 15th September 1899 thus :—

"My only ambition is that during the time I may have the charge of the administration, God may help me to act in such a way as to secure the approbation of good and great men like you."

He was considered particularly strong in the writing of official reports and despatches. One such official paper was noticed in very complimentary terms by His Highness the late Maha Raja so long ago as March 1879. His Highness then wrote :—

"I have read through your paper and now return it. It is very interesting (in its own way) and the subject dry, difficult, and intricate as it is, has been handled by you with patience, judgment and ability. I could wish that a paper like it met the eye of a Maltby or a Madhava Row."

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Row, C.I.E., F.M.U., Dewan, wrote on 11th March 1909 :—

"Your reply to the Qulon Memorial is a masterly production. It fully exposes the folly of the memorialists. I thank you for it....."

He wrote again on the 22nd October 1900 :—

"I read your D. O. on the subject of the castes of the public servants, with great pleasure. It is well argued and convincing. It is not capable of further improvement."

He wrote again on the 20th May 1901 :—

“ I beg to return with thanks, your excellent memo on the memcrials. I have nothing to suggest in the way of addition or subtraction.”

At distant intervals, he has indulged in delivering speeches and in writing short papers, on social, literary, archæological and economic subjects unconnected with his official work. Of one of these latter, Sir J. D. Rees, M.P., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., (late British Resident of Travancore and Cochin) observed in a public speech in November 1897, when His Highness the Maha Rajah presided :—

“ I should like to add that a most interesting series of articles is now being re-printed, showing the admirable character of the Hindus in family and domestic life. The author is a talented servant of His Highness' Government, the Dewan Peishcar Mr. Nagam Aiya.”

In writing to Mr. Nagam Aiya, Sir J. D. Rees said :—

“ If you should be printing your very interesting lectures on ‘ The Hindu Home,’ I should be extremely obliged if you would favour me with a copy.”

M. R. Ry. Kerala Varma Avl., C.S.I., Valia Koil Tampuran, wrote on the 12th March 1898 :—

“ It is a great treat to me to read whatever emanates from your facile pen.....”

Of another pamphlet, Mr. W. E. Lecky M.A., M.P. (the Historian) wrote in February 1896 :—

“ I must thank you very sincerely for your curious and interesting lecture (the Manthradams of Malabar). It is a

subject which Sir Alfred Lyall has lately brought a good deal before the public, but most of the facts in your paper were quite new to me."

Mr. H. K. Beauchamp, C.I.E., M.R.A.S., of the Madras Mail, wrote on the 29th April 1898:—

"Very many thanks for your most interesting letter on *Buddhist Relics in Travancore*.....You will be doing a good work if you try and persuade other Travancoreans to emulate your own pursuits in this direction."

Mr. T. Chellappa Pillai, B.A., B.L., late Chief Justice of Travancore, wrote on the 10th March 1900:—

"Your article on the *Manthradams* of Travancore you sent me years back was very interesting. I hear you are engaged in enlarging your lectures on the Hindu Home. I read the lecture in the papers. I think it dispels many errors which Europeans entertain about our homes. Some even go the length of denying the existence of Hindu homes."

To Mr. Nagam Aiya's speechifying capacity as a young man, Dr. Harvey his old School Master and the Principal of H. H. the Maharaja's College, bore the following high testimony in September 1872:—

"I have a very high opinion of his abilities and have had frequent opportunities of judging of them elsewhere than in the Class For some time he was a member of a Debating Society here which I was in the habit of attending. I was often struck with the clearness and pointedness with which he expressed his thoughts, and the intelligence and good

sense which they displayed. I have every reason to hope that he will still do his best zealously to cultivate these qualities."

In the same letter, Dr. Harvey testified to the success of Mr. Nagam Aiya's collegiate and early official career in the following terms :—

" I have much pleasure in certifying that V. Nagam Aiya was under my tuition for one year, while preparing to pass his examination for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, which he passed successfully.

" His attendance was most regular, his diligence exemplary, and his behaviour gentlemanly.....

" His services, I know, were highly appreciated in the first post he held, and as a proof of this he has lately been promoted to the more important one of Tahsildar.

" I have never seen or heard of anything that would lead me to doubt that he was a young man of integrity and principle."

His speeches (other than those in the Legislative Council) comprise a good lot and are as varied as they are interesting and eloquent, whether as College-day speeches or on Prize distributions, receptions to the late and present Maharajahs, memorials to departed worthies, famine-fund speeches, club-day speeches, Maharajah's birthday-speeches, or as chairman of meetings on occasions of lectures and addresses, special gatherings, etc. A collection of these speeches and such official papers as may without impropriety be published would be interesting reading and may afford valuable instruc-

tion and aid to the rising generation of his countrymen. In 1890, when Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row, K.C.S.I., had retired from the Baroda Dewanship, Mr. Nagam Aiya asked him for all the papers in his possession bearing on his career as Dewan of Travancore, Indor and Baroda—to be compiled into a short biography of Sir T. Madhava Row after the model of the 12 English Statesmen series (Macmillan & Co.). This work Mr. Nagam Aiya wished to undertake not only as a contribution to the history of Indian statesmanship but as a guide and an object lesson to practical administrators, for Sir Madhava Row was to his mind the *Beau ideal* of a cultured Native statesman and had earned the high reputation of being the ‘Turgot of India.’ But Sir Madhava Row himself dissuaded Mr. Nagam Aiya from this work—which he said was a profitless one, considering the apathy of the Indian reading public and the small demand which existed for books of this nature. On the 1st July 1890, Sir Madhava Row wrote to him thus:—“I go so far as to suspect that it would not even pay the expenses of its publication. European analogies may be quite misleading.” Sir Madhava Row added, “I should have ample reason to consider myself fortunate if you were to undertake the work in which you evince so much friendly interest. You are just the man for it in every respect.” Sir Madhava Row concluded the letter in these terms:—“I hope, my dear Sir, that you will, in

due time, have a higher destiny than of *writing* the life of a Dewan, viz., that of *acting* it." It is to be regretted that no one has yet been able to bring out a biography of the illustrious Statesman.

Of one of his later public speeches, Mr. T. Vedarisadasa Mudaliar, a retired High Court Judge and the doyen of the Trivandrum city, wrote in November 1899 :—

"I have read with great interest your speech on the occasion of your prize distribution in the Native High School the other day. Every father of the Makkathayam and every uncle of the Marumakkathayam people should be grateful to you, and bear in mind what you have said and watch their heirs and advise them to study and follow your advice. Your speech must have instilled into the mind of every thinking boy a spirit which would not be easily forgotten. You have accompanied the boy from the moment he entered the threshold of the school-room, and guided him over every step he took and advised what he ought to do in after-life. Your speech clearly establishes what a very attentive and noble father you are yourself, and what example you set to your fellow countrymen. Really to speak the truth, I am at a loss to express my feelings, on reading your excellent speech, especially the concluding para, i.e., 'Let truth be our mother' and so on, is admirable for which not only the boys but the whole audience should have felt grateful. I am sorry I missed the opportunity of hearing you. I should have attended the meeting with very great pleasure but for an important engagement which I could on no account avoid."

Mr. T. Ananda Row, B.A., of the Mysore service (eldest son of Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row and a school-fellow of Mr. Nagam Aiya's) wrote of the same speech thus :—

“Just a line to compliment you on the excellence of your little speech reported in yesterday's Hindu. It is a gem.”

I have already remarked that his not having been made permanent Dewan was a sad disappointment to the Public in and out of Travancore. The Venerable Archdeacon Caley, one of his European friends in North Travancore, writing to Mr. Nagam Aiya on the 21st August 1903 observed:—

“For a long time I have been *fully* expecting to hear that you had reached the highest appointment in the State under His Highness the Maharajah. Not only so, but I have felt sure that with your wide experience and complete knowledge of Travancore coupled with a natural power of conciliation--you would be sure to succeed as an administrator. I am very sorry therefore to hear that an outsider is coming in, but still hope it may not be true. I am free to admit that there are advantages in having an outsider but there are disadvantages as well. Travancore does not need to be governed for the outside world but for itself. Its position is unique. It does not need to do everything that other places do. Hence it needs a wise and careful conservative policy. If a former Dewan had not set himself to catch flies with vinegar instead of treacle, Travancore would never have had so many sores to heal. It is far easier to make wounds than to heal them. Some men can give more satisfaction while denying a request than another gives when granting it. The manner in which a thing is done makes a wonderful difference.”

The same gentleman wrote again on the 22nd February 1904:—

“.....Since writing I am exceedingly sorry to see a Dewan is already appointed. I have been earnestly hoping

that you would get the post, for I felt that you not only deserved it but that you would fill it with satisfaction to His Highness and benefit of the State. It may be an easy way of solving a difficulty, to get a man from the outsider but it also creates another very serious one, viz., it removes a powerful stimulus to faithful service when men see that whatever they may do there is no hope of the first prize. Suppose for argument sake you gain a little in one case; if you thereby breed a paralysis in several departments, the net result is heavy loss. I cannot but hope that even yet you may succeed. There may be a vacancy, or some unexpected thing may happen. For the present the disappointment is keen, but there will be much sympathy. I wish I could hope the news is not true."

This estimate of Mr. Nagam Aiya seems to have been general among the Europeans of the State particularly the older residents among them who have long known him as a high official in Travancore. For, the Revd. J. Duthie, L.M.S., the oldest European resident in Travancore and intimately acquainted with the country and its people for the last 45 years, wrote to him on the 31st December 1903, wishing him a happy New Year thus:—

"Let me wish you and all the members of your family a very happy New Year.....The Dewan kindly sent me the other day the Administration Report for the past year. In that reference is made to his approaching retirement, so there is no imp-opriety in my alluding to it, and just to say that I wish, sincerely, that His Highness will confer the honour, in filling the vacancy, upon yourself. No one that I know has claims at all equal to yours. You have long served the State with conspicuous ability, and you have a knowledge of the country such as no other officer could lay claim to. Besides you are in good bodily health



able to go on tour all over the kingdom, and I cannot doubt that, if made Dewan, you would do, not a little, for the welfare of the country."

The Revd. J.H. Bishop, formerly Principal of the C. M. S. College at Kottayam where Mr. Nagam Aiya was Tahsildar-Magistrate in the early seventies (1872 to 1874 A. D.), is another old friend and admirer of his, though they have not met each other for years. Mr. Bishop wrote on the 17th March 1904 thus:—

"MY DEAR MR. NAGAM AIYA.

"It is a long time since I first made your acquaintance at Kottayam where you were Magistrate and I was Principal of the College. But I have noticed your successful career ever since with considerable interest, and though you have justly attained a very high position in the State, due to your great abilities and conscientious discharge of your duties, I fear whether you may now feel a little disappointed, and think that your merits have been passed over, because the Dewanship has not been conferred upon you. Had a Travancorean been selected for the post, the choice of His Highness would, I doubt not, have fallen upon you. But Imperial policy has led to the selection of a gentleman outside of Travancore. We do not always know before hand what is best for us and you may be a happier man, by escaping many cares and snares which the administration of the State might have involved you in.

'Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown

'There is a Providence which shapes our lives

'Rough—hew them how we will.'

"So it is our highest wisdom to submit cheerfully to the inevitable, believing it will, in the end, be for the best. The great thing is to have 'a conscience void of offence towards God and Man.' With kindest regards and sympathies."

That, Mr. Nagam Aiya is in admirable health and strength one could easily see from his ardent literary pursuits, enthusiastic discussion of public questions and keen love of sports. He is fond of Tennis and Billiards, his two favourite games which curious to say, was regarded until recently as incompatible with official dignity in Travancore. He can enjoy a ten miles' walk at a stretch over hill and dale, and has always felt grateful whenever his official duties necessitated such long and tiresome pedestrianism.

On public questions of every shade of importance he holds ripe thoughts, matured by wide reading and considerable experience of the different branches of the State service—comprising at first 4 years in the Educational Department, then 2 years as a clerk in the Dewan's office, then 2 years as a Tashildar and Magistrate, then 7 years in several Departments of the Huzur Cutcherry (Dewan's office), then 12 years as a Dewan Peishcar and District Magistrate of 3 out of the 4 Divisions of the country, and  $11\frac{1}{2}$  years as Dewan Peishcar of Revenue Settlement, about 2 years on Special duty in connection with the State Manual and another 2 years as Senior Dewan Peishcar, in all, a period of 42 years of strenuous public life—which, added to the knowledge acquired in the discharge of *special* duties entrusted to him from time to time, gave him a marked superiority over his compeers and colleagues and would have stood

him in good stead, if he had been called by his Royal Master to discharge more responsible functions as his permanent Minister. It is not perhaps generally known that with much courtesy of manner Mr. Nagam Aiya combines great strength of will and courage of convictions, both so essential to high office. This was often shown in Council discussions and official correspondence. His friends and admirers have known it for long—his opponents have felt and feared it.

It may be pointed out here that he has served under 3 Maha Rajahs and 7 Dewans ; of which, 22 years have been under His Highness the present Maha Rajah and 20 years under his illustrious uncles, the late and the penultimate Maha Rajahs, and if His Highness the late Maha Rajah had been spared a little longer, it is believed that Mr. Nagam Aiya, for whom His Highness entertained such genuine regard and admiration, would have been Dewan long ago. It was said of His late Highness that if he had not been born in the purple he would have been one of the most notable South Indian worthies, like Raja Sir T. Madhava Row, Sir A. Sashiah Sastri, Mr. Rungachariu, &c. What he thought of Mr. Nagam Aiya during a period of 15 years' close acquaintance must have been noted down by him from time to time in his valuable private diaries which, though a sealed book to the public, are believed to be replete with his impressions of contemporary men and manners formed during a

course of 35 years' observant life and unreservedly recorded in the privileged pages of a private journal. His Highness the present Maharaja is believed to have read every scrap of paper left by his illustrious uncle, guiding himself by the valuable lessons which they contain for the administration of the State. As I am however a stranger to the precious contents of those diaries, I am not able, much as I wish, to give the further confirmation to the popular belief about that Maha Rajah's high regard and esteem for Mr. Nagam Aiya than what his valuable letters herein quoted contain. Now that His Highness the present Maha Rajah has known him most thoroughly and has expressed high appreciation of his services on several occasions, it is expected that His Highness will do for Mr. Nagam Aiya what His late Highness only meant to do.

In his farewell letter of the 2nd March 1904, the Dewan Mr. K. Krishnaswamy Row, F.M.U., C.I.E., wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya thus:—

“I request you to kindly accept the accompanying photo of mine as a small token of my long friendship with you extending over 20 years.....I sincerely regret that your long and meritorious and faithful services to the State, have not received the reward which I fully anticipated. I believe it is only deferred. I trust that God in his infinite mercy and grace will ere long place you at the head of the administration.”

From Trichur, Mr. Krishnaswami Row again wrote on the 18th March 1902:—

“This being our New Year’s day, I wish you and all yours a happy and prosperous new year and many happy returns of the same. I have also to-day the pleasant duty of offering my sincere and cordial congratulations to you on your appointment as Officiating Dewan. This appointment is important in that it shows beyond doubt that among the local candidates, you are the Dewan-elect. I pray to God that in course of time you be made a pukka Dewan.”

Mr. Nagam Aiya is a great admirer of Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row and Sir A. Sashiah Sastri under both of whom he had served as a young officer during their Dewanships. They both extended to him their warm support, while in power as well as in their retirement, and had always treated him with especial consideration and regard as is clear from their letters quoted above. He is himself imbued with their high ideas of enlightened and progressive government.

On the retirement of Mr. K. Krishnaswamy Row, C.I.E., from the Dewanship on the 13th March 1904, Mr. Nagam Aiya was again placed in charge of the Administration. This is the *second* time he was so appointed, the last occasion being in December 1902, when His Highness the Maha Rajah proceeded on tour to the Delhi Coronation Darbar.

His appointment was notified in the Travancore Government Gazette of the 15th March 1904 thus:—

“His Highness the Maha Rajah has been pleased to direct M. R. Ry. V. Nagam Aiya Avergal, B.A., F.R.H.S., Dewan

Peishcar, Revenue Settlement, to officiate as Dewan temporarily without prejudice to his own duties."

On the same day (15th March 1904), His Highness was pleased to address the following highly eulogistic autograph letter to Mr. Nagam Aiya:—

"My dear Paishcar, I have often thought of writing to you after my return from my trip to Delhi last year, to express my high appreciation and satisfaction of your work when you were in charge of the Administration during my absence from Travancore for more than 6 weeks. I know what difficulties and troubles you had to overcome but you worked with your wonted zeal and energy and carried on the duties of the Administration to my entire satisfaction. I have much pleasure therefore in placing you again in charge of the Administration. It is needless for me to express the high opinion I have always entertained of your integrity and abilities. I have every confidence that you will afford me the same satisfaction whenever you are placed in charge of the Administration."

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd). RAMA VARMA.

Mr. R.C. Dutt, I.C.S., C.I.R., (late of the Bengal Civil Service) and now the Revenue Minister of the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda, wrote to Mr. Nagam Aiya on the 25th December 1904 thus, (*re* Travancore Hindu Religious Endowments Regulation):—

"It is curious that these papers have come to my hand just when we are ourselves discussing the clauses of a similar Bill for Baroda. It so happens that myself and a few other members are to meet the Maharajah Gaekwar *to-morrow* on this subject and the provisions of your Act will be most helpful to me, because I have taken up precisely the same ground

that you have taken (without knowing it) about the classes of cases in which the Government should assume control. I have seldom known a case in which coincidence was more accidentally strange or the help rendered by one worker to another has been more accidentally opportune."

Since December 1904, Mr. Nagam Aiya has been wholly engaged in completing the Travancore State Manual of which mention has already been made in the foregoing pages. Mr. G.T. Mackenzie, I.C.S., the late British Resident in Travancore, wrote thus of a portion of the History Chapter of the Manual when he retired from service (19th November 1904):—

"I have now perused it and find it deeply interesting. I have corrected one or two clerical errors but otherwise there is nothing to alter."

His Highness the Maha Rajah was pleased to write of another chapter thus on the 31st August 1905:—

"I return the accompanying chapter on the Economic condition of Travancore. I read it with much interest."

In his letter dated 26th September 1905, Revd. Fr. Denis, D.C.M.A. writes:—

"I send you herewith the sketch asked for (Translation of the Life of Lazar Papi of Lucca from the Italian original), and will be delighted if it can be of any use for the valuable work you are preparing and which coming from your hands, I am sure, will be of the greatest interest."

Mr. T. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar, Retired Judge of the Travancore High Court, also wrote in the

same strain in his letter of the 18th October 1905. He said :—

“ I doubt not your State Manual will be of great use to the Public and add much to your name and credit.”

M. R. Ry. Kerala Varma Avergal, C.S.I., F.B. HIST. S., M. R. A. S., Valia Coil Tampuran, himself a great scholar, wrote in his letter of the 29th November 1905 :—

“ Your labour in collecting and beautifully narrating all these facts cannot be too highly commended.”

The book is now in the Press. It will appear in 3 large Quarto volumes, of the Madras District Manual size, containing about 500 to 600 pages in each volume, and is replete with information on every head. It was issued in 1907. In reporting to His Highness' Government the completion of the book, Mr. Nagam Aiya wrote in his letter dated 1st October 1905, thus :—

“ I take this opportunity of expressing my grateful acknowledgments to His Highness' Government for entrusting this important work to me without any solicitation on my part—a work in which I have spent much thought and study during several years past, though owing to more pressing duties I could not devote to it that attention which it deserved except at distant intervals of business. It is due to us also to add that my extremely limited staff and myself have worked at it with energy and diligence.”

When the Dewan (Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, B A., C.I.E.) accompanied His Highness the Maha Rajah to Madras in January 1905, Mr. Nagam Aiya was



again appointed to act as Dewan. This was the *third* time he was so appointed.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvila, B. C. E., a retired Executive Engineer and formerly a Member of the Travancore Legislative Council, telegraphed to him on the appointment thus, under date the 30th January 1905 :—

“With all heart thank God and congratulate Highness and the country.”

Mr. T. Vedadrisadasa Mudaliar, retired High Court Judge, wrote in his letter of 1st February 1905 :—

“You are perfectly right in saying that I would be exceedingly gratified to learn that our most Gracious Sovereign has been pleased to appoint you once more as Acting Dewan. I am sorry there was some opposition but Divine Will must prevail. Please accept my heartfelt congratulations.”

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Row, C. I. E., late Dewan of Travancore, wrote thus in his letter dated 31st January 1905 :—

“Under ordinary circumstances your appointment to act as Dewan for the *3rd time* is no matter for special congratulation. But the recent events have given it a significance which it will not otherwise have. His Highness has shown in an unmistakable manner that you enjoy his fullest confidence and that nothing will stand in his way in rewarding your services with the highest appointment in his gift in due course. I offer you my sincere congratulations on the acting promotion. I hope I will live to congratulate you on your appointment as Dewan of Travancore.”

For the *fourth* time Mr. Nagam Aiya was appointed to act as Dewan in February 1906, when

Mr. V. P. Madhava Row went on leave. It is needless to say that Mr. Nagam Aiya's appointment was again welcomed by H. H's subjects as on previous occasions.

The Travancore State Manual work in which he was engaged till September 1906 being completed, he reverted to the charge of the Trivandram Division under the designation of "Senior Dewan Peishcar."

In January 1907, H. H's Government issued the State Manual to the Public, in three large quarto volumes containing about 2000 pages, with numerous excellent illustrations, a monumental work, which elicited a chorus of praise from all quarters. This may be called Mr. Nagam Aiya's *Magnumopus*. It evidenced Mr. Nagam Aiya's varied study and wide research, untiring energy, rare knowledge of the country and its people, their life, customs, industries, aims and interests, his fine scholarship, uncommon mastery of English, a clear style and a power of vivid description.

That he formed a high ideal of the work he undertook will be clear from the following sentences in his Preface to the State Manual :—

"In the writing of this book, my aim has been to present to an utter stranger to Travancore such a picture of the land and its people, its natural peculiarities, its origin, history and administration, its forests and animals, its conveniences for residence or travel, its agricultural, commercial, industrial, educational and economic activities, its ethnological, social and religious features as he may not himself

be able to form by a 30 years' study or residence in it. If this is a correct view of the object of a Manual, I trust I may be permitted to entertain the hope that a fairly successful *debut* has been made, notwithstanding defects or shortcomings that may exist, especially as this is only a pioneer attempt in a novel direction. It is not necessary to pre-judge here what a revision might give opportunities for, in the way of condensing in some directions or amplifying in others. If I get the chance myself at a not distant date, I should probably do both and thus try to reach the ideally perfect Manual, perhaps a vain Utopian desire which standard of excellence however, I know, is far from having been attained in the present performance."

It is unnecessary to inquire how he came to be a master of such easy and elegant English and the power of vivid description. It was not due to his professors—for one though an Englishman by birth, well-versed in Latin and Greek, never wrote anything on a large scale. He confined himself to correcting the school boys' compositions into simple and idiomatic English in which he excelled, but did not attempt anything beyond, for I am told he did not care to do it. Of the other two professors [both Scotchmen, hardworking and conscientious], one was a *Mathematician* and wrote only an austere, grammatical and extremely dry matter-of-fact style; while the other was a scholar and *Metaphysician* who taught English and Mental Philosophy with uncommon zeal and devotion, but wrote an unimaginative and laboured style taking enormous pains to secure accuracy of expression by putting in qualifying phrases and words, which spoiled the

effect of his otherwise excellent sentiments and fine scholarship. Thus young Nagam Aiya cannot be said to have been influenced by his early teachers in the formation of his style, which has been so often commended in these pages for its "lucidity" "elegance", "eloquence", "great knowledge of the English language", "almost faultless English" and so on. It would be wrong to say that he *learnt* it, for as Fredrick Harrison says of himself, (*viz.*), "he learned to write just by writing, as fishes learn to swim by swimming, and birds learn to sing by singing." But we must say he is much indebted to an adventitious circumstance while working for two years, as a clerk in the Dewan's Secretariat, under Rajah Sir Madhava Row. He was allowed access to all the old records of the office, during his leisure hours, *i.e.*, after his daily task was done. This gave him a thorough insight into the nature of the official correspondence of the Dewan's Office for 50 years, in all its multifarious branches, as the study included a careful perusal of Sir Madhava Row's despatches during his 14 years' administration and the correspondence of several eminent Residents like Messrs. Maltby, Newill, Minchin, Fisher and others on the several tough problems which came up for decision in those stormy days. Mr. Nagam Aiya always felt thankful for this lucky circumstance in his early life.

The publication of the book (the State Manual) was the signal for loud praise from all quarters, far

and near. Both *eminent* authority and the Public Press joined in warmly eulogising the work. A few extracts will here be given.

His Excellency the Governor, Sir Arthur Lawley, wrote :—

“ Dear Mr. Nagam Aiya,

“ I have delayed writing to you in response to your kind letter of May 7th, because I was anxious to have an opportunity before I wrote of perusing your volumes of the Travancore State Manual. However I will lose no more time in writing to express to you my very best thanks for presenting me with a work which I shall always value not only on account of its intrinsic merit but also on account of its associations. May I congratulate you on the successful achievement of a work which must have involved an immense amount of research and study and which in its present complete form reflects, if I may say so, the greatest possible credit on its author. It is a source of great satisfaction to me to be able to add a “ Presentation ” copy, for which I offer you my best thanks, to the shelves of my Library.”

The late Sir Arthur E. Havelock, Governor of Madras, wrote :—

“ Dear Mr. Nagam Aiya,

“ On the 1st Instant, I had the pleasure of receiving your kind letter of the 10th June, accompanied by a sketch of your biography and by a copy in three volumes of your Travancore State Manual. I have deferred writing to you until I have had time to look through the volumes. They form an admirably compiled and complete work which should be of great value, usefulness and interest to the administration of the State, which contains a mine of information for all those who wish to study the history, the social and material condition of one of the happiest and best governed portions of the Indian Continent and which evinces on the part of the

author, knowledge of his subject, literary skill and devotion to his undertaking, deserving the praise and gratitude of all his fellow-subjects and countrymen. The volumes are beautifully finished and illustrated. To me who retain for Travancore and all belonging to it, a warm affection and a sincere admiration, these volumes will form a cherished possession. I accept them from you with an unqualified expression of commendation for the work itself and with an assurance of my appreciation of and of my gratitude for the kind recollection of me which led you to bestow upon me this most agreeable memento of a beautiful country, of kind friends and of happy days. My memory of Travancore is kept constantly alive by a splendid portrait of the Maharajah given to me by His Highness. It stands in this room, before me, in the same line with portraits of the late Queen-Empress and of our present King-Emperor and Queen-Empress."

On behalf of H. H. the Maha Rajah Gaekwar of Baroda, the late Mr. R. C. Dutt, I. C. S., C. I. E., H. H.'s Revenue Minister, wrote:—

"Dear Sir,

"I am directed by H. H. the Maha Raja Gaekwar to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 5th March and a copy of the Travancore State Manual in three magnificent and illustrated volumes.

"His Highness desires me to say, from what he has already seen of the work, that he considers it a publication of unique interest and value, highly creditable to yourself and to the enlightened State of Travancore which ordered its compilation and undertook its publication. The book is a mine of information relating to the State of Travancore itself; but more than this, it elucidates and illustrates general Indian polity and institutions, Indian life and thought, in a manner which must interest all Indians and all students

of Oriental history and progress..... It is a matter for special gratification to His Highness that you have sent this book as a birth-day gift with your kind congratulations. His Highness accepts the gift with thanks, and hopes to go through your interesting pages when he has more time at his disposal. It is gratifying to His Highness that his desire and endeavours to perform the duties of his position during these 25 years have received the recognition of thoughtful men like yourself in distant parts of India. I am directed to add that His Highness will be much interested in the Hindu Religious Endowments' Regulation in Travancore, of which you are the author, if you would find it convenient to send a copy of the Act, at an early date. It is a subject which has engaged his attention for years past, and on which an Act was passed in Baroda two years ago."

Mr. R. C. Dutt, C. I. E., wrote on his own behalf thus :—

" My Dear Sir,

" A copy of the Travancore State Manual which you have kindly sent me has already been acknowledged from my office, I believe, but I write this to thank you again for your kind thought in presenting me with this very valuable and meritorious work.

" His Highness the Gaekwar is now at Ooty, as perhaps you know. I am exceedingly busy just now, on the eve of my leaving Baroda, but I am sure your splendid work will give me many hours of entertainment and instruction when I have more time."

Sir Gabriel Stokes, the Senior Member of the Madras Council, wrote :—

" Dear Mr. Nagam Aiyar,

" I have received your letter of the 20th Inst. and also the volumes of your book on Travancore. It is kind of you to think of sending them to me. I have not yet had time

to more than glance at the books. They are admirably got up and are a valuable epitome of Travancore progress. I congratulate you on the completion of your heavy task."

Sir. G. S. Forbes, Second member, wrote :—

" Dear Sir,

" I have to acknowledge with many thanks your kind letter of the 9th June and the volumes of the State Manual of Travancore. I am looking forward with great interest to perusing them when I have more leisure. Meantime the few pages I have been able to read prove what an amount of study and research you must have devoted to the work."

Mr. G. T. Mackenzie, I.C.S., (Retired) a former Resident in Travancore and Cochin, wrote to H. H. the Maharajah:—

" I am very much obliged for your Highness' most kind letter and for the munificent gift of two splendidly bound copies of the Travancore Manual.

" I have been perusing the volumes with the utmost interest and I respectfully congratulate your Highness upon this great work which will serve for all time as a memorial of your Highness' reign in Travancore.

" This Manual is certainly one more thing in which Travancore has shown the way to all other States in India."

In writing to Mr. Nagam Aiya himself direct, Mr. Mackenzie observed :—

" Many thanks for your letter and for the two copies of the Manual which by permission of His Highness you have kindly sent me. I have studied the volumes with much interest and congratulate you on this lasting memorial of your connection with the State."

Mr. T. Ananda Row, B. A., C. I. E., Dewan of



Mysore, wrote a long and interesting letter of warm appreciation, in the course of which he observed :—

“ I received in due time your two very kind letters about your great work, the Travancore State Manual, and subsequently the book itself, of which you have so kindly sent me a copy... ..

“ As to the work what shall I say ? Words fail me, I am in ecstasies with it. I am enamoured of it.

“ The dominant feature of the book is that its author is a hero-worshipper. The world in general and the Indian world in particular is to-day the poorer for want of several such. I have glanced through several pages of it and have not yet come across a dull page. Every page that I have read has been informing and also instructive.....I must congratulate you on the imagination which you have brought to bear on your work. By imagination, I mean, not the fancifulness of the dreamer but the realistic faculty of the true historian which enables him to grasp interesting details which go to make a true and vivid picture of the events he is writing about.....Your character sketches in which with a few rapid strokes you present a picture of your subject are delicious reading..... Your book will be a valuable and cherished addition to my collection and I shall often take long and deep draughts from it.....Having now inflicted a long and tiresome letter on you, I conclude as I began by thanking you for having sent me a copy of the book.”

Rev. J. Caley, Rector, Bradly, wrote :—

“ It is so very kind of you to send me the State Manual. I cannot tell you how I prize it. I have dived into it very considerably, but the information is almost endless. So I have before me the prospect of many pleasant hours. The labour involved in its preparation must have been very great indeed.”

Mr. V. P. Madhava Row, B. A., C. I. E., Retired Dewan of Travancore and Mysore, wrote:—

“His (Mr. H. Bruce’s) letters about Travancore were very interesting, I think. I was particularly anxious that he should get correct and first hand information about Travancore, and so when he applied to me for information about the country, I had no hesitation in referring him to you. I advised him to make it a point to call on you and also gave him the three volumes of your State Manual. I may take this opportunity to say how well you have executed the important task of compiling the State Manual, that was entrusted to you. The three volumes are most interesting reading and I think there is very little about Travancore that is worth knowing which does not find a place in these volumes.”

It appears to me unnecessary to quote more and it is really difficult to select from a great volume of commendatory letters that poured in on the author, but the few that have been given will suffice to show the nature of the appreciation the work met with.

The Press was equally unanimous in the tribute of praise it bestowed.

The “Madras Mail” of the 13th March 1907 wrote:—

“At a time when the Madras Government are revising their excellent series of District Manuals, it is only appropriate that Travancore should fall into line and issue a similar publication. The Travancore State Manual which has been issued, is written by Mr. Nagam Aiya the well-known Travancore official to whom in the past has been entrusted

most of the literary work of the State—who is to be congratulated on the manner in which he has discharged this arduous work.

.....

“The Manual, during the course of preparation, was read and approved by various Residents, and by His Highness the Maharaja, than whom no one can be more alive to the welfare and proper development of the interesting and beautiful land over which he rules. We may take it for granted therefore that the Travancore State Manual will be a valuable addition to Indian official literature and will form a valuable work of reference for all seeking information about the State.”

The “Madras Mail” wrote again on the 23rd March 1907 :—

“The Book is.....eminently readable ; while it is easy to see that to its author its compilation has been a labour of love. The chapters on the early and modern history of the State are excellent and shed considerable light on the inter-statal relations of the paramount power and the Durbar.....

“We congratulate Mr. Nagam Aiya on the admirable result of his labours, carried on mostly when he was engaged upon other work of responsible kind. His English is almost faultless, while he is master of an easy narrative style which does him great credit.”

The “Madras Times” wrote :—

“This work by Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, B.A., Dewan Peishcar, Travancore, is an important and noticeable addition to the Manuals of the Presidency. In this, as in other matters, Travancore has led the way to its sister-States, and it would add greatly to our information if Cochin and Hyderabad and Mysore and other well-known and advanced Native States were to follow the example of Travancore. ....

“ In Mr. Nagam Aiya, Mr. Rama Row found an efficient lieutenant to carry out his conception, for it is not difficult to perceive that the author has performed his task as if he loved it. Not only has Mr. Nagam Aiya the pen of a ready writer, but he has an intimate knowledge of the land he lives in, while he lingers with evident affection and sympathy over names and facts connected with the history of Travancore which only a son of the soil would evince for the land of his birth or his adoption. It certainly is a most comprehensive picture that Mr. Nagam Aiya has produced. Such a handbook of Travancore has long been a desideratum. ....

“ The printing and get-up of the book leave nothing to be desired and the illustrative photographs and maps which add to the value of the Manual are a new departure in manuals. Mr. Nagam Aiya is to be warmly congratulated on the result of his labours, and by this work he adds to his reputation as a cultured literary man.”

In a highly appreciative article, the “ Hindu ” observed :—

“ We have just received the three volumes of the Travancore State Manual prepared by Mr. Nagam Aiya, B.A., F.R. HIST. S., Dewan Peishcar. We congratulate Mr. Nagam Aiya and the Government of Travancore on this very useful publication. Mr. Nagam Aiya is a very able and experienced officer of the State and in literary capacity and knowledge nobody was more competent to be entrusted with the writing of so important a work as the State Manual. An unsympathetic Dewan would not leave the Author to be absolute and unconditional as desired and went the length of even more than once threatening this devoted worker by open communications of entrusting the work to other agency. But Mr. Nagam Aiya was not to be swayed from his purpose by threats of this kind. Three former Dewans concurred in thinking that the work should be done by him as if they

could not think of any other officer equally competent to do it.' The Dewan's threat was only a passing cloud. Dewana came and Dewana went away, but Mr. Nagam Aiyā's work went on. 'The idea of writing a State Manual was first broached to him by Dewan T. Rama Row, C.I.E., one fine morning 14 years ago, i.e. even before I had begun to compile the Census Report of 1891. The offer was kindly made with 'flattering compliments.' It was agreed to without a moment's hesitation .....

"Mr. Nagam Aiyā now hopes to get even the chance of re-writing his work at no distant date, and is already full of suggestions for the same. We hope to deal with the contents of these useful volumes in a future article."

"The Statesman," Calcutta, wrote:—

"Mr. V. Nagam Aiyā, Senior Dewan Peishcar, Travancore, is already favourably known as the author of the Travancore Census Report which appeared ten or twelve years ago and as the promoter of the Travancore Hindu Religious Endowments' Bill which has since become law. His latest effort is an exhaustive Manual of the State of Travancore prepared by command of the Maharajah. The book is modelled upon the District Manuals of Madras, and consists of large illustrated volumes, each one bearing testimony to the writer's industry and conscientiousness."

The Encyclopædia Britannica (Eleventh Edition) bases its article on Travancore wholly upon Mr. Nagam Aiyā's State Manual and quotes his authority for the same.

In appreciation of Mr. Nagam Aiyā's excellent services in this connection, H. H. the Maharaja was graciously pleased to award to him an honorarium of Rs. 2,500 and His Highness took the

occasion of his own birthday to intimate this gratifying gift.

When Dewan Bahadur Mr. S. Gopalachariar, B.A., B.L., resigned the Dewanship and left Travancore in August 1907, Mr. Nagam Aiya was appointed Acting Dewan for the *fifth* time, and the announcement was received both in and outside Travancore with genuine satisfaction.

The Indian Patriot wrote :—

“ Mr. V. Nagam Aiya, Senior Dewan Peishcar, has been appointed to act as Dewan of Travancore and he will hold the office till assumption of charge by Mr. Rajagopalachariar. So far so good. But why was he not appointed before, and why is he not appointed now, as permanent Dewan ? It is certainly not due to any lack of qualifications or merit, for Mr. Nagam Aiya is well-known as an accomplished man in many respects. He is a scholar of repute, well read in literature and history, a chaste and forcible writer, an administrator of admitted ability, with an unblemished service of forty years to his credit. In refinement of feeling and manners he can take first rank in any society of cultured men. He is a man of ideas animated by a noble enthusiasm for the public good. To these he adds rare experience of Travancore and rare sympathy for its people. Everything considered therefore, it is impossible to think of a better man for the position of the chief minister of the State and he has amply established a claim to it.”

He was in charge of the administration for about three months, and the success which he achieved during this period was felicitously referred to by the Resident, the Hon'ble Mr. R.C.C. Carr, I.C.S.,

BAR-AT-LAW, in his speech on the occasion of the Prize distribution at the Maharajah's College (26th October 1907) thus :—

“ I offer my hearty congratulations to the prize winners, and I think I may include amongst them the name of Mr. Nagam Aiya the first graduate from your Highness' College, whom I am glad to see here to-day. Mr. Nagam Aiya graduated, well I will not say how many years ago, and has recently held with conspicuous success the highest office in Your Highness' State.”

In December 1907, Mr. Nagam Aiya took 2 months' leave and on the 22nd February 1908, he retired from the Public Service of Travancore after a long, distinguished and honorable career. His was a remarkably successful official life, and though he retired after an arduous service of 42 years devoted to the best interests of his Sovereign and his country, yet his friends wished that it had continued and that the State had the full benefit of his great talents and experience which they had long learnt to associate with his name ; especially as he possesses, like his quandom official chief and illustrious friend, the late Sir A. Sashiah Sastri, K.C.S.I., who administered the Pudukotai State for 16 years after his retirement from Travancore, a strong physique and retains a keen faculty for high intellectual work. .

In his address to the fifth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the Dewan, Mr. P. Rajagopalachariar, M.A., B.L., C.I.E., Dewan Bahadur, referred to Mr. Nagam Aiya thus :—

“ The Senior Dewan Peishcar, Mr. V. Nagam Aiya Garu, retired on a well earned pension on the 10th Kumbhom 1033. His long and honorable record extended over a period of 24 years during which he held some of the highest offices in the State including the charge of the administration on five occasions. His valuable Census Reports and Manual of the State will always bear testimony to the labours of one of our most cultured officers.”

H. B. in his letters to the ‘Times of India’ said :—

“ A very distinguished citizen of Travancore is the Senior and retiring Dewan Peishcar, Nagam Aiya, who has five times served as Acting Dewan. Mr. Nagam Aiya, still but fifty-seven, and a fine figure of a man, is the oldest Graduate of the Trivandrum College. I was introduced to him by his close friend, Mr. Ananda Row, the first Councillor of Mysore, who shares with him his literary tastes. Mr. Nagam Aiya is the accepted literary man of the State. He has been settled in Travancore for generations past, yet is a Telugu Brahman, and like so many other prominent men, not quite of the soil. As a young graduate, he began to attract the notice of the gifted previous Maharajah not yet on the throne, by 1872 or earlier. He conducted the Census of 1891. But his great work is the 2,000 pages of the ‘State Manual.’ These three volumes or the thinnest of them would be enough to knock a man down with. The ‘State Manual’ is the best, practically, the only repository of the latest information about Travancore. Mr. V. P. Madhava Row an old political opponent of the writer who is severely glanced at in its pages, delights in it. He gave me his own copy saying that there was, on the whole, no book like it.

“ Mr. Nagam Aiya lives both in his Brahman village (also not indigenous) through which I was pleasantly and



courteously shown; and on a noble, breezy estate of a hundred acres, a mile or two from Trivandrum, his "Hill" as he calls it, or 'Tirumalai Lodge.' He seems to be a rich man; yet he is liable to have to feed forty or fifty kinsmen daily. That is the pleasant Indian system so different from English snobbery. A man in the highest position will not disown a kinsman in the lowest.

"I have long been accustomed to say that orthodoxy is everywhere unintelligent, yet there seems to be a momentary exception when one meets Nagam Aiya and one or two others."

The Indian World, Calcutta, wrote:—

"Mr. Nagam Aiya, Senior Dewan Peishcar of Travancore, has retired after a long and meritorious service of nearly forty years to the State. Mr. Nagam Aiya has an Encyclopædic knowledge of every manner of subject concerning Travancore, and his retirement can be described as a public calamity to that State with as much justice as Sir Subramanya Iyer's retirement has been by Sir Arthur Lawley. Mr. Nagam Aiya richly deserved to fill the office of Dewan, and it cannot but be regretted that he was treated with less than justice every time a vacancy occurred. For the third time after the retirement of Dewan Bahadur Krishnaswami Row an outsider has been appointed as Dewan to the detriment of the claims of capable and experienced men of the State such as Mr. Nagam Aiya. This is surely not the means of encouraging indigenous talent and indigenous work."

After a brief period of rest, so alien to his training and temperament, public affairs of a wider range claimed Mr. Nagam Aiya's attention. The philosopher-statesman at the head of the India Office, Lord Morley, was just then lifting the curtain for the first act in that memorable drama of the recent Indian Reforms.

After more than a quarter of a century of unceasing popular agitation, the authorities had opened their eyes and felt the necessity for making a move forward in the methods of Indian administration. And Lord Morley in conjunction with one of the most popular and successful of recent Viceroys had promulgated a generous scheme of reform. To the volume of valuable and weighty Indian opinion which the scheme elicited, Mr. Nagam Aiya added his quota in a series of able and thoughtful letters, clearly expounding the principles that should be adopted as the basis of an enlightened and progressive administration, which he had always entertained, and which alone could be relied on for its stability and permanence. Mr. Nagam Aiya's letters were characterized by liberality of sentiment, mature thought and moderation, and animated throughout by a genuine sympathy for his fellow-subjects and deep loyalty to the British Government. The political crimes of recent years committed by a few misguided youths are the result of ignorance, not of education. The educated Indian is the best friend of the British power in the East. That is Mr. Nagam Aiya's faith. He believes in it as in the axioms of Euclid.

The Hon. Mr. R.C.C. Carr, I.C.S., Bar-at-Law, late Resident in Travancore and Cochin and now Madras Member of the Imperial Council at Delhi wrote thus :—

“ I was very glad to get your letter and the interesting Note on Lord Morley's Reforms. You are certainly occupying

your time to advantage..... ..I did not need to be satisfied as to your deep and genuine loyalty to Government, but it is good to see public men standing out boldly and declaring their views."

Mr. Nagam Aiya has been closely watching the progress of the reforms since they were outlined, the battles that were fought in Parliament and the various triumphs of Lord Morley, the quiet and unostentatious courage of Lord Minto which enabled him to conciliate and conquer the orthodox prejudices of the Civil Service and the Anglo-Indian Press, and his remarkable coolness which bravely bore him up under trying circumstances and amidst gibes and sneers on the one side and ignorance, impatience and crime on the other. These great achievements have been warmly acknowledged by Mr. Nagam Aiya in his letters which also express the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen towards these two statesmen for the privileges granted, a larger and more effective representation and the appointment of Indians to the cabinet of Government. His friends may be permitted to hope that in the practical working out of these reforms, Mr. Nagam Aiya may himself come in for a share which he so well merits and which would mean a closer identifying of the interests and welfare of Native States with those of the Suzerain-Power.

In June 1909, Mr. Nagam Aiya was requested to open the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition held at Oachira in Central Travancore, and his

presence at the ceremony in which he evinced his characteristic interest created great enthusiasm. Of his Presidential address, the Hon'ble Mr. Carr wrote :—

“ I have read your speech at the Oachira Exhibition and congratulate you on the clearness with which you expound your principles.”

Mr. Lionel Davidson, I.C.S., now Local and Municipal Secretary to Government, wrote :—

“ I read your speech at Oachira the other day and wish more of your countrymen were as outspoken.”

In the following year, when Mr. Carr himself presided at a similar function at Oachira, he referred to his predecessor in the chair as “ my friend Mr. Nagam Aiya, whose name will be handed down to history as the author of the Travancore State Manual.”

He has more recently contributed numerous articles to the Daily Journals on Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu's Special Marriage Bill, on the King Emperor's Indian Tour and on “ Education.” These have been widely read and appreciated.

Though the whole of Mr. Nagam Aiya's official life had been devoted to the service of Travancore, his knowledge and culture, his character and abilities, his friends felt sure, would eventually be appreciated abroad and secure for him some signal mark of recognition from the British Government itself, slow as that Government has always been to spot or reward genuine merit ; and they were

not wrong, for the recognition at last came on New year's day of 1911, in the form of the title of *Diwan Bahadur* conferred on him by His Excellency the Viceroy. This gave much satisfaction to the public as well as to Mr. Nagam Aiya himself, for he never sought it; he did not even dream of it. It was therefore doubly gratifying to him that H. E. the Viceroy should have thus marked his appreciation of his services. His friends and well-wishers literally showered congratulations on him. The unexpectedness of the honor to a Native State official partly accounts for it. I give below a few extracts from their letters and telegrams. But almost every communication received by Mr. Nagam Aiya referred to the honor as being a "belated" one or a "tardy recognition." It is perhaps even a meagre one.

The first to felicitate him was his own gracious sovereign-master to whose service it is, Mr. Nagam Aiya chiefly owes the appreciation of the Paramount Power. His Highness wrote:—

My dear Nagam Aiya,

"I return the enclosed with thanks. I congratulate you heartily on the honor conferred upon you by H. E. the Viceroy."

Mr. A. Y. G. Campbell, B.A., I.C.S., C.I.E., Private Secretary to H.E. the Governor of Madras, wrote:—

"I am desired to convey to you His Excellency's congratulations on the honor which has been conferred on you and to inform you that it gave His Excellency much pleasure to recommend you for the honour in recognition of your services."

The Hon'ble Mr. R. C. C. Carr, I.C.S., BAR-AT-LAW, wrote from England :—

“ I am so glad you have been honoured with a Dewan Bahadurship. Long may you continue to enjoy the title and to set an example to the rising generation. India wants the steadying influence of the elder men of position, and you can do much to guide the minds of your countrymen.”

Sir J. D. Rees, K.C.I.E., I.C.S. (Retired), M. P., who has long entertained a high regard and admiration for Mr. Nagam Aiya wrote :—

“ I am much obliged by your kind letter, and heartily congratulate you on your new title ..... I much regret that you did not succeed to the Dewanship which was a perfectly legitimate aspiration on your part.”

Mr. L. Davidson, I.C.S., wrote :—

“ A line of hearty congratulations on your New Year's honour which I hope you will long live to wear.”

Sir Murray Hammick, K.C.S.I., Senior Member of Council, wrote :—

“ I congratulate you much upon the honour that has been conferred upon you. I wish you all happiness.”

Mr. T. Ananda Row, B.A., C.I.E., Dewan of Mysore, wrote :—

“ Allow me most heartily to congratulate you on the title of Dewan Bahadur which the Viceroy has been pleased to confer on you. It is somewhat belated. But in no case was it better deserved. May you live long to enjoy it yourself and be a pattern for others.”

M. R. Ry. Kerala Varma Avergal, C.S.I., Valia Koil Tampuran, wrote :—

“ I most heartily congratulate you on the Dewan Bahadurship so tardily conferred on you by the British Government and pray that you may live long to enjoy the distinction.”

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Row, C.I.E., Retired Dewan of Travancore, wrote :—

“I offer you my most sincere congratulations on the distinction of Dewan Bahadur conferred on you by the Government of India. Although very late in your public career, still it is most welcome. Both your literary attainments and valuable services to the Travancore State had long deserved it. May you live long to enjoy the distinction is my devout prayer to God.”

The Hon. Mr. P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, B.A., B.L., C.I.E., Advocate-General, Madras (now member of the Madras Executive Council) wrote .—

“Allow me to congratulate you heartily on your well-earned distinction of Dewan Bahadur. I hope you will be long spared to enjoy the honor.”

The Hon'ble Rajah Vasudeva Raja of Kollengode wrote :—

“Let me first congratulate you most heartily on the well-merited distinction that has been conferred on you as a New Year honour. I hope you will long live to enjoy it. It was uppermost in my mind to offer you my felicitations much earlier but I was indisposed for a few days which prevented me from writing to you.”

Captain W. M. Fenning, I. A., a former Assistant Resident in Travancore and Cochin, wrote :—

“I saw with great pleasure in the Madras Mail the announcement of the new title conferred on yourself..... Please accept our heartiest congratulations on your new dignity, which you so well deserve after so many years of loyal and faithful service in his Highness' State.”

Among a number of Clubs and Associations that sent him their congratulations, those of the

S.M.R.V. Union Club, Trivandram, may here be quoted first as proceeding from the oldest institution of its kind in Travancore. Its Secretary wrote:—

“ In pursuance of a Resolution of the Committee, I beg to tender you on behalf of the Club our sincerest congratulations on your being granted the title of “Dewan Bahadur” by H. E. the Viceroy. Though in common with the rest of our townsmen we rejoice at the recognition of your distinguished services to this State, to us, the members of the Union Club, the title conferred upon you has a peculiar value. For you have so long been connected with this institution—and latterly as its President—that it has become difficult for us to think of the Club without being reminded of you. Under these circumstances we believe we can without presumption say that we feel the honour as one personal to us, and that we feel flattered by the fact that one of our number has been chosen for distinction. We look forward with pleasure to the time when we may be able to congratulate you on the still higher honours which you so well deserve, and we pray that you may be spared for many long years to come to enjoy your well-earned title.”

On the occasion of Mr. Nagam Aiya's last birthday, the President of this Club, Mr. M. La Bouchardiere, M.A., was good enough to write to him thus:—

“ With an honourable record of hard and valuable services rendered to your Sovereign and country, of useful work for the public good, and of kindly and generous deeds to your friends, you have won the approbation of the public and have endeared yourself to all who have had the privilege of coming into close contact with you. This is indeed an achievement of which any man may be justly proud, and we, the members of the Union Club, for whom as member and President, you have done so much, rejoice in your



happiness and send you our hearty good wishes. We pray that the Almighty will spare you in health and strength for many more years and shower on you every happiness and blessing."

Mr. Nagam Aiya was evidently touched by this warm tribute of affection and regard, and coming as it did from the elite of Trivandrum, the appreciation was very gratifying and specially appealed to his feelings. In acknowledging this letter, Mr. Nagam Aiya observed :—

"Your kind letter conveying to me the 'unanimous resolution' of the Managing Committee to offer me on their own behalf as well as on behalf of all the members of the Sri Mula Rama Varma Union Club, their 'respectful and hearty congratulations' on the occasion of my *Shashthi-purthi* ceremony has deeply touched me. By the blessing of Providence I have been enabled to celebrate my *Shashthi-purthi* but the congratulations of the S. M. R. V. Union Club which represents the elite of Travancore society and the expressions which you as the President of that club have thought fit to use on this happy occasion, have sweetened that blessing. I have been a member of the Union Club—since it was started some 30 years ago, and though I have always been indulgently treated by my brother-members, I did not know that they entertained such a regard—almost affection for me I should say—as is evident from the kindly reference you have made to my 'valuable services rendered to my sovereign and country,' to my 'kindly and generous deeds to friends' and my 'having won the approbation of the Public' and having 'endeared myself to all who have had the privilege of coming into close contact with me,' and mine as 'an achievement of which any man may be justly proud.' You then are pleased to add that the 'members of the Union Club, for whom as member and President I have done so much,

rejoice in my happiness and send me their hearty good wishes.'

"If I can bring myself to believe that I deserve these high compliments or any portion of them, I can boldly say that I have not lived in vain. I pray for the success and continued prosperity of the Union Club."

The Secretary to the National Club, Trivandrum, wrote:—

"The National Club offers to you its most hearty congratulations on the high honour of Dewan Bahadur recently conferred upon you. It is highly gratifying to us that the services rendered by you, as one of the trusted and responsible officers of the State, have at last been recognised and rewarded by His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor. We rejoice with the rest of Travancore at this happy event and pray to God to bless you with health and long life to enjoy this and still higher honours."

The Rama Varma Jubilee Association, Puthenchandai, Trivandrum, wrote:—

"We beg leave to convey to you the Association's hearty congratulations on the title of Dewan Bahadur that the British Government has recently conferred on you, a title so well-merited both on account of your recognised culture and your meritorious public services. The Association is very gratified that one of its valued and respected members has been chosen for this honor."

The S. M. R. V. Association, Karamanai, Trivandrum, wrote:—

"In pursuance of a resolution passed by the Managing Committee of the S.M.R.V. Association, Karamanai, I have great pleasure to tender to you, on its behalf, its sincerest congratulations on the well-merited honour of Dewan Bahadur, conferred on you by the King-Emperor. Every body that knows anything of you will feel sure that this

honour cannot have fallen on worthier shoulders. The Association feels genuine pride at the honour granted to you—the President of the Association.”

More recently (March 1913), he was asked by the Tanjore District Conference to preside at the celebration of Sir A. Seshiah Sastri's eighty-fifth birthday and unveil his portrait, which he agreed to during his recent prolonged stay at Madras. The Secretary of the Conference earnestly requested him to accept the invitation, as he thought Mr. Nagam Aiya was the fittest man in Southern India to preside at the function. The Secretary wrote:—

“ It is the anxious desire of the organisers to request some one who had known Sir Seshiah's services with personal acquaintance. We cannot think of another more competent for presiding over the day's public meeting and we approach you with the request that you will preside and speak on the great man. In making this request, I know I am putting you to considerable inconvenience by requesting you to go over a long journey to Kumbaconum, where the day will be observed. But the thought, that even in your retirement you still keep connection with the Press and condescend to serve the Public, emboldens the proposal. If you accept, (I request you will not refuse), we shall deem it an honor to have the day observed under your Presidency.”

Mr. Nagam Aiya had known Sir Seshiah intimately for about 30 years, though they met only once after Sir Seshiah left the Travancore Dewanship. They discussed between themselves unreservedly numerous public questions of importance in long private correspondence, and Sir Seshiah often expressed admiration of Mr. Nagam Aiya's

opinions and his bold advocacy of them as will be evident from Sir Seshiah's letters quoted in this sketch.

For Sir Seshiah personally, Mr. Nagam Aiya entertained genuine respect and esteem, and in the speech which he delivered at Kumbaconum, (22nd March 1913), on Sir Seshiah's life and work, Mr. Nagam Aiya lets us into the secret of his own ideals of public rights and the duty of public men in regard to them. We may quote here a few extracts from that speech: Mr. Nagam Aiya said:—

“ If this is the treatment accorded to the giant benefactors of the human race, what do you think will be the fate of millions of mushrooms like us, who leap into life suddenly, and flit across this ephemeral sphere for a few moments, and then disappear finally ' unknown, unwept, unsung.' The thought is dismal. It unnerves one—it almost incapacitates one for worldly work. It is therefore very gratifying indeed to see in an age of lip homage and mock gratitude like the present, that there should be an organization of this nature in this premier district of the Madras Presidency, for holding an annual demonstration to the world at large of the Tanjore people's remembrance and grateful regard to their illustrious dead. In doing honour to the memory of Sir A. Seshiah Sastri, you are doing honour where honour is due; you are doing honour to yourself as a community, and setting a good example to your less fortunate though by no means less patriotic brethren in other districts.

“ Personally I feel flattered by the honour you have done me to-day, through your energetic Secretary, Mr. Doraswami Aiyar, who has managed to ferret me out, a humble Travancorean from the extreme south of the

Peninsula, to preside at this day's conference of the *élite* of Tanjore, at one time the seat of a prosperous native Raj now lost in oblivion, but still the centre of wealth, affluence and culture, representing the cream of the intellectual aristocracy of Southern India, the leader of fashion and the fine arts, and the nursery of statesmen, lawyers, pundits, scholars, philosophers, school-masters, artisans and musicians, all alike indebted to the beneficent and brain-giving waters of the Puranic Cauvery. It goes without saying that I heartily participate in the rejoicings of to-day in honour of the illustrious Sir A. Saahiah, whom I have known, first as my official chief in Travancore for five years in the early seventies, and then for the rest of his life as an august friend and well-wisher, in all, for a period of 31 years.

"What we are all concerned with in this day's celebration, is the import to us of Sir A. Seshiah's mission in life and conduct. What are the lessons they teach us and how best could we utilize them?—we, who see 'the foot-prints he has left on the sands of time.' What are the lessons which we should like our successors to learn from his career? I shall endeavour to answer these questions as best I may.

"I heard of him for the first time in my life, only after he was appointed Dewan of Travancore in succession to Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row. I heard of him from Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row's eldest son, Mr. T. Ananda Row, C.I.E., my early friend and school-fellow, who himself became Dewan and retired from Mysore the other day. This conversation took place one fine morning at Cotton Hill, Sir T. Madhava Row's private residence at Trivandrum—the same morning that his father went to take leave of the penultimate Maharaja. Mr. Ananda Row said:—

'The incoming Dewan is Seshiah Sastri, my father's friend and school-fellow—a gentleman as stout in heart as in body.'

"This pithy description of the great man has ever stuck to my memory since. And all the long years of my acquaintance with him have only confirmed me in the accuracy of Mr. Ananda Row's statement.

"In all his dealings with his fellow-men, whether equals, subordinates, dependants, neighbours or strangers, Sir A. Seshiah Sastri's perennial sympathy, generosity of nature and genial temperament, stood out prominently as his characteristics. Towards his superiors, he was modest, respectful, even deferential. He expressed his views to them in a somewhat apologetic tone at first, and then when they came to close quarters with him they found he was bold, obdurate and unflinching in his opinions. He concealed an iron hand within a silken glove.

"This is what he wrote to the penultimate Maharajah of Travancore (Ayilliam Tirunal) on one occasion :—

'It is the first duty of kings to do that which is proper before that which is only agreeable, and in the high station in which sovereigns are placed, they often feel bound to do that which is painful to them and in doing so, God knows what sacrifice of personal friendship and regard they have to make in the appointment of their chief officers. The government or subjugation of self is the foundation for the just government of a kingdom.'

"What a high ideal of duty is this !

"In addressing the Madras Government on the much vexed question of criminal jurisdiction over Europeans, he was equally fearless.

"He had great moral courage. He wielded a facile pen. He worked 10 hours a day. He was a wonderfully quick reader of official reports and papers. He was well posted in the news of the world for he was a careful reader of the daily journals, and he was able to utilize every thing that he read or heard or saw, owing to his marvellous powers of memory. He never cared to make notes, for he needed

none. He carried them in his head. He wrote idiomatic and chaste English. His European and Indian friends greatly admired his rare conversational powers. They were to them a rare intellectual treat. His visitors, while Dewan of Travancore, came in numbers on the afternoons of holidays, and the conversation went on as the circle of visitors increased; almost every one took part in it. Those who did not take part in it enjoyed it all the more. He led the conversation from topic to topic gliding on smoothly, and guided and controlled it. Every conceivable subject was comprised within it and as the afternoon hours rolled on, the interest of the conversation increased and the discussion became earnest and animated and the visitors had their full say, though not a word of offence or pain to any one, present or absent, escaped Sir Seshiah's lips or from any of his hearers, for the talk was kept on in good taste and the holiday afternoons were a source of interest and instruction, which were therefore courted and coveted and looked forward to with zest. This was the case in Pudukotah too, as I know, for many long years, and must have been so even earlier, while Seshiah was in Tanjore and Madras. This free interchange of thought and the healthy elevated tone of the conversations led to the formation of early attachments and life-long friendships and to the bettering of official relations among men of the service, which acted and reacted in a hundred ways, both to the advantage of official work and the personal relations between the officers. This was the secret of Sir Seshiah's influence over his fellow-men.

"We should all imitate Seshiah in his loyalty, candour, rectitude and independence. As Dewan, he behaved most respectfully to the Maharajahs and the British Residents and showed the utmost consideration to the European subordinates of the State—in spite of faulty, even disrespectful behaviour on their part towards him. But in his official despatches and official orders, he showed no difference between a European subordinate and a Native subordinate. He

was kind, considerate and sympathetic to all; he was pre-eminently just and equitable in his dealings between subordinates, whether high or low. If two subordinates quarrelled among themselves and the matter came up before him for decision, he put his weight on the weaker side and he weighed the matter strictly as against the stronger party, with the result that while the weaker man got his sympathetic hearing, the stronger man got absolute justice. He doubly guarded himself against being influenced by bias or prejudice of any kind. While ever ready to overlook human frailties and pardon mistakes in others, he was implacable in his hatred of corruption and dishonesty of every kind. He was a friend of the weak and the helpless, and a terror to evildoers. As a school-fellow of mine humorously remarked of him at the time, he sat with all his weight on the corrupt officials of the State. If we meet here, year after year, to celebrate his birthday rejoicings, I take it that it is meant not merely as a tribute to his genius and abilities, but in order to engrave in our hearts and those of the rising generation of our countrymen, his many excellences and virtues which have left their impress on the world and to guide our lives accordingly. That will be paying a just homage to our departed worthy.

"I may be permitted to premise that in this age of militant civilization with ideals of life different from those of ancient India, the qualities required in a man for success in the world are different from those of the Aryan age, when our wants were fewer and their satisfaction much easier than now. The two epochs mark two different stages of Indian thought and evolution and therefore require two different kinds of education and equipment.

"If you grant that Sir Seshiah has been an instance of a successful man of the world, as I believe him to have been wonderfully so, then a thorough study of his excellences and a proper appreciation of them is a necessary object-lesson to his countrymen, for those are the qualities which will enable



them too to go through this world successfully and achieve the objects of their worldly ambition.

"It goes without saying that we, Indians of the modern age, have endless aspirations and any number of ambitions to achieve; some of them at any rate are of a most pressing nature.

"Time was when it was believed that we Hindus—particularly the Brahmins—were an unpractical, contemplative sort of people, given to speculations on the worthlessness and the ephemeral nature of this life, except as a stepping-stone to another and a better sort of existence and wholly indifferent to the good things of this world. All that is now changed, under the inspiration of English education and the influence of British rule. We have acquired a morbid craving for worldly goods, and are perhaps more *materialistic* than even the English people themselves, to whom spiritual teachings and spiritual knowledge are as foreign as Sanskrit, Arabic or Chinese. Such is the course of events. In the result, we have now any number of needs and aspirations to be satisfied.

"We have need for social reform, for foreign travel, for better marriage laws, for greater self-government, for more Indianising the machinery of State, for a more liberal education and that at a lesser cost, for a universal elementary education and that as free as possible, for female education on a different basis, so as to suit our women better for our Hindu home life, for lesser litigation which takes away the life-blood of the nation, for more offices in the Indian Civil Service, for a reduction of the land taxes, for more irrigation works, for more roads, more manufactures and industries, for more sanitation and the prompt annihilation of drains and stench from cities, for more hospitals and Native Vaidyasalas, for the resuscitation and development of the ancient handicrafts and the indigenous arts, for pure water and a plentiful supply of it in the inhospitable dry tracts of the country, for a better police system, for the reduction of the telegraph charges so as to enable

us all to send a telegram instead of a post card, for abolishing famines, pestilences and epidemics from the land; we have equal need to establish village panchayats, giving them powers to hear and dispose of all small suite and petty offences, to direct elementary education of all the castes in the village, to supervise the village hospitals and Vaidyasalas, to modify the water rates from time to time or from season to season, to note the condition of the growing crops and recommend remissions for them, to allot village lands for grazing purposes free of fees, to give forest trees for agricultural implements and for daily consumption of fuel, to dispose of caste disputes which give rise to endless defamation cases, to settle division of properties and differences between brothers, cousins, and more distant *Dayadis*, without going to the worry and expense of litigation in the law courts, to supervise temples and manage their endowments which are now the one source of perennial speculation, corruption and strife, throughout the land; we have need for the separation of the judicial from the executive functions of Government officers, for a law to legalise gifts to those other than heirs and their unborn children, with some slight restrictions, so that they may continue in the family of the donees and their children, which I believe is the object of the Hon'ble Mr. Seshagiri Aiyer's Bill before the Madras Legislative Council. We want a greater latitude to be given to Native Rulers throughout India, to develop their administration on national lines, instead of following the cast-iron methods of the dull uniform British system; in one word, we want our august Government to give us equal treatment and purer laws, so as to make His Majesty King George's rule the *Golden Age* of Indian History, which in spite of endless change of dynasties and vicissitudes of fortune has gone on marching through the ages in a marvellous fashion. These ambitions and more, we could, I assure you, achieve only if we steadily keep before our eyes as

models to follow, men like Sir Seshiah Sastri and his illustrious compeers, Raja Sir Madhava Rao, Sir T. Muthuswami Iyer, M. Sadasiven Pillai, Ramaiyengar, Rungaacharlu and Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao. Labour honestly and earnestly and you will get everything you want.

“We are all one with His Highness the Agha Khan and the late Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao in thinking that Indian youths should not be exposed to the snares and pit-falls of English city life by a prolonged stay in England for their studies, at an *immature* age. The Agha Khan made the other day a statement which greatly startled me but which nevertheless gratified me, because he belongs to a community which is not tied down by hide-bound customs as we Hindus are. His Highness said:—‘I do not think the sending of young boys to England is satisfactory, but that he did not commit the Moslem League as a political organization to simultaneous examinations but the League was considering the question.’ ‘We regret to note’ said *The Times of India*, ‘that Agha Khan is opposed to a system of thorough English training for Indian boys. He is evidently of opinion that India can be governed by Indians trained in this country.’ Rajah Sir Madhava Row, the greatest of your Tanjoreans and a close friend and school-fellow of Sir Seshiah’s, known as the *first* Native statesman of India, and one who earned for Travancore the enviable distinction of a Model Native State, a title which *has* continued unto this day, in undiminished lustre, under the wise rule of our illustrious Maharajahs, was of the same opinion. He wrote:—

‘To insist upon the youths of India proceeding to England and staying there and passing would in effect be to place a number of barriers in their way. They are: the great expense involved; great inconvenience; withdrawal from friends, guardians and natural well-wishers; risk of youth going astray; risk as to health; great loss of time; loss of touch with his own country and people; probable impairment of social status; certain amount of denationalisation. These

barriers would be insuperable to most classes and particularly to the Brahmin community, which has, from time immemorial and through successive dominations, maintained intellectual and moral ascendancy and social influence in India. As regards the best families, the plan would amount to a sentence of exclusion. Just imagine what the people would have felt if the Mahomedan rulers, even in the plenitude of their despotic strength and prosperity, had declared that no Hindu would be eligible to high office without going to Mecca and staying there several years.'

"I am one of those who strongly believe that the best administrators for India could be found among the stay-at-home Indians themselves, who have not gone abroad, if we give them here the needful intellectual equipment and official apprenticeship. We have the men possessing the necessary qualifications and stamina. For instance, I could have picked out half a dozen Provincial Governors and Chief Commissioners, from amongst Mr. Powell's earliest pupils. They would compare favourably with the best members of the Viceroy's Executive Council or the Cabinet at home.

"Sir Madhava Row was opposed to the idea of sending our youths to England for education or examination; and were he living to-day, he would have been horrified at some of our England-returned youths, who seem to mistake the 'petty vanities of dress and taste,' as Sir Muthusawmy Iyer so well put it, for English culture and English civilization. The other day I met a young man whose gait and manners did not seem to charm me, though I must do him the justice to say that he did his very best to put on English airs and to look an Englishman every inch of him, with his cropped hair, a cigar in his mouth, a short coat and a straw hat, having no caste marks on his forehead, but with black shoes and trousers, and collar and necktie, of course. I enquired and was horrified to learn that he was an England-returned Brahmin youth of one of your southern districts.

'I beg your pardon' I told my informant. 'I did not know he was a Brahmin, he did not, of course, look like a European which he evidently wished to, but looked something very different indeed.' What pained me most in this young man was not his aping English airs and English dress, but the studied contempt which his conduct implied to the feelings and opinions of his highly educated and orthodox countrymen. Can you look upon such a youth as a valuable member of Indian society? It is not necessary to call your attention to the other risks to youth, of which Sir Madhava Row spoke. Let us trust that our Hindu girls will not at any rate follow in the wake of their brothers and husbands, for if they do, we shall soon disappear as a Hindu nation, but become another community instead, like what is called 'the domiciled community' in India.

"Above all, you should remember how immense is our debt of gratitude to the British statesmen of the last eighty years who have made these aspirations possible in us, and to whose genius we owe so many improvements in the administration of India and the progress of British rule, long before we asked for any privileges or knew how to ask for them.

"All these circumstances, showing a paternal regard and consideration to the subject races increase the weight of our indebtedness to the great British nation, to whom we owe the present era of a settled form of Government for the last 150 years, and for which we owe them the utmost loyal allegiance in *word, thought and deed*. Upon the continuance and prosperity of their rule, depend wholly our future progress and the welfare of India.

"You may well go on asking for more privileges and more favours. You may ask for them in season and out of season. You may plead for them with disagreeable importunity. You may agitate, you may clamour for them. But let it be after the fashion of fond children asking their parents

for privileges which they have not perhaps earned, and for favours which may not be granted, let it be in the spirit of due filial obedience, respect, affection and loyalty. You would do well to remember what Mr. P. Ranganada Mudaliar, M.A., the most intellectual citizen of Madras in his days, said in his Convocation Address that 'a Government which has done so much may well be trusted to do more.'

"In this evening's discourse I have pointed out to you some of the virtues and excellences of our distinguished countryman, which raised him to eminence and fame. These excellences, you may rest assured, will always be in requisition in any age and under any government, for a time will never come in the history of the world, when a ruler of men can say that he cares not for ability or learning, tact, modesty, honesty, loyalty, thoughtfulness, rectitude, diligence, devotion, judgment or discrimination, sweet temper, patience, sobriety, candour, tolerance or sympathy, in any of his public servants. No ruler of men can ever afford to say that he wants, for his service, only men noted for ignorance, faithlessness, illiteracy, thoughtlessness, ill-temper, disloyalty, bigotry and corruption. Such a man's rule will not last for 24 hours."

This speech was much admired. The Hon'ble Mr. P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, C.S.I., C.I.E., Member, Madras Executive Council, wrote:—

"Let me acknowledge with thanks the copy of your interesting speech on Sir A. Seshiah Sastri. The managers of the commemoration were very wise in choosing for the orator of the day one who had such long and such intimate acquaintance with the subject of the commemoration as yourself. Age has not affected the felicity of your composition or quenched the youthful ardour of your political aspirations."

Mr. V. P. Madhava Row, C.I.E., Retired Dewan of Travancore and Mysore, wrote :—

“ I am in receipt of a printed copy of the speech made by you on the occasion of the Seshaiya's birthday celebration, and thank you sincerely for it. I had read the report of the speech in the papers and thought that the promoters of the movement could not have made a happier selection of a speaker to do justice to the character and achievements of one of our great administrators and patriots.

“ The sentiments of your speech were excellent and were clothed in the felicitous language which we have been accustomed to expect from you.”

Mr. A. T. Forbes, I.C.S., Resident in Travancore and Cochin, wrote that the organizers of the Commemoration-day were lucky in having secured for drawing the portrait of a great man, a great literary artist like Mr. Nagam Aiya.

Sir J. D. Rees, K.C.I.E., M. P., I.C.S. (Retired), writes by the last mail :—

“ Many thanks for those nice little books [Letters on Education and Speech on Sir A. Sashiah Sastri, K. C. S. I.] which I am reading with great interest. I greatly admire Hindu civilization but not the outcome of the renunciation thereof.....I sincerely hope you will find some work suitable to your great abilities.”

It is confidently hoped that as opportunities offer, the august British Government will confer higher honors on Mr. Nagam Aiya, for he belongs to that class of public men, so rare in India who combine genuine loyalty to the ruling power without the taint of servility or sycophancy, real sympathy for their fellow-subjects without the bias of a

narrow patriotism, wide reading and culture accompanied by sound judgment and practical wisdom, a fearless expression of opinion with a clear perspective of national aims and interests—a class of men who, in fact, to use the Hon'ble Mr. Carr's (Member of the Board of Revenue and Madras Member of the Imperial Council) words, can "guide the minds of their countrymen" and whose "steady-ing influence India so much wants at present," and to honour whom should therefore be not only the duty but the interest as well of our enlightened British rulers. As his friend and biographer, I may make bold to remark that Mr. Nagam Aiya's retirement from Service is "a public calamity," for thereby his great talents and experience are thrown away, instead of being utilised as they should be to the utmost possible extent, especially at a time when the co-operation of such men is invaluable to the authorities in the interests of sound and sympathetic rule. We would fain hope therefore that Government may find it possible to avail themselves of his services, in directions most beneficial to the public interest and in keeping with his past achievements.