

LIFE AND TIMES OF LOK. TILAK

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of
LOKAMANYA TILAK

By N. C. KELKAR

Translated by
D. V. DIVEKAR



S. GANESAN,
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FOREWORD

I am very much thankful to my friend and co-worker Mr. D. V. Divekar for having given an English garb to the first volume of the biography of the late Lokamanya Tilak which I wrote and published in Marathi in 1923. Ordinarily, one would like himself to translate his own book in a different language or to re-write it independently. But in this case I was busy with the preparation for completing this biography, which I have done this year by bringing out the companion volumes II & III of the Marathi work. And I am glad to announce that Mr. Divekar intends soon to follow up his present book with another, and a bigger one, in which the life-story of Lokamanya Tilak will be taken up and carried to the end.

It goes without saying that every language has got a genius of its own, and for that reason the original and the translation of any literary work must occasionally differ in the resulting sense and expression. But this is not so vital where a biography is concerned, which is written mostly in a historical spirit and a narrative form, as it may be in the case of literature whose literary form is its very essence. Moreover, I have satisfied myself that Mr. Divekar being very

well acquainted with both Marathi and English, has done his best to make his English rendering of the original Marathi as faithful as possible, even considering the fact that he had necessarily to condense the original matter a good deal in places where there was too much of detail of a local character or mannerism or special allusion which might defy translation.

As I have said above, Mr. Divekar has in this book given an English garb to the original Marathi. The sartorial art is a difficult art in itself. And the difficulty increases when for a man of one nationality, a dress of a different nationality has got to be planned and fitted. But the difficulty in the present special case is, I think, tempered by the fact that in so far as Mr. Divekar has paid his attention more to the original purpose of dress, *viz.*, comfort in use than outward ornamentation, the Indian reader, at any rate, would be prepared to approach his book from the same point of view. He would care less for the manner than the matter of expression. The reader would like only to go straight into the spirit of the translation for the sake of the biographical matter it may contain and would not stop on the way, like a fastidious idler, to look at and criticize and find fault with things simply to gratify his own literary egotism. He would bear in mind that Mr. Divekar has had to work under a double

disadvantage, in that his task was to give a suitable expression to ideas which were not in many cases his own, and that also in a foreign language. But I think that, on the whole, Mr. Divekar has done his task well. His habitatory mode and endeavour has been fairly successful, because in his translation, he has followed me in my method in writing the original book. We have both, I think, discarded the cut and colour of an extreme kind. In point of colour we have not chosen, to use Carlyle's words, 'the soberest drab' or 'the high-flaming scarlet' either, in depicting our subject. And as for the cut, it is not too prosaic and matter-of-fact or dandiacal either. We have discarded mannerism and idiosyncrasy and tried to give a simple narrative of the life-story of Lokamanya Tilak, taking care, however, to give the picture an ample and suitable back-ground, painted in true historical colours, and faithfully depicting the life and spirit of the contemporary generations through which Tilak gradually emerged from the position of a school-master to that of an Indian national hero.

POONA,
10th October, 1928. }

N. C. KELKAR.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Few words are necessary to send out this book into the world. And after Mr. N. C. Kelkar's reference to the difficulties of a translator of such books in his foreword, fewer still are called for.

Ever since the first volume of Mr. Kelkar's Marathi biography of Lokamanya Tilak was published, I wished that there ought to be a full biography of Tilak in English as well. The Marathi book was in the hands of readers in 1923 and surely soon after that the English rendering of the same should have appeared. But the wish, for one reason or another—or probably for no reason at all—remained unfulfilled. At the beginning of April of 1927, however, it began to beat itself on the mind with greater strength and earnestness and under its strokes I began the work of translation in May of the year. The work of translation was carried on for a year and more during the leisure-hours, of course not without occasional inevitable interruptions, sometimes of the duration of a whole month. I am, indeed, glad that the work has been over and that the fruit is at last in the hands of readers.

Every one can imagine the difficulty of

the task of translation. And I crave from the readers the indulgence which a knowledge of the arduous nature of the work is sure to evoke. Abridgment and translation had to be carried on simultaneously, and naturally a coach with these two not well-yoked and well-broken horses was more than commonly difficult to drive. I am not unconscious of the many deficiencies in the book. I can at least assure the readers that I have given to its preparation as much as I could in point of attention and care. My only wish is that I have not mutilated the original, nor marred its beauty in the least manner.

For helping the completion of this literary undertaking I owe a deep debt of gratitude to many friends. First and foremost, I am profoundly thankful to Mr. N. C. Kelkar for granting me the permission to translate his work, for writing the foreword to it, and also for otherwise helping me in many respects. I am delighted to acknowledge my obligations to Professor V. T. Champhekar who, as a labour of love, wrote out chapter XXVII of the book. My friend Mr. D. B. Ranade, (student in the M.A. class, Deccan College, Poona) obliged me by doing the most tedious task of going through the heaps of manuscript and preparing it for the press. I value highly the friendly gift to me by Mr. P. M. Chandarkar of Lok. Tilak's letter of

resignation published as an appendix for the first time in full. Out of the remaining friends, colleagues and superiors who always wished well of the book, I must select for special mention the names of Mr. S. N. Agashe who took down the first two chapters and of Mr. V. H. Ponkshe whose ever-ready pen, moving in his invariably willing hand, did yeoman's service to me.

My friend Mr. S. Ganesan, the publisher, comes in last. But to him my thanks are due in a great measure. The manuscript was transformed into a book-form, with all the laborious processess which only book-makers can know, and in spite of all breaks and interruptions that happen in the day's work, within only a few months ; and readers can well imagine that without his unstinted efforts the work could not have been accomplished in such a wonderfully short period. The printing, the get-up, the binding of the book show what great care he has bestowed upon it and prove with what parental love he saw it through the press. And surely none would be more ungrateful than myself, if I were not to say in the most simple words that I am beholden to him beyond measure, for want of other words to express the gratitude I feel.

MADRAS,
21-8-28

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D. V. DIVEKAR.

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