

SRI TYAGARAJA BRAHMAM AND HIS TIMES

ADDRESS

BY

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ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF
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This annual function marks the date of the passing away of Sri Tyagarajaswami who lived, according to the best authorities, from 1759 to January, 1847. The celebration owes its inception to the untiring efforts of that musical savant and devotee, Bangalore Nagarathamma, who contributed so greatly to build the temple over the *samadhi* and helped to inaugurate these festivities. Although Tyagarajaswami was born at Tiruvalur and named after the presiding deity of that sacred shrine, his whole life was centred in the locality in which we are gathered and where the Lord of the five rivers, Panchanadiswara, has his seat. It is a matter for profound satisfaction that not only scholarly experts but the musical laity have in their several ways, offered their co-operation in making a resounding success of these periodical gatherings.

In the south of India it is not too much to assert that the musical trio, Tyagarajaswami, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri, along with the artistic group that surrounded and was dominated by the Royal musician, Sri Swati Tirunal, established the classical tradition of the south and that the system of *krithis* now regarded as the foundation of musical performances owes its perfection to this great assemblage of composers and musicians amongst whom perhaps Tyagarajaswami's influence was most widely pervasive.

The artistic contacts between Tanjore and Travancore were not only symbolised by the visits of the Travancore musicians, Vadivelu and Govinda Marar, to Tiruvaiyar but there have been also other instances of mutual influence and assimilation. It may be of special interest to this audience to learn, that touring in these parts in the eighties of the last century, His Highness Visakham Tirunal of Travancore who gloried in the

literary and musical traditions of his Royal family that have been maintained unbroken down to this day stated :

“I rejoice that I stand to-day on the soil that has produced Tyagaraja and nourished Appaya Dikshitar.”

In dealing however summarily with the subject of this sketch, it is needless to remind Indians and especially those who are the nurslings of the Kaveri, of the place that music holds and should hold in the scheme of life. One of the greatest of English art-critics, Walter Pater, was responsible for the observation that “all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music” meaning thereby that music, whether simple or subtle, is the sublimation of the human effort to reach perfection. Such an idea is common to the west and the east. In his poem on the Musician—“Abt Vogler”—Robert Browning has sung:

“But God has a few of us
Whom He whispers in the ear
The rest may reason and welcome ;
‘tis we musicians know.”

India has identified Iswara with melody and the Vedas have proclaimed that the world rests in sound शब्दनिष्ठं जगत्. In greater detail a Sanskrit poet asserts that he reaches heaven most easily who knows the science and the art of the vina, is acquainted with *sruthi* and *jāthi* and who is cognizant of the principles of *tāla*, or musical time.

वीणावादनतत्त्वज्ञः श्रुतिजातिविशारदः ।

तालज्ञश्चाप्रयासेन मोक्षमार्गं गमिष्यति ॥

Maharaja Sri Swati Tirunal who was a finished poet as well as a great composer declares in his Bhakti Manjari—

तन्त्रीनादविमिश्रितं लययुतं तारस्वनात्युज्ज्वलं

श्रोत्रानन्दकरं चरिष्णुभिरलं ग्रामत्रयेऽपि स्वैरैः ।

गीतं तावकनामनिर्भरसुधाजुष्टं न चेत् तत् पुनः

व्यर्थं व्यर्थमरण्यरोदनमिव प्रायो रमावल्लभ ॥

He assigns a due place to the vina accompaniment and stresses the place of *laya* and what he terms *tāraswara* emphasises the importance of sweetness as well as of expertness, indicates the place of the *swaras* and the three *gramas*—*shadja-grama*, *madhyamagrama* and *gandharagrama*, and above all asserts that musical effort attains its climax in the praise of the Supreme arising out of the fervent devotion of the singer. In his own language, all other music is like cries in the forest and in those verses he epitomises the elements and ideals of karnataka music. A loving description of Trivandrum during one of the temple festivals in his स्यानन्दपुरवर्णन (Syānandūrapura Varnana) contains this description—

विश्वजनकर्णसुखापादकनिनादवीणानिस्सरद्विविधश्रुतिमण्डलोद्भिन्नस्वरनिकरो
मधुरतरहरिचरितमयसाहित्यगानेन दिविलसन्तं हाहाहूहूमुखगन्धर्वनिकरमपि विस्मये-
र्ष्याकुलुषीभूतं कुर्वाणो गायकसमुदायः समुल्लसति ॥

Here also we observe the insistence on technical excellence in unison with सहित्य or poetic gift and the manifestation of true Bhakti.

This is not the occasion to discuss the differences between the west and the east in regard to melody, harmony and so forth ; but the place assigned to music everywhere in cultural life is unchallengable although as a critic has stated, the westerner looks at music vertically and produces harmony and the easterner looking horizontally produces melody.

Perhaps the most striking difference between the eastern and the western evolution in musical composition may be discerned in the almost exclusive adherence of the Indian composer and artist to religion, whilst love and war predominate over religion in the music of the west. The close connection of music in most countries with religion and religious observances is realised but few have set the art on such a pedestal as Sri Tyagaraja who described the emergence of divinity in the Chittaranjani song "*Nadatanumanisam*", though of course it cannot be forgotten that Sarngadeva had already apostrophised the deity as *Nadatanu*.

The history of Indian music is ancient and dates from the simple though elevated strains of the Sama Veda ; and Sangeeta as connoting song, instrument, dance and expression was as old as the Aryan civilisation, which when it came into contact with Dravidian life, characteristically gave to and received from it a great deal. Just as the Nataraja image is the climax of South Indian Art, so the dance of Natesa in the presence of the Devi, with all the main Divinities contributing to the synthesis of *Sangita* is the integration of the Hindu ideals of musical effort.

कैलासशैलभुवने त्रिजगज्जनित्रीं

गौरीं निवेश्य कनकाञ्चितरत्नपीठे ।

नृत्यं विधातुमभिवान्छति शूलपाणौ

देवाः प्रदोषसमये तमनुव्रजन्ति ॥

वाग्देवी धृतवल्लकी शतमुखो वेणुं दधत् पद्मज-

स्तालानन्दकरो रमा भगवती गेयप्रयोगान्विता ।

विष्णुस्सान्द्रमृदङ्गवादनपटुः देवास्समन्तात् स्थिताः

सेवन्ते तमनु प्रदोषसमये देवं मृडानीपतिम् ॥

In this great concert, the Lord of Hosts dances in Kailasa before Parvati in front of the assembled gods ; Saraswati plays on the Vina ; Indra on the flute ; Brahma keeps time ; Lakshmi sings and Vishnu handles the deep-toned mridanga. Competent scholars believe that the south contributed elaboration and subtlety to an art which was originally simple and pastoral. Sarngadeva, one of the earliest writers on music, was in his own person typical of the combination of the north and the south. He was a native of Kashmir but settled down in peninsular India. To him we owe the classification of music and ascription of the due place to the *Desi* or indigenous style. It may be remembered that the ancient *Margi* style was regarded and described as *Bhavabhajana* or as helping to destroy *Samsara*, and the *Desi* style as *Janaranjana* or as pleasing to the people at large. The former style has also been described as *Nibaddha* or linked with words, the latter being regarded as comparatively free from the slavery of the word, *Anibaddha*. From the days of the Nayaks of Tanjore who were great patrons of music and in whose court

flourished statesmen and musicians like Govinda Dasa and his son Venkatamakhi, the doctrine was asserted and implemented that our music should be regarded as wholly *Desi*. This in fact is the basis of Venkatamakhi's *Chathurdandi prakasika* to which great work we owe the classification into 72 Melakarthas and Janyas. Tyagaraja himself was one of those who freed the *krithi* from overmuch tyranny of words. He, in contrast to his predecessors like Arunachalakavi, composed his songs in fairly simple and homely language and one need not go further afield than the songs *Girirajasuta* and *Pahiramadoota* as instances of this characteristic.

Taking a rapid survey of Indian music, so far as its history is recorded, we begin with Jayadeva Gosvami's *Gita Govinda*, which is alike one of the great mystic poems of the world and a treasure-house of song and which owes and acknowledges its debt to the Bharata Natya Sastra composed as early as the 6th century A. D. It is the earliest recorded piece of music that we possess and the author proudly asserts that his followers will come from three groups—skilled musicians, true Bhaktas and finished poets. The *Sangita Ratnakara* of Sarngadeva was published in the 16th century and Venkatamakhi's *magnum opus* in the 17th. But by the end of the 17th century the separate characteristics of the northern and the southern styles had been definitely differentiated and Kabir, Thulsi Das, Mira Bai, Soor Das and Tuka Ram had perfected in the north a technique full of devotion and full also of appeal to the multitude. A link between the north and the south was furnished by Purandara Vitthala who created his simple and touchingly fascinating *Devarnamas* in Canarese and who was the artistic predecessor of Ramdas Swami of Bhadrachalam whose *kirthanas* are sung all over the Andhra country to-day. Suffice it to say here that the development of music in the north and in the south have been along parallel lines and there has been no coalescence of methods. The talk of fusion or union is not practicable and perchance it is wisest to remember as Jesus once declared: "In my father's house are many mansions." So far as the South Indian practice is concerned, the earliest authentic master was Kshetragna, a native

of North Arcot, who composed thousands of padams and dedicated them to Gopala. There followed certain great artists who produced varnams and others like Arunachala Kavi to whom we owe marvellous kirtanams. But it was almost as a sudden efflorescence that there blossomed on the banks of the Cauvery the three great composers—Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri—who lived in the beginning of the 19th century in Tiruvalur and the neighbouring places, and who, following in the tradition of Venkatamakhi, perfected what is now regarded as the essential elements of carnatic music. Each of them used special expressions to denote his respective compositions—the respective indicia being—Tyagarajanutha, Guruguha and Syamakrishna. Muthuswami Dikshitar's *kirthanams* are all in Sanskrit and he was a follower of the Sri Vidya. His padams constitute landmarks in Sanskrit prosody and imagery as well as in musical treatment, felicitous choice of words and movements in consonance with the underlying emotion or भाव being one of his rare gifts. The compositions of Syama Sastri are both in Sanskrit and Telugu. He worshipped Kanchi Kamatchi and his compositions include several *Svarajatis* embodying many *tala* movements. Tyagaraja's works, on the other hand, were almost entirely in homely Telugu and combined fervent idealism with a personal appeal which often climbed to great poetic height. He is the fine flower of the school inaugurated by Purandara who recaptured the Bhakti movement, a movement associated with the sage Narada the musician of the Gods.

Tyagaraja's life-history was outwardly uneventful although certain supernatural incidents have been woven into the chronicle connected with his mission and the mystery of his music. Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, to whom all students of Tyagaraja owe so much has imparted the information that Tyagaraja's family name was Brahman, his father being known as Ramabrahman. The appellation "*Tyagabrahman*" by which his disciples lovingly designate him is thus literally as well as psychologically correct. His father seems to have destined Tyagaraja for a life of literary scholarship and entered him as a student in the Sanskrit College at Tiruvayar but the attractions of music proved to be irresistible and he dedicated himself fairly early to the art. Tradition declares

that over and above the Vainika Venkataramanayya who originally instructed him, Narada himself became his preceptor and presented him with a treatise entitled *Svararnavam* which is now lost and taught him the Tarakamantra. Tyagaraja is supposed to advert to this episode in the krithi *Swararagasudharasa*, and his gratitude towards Narada is outlined in another, *Varanarada*. At the family partition, Tyagaraja received very little in the way of worldly goods but he obtained the golden image of Rama cherished in the family as an heirloom. His elder brother, although he came into possession of all the properties of the family, was yet jealous of the rising reputation as a musician of his younger brother, and the story goes that he secured and threw the image of Rama into the Cauvery. The biographers of Tyagaraja declare that Tyagaraja was absorbed in this image and in its worship and composed hymns outlining in loving detail all the rituals relating to the ceremonial worship, including the Naivedyam and the Arathi to the image. The loss of the golden image was chronicled by him in krithi "*Nenenduvadakudura*" in Harikamboji and when, after many months of search, the image was marvellously washed ashore and recovered the song *Etila, Dorakithivo* was composed by him descriptive of this homecoming of Rama. Throughout his life, Tyagaraja consciously put aside wealth and honours. He lived with his wife and supported a large number of disciples who gathered around him and they all subsisted mainly on alms in kind gathered by *unchavritti* from householders in Tiruvaiyar. He appears to have been a hard taskmaster with a temper of his own and was as exacting with his disciples as with himself. The krithi *Santhamulekha* is regarded as autobiographical. In the brochure by Mr. Ramaswami Aiyar to which reference has been already made, there is an acute analysis of the tradition and the tendencies during which Tyagaraja lived. It is pointed out that the age of the times of Tyagaraja was a transition between the age of patronage when kings and noblemen endowed and gave shelter to chosen musicians and other artists and the age of public support which only recently has come to its own. During the time of Tyagaraja the Tanjore dynasty which in its heyday of prosperity

was one of the greatest patrons of painting and letters and music had decayed, and the only locality where the love of music and its patronage were still flourishing was Travancore where, from the days of Marthanda Varma, the founder of modern Travancore and his successors (the greatest of whom was Swati Tirunal) music was both encouraged and practised by the members of the Royal family. Saraboji, the titular king of Tanjore, however, kept up some state and he was a contemporary of Tyagaraja. It is recorded that he sent an emissary to the musician asking him to compose a kirthana in his honour and we learn that he refused to do so but on the other hand composed a song in Kalyani—*Nidhisâlasukhama*, where he dilates on the theme: "Which gives greater joy, wealth or worship, in the holy presence of Rama? Which of the two is better—the praise of man or the praise of the Divine?" Such was the disdain for worldly recognition which was manifested by this man of God. Not only the biographer to whom reference has been made but other writers on Tyagaraja and his times have outlined his career as falling into distinct periods and it may not be inappropriate before this audience to attempt a resumé of what has been said on this subject if only for the purpose of stimulating further enquiry. As already stated, Tyagaraja in his own compositions has ranged from simple *Divyanamavalis* to most complicated kirthanas though he did not emulate the reconditeness of Kshetragna or Muthuswami Dikshitar. His kirtanas were created as accompaniments of fervid worship and are often conversational and sometimes are personal outpourings outlining his life and his experiences. It has been remarked, that he began by regarding Rama who was his tutelar deity as being the one supreme God, superior to every one else. His songs *Ramam Bhajeham* and *Rama Kothandama* are typical of this mood. He is supposed to have declined even to witness a procession of the goddess Dharماسamvardhini and instituted unflattering comparisons between her and his own Ishtadevata whom he, in his song, described as *Lāvanyu Rama* contrasting his beauty and grace with the attributes of the Devi whom he termed *Thamasa matha daiva*, the deity of the Thamasa way of life.

As happened in the case of Shakespeare and Dante, Tyagaraja seems to have had his moods of despair and periods of tribulation and notwithstanding his spiritual quest, his song in Denuka headed *Teliyaleru Rama* is indicative of his despair of realisation and the difficulty of knowing the right path. He fell ill and ascribed his illness to the anger of the Goddess whom he disparaged and whose grace he at last implored in the song *Karuna jooda vamma*. Later, as in the case of other great poets and musicians including Shakespeare, Goethe, Mozart and Beethoven, he attained comparative peace of mind and acquired a rare catholicity of temper. To this period are attributed songs in which he has apostrophised many deities and evolved a mentality which has been styled by Professor Max Muller 'henotheism' wherein the devotee alternately ascribes supremacy and primacy to several manifestations of Godhead. This method indeed is in the authentic Hindu line of thought and the greatest example is the Rig Veda where alternately Surya, Mitra, Aditi and Varuna are dealt with as supreme. To these years belong the songs *Girirajasutha*, dealing with Ganesa, *Neevanthi daivamu* to Subrahmanya, *Sambho Maha-deva* to Siva, *Pahirama Doota* to Hanuman and *Tulasi Jagajjanani* to the Thulasi plant.

Towards middle age, Tyagaraja resolved to go on a pilgrimage to various shrines. At Tirupathi he found that a screen separated him and Venkataramana and sang about that screen in the *Therathiyogarada*. A wealthy patron and Tamil scholar, Sundaresa Mudaliar, at Poonamalle presented him with a palanquin and a sum of money. Thieves beset him on his journey and he is supposed to have sung the song in Darbar, "*Mundu Venaka*," which led to the conversion of the thieves into docility. The story recounts that they even offered to carry his palanquin. He visited in turn Conjeevaram where he sang of Kamatchi; Madhyarjunam, where he is stated to have resuscitated a dead man by his composition *Sri Rama Padama* in Amritavahini. He then proceeded to Rameswaram. In Madura he sang the hymn *Manasunilpa* and in Srirangam was composed "*Oh! Rangasayi*". In his travels, he heard a discourse on the avatars and his mental reaction was manifested in the song *Evarinirn ayanchirira*—"How did the wise determine who thou

art? How do they worship thee !” His main musical contributions were in praise and honour of Sri Rama, regarding him as the summation and essence of all the Gods, as illustrated in the krithi *Dvaitamu sukhamā*. His thesis on one occasion was that the syllables composing the word *Rama* epitomised the Thathvas of the Siva mantra and the Vishnu mantra—*Ma* being Jiva of Siva mantra and *Ra* of Vishnu mantra. It must not be however forgotten that in addition to his krithis he wrote the Divyanamavali, Prahlada Bhakta Vijayam, Nowkacharitam in honour of Krishna and finally the Pancharatnas. Many of his songs rebuked intellectual pride and intellectual equipment as such and he is constantly advocating the grace of Rama as the only means of attaining bliss, the kirthana *Enu Chesthini* being typical of this outlook. Whenever there arose an opportunity as in his songs *Kasi Chetha* and *Rookalu Padi-velunna*, he inveighed against the love of money and the love of possessions. Curious observers have detected a conscious approach to the Northern system of music in one or two of his songs and even an approximation to western symphonies as in the song *Ramimchu varu* but in all but a few of his composition he was an exemplar of the strictest technique of carnatic music.

From the first he collected a band of devoted and accomplished *sishyas* around him, one of whom, Kanniah Bhagavathar, who visited Travancore impressed himself so much upon Maharajah Swati Tirunal that the most musical of monarchs sent his own court musician, Vadivelu, the violinist, to invite Tyagaraja to his capital. Tradition has it that there were many contacts between the Royal Musician and Sri Tyagaraja who seem to have profoundly appreciated each other's gifts but they unhappily never met. When Vadivelu approached Tyagaraja and stated that Swati Tirunal could bestow on him a great Padavi or status he is said to have sung the krithi, *Padavi Sadbhakti*, asserting that the state of mind which places implicit faith in Rama is the only Padavi for which he craved. It may not be irrelevant at this juncture to refer in some detail to Sri Swati Tirunal, the Maharajah who reigned from 1829 to 1847 and who died before he was thirty-five but was able not only to fulfil the exacting duties of royalty during a troublous period but to compose descriptive poems and dramatic works of conspicuous merit in Sanskrit and also to

create *varnams*, *kirthanams*, *padams* and *tillanas* in Sanskrit, Telugu, Malayalam, Canarese, Marathi, Hindi and other languages. His musical proficiency is as amazing and comprehensive as his mastery of several languages and the characteristic insertion of Swaraksharas bears testimony to both sides of his genius. Many of his compositions are sung all over South India and regarded as masterpieces although the authorship is not even known in some localities. Two of his *padams* epitomised the Ramayana and the Bhagavatha and another, the Stalapurana Mahatmyam. In his court flourished Vadivelu, the master of abhinaya who was sent for from Tanjore, Sivananda, the mridangam player, Chinnayya and Eravi Varman Tampi, the composer of *Varnams*. He, as well as his successors, were ardent exponents and lovers of the Bharata Natya and the art of Kathakali, and Chinnayya was one of the foremost masters of the dance. Swati Tirunal and Vadivelu already referred to are said to have jointly composed a *varnam* in *Kapi* after the manner of Tyagaraja. The Maharajah encouraged proficiency in *thānams* which represent special modes of *rāga* expression and were deemed to be the speciality of Parameswara Bhagavathar and for which Travancore has been famous right through. Swati Tirunal amongst his multifarious accomplishments and gifts shared the passion for style and verbal splendour which animated Syama Sastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar but he possessed in addition an absorbing devotion to Sri Padmanabha which was as inseparable from his work as the love of Sri Rama in Tyagaraja. Whereas before the times of Tyagaraja the *ragas* used for songs were not very numerous and it is computed that Jayadeva utilised less than twenty ragas in the whole of his Gita Govinda, both Swati Tirunal and Tyagaraja brought into vogue many *apoorva* ragas. At one and the same time at the court of Swati Tirunal there lived not only Vadivelu and many other experts who have been enumerated but the great Govinda Marar of whom more will be said hereafter and who came into personal contact with Tyagaraja. It is noteworthy that in his court also flourished Meru Swami, who was responsible for the introduction of *Harikathas* into the south and who also played a notable part in popularising Tyagaraja's *krithis* in Travancore. More than one member of the Royal Family patronised and took part in the

Kathakali and one Maharajah was personally proficient in the art. As already stated, Kanniah Bhagavathar, the direct disciple of Tyagaraja, lived for many years in Travancore and he and his pupil Raghupathi Bhagavathar and Natesa Bhagavathar were attached to the Maharaja's Palace. The indigenous style of music peculiar to Malabar and Travancore based on what is called the *Sopanam* system is now confined to temples and even the names of some of the tunes such as *inniva* and *puraneer* are referable to Dravidian origins the former word appearing both in Thevaram and Thiruvachakam. In this style of music, indigenous musical instruments were used such as *chembu*, *chenda*, *mlavu*, *nedunguzhal* and *idrukka*. They are still part of the temple musical accompaniments in Travancore. It was in the reign of Swati Tirunal that carnatic music became the dominant feature of musical life and the biggest contribution to that music was made by Swati Tirunal himself. It should also be remembered that one of his successors, Ayilyam Tirunal was not only a scholar but a musician and patronised the great Maha Vaidyanatha Aiyar and Raghava Aiyar who belonged to the generation next after Tyagarajaswami.

Amongst Sri Swati Tirunal's court musicians already referred to, one of the most accomplished was Govinda Marar who was named "Shadkāla Govinda Marar" on account of his ability to sing *pallavis* adopted to six *kālas* or degrees of time. This Govinda Marar notwithstanding that he was crippled by rheumatism, went on a pilgrimage to meet Tyagaraja, the meeting having been arranged by one Nallathambi Mudaliar who was a palace employee. His performances so enthralled Tyagaraja that he is reported to have composed his famous song *Entharo Mahanubhavulu* in honour of Govinda Marar, to whom he gave the title "Govindaswami." This song avers: "Many indeed are the great ones of the world and to all of them I pay my homage." This and four other hymns in *Nata*, *Gowla Arabhi* and *Varali* constitute the Pancharatnas.)

The outstanding contribution of Tyagaraja in the domain of music was the development and systematisation of *sangatīs* or melodic phrases in close assonance with the *bhāva* or the underlying emotion and he also released musical practice from the grip of the word as such. Some one has averred that his

work was krithi as apart from kirthana. His services to the continuity of the Indian tradition are conspicuous. After him there has been a little too much of emphasis on formal correctness and the musical value of notes, whilst at the same time purely musical values have not been preserved against non-musical intrusions. Tyagaraja himself represented a compendium of all the musical resources of his predecessors. It may be remembered that in his days the main instrumental accompaniments had not attained the position which they now enjoy and exact. The violin does not seem to have been much in use during Tyagaraja's time and it has been observed that there is no mention of it in any of his krithis. In northern India its use is not as prevalent even now as in the south and in fact in this Presidency, the vogue of the violin really started with Thirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar, although in Travancore Vadivelu had largely popularised it. Krishna Ayyar along with the saintly Sarabha Sastri, who gave the flute a unique place in South Indian music and Narayanaswami of Mridangam fame, constituted the great names of the generation subsequent to Tyagaraja. According to tradition, Tyagaraja's main and simple accompaniment was the Tambura and this was but appropriate in the nature of things to one who was essentially a Bhakta. It was fitting that Tyagaraja should have felt that his proper end and aim was *sanyasa*. Passionately devoted to his art he rose above it towards the end, although he had in the past insisted that music was essential for salvation in his lyrics, *Mokshamu Galada*, *Ragasudharasa* and *Enthuku Peddala* and had insisted on all curricula of studies including music. His krithi *Aparthamuna norva* exemplifies the final attitude. "I have a wavering mind. I have begotten my difficulties. I composed and sang hundreds of kirthanas in order to obtain salvation for my individual self irrespective of others. I crave pardon and mercy for such great offences." The next step was to prepare for his death and his song in Manohari, *Parithapamukuni* foretold his end and he prepared for it by *sanyasa* and surrender. He exclaims in it: "Oh Rama, you appreciated my condition and have told me that in ten days you will save me. May I remind you of this promise?"

Gayakasikhamani Muthia Bhagavathar who, in his own person, typifies the confluence of many traditions and is equally honoured in his own district and in this, in Mysore and in Travancore, has in his short account in Sanskrit of the life and work of Tyagaraja described his musical output thus :

देशीकर्णाटसङ्गीतविचित्रसरणिस्पृशः ।
 त्यागराजनुतेत्यादि पदैरन्ते च मुद्रिताः ॥
 अनरस्तोत्रसम्बन्धा अविष्णुस्तुतिर्वर्जिताः ।
 बालैरपि सुगानांशः पण्डितैरपि दुर्गमाः ॥
 आपादचूडचार्चजीर्वेदान्तार्थविजृम्भिताः ।
 सर्वलक्षणसम्पन्नाः स्तुती रचितवांस्ततः ॥

These verses aptly outline the scope of Tyagaraja's art, his freedom from sycophancy and his devotion to his *Ishtadevata*, (Rama) his outer simplicity and the inner symbolism of his krithis, the felicity of his wording, compact, nevertheless with profound spiritual meaning and the technical excellence of his work.

With this description of his genius I may well conclude but may I take the opportunity of, remarking before I finish that the memory of Tyagaraja should serve to minimise, if not to counteract some of the tendencies now increasingly prevalent in the practice of Carnatic music? To say that at present the 'laya' aspect is sometimes overemphasised and the passion for 'tala' overaccentuated and that legitimate regard is not paid to sheer melody and to the *Raghabhava* is certainly not to exaggerate. The present type of audience is new and in the making and the present demands on the artists are variegated, and therefore is it that I have ventured on such a reminder. "Often ornateness goes with greatness. Oftener felicity comes of simplicity."

Of Tyagaraja it may well be said in the words of the English poet :—

" Enough that there is none since risen who sings
 A song so gotten of the immediate soul,
 So instant from the vital fount of things
 Which is our source and goal."