

Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar

A Biography

K. Nagarajan



ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar

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by

K. Nagarajan

Acknowledgments

My acknowledgments are many and various and my first duty is gratefully to refer to them. First and foremost, I must express my indebtedness for the facilities provided by the Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, the son of Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, the subject of this Memoir.

Professor S.V. Chittibabu, the Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University and the University staff were ready with facts and figures which they provided at my behest. It may be invidious to make any distinction but I must refer to the readiness with which the staff of the Marine Biology Centre gave me all the assistance which I sought at their hands. Dr. R. Natarajan, the Head of the Department and every member of the staff of the Department from the oldest to the latest-joined were ever ready to help; I would also like to mention Dr. S. Agesthalingom, Professor in the Department of Linguistics, learned in his subject and unremitting in his endeavours to take the Department further and further in Linguistics research; and not the least, Professor R. Krishnamurthy, who with the assistance of the late Professor C.S. Srinivasachari has compiled a highly interesting brochure on the Mayoralty of Madras of Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar.

I was extremely fortunate in obtaining very valuable assistance at the hands of two Departments of Government: (1) The Tamil Nadu Archives, and (2) The Corporation of Madras. Mr. S. Rangamani, I.A.S., who is administering the Archives, gave me every facility to have access to the relevant records in the Archives.

A meed of praise is due to Mrs. Saroja Vincent and Mr. Vincent who spared no pains to provide the material required. All their help would not have been put to proper use but for the whole-hearted assistance of my son-in-law,

Mr. B. Natarajan, Chief Commercial Superintendent (Retired), Southern Railway. At my request he rummaged among the Archives' records of nearly thirty years, which were voluminous. He has a flair for archaeological research and considerable experience of it. He could place his finger on the right records which help one to recapture the authentic flavour of the past. In a very real sense he may be considered as co-author of this part of the book.

I indented on his services to search into the records of the Corporation of Madras for relevant material and I am immensely obliged to Mr. K. Madhava Sarma, I.A.S., Special Officer, Corporation of Madras, for providing access to the records of the Corporation of Madras.

Mr. S.R. Venkataraman, President of the Servants of India Society, Mr. T.T. Vasu and Mr. M.C. Subramaniam of the T.T.K. Memorial Library placed at Mr. Natarajan's disposal valuable material which provided authentic information for the period 1929-47.

My son, N.K. Sundaram, and my grandson, K. Chandrasekharan, assisted me a great deal in compiling the relevant extracts from the proceedings of the Legislature in which Muthiah Chettiar had actively participated.

Considerations of space prevent my acknowledging the help given by several others including members of the Chettinad staff all of them old and trusted employees of the family. They include Padmashri Dr. V. Vaidya Subramania Aiyar, whose connection with the Chettinad family goes back to the early thirties; Mr. G.D. Nandagopal, who was Registrar of the Annamalai University for some years; Mr. Arumugam, Mr. L. Sabaretnam, Mr. V. Jayaraman and Mr. R. Narayanan, who provided valuable information in respect of the South India Corporation and the growth of Chettinad Cement Corporation.

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1989

First Edition: 1989
© Annamalai University

520

472983

Diamond Jubilee Publication
(1929-1989)

923.75411
1007

Price:

Copies can be had from:
The Publications Division
Annamalai University
Annamalainagar 608 002

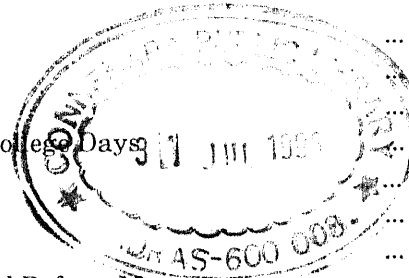
Typeset and printed by
Annamalai University Press



LORD NATARAJ, THE COSMIC DANCER

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Dr. RAJAH SIR M. N. CHETTYAR OF CHET PINAD.

K. B. A. D. L.



Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad and
Rani Lady Seethai Achi



The Founder's Coat-of-Arms

Foreword

I deem it a great privilege and a rare honour to write this Foreword to the brilliant biography of Tamil Isai Kavalār, Padmabhushan Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, written by Thiru Nagaraja Iyer, a reputed writer and author.

It is very difficult for the son of a great man to be equally great, rarer still for the third generation to continue to be equally great. There are few exceptions -- one, the family of Jawaharlal Nehru in the North, and the other, the House of Chettinad in the South. Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was the son of a distinguished personality. This did not inhibit him in anyway in gaining fame in his own way, by virtue of his nobility and noteworthy achievements.

The Rajah was a Distinguished Son of India, an Eminent Educationist, a Patriot, Statesman, Parliamentarian, Patron of Tamil and Tamil Culture, Connoisseur of Fine Arts and Sports, Lover of English; a World-Traveller and an Architect and Founder of many Schemes and Institutions. He was a noble philanthropist, a man of high thinking and remarkable memory -- gentle, affectionate, duty-conscious, simple, hospitable, religious, and humanitarian to the core.

The Rajah's contribution to the growth and development of the Annamalai University should be written in letters of gold. He had helped his father in founding this University as a "runner boy" to him, and later, he nurtured and nourished the growth of this University as its second Pro-Chancellor for a period of nearly 36 years. During that period, the University had grown in stature and dimension, dignity and prestige, with several departments of study in new areas, to meet the changing needs of society and also of higher education. He rendered yeoman service to the promotion and propagation of *Tamil Isai*.

To write the biography of such a great personality, is not an easy task. Only a man of Thiru Nagaraja Iyer's calibre and experience, who had moved and worked with the Rajah closely from his early days as his legal adviser and friend, and

associated himself with the administration of many institutions founded by the Rajah, can write such a biography. With intimate knowledge of the Rajah, his dreams and achievements, the author has presented a brilliant biography of the Rajah.

The Rajah's life is like a pole-star for all to see, cherish, remember, admire, and emulate, just as the life of Johnson was to Boswell. This biography of Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, I am sure, will inspire and motivate the younger generation, to emulate him and soar high in life. I therefore offer my congratulations to the author for his outstanding performance in bringing out the biography of both Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, earlier, and Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, now.

Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, our present Pro-Chancellor, follows the footsteps of his grandfather and father, and shows great interest and care, and works assiduously for the welfare, growth, and glory of the University, and to him we are deeply indebted.

The Annamalai University is privileged to have the honour to publish this book on the occasion of its Diamond Jubilee, in fond memory of its illustrious Founder Pro-Chancellor who wanted to make it what it is today — an institution of higher learning and research, recognised all over the world.

Annamalainagar
4 December 1989

Rm. SETHUNARAYANAN
Vice-Chancellor

Author's Preface

It was only the other day that I completed a biography of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, the Founder of the Annamalai University, which I had been commissioned to write. The biography was expected to be formally released on Founder's Day, usually celebrated on the 30th of September, the date of his birth. His son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, was looking forward to its release but he was struck down by illness. He was expected to recover quickly. However, his illness took a serious turn and he passed away on May 12, 1984.

The obsequies over, the question of memorials to perpetuate Sir Muthiah's memory was raised, that could not be decided in haste. However, those close to him were agreed that his biography should be written and that without delay. I was asked to take on the job, I hesitated and that was because I had only recently written his father's biography and the ink on it was not yet dry. A biography of the son coming close on the heels of the father's, I feared, would be, in a phrase once much current, "much of a muchness". There was bound to be a repetition of phrase and fact, thought and expression, and the resulting flavour would not be very different.

However, it was not long before my hesitations vanished. Research revealed that Muthiah Chettiar's life was one of unceasing and purposeful activity. There was no department of life in which he was not usefully engaged. Education was his first and major love, the most valuable legacy left by his father. He held several important public offices, served in the legislature, was a Captain of Industry, and a Banker who knew all about money and its ways, was an all-round man whose life-long experience was, in Tennyson's phrase, "a laboured mine, undrainable of ore."

Contrary to my earlier reactions, the more I thought of it, the more I liked it. The subject had cast its spell upon me and I yielded to it. This book is the result.

1st January, 1986.

K. Nagarajan

CHAPTER ONE

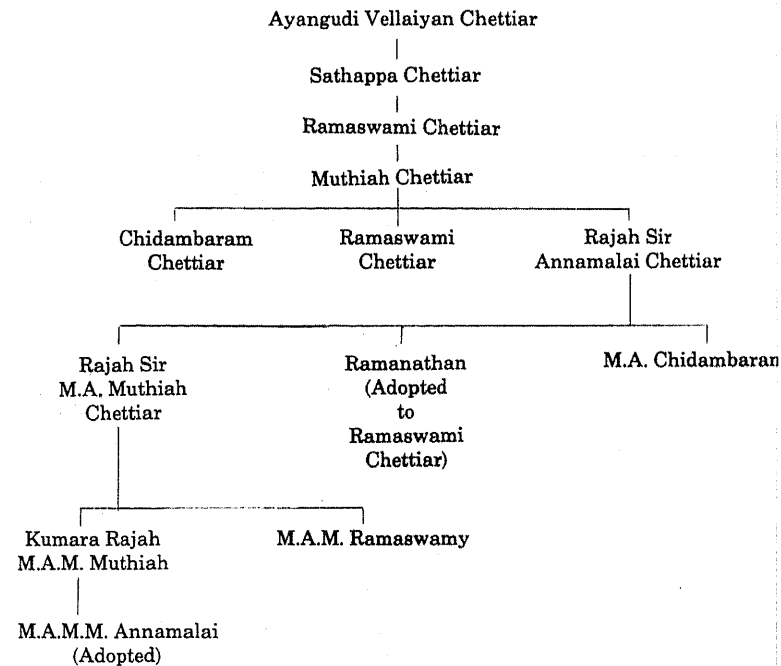
Introductory

Muthiah Chettiar, the subject of this Memoir, was one of the fortunate few, who, by their own exertions in pursuit of an ideal, rose to name and fame. He had very little in common with the proverbial 'industrious apprentice' who, born and bred in poverty, left home and hearth, trudged to the nearest city, obtained a minor job, worked early and late and, by hard work came to rank high in civic affairs. Born to great possessions and cradled in luxury, he set a purpose before his eyes and did not falter in its pursuit. From his early youth he was moving in the glittering realms of silver and gold and, yet, never allowed them to go to his head, impair his energies or make him take the easy line. Reasonable comfort he enjoyed and, truth to tell, more than reasonable comfort, and that only made him persevere in the activities on which he had set his heart. His father's example was always before him, a never-failing inspiration. His father was a busy man who never wasted a minute of his time. His was a life of unremitting endeavour in the service of his fellow-men, especially in the field of education. His services were so outstanding that an appreciative Government conferred upon him honours in quick succession. Indeed, his life was mile-stoned with public honours from Rao Bahadur to Knighthood. And, when he capped his benefactions by establishing a University, the Government decided to confer on him a distinction with a distinctively Indian flavour. They raised him to the dignity of a hereditary Rajah and all Madras was pleased.

Muthiah Chettiar, it is true, was blessed with ample means but his real blessing lay in his father. To him his father's word was law. Never once did he slight his word or cross his wishes. His chief ambition was to emulate his father, follow in his footsteps and serve the public to the best of his ability. And to that resolve he adhered unwaveringly. Like his father, he came to regard his wealth as given by God for service to his country

and his fellowmen and he gave generously and without stint to all good causes. The circumstances of his life could not have been happier. An understanding father, a loving mother, a well-run home, an army of servants who went about their work noiselessly, were not gifts to be despised. The chores of the household went like clockwork; no jars, no creaks. Their house at Chettinad was a gracious mansion. Admirably planned and admirably proportioned, doors and windows and ceilings of the best Burma teak, beautifully furnished, it was made for a life of refinement and ease. The womenfolk had rooms and halls for their exclusive use. Sir Annamalai's children — and there were seven of them, three sons and four daughters — were cast in his mould, simple in habits, though lapped in luxury. Sir Annamalai was an understanding father. He left his children to their devices, only keeping a watchful eye lest they should go off the track.

LINEAGE



CHAPTER TWO

Ancestry

Sir Muthiah Chettiar belonged to what used to be referred to as the *Moona Ana* family. *Moona* stood for Sir Annamalai Chettiar's father, Muthiah Chettiar. The family was referred to more expansively as *Savanna Ravanna Mana Moona Ana* (*Savanna* indicating Sathappa Chettiar, *Ravanna Mana* Raman Chettiar, the great grandfather and grandfather respectively of Annamalai Chettiar). The initials changed with every generation, those indicating earlier generations receding into the background, making way for succeeding ones. The family tree printed overleaf begins with V.S.R.M. indicating earlier forebears, V.S. standing for Vellaiyan and Sathappa. For many years, towards the close of the last century, the family was referred to as V.S.R.M. and later as S.R.M.M.A. and, in Sir Annamalai's time, as *Moona Ana*. The Chettiars referred to all the families in their community by their group initials, reeling them off effortlessly. There was no such thing as a family name as in Northern India. Puzzling, indeed, to strangers, but taken in their stride by the Chettiars (who were collectively known as *Nagarathars*). If one gets into the company of the *Nagarathars* and listens to their talk, they will hear the entire Tamil alphabet in brisk circulation, in various permutations and combinations, while referring to different members of the community.

At the turn of the century, the *Moona Ana* family came into the wider life of the Madras Presidency, in the area now referred to as Tamilnadu. Annamalai Chettiar went to Britain in 1910, with his nephew, Muthiah Chettiar, and his friends, the Reverend J.X. Miller and Mrs. Miller of the American Mission. That was a break with custom. There was a more significant breach when he went to Britain in 1935, taking his wife Rani Seethai with him. That was an example which caught on rapidly. It wasn't as if Annamalai Chettiar was the first of the community to go overseas. The Chettiars were a sea-faring people, crossing the seas in the way of their business in Ceylon,

Burma, Malaya and French Indo-China. They went skirting the coast, with food packages from their homes, vending their wares and on reaching port, looked after their firms, which were engaged mainly in money-lending. Undeniably, a people who had adventure in their blood.

That spirit of adventure was again to the fore, when they were forced to seek another homeland. That was on account of an unprecedented cataclysm of nature which compelled the Chettiars to collect such of their belongings as they hurriedly could and flee for their lives. They had been living in peace and prosperity at *Kaviripoompattinam* — *Puhar*, for short — the capital of the *Cholas*, a flourishing emporium of trade, to which came the merchandise of Greece and Rome, Ceylon, Burma and the Far East. It stood on the East coast — the Coromandel coast about forty kilometres from Mayuram (now Mayiladuturai) near where the Cauveri joins the sea. One night, when the whole city was locked in sleep, the waves of the Bay of Bengal rose, rose mountains-high, overflowed the city of *Kaviripoompattinam* and wrought one of the completest destructions known to history. Except for a tiny shrine at *Chayavanam*, nothing was left of the city.

The Chettiars, with all their families, trekked south, looking for a habitable locality. Providence guided them to the deep south, beyond the Cauveri, where the current *Pandya* Ruler invited them to settle in his domains. He gave them ninety-six villages, or *oors*, south of the *Vellar*, and they came to be known as ninety-six *oorars*. They settled there, divided into nine clans, known by the names of the temples to which they owed allegiance. It must have been an auspicious hour when they settled there. It was sacred ground trodden by the Gods. They flourished there trading in the wares of the homeland, travelling all over the Tamil country on foot.

The Chettinad country has been interestingly described by Charles Cotton, who knew it intimately. He says:

A flat monotonous, unattractive landscape, with no suggestion of the tropics except in an occasional palmyrah *tope*, an unfertile country where a good season is so infrequent that very few of the peasants are ever out of debt, this is the sunbaked homeland of a most affluent and enterprising business community, clannish but

not caste-ridden, pious but not bigoted, the ramifications of whose financial activities extend not only over India and Ceylon but also to Malaya and the Far East. And, in this incongruous environment rise, in conscious emulation, in a number of scattered and otherwise undistinguished villages, the rococo palaces which these Chettiars delight to erect, fitted with all the domestic conveniences which Western ingenuity has been able to suggest, but decorated with frescoes and plaster-work according to the most exuberant Dravidian formula.¹

The author's comment on the above description, quoted in his *Life of Sir Annamalai Chettiar*, with remarks of his own, is extracted below:

110 "Flat, yes, monotonous, no. The country is studded with groves of coconut-palm, whose fruit yields a cool and refreshing drink, ponds, broad and often studded with stone-stairs leading down to the water, flower-gardens and, above all, temples, big and small, apart from wayside shrines all along the line."

"Splendour it may lack, but it has its compensations. It is when the north-east monsoon has spent itself, and what one may call, the South Indian spring sets in, that the country puts on its gayest raiment. The sky is a rainless blue, the groves of banyan, the tall, tufted palmyra-palms from which the birds of the peninsula, the *kuyil* and the *myna*, the copper-smith bird and the blue-jay, dart and swoop, give the scene its characteristic mood. The landscape takes on colour and beauty at dawn and, again, at evening when the sun goes down in the west in a blaze of yellow and gold, reflected in the east. And at night, when the stars mass themselves overhead and march in silent procession, the tall, towering spires of the temples which stud the land, reflected in the sacred ponds, give to the landscape a fairy-land effect — an effect heightened — or is it spoiled — by the iridescence of the neon-lamps all along the line. The blare of loud-speakers and the hoot and screech of speeding motor-lorries, the wayfarer takes in his stride. He cannot help it, not that he minds it, not in the least, not he! When the temple bells peal, summoning the devout to evening worship, sound and colour and the freshening breeze of eve waft one to a serener air, a diviner ether, all assisting in Nature's High Mass."

1. C.W.E. Cotton was a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service, knew India and Burma well. Madras he knew like the palm of his hand. He was Agent to the Governor-General for the Madras State, and, in that capacity, had a good deal to do with the Pudukkottai State where the Chettiars had settled in a score or so of villages.

CHAPTER THREE

Birth - Early Years

Muthiah Chettiar was born in his maternal grandfather's house at Pallathur, a village about two miles from Kanadukathan, the home-town of the S.R.M.M.A. family. That was in accordance with the custom of the community, as, indeed, of all Hindus. The expectant mother, not yet out of her teens, was safe to get all the care and attention she needed at her mother's hands which could not always be expected in her husband's house. At all events, she would feel less restricted and more at home. Pre-natal care would be the anxious concern of the mother and the entire house-hold. Pre-natal care did not mean merely health care. It involved placating the family Gods in accordance with custom and the prescribed ceremonies. All the same, the two families were in close touch, with daily visits from the husband's family and relations.

Muthiah was born on August 5, 1905, in an auspicious hour, as the family astrologers confidently asserted. The planets, they averred, were all favourably positioned. There was great rejoicing. Muthiah was not only a son, he was the eldest son, who was expected to perpetuate the family. When he was four months old, he was taken to his father's house, with all ceremony and invocations of divine favour. "Heaven," it has been said, "lies at one's feet in infancy." It certainly did in Muthiah Chettiar's case. He grew up to be a lusty lad. The odds were certainly in his favour. Not that it was all smooth-sailing. Occasionally adverse winds blew, however, that was only for brief spells. The Sun soon shone again.

Muthiah's was a happy childhood. He was constantly petted and cajoled as though he was a wonder-child. The odds were that, with so much petting and pampering, he would be spoiled for life. However, mercifully, he wasn't and he grew to be a likeable boy, amenable to discipline.

When he was four years old he was sent to school, the village school, at Chettinad - Kanadukathan, as it used to be called. The astrologer was again to the fore. He selected an auspicious hour and Muthiah, in silks, and gleaming with ornaments of gold and diamonds, emerald and sapphire, was conducted to school in procession, with friends and relations and retainers following, while the village piper played lustily on his instrument, accompanied by drone and drum.

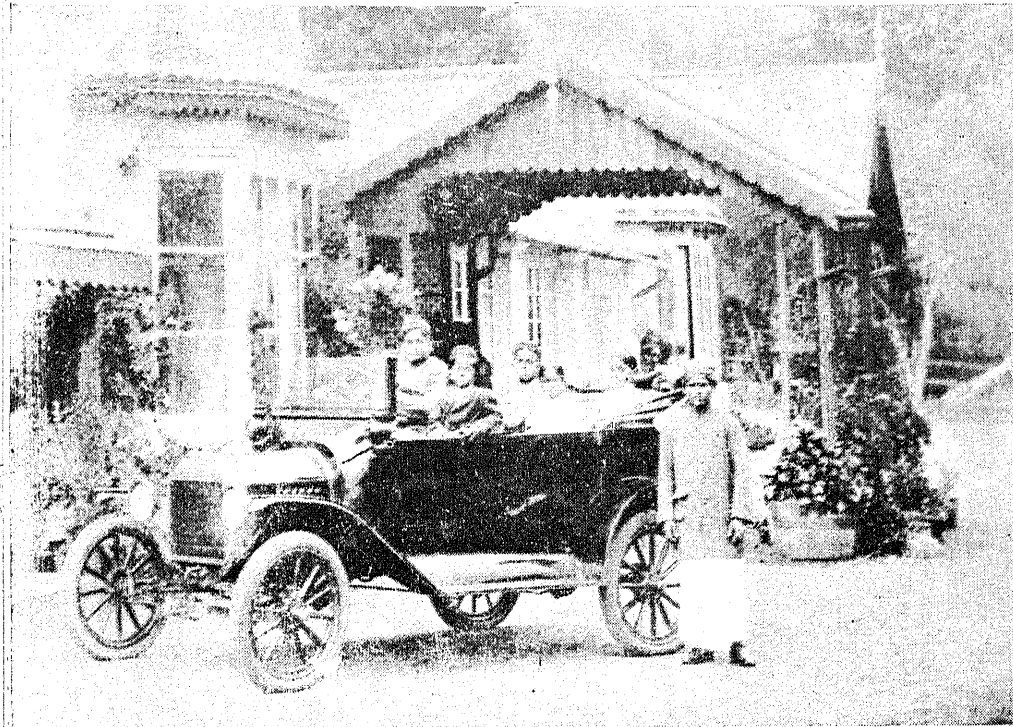
He did well at school. What he did not like was to be awakened from bed, when it was time for school. And when he was persuaded to get up, he was washed and given a light breakfast and carried to school on the shoulders of a servant. It would have been *infra dig* for a boy of a wealthy family to walk to school, like a boy not half so well-born. And when he was persuaded to walk, he went, like Shakespeare's school-boy, "creeping like snail, unwillingly to school." Once at school, he was all that his masters could have desired. He is said to have enjoyed tracing the letters of the Tamil and English alphabet on fine sand spread on the floor. He had a good memory and he learned by heart the multiplication table, the *kilvai lakkam*, *nalvazhi* and other old-time disciplines for ready reckoning, so valuable to those who owned banking houses or were employed in them. He memorised the homely and smooth-running verses of *Auvaiyyar*, the favourite poetess of the Tamils, a mine of wise sayings and precepts.

After five years in the village school he left. He was admitted to St. Joseph's School in Tiruchirappalli for a while but was soon taken to Madras, where he joined the Presentation Convent at Vepery. He had an able teacher of English in Miss Lazarus, with whom he kept in touch all his life. In Madras he stayed with his father at *Natana Vilas* in Vepery, a bungalow he had taken on rent. Annamalai Chettiar divided his time between Madras and Kanadukathan. It was then that Muthiah's acquaintance with the City began and Madras came to be his favourite residence in the years ahead.

Muthiah was fortunate in his teachers and he, in turn, was all that a teacher could desire. He liked his teachers and his teachers liked him. Madhava Rao — the *Rayar* as he was familiarly called — coached him in Tamil and in Arithmetic.

His father was keen that Muthiah should start learning English quite early, the same as his father had done before him. Herealised that a sound knowledge of English was essential, as that was the only passport to success at school and at college and in public life. Muthiah was good at English, picked up a good deal of it even while at school. That was mainly due to the Millers - the Rev. J.X. Miller and his wife, of the American Mission. They had accompanied Annamalai Chettiar when he visited England and the Continent in 1910 and, after their return, continued on their terms of close friendship with Annamalai Chettiar. Very early they took a deep interest in Muthiah and helped to increase his knowledge of spoken English. They used to engage him in conversation and that enabled him to speak it with ease. They made him memorise Baby songs and simple poems like, for example, "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep," "Jack Horner Sat in a Corner," "Mary had a little lamb" and other poems for children.

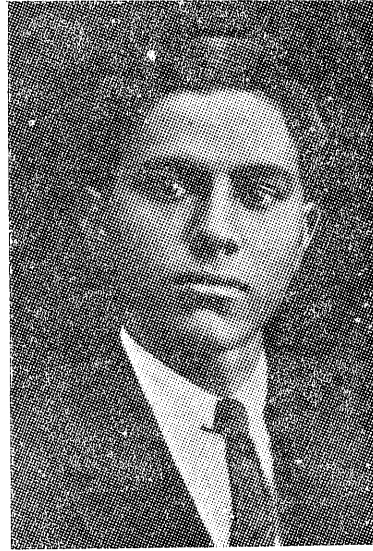
In that way, he came to get the feel of English in his bones. That was something for which father and son were grateful all their lives.



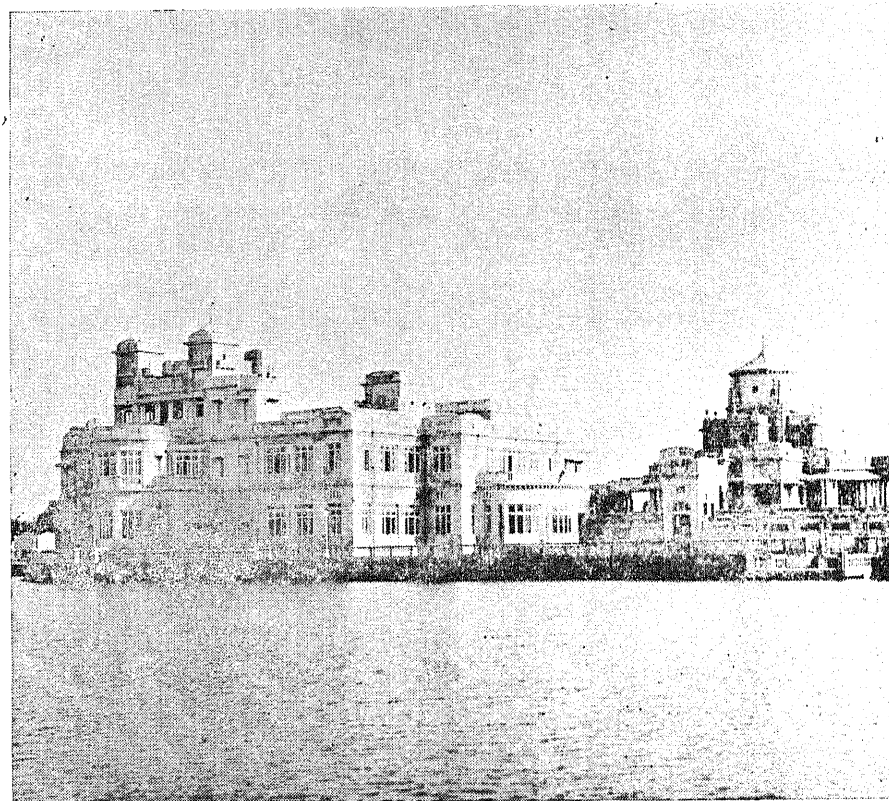
Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar as a boy with sisters Meenakshi and Unnamalai and brother Ramanathan at Ootacamund.



Student of the Intermediate
Class, 1920-22

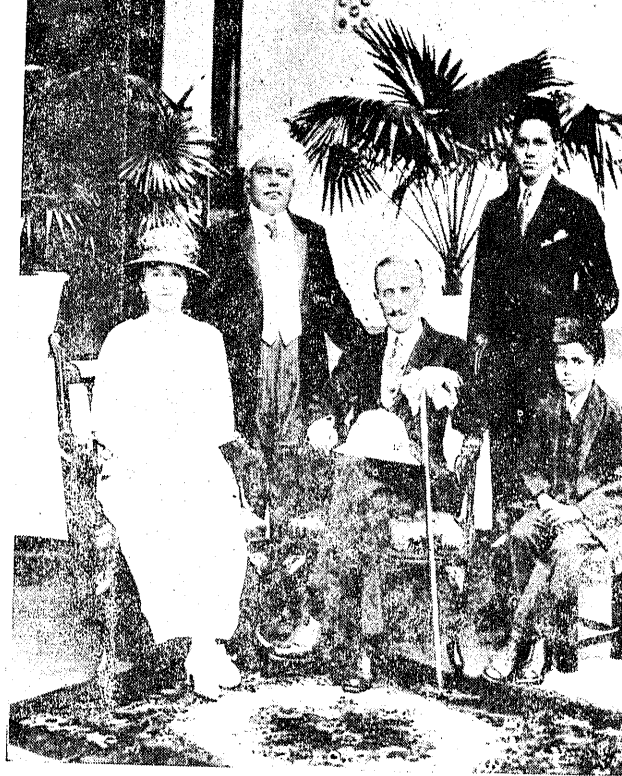


Rajah as a Student, B.A. class, Presidency College, Madras, 192



Chettinad House at Rajah, Annamalaiapuram, Madras, on the A

With Their Excellencies
Lord and Lady Willing-
don at the palace,
Chettinad, Rajah Sir
Annamalai Chettiar,
Kumararajah Muthiah
Chettiar and Ramana-
than Chettiar, 1922.



Rajah Sir Annamalai Chet-
tiar and young Muthiah
with H.E. Lord Pentland,
Governor of Madras, at
the palace, Chettinad, 1916



Rajah with his m
Rani Lady Seetha
1922.

Rajah Sir Annamalai
Chettiar, Kumararajah
Muthiah Chettiar and
brothers R.Ramanathan
Chettiar and M.A.
Chidambaram Chettiar
with H.E.Lord Goschen
at Chettinad Palace,
Chettinad.



CHAPTER FOUR

High School and College Days

Muthiah then joined the Ewart School on Lauder's Gate Road. His father engaged for him a good private tutor, who gave him lessons in English. That was Miss Lazarus, mentioned earlier. She took the cue from the Millers and made him memorise many poems meant for children. A friend of Annamalai Chettiar's who could not engage a private tutor but was himself a sound scholar in English, had made his little son memorize the minor poems of Tennyson and Wordsworth. Annamalai Chettiar knew about it. Annamalai Chettiar followed his example and requested Miss Lazarus to do likewise. She did, and Muthiah's response was gratifying.

Muthiah liked listening to good speakers. He had a weakness for the platform and, in the days ahead, frequently appeared on it himself. The poet, Rabindranath Tagore, visited Madras, and all Madras was eager to listen to him. Muthiah fell under the poet's spell and the spell held him all his life. Muthiah invited him to visit his school, which the poet did. There is a photograph with the poet in the front row, Muthiah sitting next to him.

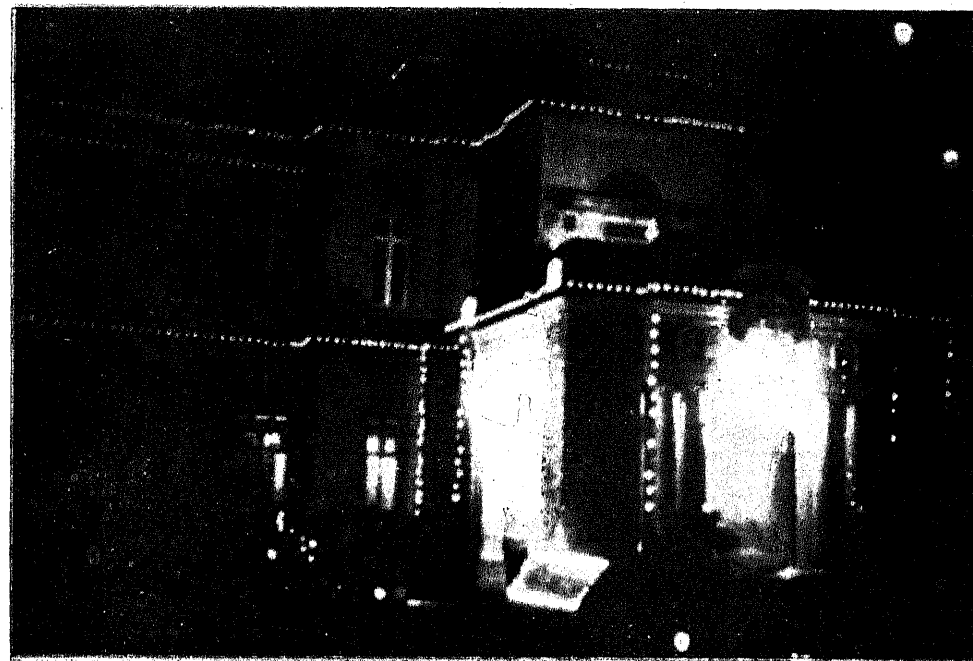
Annamalai Chettiar kept an eye on his son's progress in his studies. T.G. Ramaswami Aiyengar, who later became an Advocate at Devakkottai, gave him lessons in English. So did Miss Krishna Rao. Last of all came R. Krishnamurthi Aiyar, a Professor of English in Pachaiyappa's College, who rose to be its Principal. He belonged to a category of Professors in Madras, who ranked high among Indian scholars in English like K.B. Ramanathan, K. Swaminathan, Samuel (later Sir Samuel) Runganadhan and the Rt. Hon'ble (as he came to be) V.S. Srinivasa Sastri. In 1922, he joined the Presidency College, Madras, where he came under the eyes of Professor M.A. Candeth (A Cambridge man, Professor of History and Politics) and Dr. John Mathai, Professor of Economics, who later became Finance Minister at the Centre in free India. Both of

other,
Achi.



them influenced Muthiah's thoughts and actions. When Muthiah took his degree in 1924, he was fairly well-grounded in the prescribed subjects.

Muthiah was developing fast. A major influence at that time was the company which frequently collected at *Natana Vilas*, the leaders of Madras society, who called there often and sometimes stayed to tea or lunch or dinner. Annamalai Chettiar had been recognised as a coming man, a man with brains. Young Muthiah came to be a favourite of theirs. His good nature and respect for his elders endeared him to them.



The Chettinad House

CHAPTER FIVE

Marriage

He was still a lad at school when Muthiah was married. Very early it was, almost a child-marriage, not, however, uncommon in those days. The time was at hand when early marriages would come to be viewed with disfavour. Muthiah was only twelve years old and it would not have been seemly to defer the marriage any longer. To have done so would have been for the family to write themselves down as second-rate. The community would not have liked it and would not have hesitated to speak to the parents of the boy concerned and remind them of their duty. However, it never went to that extent. Boys were united in wedlock before they knew what it meant.

And married Muthiah was, when he was hardly twelve — on 2nd February 1917. The bride was Meyyammai, not much younger, daughter of Sir Annamalai Chettiar's sister, Sigappi Achi. That was about the time when Chettiar boys were married. He had no voice in choosing his bride. That was his parents' concern. As for the dowry, which was an elaborate affair of cash, jewels of gold and diamonds, sapphire and emerald, vessels, again of silver and gold, brass and copper porcelainware, bed and bedding, shawls and coverlets, food-stuffs for one year, rice, dhal and all imaginable items down to the smallest detail, there could not have been a happier launch in life.

And one important item, the most important item, was the money present made to Muthiah's mother. Chettiars, canny in their time, cannier than most and highly practical, believed in keeping the bridegroom's mother in good humour - for a mother-in-law could make herself very disagreeable.

Muthiah's bride was a cousin of his, Meyyammai, his paternal aunt's daughter and an early playmate of his, a favoured union. She was greatly excited about the wedding and the attendant gaiety inseparable from a wedding.

On the day fixed for the wedding, the bride and bridegroom appeared, visions of splendour. She was in a velvet silk *sari*, blazing in gold and diamonds. Muthiah was equally glowing in a silk *dhoti* and a cream-coloured shirt, a gold and diamond necklace round his neck, a laced *turban* on his head, his chest a constellation, so to speak, of precious stones.

Love? That question did not arise at all. That was to come later when the parties came to read western novels and, again, when it came to be depicted in Indian fiction and much later, more pronouncedly, on the screen. The young couple were content with mutual affection and mutual esteem. These they had in plenty and they made for happy homes.

Now for the wedding, an auspicious day was fixed and for a month and more the house was a scene of unending bustle, comings and goings, issuing invitations, purchasing provisions and a hundred other details filled the days and half the nights.

The wedding itself was a thing of beauty and innocent gaiety. There was ragging, jokes at the expense of the bride and the bridegroom, group-dancing and singing of old-time ballads.

On the floor, decorated with drawings in ricemeal, a gaily coloured Saigon mat was placed for the bridal couple to squat on. Above hung festoons of flowers, symbols of auspiciousness, also a swing (rosewood) on which was spread a woven mat, for the couple to sit on, while lighted lamps were taken round the swing, the women rocking it and singing old-time songs by way of invoking the blessings of the gods. The women — very near relations — painted the edges of the couple's feet with sandal-paste and saffron powder, which was supposed to make for a happy life. It was, then, the priest's turn. He chanted the time-honoured benedictory texts. The couple went round the fire seven times, while the women sang and the priests chanted. Going round the fire hand in hand was the essence of the ceremony, a plighting of truth before the Fire God. He then tied the *tali* - emblem of the married state — at all events, he was supposed to, the actual tying being done by a relation of advanced years as that was believed to be lucky and to make for a long and happy married life. When that was over, the revelry began. Sweet drinks were handed round, betel and nut and coconuts were distributed and the guests made their presents —



Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, Kt., B.A., D.Litt.,
and Rani Lady Meyyammal Achi

mostly token — and in cash, which were scrupulously noted down. The pipers played, the drummers drummed, the women laughed and joked, time-honoured jokes all. Then lunch, which went on from about ten in the forenoon till about past mid-day and, so far as the poor of the neighbourhood were concerned, till about the evening.

At a Chettiar wedding, one saw the community in full plumage. The men in spotless white, the women in costly silk saris and jewels which included diamond necklaces, ear-pendants and diamond *bulaks* hanging from the nose like what one notices in old pictures of the Moghul queen, the Empress Nur Jehan. The talk was mainly of the details of the dowry. Among the guests were not only friendly Chettiars but also those who were not on the best of terms with the hosts. Old scores were forgotten for the nonce. Actually, old scores were rarely allowed to fester for, at some stage or another, friends intervened, a settlement was reached and perfect amity came to prevail. To the Chettiars litigation was mostly a game, like horse-racing and cricket and tennis and hockey for lovers of sport. There were minor ceremonies, of no particular significance, but were only an excuse for prolonging the gaiety.

A year or two after the wedding, the husband sets up house or, rather, their parents set up one for them. Like the Scots, they believed that "every herring must stand by its own head." The house so set up was usually a portion of the family house, a couple of rooms or so and a verandah, also a servant or two. The parents ruled the roost, put the couple through their paces, till they learnt to run their own establishment.

CHAPTER SIX

Apprenticeship

Sir Muthiah Chettiar's childhood days held no hint of the shrewd man with high ideals that he came to be. There may have been gems of greatness to come but they lay buried deep in the infant.

Muthiah Chettiar was richly endowed by the gods. The good fairies must have mustered in force at his birth, with no bad fairy to neutralise their gifts. He was intelligent, more than ordinarily so, quick of apprehension, good humoured, and gentle. His application to his studies, however, was minimal. Games he did not care for — they had not caught on in his day. Their innings were to begin far later. Cricket and football were played at school, — they were not the rage they have since become, tennis and hockey were played by a few grown-up folk. Those on lower levels used to play street-games in which very few Chettiar boys joined. It was much later that western games came to be played and that with increasing expertness. Muthiah Chettiar played no games, sowed no wild oats, was orderly and well-behaved.*

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- * 1. There was a distant cousin of Sir Muthiah who took keen interest in flying but he died prematurely and a promising career in aeronautics came to a sudden end. A far more widely-known sportsman is Sir Muthiah Chettiar's younger son, M.A.M. Ramaswamy, who is devoted to racing and has scored what may be called a series of hat-tricks with his stud. He is more than a lover of the turf, he loves his horses which after their day is done, remain as pensioners on Ramaswamy's bounty, accommodated in his stables and fed and looked after carefully. To hockey he is equally devoted and, in it he takes an immense deal of interest.
2. Herbert Spencer when he was badly beaten at a game of billiards by a young man who was an expert player, is said to have remarked: "Young man, such ability as yours is graceful but is evidence of mis-spent youth." Annamalai Chettiar would have been in total agreement with Spencer. Muthiah Chettiar would not have been so downright in his opinion though he would have been in partial agreement but his son would have totally disagreed.

Muthiah loved the society of those senior to him in years. His father's house was a sort of *salon*, where the leaders of Madras society frequently met for conversation. Muthiah was present at such meetings, unless he was away at college. He had an engaging boyishness which endeared him to them.

After he took his degree — and that was in 1924 — public affairs came to be of absorbing interest to him. He served his apprenticeship under his father. Sir Annamalai Chettiar had taken over the High School at Chidambaram which his brother, Ramaswami Chettiar, had established. It was his death-bed wish that Annamalai Chettiar should take it over, which Annamalai Chettiar dutifully did. He did not stop with taking it over. He wished to raise it to the status of a College. He addressed the Government of Madras for the required permission. He made a substantial cash endowment of Rs.3.5 lakhs for the purpose and the required permission was given. School and College administration came to be familiar ground to Muthiah as he was in close and daily touch with college affairs. Sir Annamalai noticed his son's interest in the management of the College and wished to turn it to good account. Muthiah became a sort of unofficial Secretary to his father, attended to the correspondence, writing demi-official letters (as they were called) to Secretaries to Government, Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries. He was, in his own words, his father's 'errand boy.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

Burma Visit

Muthiah took his degree in 1924. What was to be the next step? His father wished him to visit Burma and acquire firsthand knowledge of his business concerns there. Muthiah Chettiar went, visited all the branches of the family business from Rangoon to Bhamo (on the Chinese frontier) and acquired a complete grasp of the working of the firms. On looking into his firms he felt that the title-deeds of the properties which the firm had acquired by sale or lease or mortgage should be carefully examined to make sure they were in order. That required knowledge of drafting, the Stamp Law and the Law of Registration. On his return, he mentioned it to his father, who agreed. They were able to secure the services of an able advocate of Pudukkottai, A. Venkatarama Aiyar, who went to Burma, stayed nearly one year and corrected and collected all relevant records, examined them and put them ship-shape, ready references all.

That wasn't just a visit of business. Muthiah Chettiar appears to have profited a good deal by his visit to Burma. And he also appears to have enjoyed himself hugely. He was a seasoned traveller and he loved to be frequently on the move. His favourite mode of locomotion was railway. He invariably reserved one first-class compartment, all to himself and stretched his limbs in it, with three or four servants in attendance. That gave him the relaxation he needed. It wasn't just relaxation. It was relaxation with a lot of work thrown in. He got through accumulated arrears of work, noted what needed to be done and, as soon as he reached his destination, he sat by his telephone and issued instructions to the employees concerned — and they were spread practically over the whole of the Tamil country, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya — as to what should be done. In that way he did ten times the work he would have done at headquarters. In Madras a good deal of his time was taken up in meeting visitors, who came in an unending

stream and in dispensing the hospitality for which his house was famous.

In Burma, he enjoyed himself to the top of his bent. As Rangoon hove in sight, he saw the Shwedagon Pagoda of which he had heard ecstatic accounts. As he went down the Rangoon river in a barge, on leaving the boat, the Shwedagon loomed up, its bell-shaped tower caught "in a noose of light." That was a fascinating sight and he lost no time in visiting it. He ascended the steps, went past the *chinthas*, often wrongly referred to as lions, really more griffin-like than lion-like, with their crested heads held up. He went up the steps to the shrine at the top — Buddha's — and paid his devotions there and at the subsidiary shrines which clustered around and watched the Burmese at worship. He observed the Burmese people at prayer in silence, untrammelled by ritual. There were the *pongyis* (Buddhist monks) all over the place with their begging bowls held up and Muthiah Chettiar made liberal donations to them and obtained their blessings.

Muthiah Chettiar loved making purchases. He visited the shops and stalls which were all over the place, displaying toys, crackers and lacquered tinsel-ware. He purchased large quantities of them, most of which he gave away to his staff who had accompanied him. Right at the top, he made his obeisance to the Buddha in his shrine and the smaller shrines which clustered around. That visit he repeated once or twice subsequently.

What prominently hit his eye was the prevalence of teak. It was used abundantly in buildings. As in the Kerala country in South India, it went even into the habitations of the poor. It was of surprisingly superior quality, easy to polish and long-lasting. In Chettinad House, as in all Chettiar houses, there was a good deal of teak, used on ceilings, doors, windows and furniture — all sorts. Whatever the weather, teak stands up to it.

Muthiah Chettiar came across the Shwedagon almost at every turn. It loomed up when least expected and when it didn't its reflection appeared in the Royal Lakes and wherever there was an expanse of water. And when he left Burma, he told his friend, Mirza Mohamad Rafi, a barrister and one-time Mayor of Rangoon, that he had lost his heart to Burma.

"Who is the fortunate lady?" Asked Rafi.

"The Shwedagon", replied Muthiah Chettiar with a smile.

At this point reference may be made to the most important influence in Muthiah's life, his father. True to the old adage, there were three gods in his pantheon, father, mother and teacher. But it was his father, who came first. Muthiah held him in the profoundest reverence. To him his father's slightest wish was law. He never crossed his father's wishes. And, in fairness, it should be said his father never tried to influence him by injunctions or advice or prohibitions. His influence was more the influence of example than of precept.

Annamalai Chettiar was modern in his outlook on life, among the very first in his community to be so. At the same time, his roots were firmly fixed in the past. His personal habits were in strict conformity with caste rules and communal custom. Take, for example, the matter of dress. It was all in the old mode. Whenever he went to Europe, he wore clothes of European cut and occasionally a hat (as a protection against the cold). He habitually wore a turban (laced) *a la mode* Mysore.

As for food and drink, he had his palate strictly under control. Temperance was his creed. He would not touch what custom and caste rules forbade. The strongest drink bar coffee and tea was watery buttermilk, with a mild flavouring in pepper and ginger. At the same time, he was a generous host and lavish in entertainment. He had guests, both European and Indian, and he frequently entertained them at tea or lunch or dinner. The spread on the table was on a magnificent scale, the choicest food was served. As for drinks, the costliest wines were in brisk circulation; but he would not take a drop himself. Tobacco, in any form was taboo; so was smoking cigars and cigarettes and, rather surprisingly, the harmless after-dinner betel and nut, spiced with quids of scented tobacco, which, after a square meal, gave one a sense of well-being. At the same time, he was tolerant, did not feel superior to those who hadn't the same exclusions. The exclusions mentioned were true of Muthiah

Chettiar cent per cent. Muthiah Chettiar followed his father's example in every respect.*

From what has been said, it should not be thought that Muthiah was a pale shadow of his father. He was anything but that. He thought for himself, and reached his own decisions and acted upon them, unless he felt his father wouldn't approve. But his mental make-up was such that mutual accord was easy.

His dress habits were mostly the same as his father's. His head was usually uncovered, as his father's was not, except at Convocations of the Annamalai University, where tasselled caps were *de rigour*.

Like all adults, Muthiah always wore a length of towel over his chest at home. Whenever he went to see his father, he used to take it off and hitch it round his waist — the same as one did in temples. He would not sit down until his father motioned him to a seat. His food habits were exactly those of his father. Like father, like son.

The perfect accord between father and son was well-known to all their friends, who used to comment, in the words of the *Kural*: "What meritorious acts should the father have done to

* In these respects Sir Annamalai Chettiar was typical of his generation, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, for instance. Sastriar has recorded in a sea-board letter to his daughter, Rukmani, a conversation he had on board with a vivacious English lady, who was struck by his abstemious ways.

"Mr. Sastri, you don't touch meat, do you?"

"No", was the answer.

"Eggs?"

"No."

"Wine?"

"Again, no."

"You don't smoke?"

"I don't."

"You don't play whist?"

"I am afraid, No."

"You don't dance?"

"No."

"You don't flirt?"

"No, no, no."

"Then what on earth do you do?"

get such a son!"¹ "When the son was one who brought credit to the father, what meritorious services should the son have done to merit such a father", the Kural balances it by a couplet on a son's indebtedness to his father.²

Conversation between father and son was free and easy. That was wholly due to Sir Annamalai. He encouraged his son to be perfectly frank and Muthiah fully respected the father's wish. Sir Annamalai Chettiar was an understanding father, more understanding than most. He knew the changes which time works. New ideas had come to prevail and he saw that his son was, to some extent, the child of his times. Muthiah moved with the times, at the same time, he did not forget the past. He went forward but, as G.K. Chesterton said, "with his eyes firmly turned backwards."

At base, both father and son were conservative. Theirs was not a blind conservatism. They had an open mind, saw the changes that were coming over society and recognised their inevitability. Their conservatism was exactly that of the well-known seventeenth century English statesman, Lord Falkland, whose philosophy of action was, in his own words, "When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change." However, he was not a stick-in-the-mud. Social change for the community's good was one of his main concerns.

One instance of the father's consideration for the son may be mentioned. Muthiah was a far later riser. Sir Annamalai was usually up before dawn. He got up, bathed, performed his ablutions and had his early morning coffee at six. Muthiah did not leave the bed till eight. Sir Annamalai Chettiar didn't like it. He asked a close friend of the family to advise Muthiah to get up early from bed. The friend replied, "I am ready to do so. Will it not be better if you speak to him yourself? To that he will listen politely and do as you wish." Sir Annamalai reflected for a minute and then agreed. He went further and added, "Let us leave it alone. He will respect what I say and try to get up early. But he may not succeed and he will be greatly disturbed in

1. மகன் தந்தைக்கு ஆற்றும் நன்றி இவன் தந்தை என்னுற்றான் சொல்.

2. தந்தை மகற்கு ஆற்றும் உதவி அவையத்து முந்தியிருப்பச் செயல்.

mind. Don't bother. Let him have his way. No harm will be done."

When Muthiah returned to Madras, Sir Annamalai told him of an idea that was simmering in his brain. Sri Meenakshi College was doing well, was attracting a large number of students and winning public esteem. Sir Annamalai took counsel with some of his friends — prominent among them being the Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri and S. Satyamurti. He sought the help of many legal luminaries of the day in putting the Annamalai University Bill into shape and among those who made a substantial contribution in this effort was R.V. Krishna Ayyar, Secretary, Madras Legislative Council (He was a close friend of Rajah Sir Annamalai and R.V. Krishna Ayyar was later honoured by the Government with the distinction of Diwan Bahadur). An eminent authority on Parliamentary Law and Practices, R.V. Krishna Ayyar was of great help in the drafting of the Annamalai University Bill and its passage through the Legislature. The task was also made easy by Dr. P. Subbaroyan's skilful handling of the Bill. He was a tower of strength in piloting the Annamalai University Act through the Legislature.

Sir Annamalai wished to make Sri Meenakshi College the nucleus of a unitary, residential and teaching University. R.V. Krishna Ayyar drafted the Annamalai University Bill overnight in consultation with Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar and Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar. The idea took shape and things began to move. Andhra had her own University, Mysore hers, and there was no reason why Tamilnadu should not have one. The Tamils rallied to his support. A Bill for the establishment of a University at Chidambaram, with the object, among others to revive Tamil culture and to propagate scientific knowledge was drafted and placed before the Legislature. Right from 1927 young Muthiah was actively associated with his father in the discussions when the proposal for setting up the Annamalai University took shape. The intricacies involved in drafting the University Bill which was on the anvil provided a valuable training ground for Muthiah. The Bill commanded almost unanimous support.

The Bill was published in the Gazette on 28th August 1928 and introduced in the Madras Legislative Council on 8th September 1928. It was referred to a Select Committee which submitted its report within a month. The report was presented to the Council and the Bill was taken up for consideration. The discussion on its various provisions was marked by a lively appreciation of the generosity of the Founder, Sir Annamalai Chettiar.

It was proof of the wisdom of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, R.V. Krishna Ayyar and others who were associated with the drafting of the Bill that it provided for certain powers to be given to the Founder and the Office of the Founder Pro-Chancellor which was made hereditary.

In recognition of his signal services in the cause of the Annamalai University, R.V. Krishna Ayyar was nominated to the Syndicate of the Annamalai University for two terms 1929-32 and 1932-35, an honour which he shared with S. Satyamurthi.

R.V. Krishna Ayyar addressed the Annual Convocation of the University on 30th October 1934. In his message to the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the University in February 1955, Diwan Bahadur R.V. Krishna Ayyar recalled his intimate association with the proceedings of the Madras Legislature at the time the Annamalai University Act was passed and with the working of the University itself during its first six years as a member of the Syndicate. He added that the Annamalai University was in the best position to encourage higher education and research in the Tamil districts of the Madras Presidency and went so far as to suggest that the Annamalai University should be remodelled partly as a teaching and research University and partly as an affiliating University for the whole of the Tamilnadu on the pattern of the Andhra University and to convert the Madras University into a unitary one confined to the limits of Madras City. He added that such a distribution of the disciplines among the various universities would give each of the universities the necessary numbers, finance and dignity demanded by the prestige of the university and consonant with the expectations formed of it.

It is common knowledge that when R.V. Krishna Ayyar switched over later to the Education and Public Health Department, he was closely associated again with Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar in regard to various measures that were worked out by the Government for the protection of the estates of the Hindu Religious Institutions.

The Governor gave his assent to the Annamalai University Act on 3rd November 1928 and the Annamalai University Act came into force on 1st July 1929.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Public Life I : Social Reform Movement

The nineteen-twenties were an eventful period in the history of India. India was waking from her age-long sleep and taking a growing interest in public affairs. The First World War was over, new ideas were in the air and the widely advertised belief was that a new world was opening - "brave and new," as optimistically described. Mahatma Gandhi was preaching his gospel, attracting thousands of adherents. His aim was to get rid of foreign domination so that Indians could govern the country. Social inequalities were to be abolished and it was time they were. All this set people thinking and movements were set on foot to work for those ends. In 1920, a Liberal League was formed, composed of some of those prominent in Madras society men of light and leading — and they led the way.

Another activity was the Social Reform movement. Highly respected members of society, Sir Pitty Theagaraya Chetty for instance, the Rajah of Panagal, Dr. T.M. Nair, Sir Mohammed Usman, The Rajah of Bobbili and Mr. P.T. Rajan (later Knighted) organised a party known as the Justice Party. A crusade was preached to abolish caste distinctions and to enable Non-Brahmins to take their rightful place in society. A well-known Professor of the Madras Christian College, O. Kandaswami Chetti started a paper, *The Social Reform Advocate* stressing the social imbalance and the need to rectify it. The members of the Justice Party carried on their propaganda vigorously. There were a few, a very few, who were minatory in mode and manner. The rest were moderate in expression and persuasive in their propaganda. That was all to the good. The party succeeded all along the line.

Muthiah Chettiar joined the Justice Party and was one of its leaders. He was reasonable in his approach, his statement of the case was fair and he made up, by his urbanity, for the envenomed shafts of some members of his party. When the Rajah of Bobbili, the leader of the Justice Party, formed a

Government in Madras, Muthiah Chettiar was made a Minister and given the portfolio of Education and Health. In his capacity as Education Minister, he was Pro-Chancellor of the University of Madras, where his experience of the administration of Sri Meenakshi College, Chidambaram and the Annamalai University came in useful. By a happy coincidence, he was Pro-Chancellor of the Madras University while his father, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, was the Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University.

Public Life II: Banking

Muthiah Chettiar was, as will be readily conceded, an authority on Banking. That was the air he breathed from his boyhood. Belonging as he did to a family — like most of his community engaged in money-lending — he was naturally interested in making money, and making more and more of it. The earliest conversations he heard and later listened to, were all about Banking firms, loans, secured and unsecured, in India and abroad. The family's agents discussed matters with Rajah Annamalai Chettiar and his sons and often detailed the current happenings to the ladies of the household, not that they were expected to advise but they were all in an idiom with which they were familiar and they naturally took an intelligent interest in the family's business concerns. They had money-lending business in India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia and French Indo-China. These business were conducted with fairness and integrity. After the First World War, Muthiah Chettiar's father, Sir Annamalai Chettiar converted his money-lending concerns into Banks and Companies and conducted them on modern lines. Muthiah Chettiar was initiated in Banking Law and procedure from the time he left college. As already stated, he visited Burma and travelled all over the country from Rangoon to Bhamo, on the northern frontier and obtained first-hand knowledge about the money market in Burma. This knowledge went up by leaps and bounds in the years which followed.

His business training, Muthiah Chettiar had an opportunity to turn to account, when he was appointed to the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. H.M. Hood of the Indian Civil Service and it was constituted not

a day too soon. Banks on the Western model were becoming popular and there was a demand for more of them.

Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar was one of the pioneers who took steps to provide joint-stock banks and, in collaboration with stalwarts like his own brother, Ramaswami Chettiar, Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar (a member of the Governor's Executive Council) and Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, established the Indian Bank whose Golden Jubilee was celebrated in 1958, with general rejoicing. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's brother, Ramaswami Chettiar was one of its founder-Directors and a little later, Sir Annamalai Chettiar himself got on to the Directorate.

The Imperial Bank of India on its incorporation in 1920, claimed his services and for many years, he was one of its Governors. Muthiah Chettiar was one of the Directors of the Indian Bank between 1928 and 1932. He then went on to the Board of the Imperial Bank of India in 1932. During his tenure as Director of the Imperial Bank of India in the years 1932-35, his endeavour was to expand the Banking facilities for the benefit of the common man while safe-guarding the interests of the depositors. Later he was its President till 1956, when it was converted into the State Bank of India.

The family's connection with Madras Banking continued without interruption. Never did the House of Chettinad go unrepresented on the governing Board of the Imperial Bank, as either Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar or his son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar had a seat on it.

This connection of the family with the world of Banking has been fruitful. The Indian Bank, with which its connection has been closest, has been functioning without a hitch. It had an all-round expansion, and the Indian Bank spread out to South-East Asia also. Ever since its founding in 1908, on the initiative, among others, of the Chettinad family, it has risen steadily in popularity. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar became Director of the Indian Bank again in 1956 and later became its Chairman and served the Indian Bank in that capacity until it was nationalized in 1969. The Bank has sailed on calm seas and when in 1962, it had to face what appeared to be a storm, it weathered it with complete unconcern.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar's wealth and reputation and benefactions were a grit in the eye to some people. They managed to engineer a Bank crash. There was run on the Bank. All Madras was stunned. It was believed by some that it was the end of the world - and of Sir Muthiah Chettiar! That was all they knew. Sir Muthiah Chettiar saw to it that the run on the Bank was met, as though the confidence was restored and within seventy-two hours the Bank recovered its prestige and picked up its work in full swing. There could be no more convincing proof of the meticulous care with which its affairs were run. Actually the eagerness 'crash' proved a blessing. Sir Muthiah Chettiar was not an easy man to try a fall with. Those who tried it usually went crashing down. The saving of the Indian Bank was a triumph of Muthiah Chettiar's personality.

Muthiah Chettiar had thus unrivalled opportunities of getting familiar with modern banking practice and those opportunities he used to good purpose after leaving college. His qualifications to sit on the Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee were undeniable and on that Body, whose terms of reference included an enquiry into the state of Banks in the Madras Presidency and the steps to be taken to enhance their usefulness, Muthiah Chettiar rendered such good service that his services on the Committee were acknowledged publicly.

In passing, it may be pointed out that in 1931, Muthiah Chettiar was appointed to the Provincial Franchise Committee and his membership of the Committee gave him an insight into the intricacies of Franchise distribution.

CHAPTER NINE

Pachaiyappa's Charities

Muthiah Chettiar made his debut in the public life of Madras in 1928 when he became a Trustee of what was known as Pachaiyappa's Charities. There were other Trustees and he came in, like the rest, by co-option. And, in the capacity of Trustee, he continued to serve till 1963, continuously for thirty-five years.

That was indeed a hint of what the future held. In his life he laboured in many fields but the field which was nearest to his heart was education and that held him all his life which exceeded the Biblical span of three score and ten.

Muthiah Chettiar's close association with his father in running the Sri Meenakshi College at Chidambaram, which was on the point of burgeoning into a University, was noticed by some men prominent in the public life of Madras. It struck some of them that here was a man who could usefully be pressed into service in the administration of what was known as Pachaiyappa's Trust.

Pachaiyappa Mudaliar was born in 1754 at Periyapalayam, 15 miles to the north west of Madras and passed away at Tiruvaiyaru on 31st March 1794. In the course of a short, active career, he built up a sizeable fortune. Pious, and large-hearted and ready to help in good and great causes, Pachaiyappa Mudaliar was considerably interested in charities. Education was nearest to his heart and to religious charities, the promotion of Sanskrit and educational foundations, he made substantial endowments in his Will and Testament.

From the Pachaiyappa's College Centenary Commemoration Book of 1942 and from Mr. Justice W.S. Krishnaswami Nayudu's *Memoirs*, we have some glimpses of the working of Pachaiyappa's Charities and Muthiah Chettiar's part in it. Pachaiyappa Mudaliar executed his Will on March 17, 1794, a

few days before he passed away. However it did not see the light of day for nearly 28 years until Sir Herbert Compton, the then Advocate-General stepped in in 1822, with a determination to implement the Will which was stalled by some domestic feuds. The money Pachaiyappa had left behind was intact. No misuse of the funds. Sir Herbert Compton felt that the money left behind by Pachaiyappa and locked up in domestic quarrels should be pulled out and put to proper use in accordance with Pachaiyappa's known wishes. Sir Herbert Compton put an application to the Supreme Court in August 1822 to formulate a scheme for the administration of the trust indicating the lines on which the scheme for a Trust to administer the charities may be drawn up. His time was up and George Norton succeeded him as Advocate General - a livewire who was a warm champion of the cause of imparting western education to Indian youth. He went ahead with the formulation of a scheme; Trustees were appointed, rules for the administration of the Trust were framed, and the Trust was launched for the administration of the various charities under the general supervision of the Board of Revenue. George Norton, while taking upon himself the implementation of the Will and the utilisation of the money Pachaiyappa had set apart for religious education, decided on the utilisation of the money Pachaiyappa had left behind for secular education also. Out of the estate of Rs.7.25 lakhs left behind by Pachaiyappa for charities — religious and educational — Rs.3.50 lakhs was reserved for religious charities and the remaining amount was utilised for the spread of English education - the High Schools at Madras, Kanchipuram and Chidambaram.

Trustees were appointed by the Supreme Court in 1840 through the indefatigable efforts of George Norton who was President of the Madras Board of Education and was appointed later by Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Madras, in 1850, as the President of the Governing Body of the Madras University.

In January 1842 was established, under the modest name of "Pachaiyappa Preparatory School" (which was spelt "Patcheappan's Central Institution"), a school under the Charities. It was located in a rented building in Pophams Broadway - for the purpose of offering educational facilities for

the poorer classes of Hindu community in the elementary branches of English literature and Science with instructions in Telugu and Tamil.

To the shrine and its presiding deity Nataraja, the dancing God, at Chidambaram, Pachaiyappa was particularly devoted and liberal provision was made in his charities, to the Sabanayakar Temple at Chidambaram. His devotion to Nataraja is attested by a stone engraving of him on the outer wall of the shrine at the eastern entrance right under the Gopuram.

George Norton worked on the scheme to build up a structure for the institution in China Bazaar Road, George Town. Modelled on the Temple of Thesus in Athens, with its up-standing Corinthian columns and his name Pachaiyappan (பச்சையப்பன்) plastered in bold Tamil characters above them, the structure catches the eye even to-day. George Norton declared it open in 1850 when the Preparatory School shifted to its own premises. Content for 42 years to be a school, it was soon raised by the Trustees to the status of a College. In 1880, it acquired the status of a Second Grade College affiliated to the University of Madras and in 1889 it became a First Grade College. Honours courses in History and Philosophy were added in 1924.

Pachaiyappa Charities were fortunate in securing the services of many eminent citizens of Madras active in public life and devoted to the cause of education.

7 Muthiah Chettiar was elected as Trustee in 1928 and he continued in that capacity till 1963— an unbroken period of 35 years. Trustees came and went; but Muthiah Chettiar went on, seemingly forever. He became President of the Pachaiyappa Trust Board for 1941-42, the Centenary year of the Charities (1842-1942). His experience of college administration, his standing in the public life of Madras, his popularity and his practical sense made him a valuable asset. The other Trustees, the college staff and others interested in the college met him frequently and important decisions were taken and put into effect without loss of time. A couple of hours or three, Muthiah Chettiar devoted everyday to the affairs of the College. There

were heaps of things to be looked into in College administration and addition of facilities.

As early as 1889, it became obvious that the site of the Pachaiyappa's College in the crowded Esplanade was no longer suitable to the growing needs of the college. Successive Principals referred repeatedly to the uncongenial surroundings, the dust and noise and the "noxious perfumery which made it not a little unpleasant to carry on the daily task."

It was in these circumstances that the Board of Trustees conceived the idea in 1913 of building a Residential college and as a first step, a hostel to accommodate over 200 students in the spacious grounds acquired at Chetput. The hostel building for which the foundation stone was laid on April 1, 1914 by Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, was partially completed by 1918 when the First World War interrupted the progress of the work. While the Hostel building was under construction, the Hostel was removed from Georgetown to Doveton House, Nungambakkam. Mrs. Besant and Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar rented the house at their cost to accommodate 92 students. In 1915, the Students' Hostel was transferred to Dare's Garden, Chetput, adjoining the Hostel site. The construction of the Hostel was completed in 1921. The University Commission urged strongly in 1928 the need to remove the congestion and augment the facilities for the college and the hostel.

The Residential College scheme at Chetput took definite shape in 1935 when the Board of Trustees took up this matter in all seriousness and the scheme was sanctioned by the Government of Madras in 1938. On 12th August, 1940, Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras declared open the Residential College building at Chetput. Welcoming the Governor on this historic occasion, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar mentioned that detailed proposals were sent to the Government in 1935 for their approval of the project and for a grant of at least one half of the net cost of the buildings.

The Director of Public Instruction and the Finance Department extended support to the scheme (December 1936).

The Board of Trustees were indeed fortunate that at this stage, one of their colleagues, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar

of Chettinad, was a member of the Ministry and thanks to his powerful advocacy with his colleagues on the Government and the great personal interest he took in the several stages of the scheme, the administrative approval of the Government was finally obtained. We deeply appreciate the invaluable services rendered by the Kumara Rajah then and since and thank him sincerely for all that he has done in this direction.

Before, however, the sanction of the legislature could be obtained, the Government had changed and (under the new Constitution), the Board of Trustees had once more to seek the support and approval of the proposal from the newly constituted Government and Legislature. A deputation of the Board waited on the then Premier, Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, in July 1937, who, after subjecting the deputationists to a searching examination, promised to consider the whole question further. In the meanwhile, marked changes had been introduced which led to such financial stringency in the Departments of Government that the Board of Trustees were greatly perturbed at the possibility of the scheme being deferred which meant, in view of the imminent possibilities of a European conflagration, the postponement *sine die* of their cherished project. It was no small pleasure and relief when the Board of Trustees received the news that on May 10, 1938, the Government had approved of the Scheme for the construction of the Residential College, sanctioning a grant of one half of the actual cost of Rs.3.47 lakhs, whichever was less, towards the construction of the Residential College.

For this gesture of the Rajaji Government, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar had already conveyed his appreciation and gratitude to the Hon. Premier on the floor of the Legislature in the course of the Budget Debate on 4th March 1938.

Sir Arthur Hope, the Governor, while declaring open the Residential College at Chetput associated himself with "your well-deserved acknowledgement of your debt of gratitude to all those, whether official or non-official, who have, in one way or another, assisted towards the results that we see here to-day. I am sure their efforts will not be forgotten."

It fell to Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar's lot to propose the Vote of Thanks to the Governor. He said:

The ceremony marked the successful completion of a scheme of great value in the sphere of higher education in the Province. The Board of Trustees could not forget nor be too grateful for the work of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar whose labours in the last two years were mainly responsible for the coming into being of the buildings. Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar was greatly interested in University Education and this, his latest work, would always be remembered with gratitude by all connected with the institution.

Two years later - in 1942, Pachaiyappa's celebrated the Centenary - and Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar was the President of the Board of Trustees for the year 1941-42.

Muthiah Chettiar's services to the Pachaiyappa Trust were always handsomely acknowledged. Mr. Chengalvaraya Chetti, a Trustee, quoting from *Ecclesiastics*, observed, "Let us praise famous men." That duty was remembered on every occasion and Muthiah Chettiar's services were generously acknowledged. On one occasion, when detailed plans and estimates were prepared to be sent up for official sanction, the part which he played was referred to:

Thanks mainly to the keen interest evinced by Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad for a number of years, a member of the Board of Trustees and now, in the Centenary Year (1942), its President, who was in the Ministry and later was Interim Minister, administrative approval was given to the plans.

Another significant tribute was that of Mr. E.V. Ramaswami who, in his message on the occasion of the Centenary wrote:

Sir P. Theagaraya Chetti and Diwan Bahadur O. Thanikachalam Chetti of a former generation and Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad and Diwan Bahadur Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar of the present generation have been not a little responsible for the growth and prosperity of the college during the 20th century.

Annamalai Chettiar's son Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, whose interest in the progress of education is well-

known, is the President of the Board of Trustees. As Minister of Education in 1936, he blessed the scheme of Residential College on behalf of the Government of Madras.

Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan paid an equally eloquent tribute.

Mr. P. Chengalvaraya Chetti referring to the "Yeomen Services" of those interested in the College said:

Pride of place should be given to the President of the Board of Trustees, Sir Muthiah Chettiar, the great son of a greater father, whose name has become a household word by reason of his numerous benefactions, the most notable of which is the University bearing his name.

A chorus of praise which certainly must have warmed the cockles of Sir Muthiah Chettiar's heart. It did not, however, go to his head.

The years passed and with their passing changes followed. In 1973, the scheme was altered to meet the changing times and the changing needs. There was a move to allow representation to old students of the college who had taken their degrees and the move commanded universal approval. Another salutary change was to put a time-limit to a Trustee's tenure. A two-term limit was imposed. A Trustee who had served on the Board for two consecutive terms was required to stand down, and not to seek re-election - not, however, for all time, but only for two terms, after which he was at liberty to seek re-election. In fact that wasn't so. The retiring Trustees were mostly men resident in Madras, meeting one another frequently and discussing affairs. Muthiah Chettiar, though pressed to do so, did not seek re-election. In his place, his first son, M.A.M. Muthiah (Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah) was a Trustee in the years 1966 to 1970 and later, his second son, M.A.M. Ramaswamy became a Trustee in 1973 and its President in 1978. And thus the long connection of the Chettinad family with the Pachaiyappa Trust was maintained over the decades. J.A. Yates, Eric Drew, a philosopher who was fully familiar with Western philosophy and equally so with that of the East was the Principal for a few years and the latter was succeeded by Mr. J.C. Rollo, a scholar of English of the finest vintage and a fascinating speaker. It had a succession of distinguished scholars as Principals. Professor M. Ruthnaswami, Prof. P.N. Srinivasachari, Prof.

D.S. Sarma, Prof. V. Tiruvenkataswami, Dr. B.V. Narayana-swami Naidu and later Prof. R. Krishnamurti (with the experience of a lifetime of teaching English) and others of the same calibre. (Professor R. Krishnamurti was also closely associated with Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar in the administration of Annamalai University). They were only carrying on a tradition of scholarship and devotion to the imparting of education to young aspirants to knowledge. The Professors included some of the very eminent educationists of the age, Professor K.B. Ramanathan, and Professor Lakshminarasu. Sir Muthiah Chettiar took the greatest care to appoint professors of proven merit and ability.

As member of the Madras Corporation in 1933, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar had managed, by his timely intervention, to save seven grounds of land belonging to the college from being taken over by the Corporation for laying a Corporation road. As a member of the Legislative Council, he pleaded for many steps for the growth of this college. It was already mentioned that as Minister for Education in 1936-37, Government of Madras, he took active steps to shift the college from the cramped area, the crowded and noisy China Bazaar Road in George Town, to its new habitation in ideal surroundings, in an extensive park, in a well-designed building at Chetput, "far from the madding crowd," and secured the Government's support for the plan of the Residential College building. Along with Dr. T. Sadagopan, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan Bahadur, V. Masilamani Pillai, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar rendered valuable service in constructing the new Residential College. In this endeavour, he was ably assisted by Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar and his brother Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University.

In a reference on the floor of the Madras Legislative Assembly during the general discussion on the Budget on 4th March 1938, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar acknowledged handsomely the unfailing support of the Prime Minister of Madras, Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, to the projected shift of the college from George Town to Chetput. He said:

Though the amount is small, the institution is big enough to be mentioned here. I mean the Pachaiyappa's College. I am glad that

the Hon. Premier has recognised that the programme to rehouse the Pachaiyappa's College in a new and suitable locality can no longer be justly opposed or delayed.

It is also noteworthy that Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar declared open the Pachaiyappa's College at Kanchipuram on 6.6.1953 - yet another feather in his cap.

No account of Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar's labours in the cause of Pachaiyappa's Charities can be complete without a reference to his Commemoration Address on the 106th Anniversary of the Charities.

Commemoration Address - Pachaiyappa's Charities 106th Anniversary

"I regard it a great privilege and pleasure to have been asked a second time now to deliver the Commemoration Address. I am particularly glad that my address on this occasion synchronises with the first visit of the first Indian Governor of this province to our great institution.

The celebrations to-day mark the 106th Anniversary of the foundation of the Pachaiyappa's Charities. Year after year, may be under a statutory obligation, we meet here in a spirit of rejoicing and thankfulness to take stock of past achievements. But words cannot express the true significance of the imperishable work of the illustrious Founder of these charities. We, however, take comfort in the thought that our humble tribute of homage comes straight from the heart. Many men have the means, but few have the heart to give liberally of their possessions for good causes.

Pachaiyappa Mudaliar was born at Conjeevaram in 1754, under circumstances which should not be considered by any means to be affluent. Much of the success of his later career, Pachaiyappa owed to the kind-hearted and benevolent Powney Narayana Pillai who not only educated him, but also settled him as a commercial agent in Madras. By his fortieth year Pachaiyappa had amassed a big fortune. He died in 1794,

dedicating all his wealth to the worship of Siva and Vishnu, to certain religious charities at various temples and places of pilgrimage and for educational purposes in different localities. The benefaction of the Founder surrounds this college with a halo of glory all its own. The starting of this institution was the first example of Indian munificence being directed in South India to the cause of popular education.

The vast estates left behind by Pachaiyappa were not properly administered immediately after his death. Some law suits had to be instituted to recover certain amounts, and also to prevent them from being mis-spent. George Norton who was the Advocate-General in 1841 was responsible for getting passed in that year (47 years after the death of Pachaiyappa), a scheme under which a sum of nearly 4.50 lakhs was set apart for the establishment and maintenance of educational institutions, while a sum of 3.50 lakhs was set apart for religious and charitable purposes.

The growth of the Pachaiyappa's College during the last 106 years is one of the educational achievements in the field of education in modern times. First started as an Elementary School in 1842, it became a High School in 1865, and a second-grade college in 1880. And later a first-grade college with Honours Courses was started in 1924. The need for the construction of new buildings to house the College at Chetput was a long-felt one, and it is a source of gratification to me that during the time I was Minister in charge of Education in 1936 it was possible for me to get my colleagues in the Government to sanction the scheme for these two new blocks of buildings. Thus the dream of nearly a quarter of a century was realised. "The beautiful and spacious new buildings," as I said in my speech as President of the Trust Board during the Centenary Celebrations of this college in 1942, "have made the College enter upon a wider sphere of usefulness, having become a Residential College, free from the inconveniences so long suffered in its cramped and congested habitation at George Town." The College has expanded considerably after coming over here. New courses have been started, the latest among them being the B.Sc. courses, B.Com. courses (Pass and Honours) and Vidwan and B.O.L. courses in Tamil and Telugu. The Pachaiyappa's

educational institutions (the College and the High Schools at Madras, Conjeevaram and Chidambaram) have had a great past and have done great service for the spread of education in our Presidency. I look forward to their having an even greater future.

The foundation-stone for the Hostel buildings was laid in 1914, and the work was completed soon after. During recent years, so great has been the demand for admission into both the College and Hostel that many students have had to be rejected. Thanks to the sanction accorded by the present Government, it has been possible for us to start the work of constructing two annexes to our Hostel.

After the death of Pachaiyappa, many donors followed his great example. We, the members of the Board of Trustees, have now the proud privilege of managing the estates left by a number of them. Special mention must be made in this connection of Chengalvaroya Naicker, Govindu Naicker, Ponnambalam Pillai, Shanmugam Mudaliar, Olati Ranganayake Ammal and Chellammal. All honour to these donors! May their number grow. They have done one of the highest forms of national service.

I take this opportunity of paying my tribute to successive Trustees, and expressing my appreciation of the work of successive principals, professors and teachers for all that they have done to make these institutions really great and useful. On behalf of the Trust Board, let me express our gratitude to the public who have been consistently supporting and encouraging us in the discharge of our duties, by giving us their unstinted co-operation, goodwill and support.

It is now a truism that Higher Education must be encouraged and research furthered. Nobody denies the necessity for the spread of Elementary and Secondary education. At the same time, University education must receive its due share of importance at the hands of the Government and the public alike. It is coming to be increasingly clear that the present grant-in-aid code, which gives only half grant must be revised. The Government must come forward and pay liberal grants for all development schemes in education.

I shall be failing in my duty to these great charities if I do not thank the Old Boys for all that they have done and bring home to them the work that lies ahead. There are tens of thousands of Old Boys of this College and the High Schools spread over all parts of India. Some of them are devoted to their ALMA MATER. They and all of us who are at the moment closely associated with the work of these institutions have a common aim and purpose. Pachaiyappa has blessed them with knowledge. Let them show their loyalty by making handsome endowments.

Speaking at a college like this, devoted to the pursuit of higher education, I may refer to the vexed problem of the medium of instruction in our colleges. I have always held the view that we cannot afford to minimise the importance of English in our present world context. A comprehensive educational policy has to be arrived at, and there should be no tinkering with this or that single aspect of educational problems. The opinion is crystallising that for many years to come, we in South India cannot afford to part with English, or even to relegate English to a position of secondary importance in our University. Speaking for myself, I am an enthusiast of Tamil, and I am proud to admit it. But it appears to me that the court language and the language of Science cannot be changed over-night. Nor can we afford to lose our chance in the international level. It is no doubt a great idea that we should have a common Indian language for the country. Our great Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said that a language cannot be forced upon a people. But before that is achieved, I would strongly urge the Government of Madras that let us do nothing hastily. A wise conservation tempered by judicious liberalism is the proper frame of mind whenever we think of modifying educational policies, ideals and practice.

I have just a few words of advice to give to the young men and women assembled here. You are enjoying the privilege of being students of one of the oldest institutions in South India. I request you all to be loyal to your College and to carry its message wherever you go. May I remind you also that you belong to free India, and that a great change came over the country with the attainment of Independence on the 15th

August 1947. The eyes of the whole world are now upon us. No more can we afford to be carried away by mere slogans. The country is poor to-day because of the death of our beloved Mahatmaji - the Father of the Nation. He emphasized purity of heart and purity of mind. He advised us to work towards the ideal of world citizenship, to avoid evil, to banish fear from our hearts and to eradicate poverty and suffering from our land. Free your mind from everything narrow. Fill your hearts with love to all - even to your enemies. Have as your motto "service to the community." What higher example of service to the community can we have than that of our distinguished President of to-day His Excellency the Maharajah of Bhavnagar, a ruling prince of India whose will was Law in his own State, who has now come over here actuated by a spirit of service and has already become popular among all sections of the people. Her Highness the Maharanee of Bhavnagar, whom we are also happy to welcome in our midst to-day has endeared herself to the people by her interest in social welfare work. I am sure that all of you will now join with me in my earnest prayer that these charities should grow from more and more."

CHAPTER TEN

Mayoralty

Muthiah Chettiar's next port of call was the Corporation of Madras. The Corporation had a long and interesting history. Its beginnings went back to the days of Streynsham Master, who was the Governor of Madras, in the days of the East India Company. Master could not stand the rubbish heaps on roads and road-sides. He wished to make Madras scrupulously clean, Madras then being just Fort St. George and the areas immediately adjoining what was collectively known as White Town. He made a good beginning and his successors followed his example, and made the conservancy and cleanliness of Madras their prime concern. Various Charters were issued from time to time, each Charter designed to be an improvement upon the last. There came to be a Mayor and Aldermen, of whom three were to be Justices of the Peace. In the years which followed, there were further changes. Madras was a Municipality from 1792 to 1919, with a President and Commissioners. In 1933, legislation was undertaken to amend the City Municipal Act and create the office of Mayor.

Rajkumar M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, M.L.C. as the Corporation records and the Legislature records described him, was appointed by the Government of Madras to the Council of the Madras Corporation. That was on February 26, 1929. His appointment as a member of the Corporation Council was renewed by the Government on March 1, 1932. On November 2, 1932 he was elected President of the Council, which office he held till 7.3.1933 when under the Madras City (Amendment) Act III of 1933, the President was designated Mayor of the Corporation of Madras and he was duly installed as Mayor at a formal ceremony by the Council at its meeting on 8.3.1933. The object of this amendment to the City Municipal Act was to designate the President of the Corporation as the Mayor. In the unavoidable absence from the Legislative Council of the Hon'ble Rajah of Bobbili at the time this Bill was

due to be presented to the Legislative Council, the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur S. Kumaraswami Reddiar moved that the Bill be passed into Law. While proposing the resolution he stated:

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Hon'ble House to offer its most sincere congratulations to my Hon'ble friend, Kurmara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad who will be the first Mayor of the City of Madras. It is a dignity which has long been overdue.

He added that it was a source of very great satisfaction to him that on a par with the Corporations of Bombay and Calcutta, the President of the Corporation of Madras would hereafter be designated as the Mayor of Madras and he congratulated Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar, an Hon'ble member of the house, on his becoming the first Mayor of Madras.

Muthiah Chettiar thus became the first Mayor of Madras and held that office till 7.11.1933, a matter of only eight months instead of the statutory twelve as his election to the Presidentship of the Council took place on 2.11.1932. On 7.11.1933, a new Mayor was elected and that was Mr. W.W. Ladden. But we are anticipating.

To go back to Muthiah Chettiar's installation as the first Mayor of Madras on 8.3.1933 at what was a colourful ceremony. Pomp and glitter were part of the show, more than part, almost the whole of it. And truth to tell, Muthiah Chettiar loved it. He had the presence and personality for it.

Those indeed were the days! The wealthy and high-ranking officials were visions of splendour, rivalling Maharajahs, Rajahs and Princes of the blood. They were the fortunate few; those who weren't fortunate were content and happy to look on. The days were not far off when they would enjoy similar delights or other and newer forms of delight.

A Committee was appointed by the Council of the Corporation on 7th March 1933 to consider the Procedure to be observed by the Council at the first meeting at which the President would take his seat as Mayor. It consisted of the following members:-

The President
Mr. V. Chakkarai Chettiar

3. Mr. T.S. Nataraja Pillai
4. Rao Bahadur C. Natesa Mudaliar
5. Mr. R. Madanagopal Naidu
6. Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti
7. Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan
8. Mr. S. Satyamurti
9. Mr. K. Sriramulu Naidu
10. Mr. D.M. Reid

The Committee met the same evening in the President's room, and the members unanimously recommended the following procedure to 'signify the change' when the President was installed as the first Mayor on 8th March 1933:

1. The ex-President, M.R.Ry. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti Garu will occupy the Chair at 5.15 P.M. on 8.3.1933 as soon as the Council meets.
2. The Mayor will be conducted to the Council Chamber from his room by Messrs D.M. Reid, V. Chakkarai Chettiar and Abdul Hameed Khan Sahib. The Manager will precede the procession and announce the entrance of the Mayor. The Councillors will then please rise in their seats.
3. The Chairman will receive the Mayor and install him in the Mayor's seat.
4. The Mayor will bow to both sides of the Council. The Councillors will then resume their seats.

A General Meeting of the Council was held on 8th March 1933 at 5.15 P.M. at which the above mentioned procedure was adopted. When the Mayor took his seat, he was garlanded.

'The New Times' on 9th March 1933 described the proceedings of the installation of the first Mayor as follows:

A procession was formed, the Manager preceding it, and as the Mayor arrived just at the entrance to the Chamber, the Manager announced "the Mayor" as the Secretary to the Legislative Council does when the Hon'ble the President enters the Council Chamber. The Councillors then rose in their seats, and as the Mayor proceeded to his seat, Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetty received him, shook hands, installed him in the seat. The Mayor then bowed to both sides of the House after which the Councillors resumed their seats, and the normal business for the day was taken up. The Mayor was garlanded.

Special robes etc. for the Mayor

The Madras Mail published the following under date 21st January 1933:

The Legislative Council has passed a measure changing the designation of the President of the City Council into "Mayor". The head of the municipal administration was designated "Mayor" in the early years of the British settlement, but after the passing of the Madras City Municipal Act, this designation was dropped. It was a ruling passion with the late Surendranath Banerjee to call the head of the civil administration in Calcutta by the essentially British appellation of Mayor, and when he was Minister for Local Self-Government, the title of the President of the Corporation of Calcutta was changed to Mayor. In England, socially, the Mayor has precedence in all places in the borough... The Mayor is also the Chief Magistrate of the borough, and there is a Mayor's court. The title of "Lord Mayor" has in recent times been conferred by Letters Patent in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, York, Leeds and Sheffield and other cities. "The Lord Mayor" is installed with picturesque ceremonial, and he wears distinctive dress on ceremonial occasions. The Mayor of Madras will be lacking in all these customary dignities, pomp and circumstance, and the mere change of name may not go very far to invest the office with greater importance than it now enjoys.

Thus, the question whether the Mayor of Madras does not require a distinctive dress was raised by *The Madras Mail* almost as soon as the new Act was passed. The Corporation Council had already applied their mind to these matters and after discussion the following decisions were taken by the Council at their meeting on 12th April 1933:

- I. In order to symbolize the high standing, dignity, impartiality, freedom from party influences or associations of the First Citizen of the City, this Council resolves that the Mayor shall have two sets of gowns of the approved pattern: (1) one for ordinary wear during Council meetings; and (2) another for special and ceremonial occasions.

At the time the Mayor attends the Council meetings, he shall wear the ordinary gown made of black silk or other suitable material with gold lace border, one inch broad, and white bands.

The Mayor shall wear on special and ceremonial occasions a gown made of velvet or other suitable material of fuschi shade, with a gold lace border of two inches breadth.

The head-dress of the Mayor shall be a lace turban of the Hindu or Muslim type, or a three-cornered hat of black velvet with gold braid cloth over it or a tarboosh.

The Corporation shall provide a sum not exceeding Rs.300 for every Mayor for the purpose.

The Mayor may wear court dress on functions such as levees, receptions, and any Corporation public functions, etc. and also wear on such occasions, a small badge or insignia of office down below the collar.

- II. The Corporation shall provide the Mayor with a gold Mayoral chain with a badge to be worn by him on special and ceremonial occasions. The crest of the Corporation with the words 'Mayor of Madras' shall be put in the badge, and in the centre of the chain there shall be a block of the Ripon Buildings embossed with the words 'Ripon Buildings, Corporation of Madras.'

The Mayoral chain shall be handed over from Mayor to Mayor, and shall be the property of the Corporation.

- III. A Mace with the crest of the Corporation shall be provided.

The Council resolved that a sum of Rs.2,000 be sanctioned for the gold Mayoral chain and the Mace.

- IV. A Jamadar on Rs.25-1-30 should be entertained to serve as an attendant on the Mayor, and he shall be the Mace-bearer.

- V. The following seating arrangements and alterations in the provision of office-rooms etc. be carried out:

The Mayoral chair shall be placed against the southern side of the Council Chamber facing north. The seating arrangement of the Council shall be suitably altered.

A special chair with a canopy and a table similar to those used by the President, Legislative Council, shall be provided for the Mayor.

VI. That His Excellency the Governor be requested to be pleased to assign a much higher rank in the official order of precedence for the Mayor of Madras within the City of Madras.

The following extract from *The Madras Mail* of 27th August 1933 is bound to be interesting:

The robe worn by the Mayor of Madras is almost a replica of that worn by the Lord Mayor of London, but made to suit the conditions of this country. It is made of a specially soft light-weight silk velvet in a rich shade of fuschia, trimmed with gold lace, instead of ermine, and lined with silk.

The Mayor's full court-dress suits, for both day or evening wear, are made of light-weight black vicuna fully lined with silk, and completely equipped with sword and Mayor's cocked hat. These were made and supplied by Messrs Wrenn, Bennett & Co. Ltd., Madras.

The Mayoral badge and chain which is of 18 carat gold was specially manufactured for the Mayor and Corporation of Madras. It is highly chased throughout, the chain consisting alternately of the Corporation monogram and shield bearing the City Coat of Arms.

The top plaque is beautifully enamelled with a picture of Ripon Buildings, and surrounded by a wreath of thistle.

Muthiah Chettiar retired from the Membership of the Corporation Council on 15 June 1934 in the normal course; and it is a tribute to his services to the Corporation of Madras that he was elected again as a member of the Corporation Council on 26.6.1934. Mr. W.W. Ladden, who had been elected Mayor on 7.11.1933 in succession to Muthiah Chettiar, held that office till 5.11.1934 when Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was elected again as Mayor for a full one year term. Thus Muthiah Chettiar served the Corporation as Mayor for two terms.

Muthiah Chettiar took his new office seriously. He had come to love Madras, and he made it his business to go round the city every now and then, its roads, alleys and by-ways, till he came to know it like the palm of his own hand. He was familiar with every nook and corner of the city. He came to know the inhabitants, rich and poor, who represented to him the need for such alterations and amenities as they desired.

He had already become a Madras man. Madras was his permanent home, though, now and again, he visited his hometown, Kanadukathan, for various family ceremonies. But it was to Madras that he gave his mature heart. Its appeal was irresistible. Its broad roads, wide spaces and colonnaded bungalows (where mostly European residents lived) and, above all, the magnificent Marina and the breaking of the surf on its beaches enslaved him.

He was amused by Kipling's airy description of Madras as a 'withered beldame, in faded silks, dreaming of ancient renown,' which was the opposite of fact. Madras was *not* a 'beldame,' aged or 'withered,' she was young (as you reckon a city's age), having come into existence in the seventeenth century, when Fort St. George was built and the White Town, as it was called, came into existence. "Faded silks," as applied to Madras was just imagination. Silks had not come into fashion. Old chintz sufficed. As for 'ancient renown' she had had no time to win any. Her very name, Madras, was given to her because a fisherman, named Madrasen, had made in the 16th Century, a gift of a *kappam* which he owned. Her other name was Chennappatnam, so named after Chennappa Naick, a ruler of the country around. That was the kind of thing which Kipling could airily say and get away with. He knew his Punjab and the north country but hardly the south.*

Mayoralty meant business and that included sanitation and amenities to the city folk. The slums for instance, *cheris* as they are called, were an eyesore to those who had eyes to see. They meant dirt and disease. The city was not unmindful of it. The civic authorities had been active. The Cochrane Basin settlement was a standing monument of the lively civic conscience of the Corporation. Muthiah Chettiar studied the question in depth and expressed his opinions in a considered speech delivered in 1933 during his Mayoralty:

* He was echoing the very sentiments of Lord Curzon who, replying to an address of the Calcutta Corporation, declared that there was nothing in the world which he would like so much as the Presidentship of the Corporation.

Slums commonly known as *Cheries*, the habitation of the poor and thriftless are an unfortunate development of urban civilization. Concurrent with the growth of our City with its increasing number of mills, factories and firms, there is a migration of workers from the neighbouring villages who are mainly responsible for the slum problem. The slum population in the City are mainly of the depressed classes and fishermen. The inhabitants of the slums are occupying the lowest position economically and socially.

It is the poverty that does not permit them to live in a decent locality and habitable house. In the city, there are about 180 *cheries* and they are mostly on private land and others on Government, Corporation or Trust lands. Roughly about two lakhs of people i.e. one third of the population are living in the slums. Of late the slum problem has become one of the most pressing questions and has been attracting the closest and prompt attention of the Corporation, Government and the public. The problem is not confined to this City nor even to this Presidency but it is common throughout India. I shall like to emphasise morals and pre-mature death owing to so many thousands of our fellowmen being condemned to exist in accommodation that in many cases has been declared to be unfit for human habitation. The loss of public health, the commands of humanity and of true statesmanship all proclaim the same need that slums must be either abolished or improved.

As I said, the abolition of slums is chiefly a problem of providing better houses to the working class people. The Corporation of Madras has been seriously tackling the question of clearing the slums and improving the *cheries*. The Cochrane Basin settlement built by the Corporation is a standing monument to the efforts of the Corporation and public spirited officials. Even as early as 1930, the Corporation of Madras had successfully undertaken housing schemes for the poor. About 783 tenements at a cost of

* By way of contrast, reference may be made to what some distinguished visitors have recorded about Madras. Mrs. Fay, visiting the city in 1780, found "the neighbourhood of Madras everywhere delightful, the whole vicinity being ornamented with gentlemen's houses, built in a showy style of architecture and covered with beautiful *chunam*. As they are almost surrounded by trees... a distance view of Madras with the sea and shipping, so disposed as to form a perfect landscape, it is beyond comparison the most charming picture I ever beheld or could have imagined. Another visitor, Maria Graham noted in 1810,

I do not know anything more striking than the first approach to Madras
On arriving in the roads the town and fort and like a vision or enchantment.

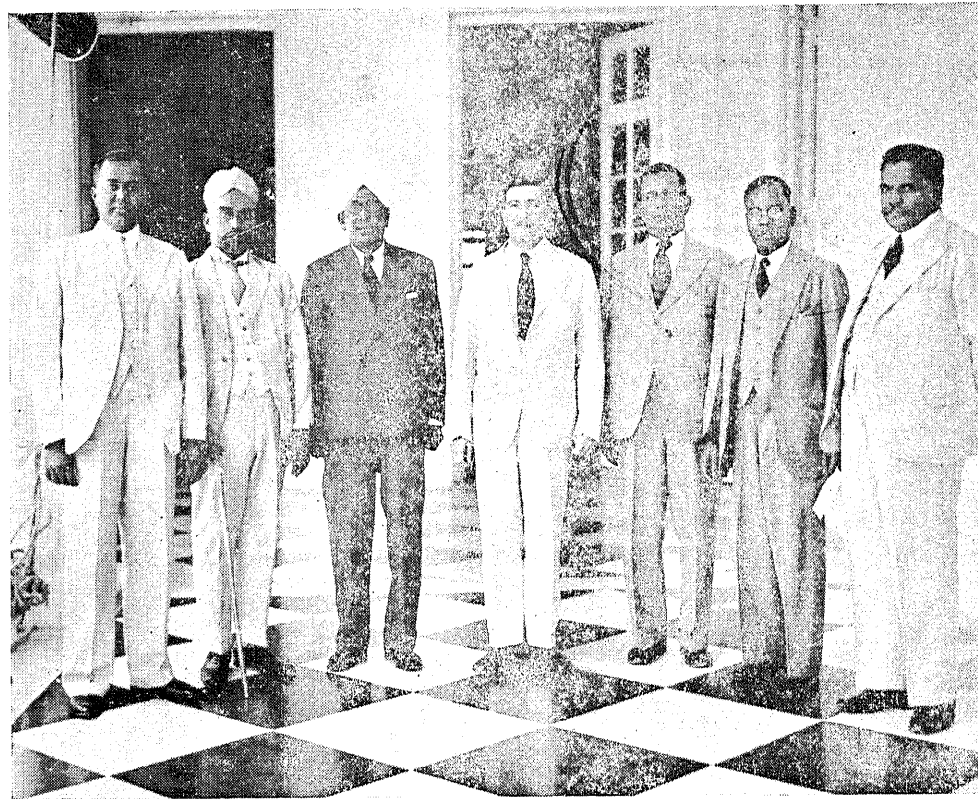
There were other visitors who equally came under the spell of Madras.



Kumararajah as first Mayor of Madras, 1932-33.



Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar (then Hon'ble Kumararajah M.A. Mut



Minister for the second time, 1937. Lord Erskine and the Interim Ministry.

With Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, then Vice-President, at a Function at Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya at Perriyanaickenpalayam.

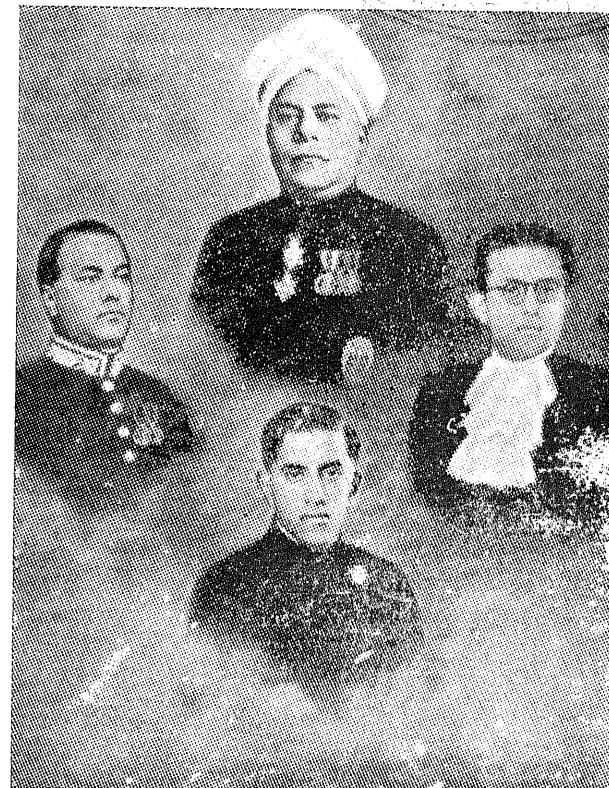
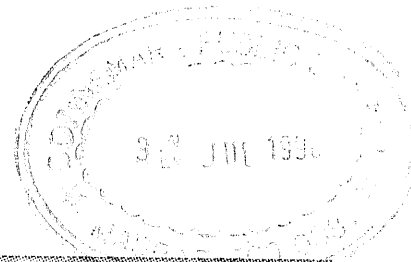




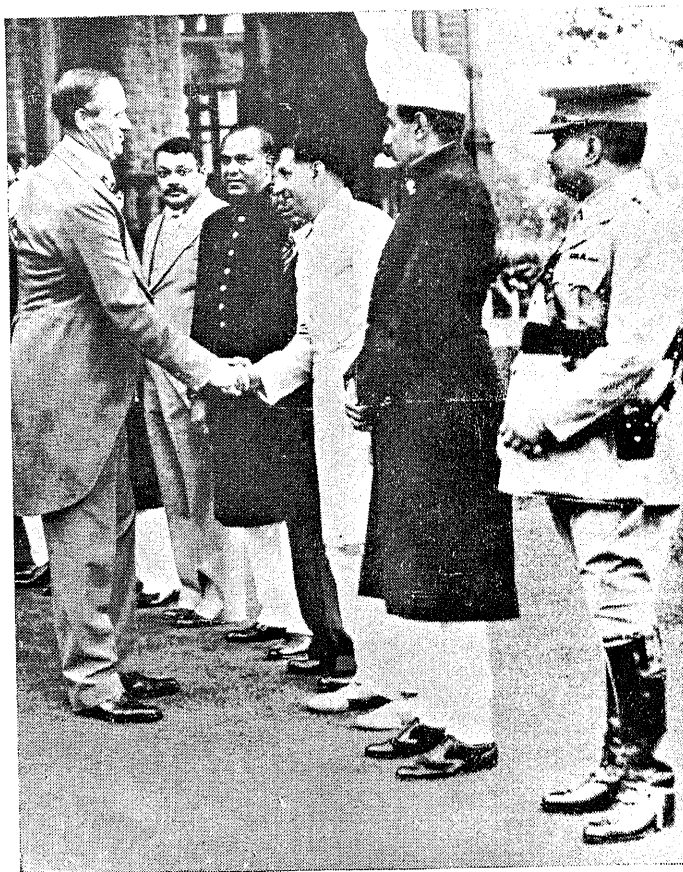
With Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, at Chettinad House, at a Function to Commemorate the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Annamalai University, 1955. Sri V. Vaidyasubramania Aiyar in the Centre.



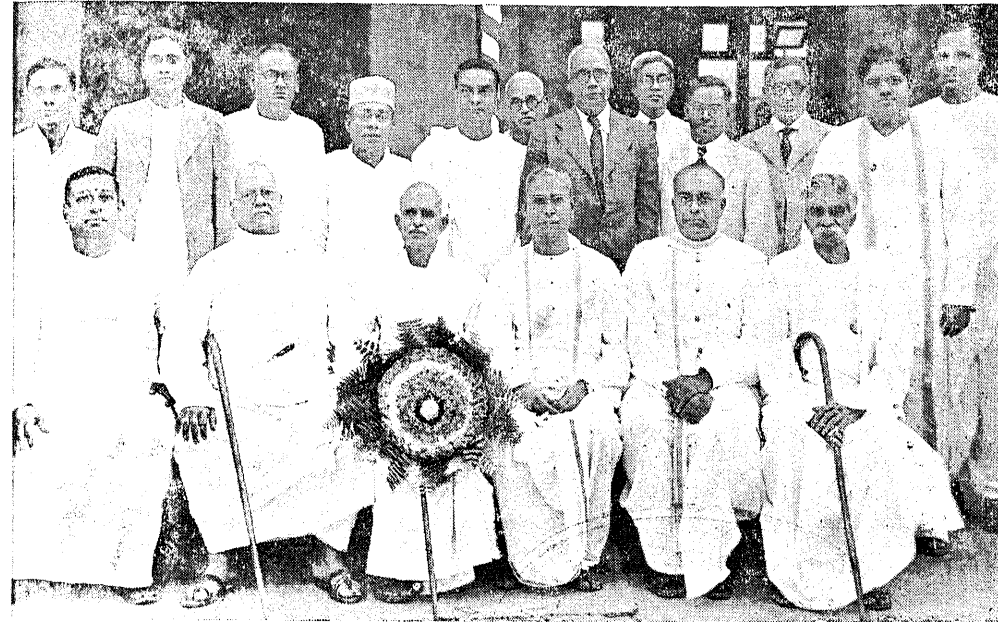
Rajah as President of imperial Bank of India (now State Bank of India) with Mr. G.F. Cobbald, Governor of the Bank of England. In the Centre - Secretary, P.A. Engineer. 1954.



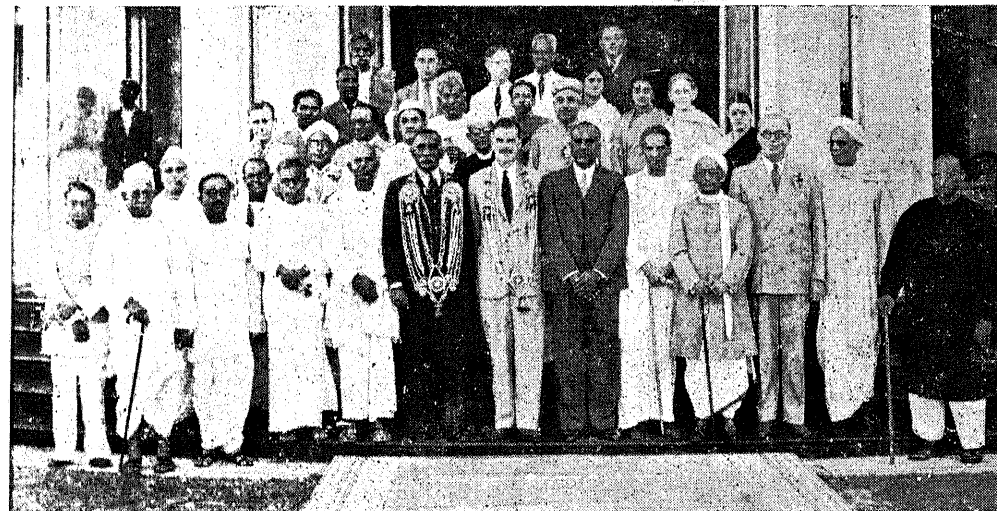
Rajah Sir. Annamalai Chettiar, his sons
Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, Mr. Rama-
nathan Chettiar and Mr. Chidambaram
Chettiar.



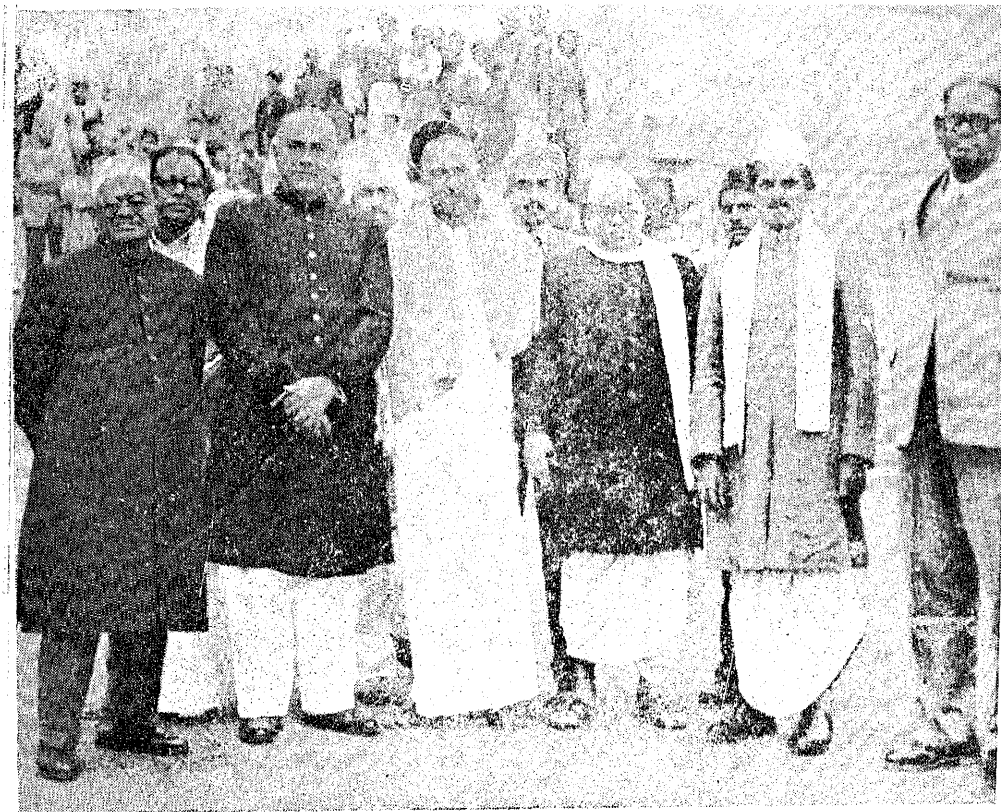
The Kumararajah as Member of the National Defence Council, 1941. H.E. Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, receiving Members of the National Defence Council at the first Meeting in Simla on 6th October, 1941.



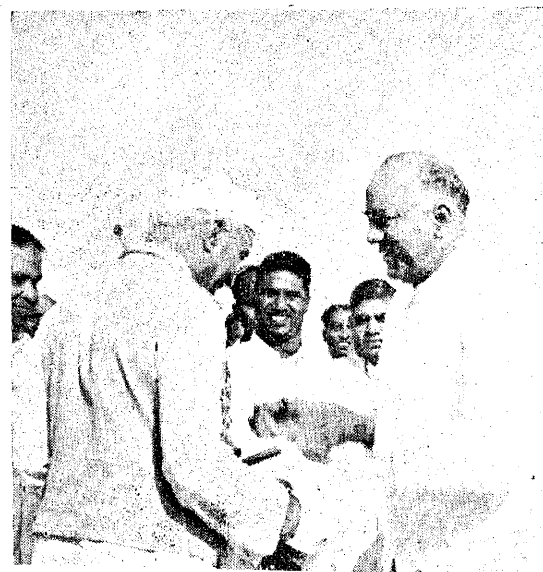
At the Tamil Isai Festival, Madras, with Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar and Sri O.P. Ramaswami Reddiar, Chief Minister of Madras.



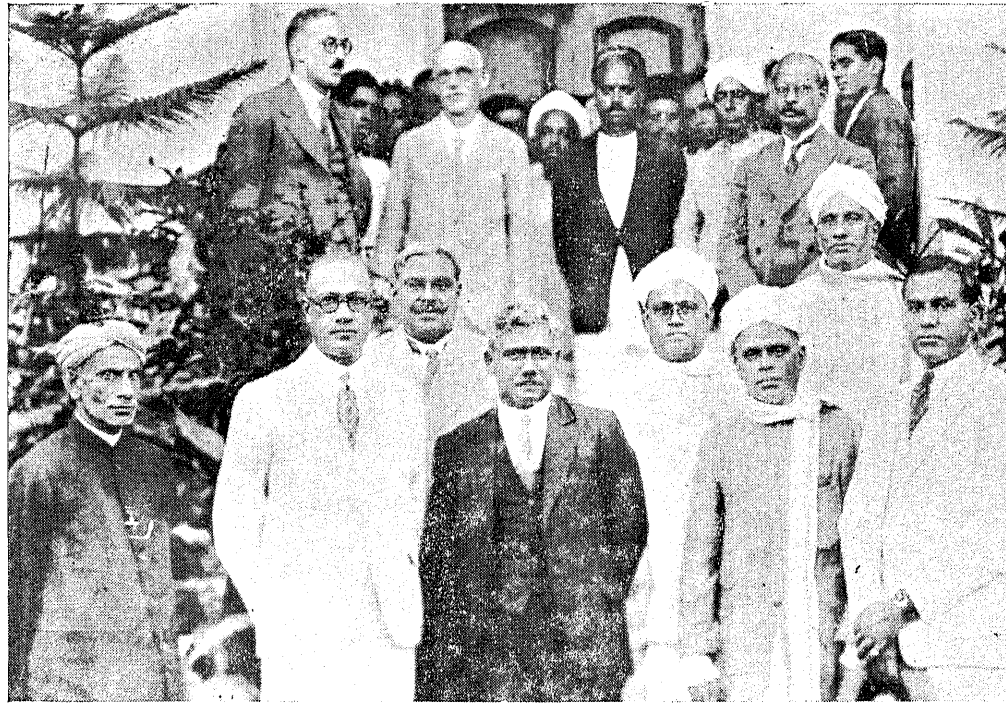
With Sir Stephen Senanayake, Prime Minister of Ceylon, Sir Archibald Nye, Governor of Madras and Ministers of Madras at Chettinad House, Madras.



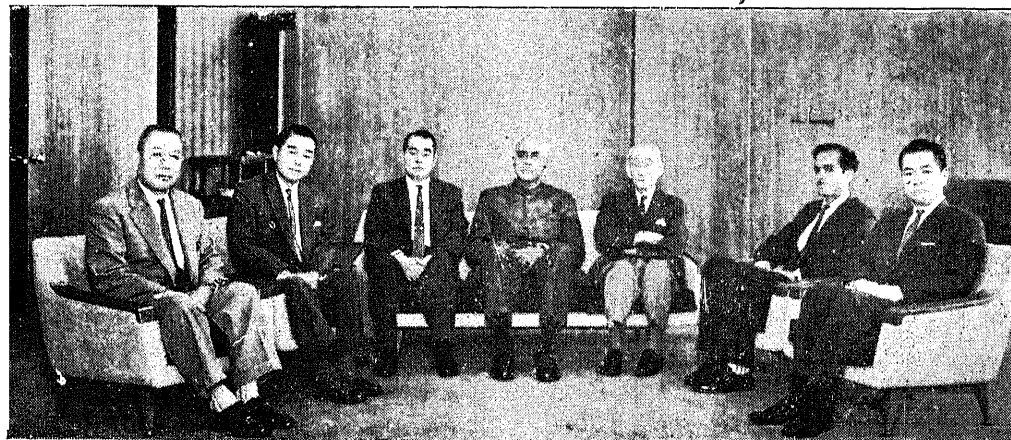
As a Member of the Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, with Sri K. Kama
Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar and Professor N.G. Ranga.



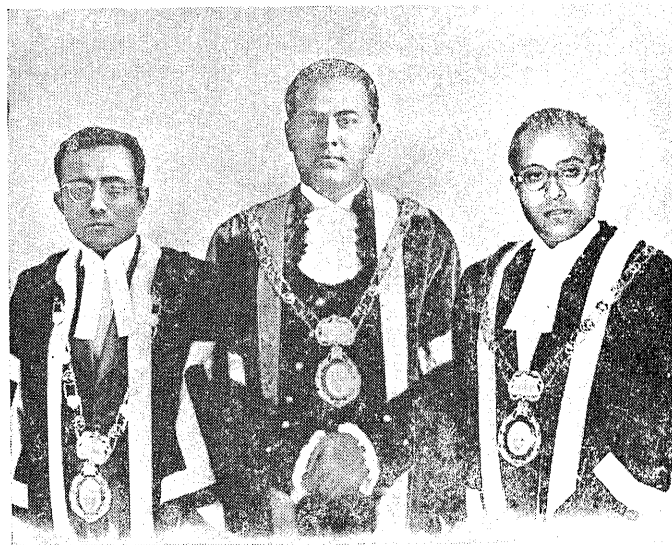
With Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru
the P.E.N. Conference, Annama
nagar, 1954.



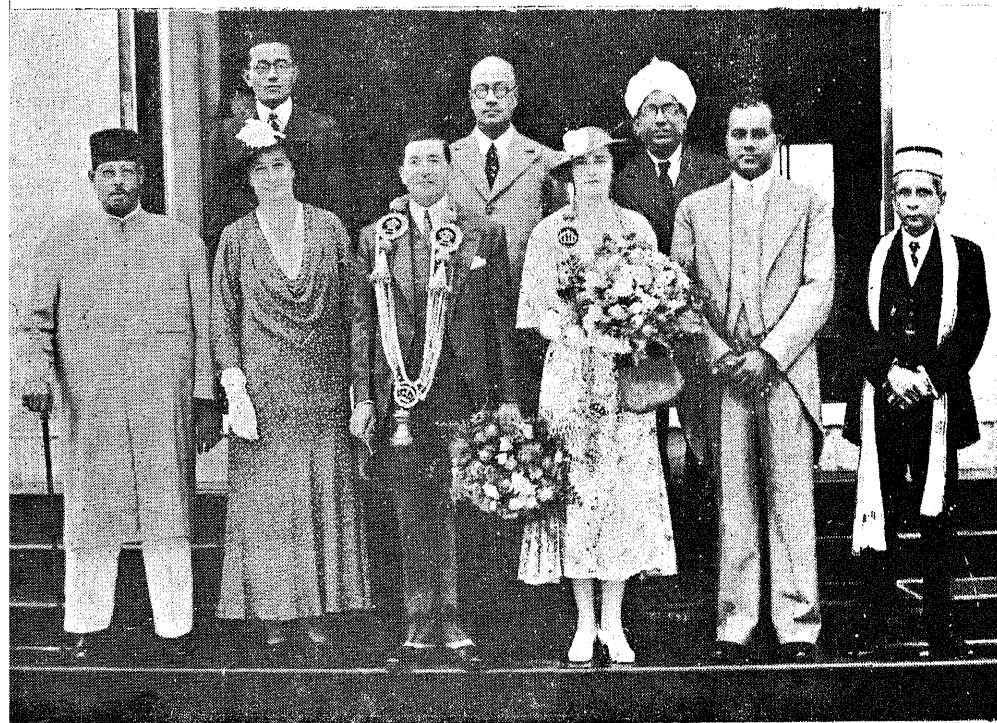
At the Founder's Day, with Sri S. Satyamurti, Sri M. Ruthnaswami
and Samuel Runganadhan, 1932.



With leading Industrialists at Tokyo



Rajah and his brothers R. Ramanathan Chettiar and M.A. Chidambaram Chettiar in Mayoral Costume.



With Lord and Lady Erskine at Chettinad House, 1936.

Rs.4 lakhs were built and in the budget provisions are made for slum improvements every year and I am glad to say that the Government have been very sympathetically granting financial aid, the most essential requisite for the solution of the problem. This year too about Rs.3 lakhs has been provided for slum improvement.

Apart from the Corporation and Government Aid, public sympathy, co-operation and service are necessary for the successful and easy solution of this big problem. From what I see and gather from your report I am greatly pleased to state that this Odder Palayam *Cheri* is an example of very fruitful public service. The programme of work sketched in the report is indeed very laudable. The provision of this community shed to serve as a reading room and library for the inhabitants here satisfies an urgent want. It is something corresponding in a smaller scale to a town hall or a club in a City. The habit of meeting in the shed after the day's hard work will be greatly conducive to the healthier development of the inhabitants who generally resort to toddy shops in the evening. The members of the youth league, Mr. Sankaranarayana Iyer, Srimathi Visalakshi Ammal, Bakeerathi Ammal deserve our warmest congratulations for the selfless work they have done for this *cheri*. I wish their endeavours will have adequate encouragement and be crowned with greater success. I take this opportunity of assuring the help of the Corporation.

The magnitude of the problem cannot be exaggerated. It implies decent housing, sanitation, education, proper lighting, credit facilities, temperance, and above all, the eradication of slum mentality among the slum population. It involves adequate money, abundant energy and persistent devotion to work. The fight against the slums is bound to be protracted and long. However, with better financial conditions, spread of education, growth of public opinion for the amelioration of the depressed classes, and growing number of voluntary associations like the Madras Sanitary Welfare League, Youth League and Triplicane Sociological Brotherhood and with an ever increasing band of public and social workers, I hope ere long our City will be rid of the slums."

During the two spells of his Mayoralty, Muthiah Chettiar spent a good deal of his time, energy and attention on the problems of elementary education of the children of the poorer sections, particularly Muslims, extending the scope of educational facilities in different areas of the City, augmented the

accommodation, playground facilities, revived the schools that had run into difficulties, strengthened their base, augmented the funds for education of the children of the weaker sections of society and provided even transport for Muslim children who had to observe purdah, problems of street light, water supply and sewerage facilities in the City and improvement in the conditions of the slums.

The mid-day meal scheme which the Corporation had worked out to encourage the spread of education among the poorer classes acquired a special emphasis under Kumara Rajah's stewardship of the Corporation. Nearly 4500 students, from the poorer sections, derived benefit from this scheme at the Corporation Schools, a sum of nearly Rs.45,000/- being spent on it annually during his tenure.

At a meeting arranged by the Sheriff of Madras, Mr. Adam Haji Mohammed Sait, at which the Governor of Madras and other notabilities were present, Muthiah Chettiar, in his capacity as Mayor of Madras, proposed the toast of the City. He said:

We are citizens of no mean city. It is a city with a great past, dating back to the earliest days of the British settlement in India, and has been variously called the City of Distances and the City of Gardens. It is a city with one of the most beautiful sea-fronts of the world. It is a city which combines the pleasures of a rural life with the activities of an urban centre. It is a city whose University has a high reputation and whose intellectual citizens have never allowed their reason to be clouded by passion or motion.

Ladies and Gentlemen, if I were to describe the City of Madras, I would like to begin in the historic and traditional manner with 'Once upon a time there was a small village called Chennappatnam,' and trace its growth and development. I might recall to your memory the early days of the East India Company, when Madras consisted of only a few scattered villages, and had no harbour of its own. I am sure there are many present at this function tonight, who can remember the city as it was about a quarter of a century ago, and who have noted with satisfaction the developments and changes that have gradually and steadily come over it. We are now having tarred and macadamised roads and the roads and streets are well-lit. Electric trains are conveying people now in a trice from one end of the city to another. The viaducts and over-bridges which have sprung up in the wake of these trains

beautify the city. Suburbs like Theyagarayanagar have become beautiful places to live in, and have relieved the congestion of the city. The experience of the past few years has shown that suburbs get rapidly filled up, and it is to be hoped that the civic authorities will think of further extensions. 472983

But these, Ladies and Gentlemen, are not everything. There have been many improvements of a more radical kind, less spectacular in character, but more helpful and utilitarian. The problem of the clearance of the slums has been taken up in earnest, and a solution is being gradually found to blot out this ugly feature of cities. The Housing Schemes, with which the Corporation of Madras is engaged, are progressing: and may I take this opportunity of thanking His Excellency whose personal interest has been responsible for expediting the solution of the question in the last few years. Just now His Excellency told us, that his term of office as Governor of Madras will be coming to a close shortly and that he will not be here next year this time. More than anybody else the citizens of Madras will feel deeply his absence. I am sure the citizens of Madras will be very happy to welcome their Excellencies back whenever they could find time to re-visit our City (Cheers). I must also thank the Hon'ble the Finance Member and the Hon'ble the Chief Minister for the great interest they have been evincing throughout. It is gratifying to note that the relationship between the Government and the Corporation has been cordial which, I firmly believe, is an essential condition of civic welfare. We quite realise the financial stringency of the times and the various demands on the funds available with the Government. But I am sure I am voicing forth the opinion of the citizens of Madras when I appeal to the Government to continue to view this noble object in a sympathetic manner and enable the Housing Schemes to be completed within a short time. 923-75411 MVT

One recent event of considerable significance, which I had thought, I would be the first to mention on this occasion, but which has been rightly anticipated by the Sheriff, is the election to the Mayoral Chair for the first time of a non-official gentleman of the European community. It is but right that the European community which has done so much for our country should have its due share of civic honours. I believe this is a symbol of a better understanding between the Indian and the European residents of Madras and I am sure that it is a happy augury for the future when the two great communities will work in harmony and evolve a greater and happier India.

That Madras should become an even more beautiful city is the wish and desire of all. What has been achieved so far encourages us in the belief that the coming years will see the growth of the city in a multiplicity of ways. I am proud of the city, and feel that all of us could be justifiably proud of our city. There can be no gain-saying that pride in one's own city is a noble virtue. 'May the City of Madras grow from more to more, and be the seat of health and happiness' is, I am sure, the sincere wish and earnest prayer of all of us.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have now great pleasure in asking you to drink to the happiness and prosperity of our good old city of Madras.

Appreciation of Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar's work as Mayor of Madras was not confined to Madras alone. The Corporation of Calcutta presented an Address of Welcome to him soon after his installation as Mayor. One interesting fact is worth recording.

When Sir Annamalai Chettiar returned from England in 1910, he was full of memories of what he saw and heard in London and elsewhere. He used to relate the addiction of the English to old-time ceremonial, the same as we in India. Muthiah Chettiar used to listen with rapt attention. And when the Rev. Mr. Miller related the story of Dick Whittington, Muthiah's imagination caught fire. And, long afterwards, when he visited England, he made what one may describe as a pilgrimage to Highgate, and saw the very stone on which Whittington rested his tired limbs. When all hopes of employment were lost, he was trudging along to his native village. When he heard the Church bells peal, summoning him in words, which sounded to his ears as "Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London", he went back to the city. The story sowed a seed in Muthiah Chettiar's mind, the idea sprouted and he longed, with a passionate longing, to be Mayor of Madras and enjoy the dignities of that office. At that time there was no provision for a Mayor. So legislation was undertaken and carried through. Muthiah Chettiar, who was a favourite among those who mattered in public life was proposed and the proposal was accepted. As in Whittington's case, his longing was satisfied. His friends used to rag him a good deal about that

incident and call out "Turn again, Muthiah, Mayor of Madras." The ragging went on for a few days.

A special committee was formed at the meeting of the Council on 12th August 1933 with the Kumara Rajah as its Chairman, to study and report to the Corporation with the following terms of reference:

1. to enquire into the housing conditions in the City of Madras with reference to overcrowding, slum clearance and the housing of the poorer classes, and,
2. to evolve a comprehensive housing policy for the City and report what legislation or administrative action was, in the opinion of the Committee, necessary to remedy the existing defects.

The Committee submitted its report on 9th October 1934 and after its acceptance by the Council, the Government was moved for financial aid to the tune of Rs.20 lakhs to implement the scheme.

Madras in the twenties and thirties was unspoiled. She had not been given over to the jerry-builder, as she has since been, and he was succeeded in chasing Beauty away. She hadn't become noisy or overcrowded. No jostling crowds at bus-stops, young and old, no rush and crush of boys and girls going to work or to schools and colleges, trying to board a bus clambering up the steps or, more often, hanging on to the straps.

Madras has come to be at the mercy of speeding motor cars, lorries and buses. She has become dementingly noisy, meretricious and tawdy. Her further career one dare not speculate upon.

Kumara Rajah took the bold step of setting up a Radio Station, against many odds, in the Madras Corporation.

In order to derive the fullest advantage from his intimate knowledge and experience of procedures and conventions in Municipal administration, the Madras Corporation Council appointed Muthiah Chettiar in 1934 as a member of the Committee to review the working of the Madras City Municipal Act. Later he constituted the City Improvement Trust and was

associated with its functioning for ten years. Earlier, he had served as the Chairman of the Standing Committee (Taxation and Finance) for the year 1933-34.

At their meeting on 31st October, 1933, "The Corporation Council placed on record its great appreciation of the services of Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad MLC and of the able manner in which he has discharged his high duties as the Mayor of Madras."

When his second term as Mayor was coming to a close, the Council passed the following resolution at its meeting on 30.10.1935:

The Council placed on record its appreciation of the valuable and distinguished services of Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad as Mayor of Madras for a second term.

A meed of praise richly merited.

Even today, a large-size oil-colour portrait of Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar adorns the walls of the Corporation office in Ripon Buildings — a constant reminder of his signal services to the Madras Corporation as its First Mayor.

What Muthiah Chettiar would have liked most, what he would have given anything for, was the continued administration of the City of Madras, in which capacity he would have laboured to the utmost to provide every conceivable amenity and make it a City Beautiful. An office like the Mayor's cannot be any one man's monopoly. But whoever the Mayor he can do an excellent job of work during his term of office and hand on the tradition to subsequent Mayors. That Muthiah Chettiar did. He had had his innings and the Mayoral office which M.A. Muthiah Chettiar held for two terms remained a gracious memory all his life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Minister 1936-37

Muthiah Chettiar's services as Mayor of Madras have already been referred to. His next important assignment was a Ministership. Diarchy was in operation. Muthiah Chettiar was designated the Third Minister and was given the portfolio of Education and Public Health. It is note-worthy that Raj Kumar Muthiah Chettiar,* as he was described in official records of the time, was hardly thirty-one, a sort of younger Pitt. He was Minister from 10-10-1936 to March 31, 1937, a short spell, at the same time, one of fruitful activity. He represented the Southern India Chamber of Commerce, in the Madras Legislative Council till 31st march 1937 and was closely associated with the leading lights of the Justice Party. One can visualise the scene:

1. Sir Kurma Venkata Reddy Nayudu, Law Member from April 25, 1934.
2. Rao Bahadur A.T. Pannirselvam, Home Member from August, 16, 1934.
3. Sir Charles Alexander Souter, I.C.S., Revenue Member, from 3-1-1935, and,
4. Mr Geoffrey Thomas Hurst Bracken, I.C.S., Finance Member from 19-3-1935.

There were three Ministers, First, Second and Third, as they were designated, names which have a strange and fairy tale-like sound at the present day.

* The reference to M.A. Muthiah Chettiar as Raj Kumar seems strange. Sir Annamalai thought so too and, so did Muthiah Chettiar. It was only the son of a ruling Prince that was referred to as *Rajkumar*, as only the son of a King was called Prince, and Sir Annamalai and his son obviated adverse criticism by making it clear that they would prefer the title Kumararajah, which ~~was~~ modest and wise. As was well-known, the father and son remembered their roots and avoided the risk of being looked upon as *parvenus*.

Ministers

The Ministers were designated as First, Second and Third Ministers:

1. Rajah Sri Ravu Sir Svetachalapati Ramakrishna Ranga Rao Bahadur, K.C.I.E. of Bobbili — Minister for Local Self-Government, took his seat on 5th November 1932 and again on 24th August 1936.
2. Sir P.T. Rajan, Minister for PWD from 5 November, 1932.
3. Dewan Bahadur S. Kumaraswami Reddiar, Minister for Education and Public Works, earlier from 27-10-1932 and from 5 November 1932 to 10 October 1936.
4. The Hon. Rajkumar M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, Minister for Education and Public Health (who took his seat on 10 October 1936).

His portfolio comprised Education, Excise, Libraries, Museums, Medical Administration and Public Health.

4th December 1936 was the last day of the session of the Legislative Council. The Governor, His Excellency Lord Erskine, prorogued the session on 4th December 1936. It did not meet in 1937, as on 1st April 1937, the Interim Ministry took over under Sir K.V. Reddy after the elections in February 1937, when the Justice Party was defeated and the Congress came out successful with a thumping majority but did not form the Government (for reasons which are explained in a Chapter to follow).

Speaking on the Budget Demand, in his capacity of Minister for Education and Public Health, during the discussion on the subject of Education, in the Legislative Council in December 1936, the Hon. Rajkumar M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad highlighted the Education policy of the Government. Education, it was well-known, was the subject nearest to his heart — not only education at the higher levels. He wanted that education should be wide-spread, begin at the primary school and cater to the poor and the illiterate. Elementary education, primary schools, not just schools in name, but schools which should have pupils who have passed the fifth standard. The number of schools was astronomical. 18600 single teacher schools and 8300 schools teaching upto the Third

Standard. He referred to the stagnation in schools but for which there would have been a far larger number of literate students. He said that the purpose of the Government was to increase the subsidies to schools by a higher grant in the case of very efficiently conducted schools. Get trained teachers but do not turn out the untrained, he said. The untrained had done their job and Government should see that they were not exposed to hardship by being turned out because they were not trained teachers, forgetting that, by long teaching they had all the training needed.

He was staggered at the thought of the salaries they drew — twelve rupees a month. He repudiated the suggestion that the Justice Party had not been helpful in regard to progress in the field of education during the previous twelve years. They had done a good deal despite the financial stringency with which they were faced during the previous six years. He stressed the need for punctual payment of salaries to teachers. He told the Assembly that Government was strengthening the Inspectorate in order to improve the quality of education. He reiterated the intention of the Government to do their very best for elementary education and impressed on the Members of the Legislature that the prevention of wastage of funds and human material was as important for Legislators to consider as the question of the expansion of elementary education! Muthiah Chettiar had some strong principles to which he steadfastly adhered.

During his tenure as Minister for Education and Public Health from 10th October, 1936 to 31st March, 1937, the Medical Department came under fire. While copies of confidential reports were, as a rule, given to permanent officials of the Medical Department, they were not given to honorary medical officers. Mr. V.T. Arasu made a point of it and said that there should be no such distinction and that such treatment was step-motherly. Muthiah Chettiar repudiated the charge and said that "in point of fact honorary doctors are encouraged under the system."

One question of importance came up: whether Government employed doctors were allowed to run their private nursing homes. Muthiah Chettiar replied that only one officer was

running a Nursing Home and that was Lt. Col. Pandalai and that he had been directed to abolish or dispose of it within six months effective from 22nd June 1936.

Muthiah Chettiar had a sense of proprieties. When one of the members — Mr. V.T. Arasu — again asked whether a particular Doctor — the Superintendent of the Barnard Institute — who was in the habit of advertising his achievements in the Press had been given any special or general permission to do so, Muthiah Chettiar reiterated the Government's standing orders on the subject and promised to make enquiries.

Muthiah Chettiar brought the much-needed touch of humour to the proceedings of the Legislature. Replying to a question on 1st December 1936 in the Madras Legislative Council from Mr. V.M. Ramaswami Mudaliar whether three students were refused admission to the Junior BA Class in the Queen Mary's College, Madras even after they have passed the Intermediate Examination, on the ground that in the opinion of the authorities concerned, it seemed unlikely that they would profit by being admitted to the BA course, the Hon. Rajkumar Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad in his capacity as Minister for Education, gave him a quick reply:

"The Hon. Member has answered the question."

Soon after assuming office as Minister for Education and Public Health, the Hon'ble Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar paid his first official visit to Karaikudi on 6th November 1936. The elite of Chettinad had gathered in their numbers to receive him at the Railway Station. The Karaikudi Municipality presented him with an Address of Welcome. There was public acclaim that one from Chettinad — a noble Scion of a noble family — had risen to the position of a Minister. The Municipality were appreciative of Kumara Rajah's qualities of administrative efficiency and hoped that with the political training he had received at such a young age, he would deal with the Municipal problems sympathetically: (1) water supply and drainage scheme; (2) more schools to meet the educational needs of the town; (3) a Government High School with a Girls' High School for the area and (4) a Women and Children Hospital. In propitious times, Chettinad did not look to

Government for help in these spheres. But with the general trade depression and the serious disturbances in Burma, facilities which Karaikudi needed urgently could be provided only with the help of the Government, the Council urged. They reminded him that soon after becoming Mayor of Madras, he had expressed himself in favour of constitution of standing committees for the administrative convenience and satisfactory working of Municipal bodies and suggested that the creation of such statutory Standing bodies should be incorporated in the District Municipal Act during his tenure as Minister. They also requested that Karaikudi should be the Headquarters of the bifurcated District Board of Chettinad.

At a reception accorded by the Tiruchirappalli Municipal Council in November 1936 to the Hon'ble Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar, the Council, in their Welcome Address, made a felicitous reference to his successful administration of the Corporation of Madras as its Mayor for two terms and pointed out that with his liberal outlook and deep and abiding interest in the well-being of fellow-citizens, he can look forward to a brilliant political career and under his stewardship of the Department of Education, the cause of education in the Presidency will gain the much-needed impetus. Once the idea came to be entertained of a Tamil University, Tiruchirappalai set up its claim to be the seat of the Tamil University.

Among other centres in the Presidency which Kumararah Muthiah Chettiar visited as Education Minister was Rajamundry (now in the present Andhra Pradesh) where again he was accorded a very cordial welcome by the local citizens and the Municipality.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Ministry Making and Unmaking

The nineteen-thirties were a more than ordinarily important period of India's political history. The old order was rapidly changing and there was no unanimity as to the shape which the new Ministry should take. In February 1935 at the second reading of the Government of India Bill in the House of Commons Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India, compared the Bill half-in-jest, half-earnest to a patchwork quilt. That was the Secretary of State's description of what really was a monument of immense skill and labour in fashioning a piece of legislation designed to provide for a variety of conflicting interests such as had never before been presented to any legislature. It was piloted by Sir Samuel Hoare in the House with striking skill, patience and ability. Its most determined opponent was Sir Winston Churchill who brought into action his entire armour of "full-blooded vocabulary and superabandon of metaphor," as Sir Samuel Hoare described it. Mr. Churchill played upon Sir Samuel's description of it as "patchwork quilt" and characterised it as "a gigantic quilt of jumbled crochet work, a monument of shame built by pigmies."

The monument passed muster, stood four-square to the winds that blew and was passed by the House of Commons with an impressive majority. It went up to the House of Lords and had an equally easy passage there. It was then submitted to the King who gave his assent and the Bill was passed into Law. A big thing attempted and a big thing done. The stage was now set for the Act to be transferred to the domain, practical politics in India.

The first step was to hold elections under the Act. That was done. The results were revealing. Congress topped the polls in six out of the eleven provinces. In Madras it won by a thumping majority.

The score-board figures show the strength of the parties and the voting results:

Legislative Assembly:	Total Strength
Congress	159
Justice Party	17
Independents	15
Southern India Chamber of Commerce	1
Nattukottai Nagarathar Association	1
Planters Association	1
European Commerce	3
European General	3
Anglo-Indian	1
People's Party	1

Similarly, out of a total of 55 seats in the New Madras Legislative Council, nine were nominated members and out of the balance of 46 seats, 26 were won by the Congress. The nine nominated members of the Upper House (Legislative Council) were.

No.	12	Mrs. H.S. Hensman
	24	Hon. Dr. T.S.S. Rajan
	27	Mr. C. Ramalinga Reddy
	28	Rao Bahadur M. Raman
	41	Diwan Bahadur R. Srinivasan
	42	Rt. Hon'ble V.S. Srinivasa Sastry, PCCH LLD
	47	Dr. P.J. Thomas
	48	Usman, KCIE Khan Bahadur Sir Mohammed
	54	Venkata Reddy Nayudu KCIE Rai Bahadur Sir Kurma

Thus, the Justice party which was in power for years, was thrown out in the elections, the Rajah of Bobbili and, P.T. Rajan being the main losers. In the new Legislative Assembly, Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad represented the Nattukkottai Nagarathar's Association.

(In Madras, the Congress was allotted the Yellow box and the Justice party the Red box for the ballot. The Justice party later blamed their failure at the polls on the Red box. The

argument was one of the most puerile ever advanced. It reminds one of the adage that any stick is good to beat a dog with.)

While acceptance of office by the Congress was favoured by the Madras leaders — C. Rajagopalachari said on March 13, 1937 that Congress should accept office and S. Satyamurti boldly expressed his belief in the programme of office acceptance by the Congress in the Provinces, where Congress was in a majority in the legislature, the Congress President, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said in Delhi: "To hell with the Constitution." He said that the Congress had fought the elections to "wreck the constitution" and his considered view was that office should not be accepted as this would devolve on them a "great responsibility which they had no power to discharge." "They should have nothing to do with office or Ministry."

The Dead-lock in the Provinces:

Thinking differently, Gandhiji was ready to counsel office acceptance by the Congress provided the Governors would not use their special powers against the advice of Ministers.

The All India Congress Committee met at Delhi on 17th and 18th March 1937 and passed the following resolution in regard to office acceptance: (differing from Pandit Nehru's approach and on line with Gandhiji's thinking):

The All India Congress Committee authorises and permits acceptance of Ministerial offices in Provinces where the Congress commands a majority in the legislature, provided that minister-ships shall not be accepted unless the Leader of the Congress party in the legislature is satisfied and is able to state publicly that the Governor will not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of the Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities.

The leaders of the Congress party in the Provincial legislatures with Congress majorities were invited by the Governors of their respective Provinces to assist them in the formation of Ministeries. Congress Parliamentary leaders in Madras, Bombay, U.P., Bihar, Central Provinces and Orissa responded to the invitation. They showed the Governors the text of the resolution passed by the AICC laying down the policy

of the Congress in regard to the new constitution and the condition attached to the acceptance of office.

The Governors in all the six Provinces (presumably under instructions obtained from higher authorities in New Delhi and London) expressed their inability to give the necessary assurance that they would not use, in regard to the constitutional activities of their Cabinets, their special powers of interference. The leaders thereupon declined to shoulder the responsibility of forming Ministries.

The breakdown in the six provinces was complete by the end of March 1937, while the new constitution was scheduled to be brought into force on 1-4-1937.

The Madras Governor's Communique:

On 27th March 1937, the Private Secretary to the Governor (Lord Erskine) issued the following statement:

On March 25, His Excellency the Governor invited Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, the leader of the Congress Party in the Madras Legislature, to assist him in forming a Ministry. Mr. Rajagopalachariar, at his first interview, intimated that he could not accept the invitation unless an assurance was given by the Governor that he would not use his special powers or exercise the functions which are by law left to his discretion or individual judgement. His Excellency replied that it was impracticable for constitutional reasons for him to divest himself of the responsibilities and duties which have been placed upon his shoulders by Parliament and that it was therefore not within his power to give any such guarantee. At the same time His Excellency intimated Mr. Rajagopalachariar that he could rely upon receiving all possible help, sympathy and co-operation in the event of his forming a Ministry. After a series of very amicable conversations Mr. Rajagopalachariar has, while expressing appreciation of His Excellency's assurance, finally intimated to-day that he is unable to accept the invitation to assist in forming a Ministry.

His Excellency, while greatly regretting the outcome of the discussions, wishes to make it plain to the public that the decision is that of the Congress Party themselves, that the terms of the statute are mandatory and that the obligations imposed by the Act and the Instrument of Instructions on the Governor in respect

of the use of special powers are of such a nature that even if he wished to be relieved himself of them it would not be in his power to do so. On the other hand, His Excellency wishes to state as the representative of the King Emperor in this Presidency that he is above party politics altogether and that within the four corners of the Government of India Act, he will extend help, sympathy and support to any Ministry from whatever section of political opinion it may be drawn. At the present juncture, His Excellency believes that time should be given for a reconsideration of the position. An Interim Ministry will therefore be formed at once in order that the King Emperor's Government may be carried on and His Excellency hopes that by thus providing a period for such reconsideration, it will eventually be found possible to form a ministry which will command the confidence of the present legislature.

Lord Erskine asked the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, the Liberal leader and Vice-Chancellor, at the time, of the Annamalai University and a nominated member of the Legislative Council to form an Interim Government. He declined the offer. Here is Mr. Srinivasa Sastriar's statement on the position which is revealing:

It is particularly lamentable that Whitehall and Delhi should be so blind in their conservatism as not to see what is so abundantly clear that the country has made up its mind not to submit quietly to the Government of India Act and its restrictions and that, if the growth from the present position to a larger measure of democracy is to be easy and safe, the right cause for the Government is to be generous in the interpretation and operation of the enactment which both, on its merits and by provoking the circumstances in which it was brought into being, has trampled on their pledges and on the wishes of the Indian people.

Sir K. V. Reddy's Interim Ministry

Lord Erskine invited Sir K. V. Reddy to head the Interim Ministry. The latter accepted the offer and formed the Ministry on 1-4-1937.

Kumara Rajah M. A. Muthiah Chettiar accepted a position in the Interim Ministry as Minister for Local Administration and Hindu Religious Endowments. Sir Kurma Venkata Reddy stepped into the breach though he knew full well it would be a stop-gap arrangement.

Some characterised the formation of the Interim Ministry as illegal. It was generally viewed by different shades of public opinions as a question of constitutional propriety.

The spirit of the constitution was that the confidence of the legislature and a stable majority are essential to the Government of the provinces and therefore to the Ministry.

In Madras, the Governor invited the members of the party overthrown at the polls, to form the Interim Ministry. As the *Indian Review* wrote:

That the persons invited from the ranks of the party overthrown prefer to speak of themselves as individuals and not as members of that party does not conceal the flagrant violation of the spirit of the Act and of the Instrument of Instructions in the constitution of this new Ministry. The overthrow of the Ministry at the first meeting of the Assembly is so certain that the Interim Ministry can be maintained in power only by postponing the summoning of the Assembly. The only straight course is to resume the Government as on the breakdown of the normal machinery of the Government.

The Rajah of Bobbili's Statement

"The Interim Ministers do not have the support of the Justice Party and the Justice Party is not committed to extend support to the present Ministry," observed the Rajah of Bobbili, in a press interview. He deplored the present impasse:

If all that the Congress wants is an assurance that they will not be interfered within the carrying out of their programmes as outlined in their manifesto, this should be made clear and I think His Majesty's Government should have no difficulty in having such an assurance given, especially as the Congress do not demand an abrogation of the Act.

Sir K. V. Reddy's Defence:

Sir K. V. Reddy, the Chief Minister in the Interim Ministry in Madras (who assumed office in these circumstances on 1st April 1937) defended his action in accepting the responsibility for forming the Government in these words:

I have not for one moment pretended that I have a majority in the newly constituted Legislative Assembly. In accepting office, it was not so much a question of obtaining a majority in the Legislature which had weighed with me as the immediate need for

carrying on the King's Government when Mr. Rajagopalachari had refused to accept office in the hope that he could thereby paralyse the Government and that the work of the Government could be brought to a standstill. I felt it my duty to throw my little weight with those who wish to prevent it.

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's Statement:

In a statement to the Press, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Leader of the Congress Party in Madras Legislature, explained the unconstitutionality of Ministers without responsibility:

The Government of India as analysed by British political science is run on the principle of responsibility in one part to the people of England through Parliament and, in another part, to the Indian electorate through the legislatures in India. Every function of Government of India under various reforms scheme should, according to them, be capable of being assigned either to one or the other responsibility and cannot possibly be left in the air.

The Ministers' share of Government is done under responsibility to the Indian electorate. They must be persons responsible to the legislature under the Act. To whom then are the unelected Ministers responsible?

Whoever advised the calling in of Sir K.V. Reddy (in Madras), the Nawab of Chattari (in UP) and Mr. E. Raghavendra Rau (in CP) and others did so without understanding this basic principle of British Governance of India. These Ministers stand responsible to none. They are obviously connected by no tie to the British Parliament nor do they stand on the foundation of confidence and responsibility in respect of the Indian Legislature. They float in the air.

Interim Ministry Repudiated:

The following communication signed by 167 members of the Madras Legislative Assembly and 30 members of the Legislative Council, has been forwarded to the Private Secretary to the Governor of Madras by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Leader of the Congress Party in Madras:

We the undersigned members of the Madras Legislative Assembly and Council, do hereby repudiate and denounce the so called Council of Ministers constituted by His Excellency the Governor of Madras in open and deliberate violation of the fundamental basis of the Act and Instrument of Instructions issued under the authority of Parliament and we hereby declare and notify to all

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R.A. Butler, Under-Secretary of State for India said in the House of Commons (inter-alia):

Let me make it plain that the Government have no intention of countenancing the use of special powers for other than the purpose whereof Parliament intended them. It is certainly not the intention that the Governors by a narrow or legislative interpretation of their own responsibilities should trench upon the wide powers, which it was the purpose of Parliament to place in the hands of the Ministers and which it is our desire that they should use in furtherance of the programmes they have advocated.

Lord Zetland's Speech on May 6, 1937, in the Lords:

In this speech, Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India repeated the assurance given by Mr R.A. Butler:

His Majesty's Government have no intention of countenancing the use of the special power for purposes other than for which Parliament intended them. It is certainly not the intention that the Governors, by a narrow or legalistic interpretation of their own responsibilities, should trench upon the wide powers which it was the purpose of Parliament to place in the hands of the Ministries and which, it is our desire, they should use in furtherance of the programmes which they advocate in working the Constitution; for as it is at present possible to judge, I find a happy confirmation of the picture as I have always seen it. Both in the provinces in which the Ministries are working with majorities in the legislatures, and those in which Minority Ministries are functioning, bold programmes have been drawn up, as far as I know, without the smallest attempt on the part of any Governor to interfere.

Is it too much to hope that those who have so far hesitated to accept the responsibilities of office from a mistaken sense of fear, lest they should be unduly hampered in the tasks, will derive reassurance and encouragement from the object-lesson provided by the actual working of the Constitution in their midst? I need hardly say I hope devoutly and in all sincerity that it may be so."

Gandhiji found this statement of Lord Zetland encouraging.

Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy's Statement of 21st June 1937:

On the basis of Lord Zetland's statement of May 6, 1937, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, issued a detailed statement on 21 June 1937.

He communicated Britain's formal reply to the Congress:

There is no foundation for any suggestion that a Governor is free or is entitled, or would have the power to interfere with the day to day administration of a province outside the limited range of the responsibilities specially conferred on him.

When the Congress Working Committee met on July 5, 1937, the Mahatma was willing to accept what was offered by the British Government. C.Rajagopalachari argued in favour of the Congress taking office.

The formation of Congress Ministries in the six provinces, where the Congress had an absolute majority in the legislature, was approved of by the Congress Working Committee, at its meeting on July 5, 1937.

Lord Erskine sent for C. Rajagopalachari to form the Congress Government.

Two days later (July 7), Lord Erskine, Governor of Madras, sent for C. Rajagopalachari and requested him to be the Prime Minister — that was the designation then used — of Madras Presidency. C.R. agreed to form his cabinet.

On July 14, 1937, C.R. assumed office as the Prime Minister of Madras Presidency, with ten other Ministers from his Congress Party.

Sir K.V. Reddy's term of office as Chief Minister of the Interim Ministry thus lasted from 1st April to 14th July 1937 when they vacated their office.

Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar became the Leader of the Opposition — the Justice Party — in the Madras Legislative Assembly from 15th July 1937 when the House met and elected Mr. Bulusu Sambamoorthy unanimously as the Speaker of the new Assembly.

As the leader of the Justice Party opposition, M.A. Muthiah Chettiar offered his felicitations to Mr. Bulusu Sambamoorthy on his election as Speaker.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Knighthood — Public Acclaim

Sir Muthiah Chettiar was one of those whom the King delighted to honour. Honours came upon him at every turn. The Common Man was not behindhand in appreciation. King (when there was a king), then the President or the Governor as the case may be, and the common men were in uncommon agreement when it came to honouring Sir Muthiah Chettiar. That was because he was a man of wealth, who was ready to share his wealth with those on humbler levels and to use it for beneficent purposes without calculating the cost.

On 11th June 1941, a Knighthood was conferred on him by the Government. There was public rejoicing on a grand scale. Government officials and the general public joined in honouring him. Sir Lionel Leach, the Chief Justice of Madras, and others in the front rank of society received Sir Muthiah Chettiar and took him round, with due ceremony. It is note-worthy that while the father, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar was Knighted in 1922, the same honour was conferred on the son Muthiah Chettiar exactly 19 years later in 1941 — an eloquent testimony to the solid contribution which both father and son had made to the public life of the country particularly in the field of education, administration and finance.

On 9th February 1955, the Annamalai University, at a Special Convocation in its Silver Jubilee year, conferred upon him the degree of D.Litt. *honoris causa*.

In 1973 the Government of India conferred on him the distinction of *Padmabhushan*.

The Tamil Nadu Government conferred on him the title 'Tamil Isai Kavalalar' on 29th April 1979 for his outstanding services in the cause of Tamil music.

Academic bodies liked to confer honorary degrees on him. Not only Indian Universities but Universities abroad. The New York World University conferred on him an honorary Doctorate

on 26.6.1982 in recognition of his services to Tamil. The Madras University followed with a D.Litt. conferred on him in 1983.

The routine in Sir Muthiah Chettiar's case was that when he returned home from foreign tours, public bodies in Madras and many District centres often organised local celebrations.

When the Second World War broke out, he was nominated to the National Defence Council by Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, for a term of six years. Leading Rulers of Indian States were on the Council. They were selected on the basis of the salute to which they were entitled on ceremonial occasions. The Maharajah of Bhopal (entitled to a salute of 19 guns) and others who ranked similarly high, were nominated to the Council. The Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, who revived memories of first-class cricket was another. Among non-officials, there were Sir Mohammed Usman and Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar from Madras, selected to serve on the *Conseil L'Urgence*.

It is also noteworthy that out of the 45 members nominated by the Congress to the Indian Constituent Assembly, Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, M.L.A. (Prov.) was one. He served that Assembly during the period 1946-50 and played a notable part in drafting the Indian Constitution. His nomination to the body by the Congress (1 out of 45) is significant in that it shows how high he stood in the estimation of the public. In a sense he was above party, beyond petty scores.

On 9th December 1946, the Indian Constituent Assembly opened its session at New Delhi with Dr. Satchidananda Sinha as the temporary Chairman, till Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the permanent Chairman. It was a rich experience and he was fortunate in being able to participate in the deliberations of a body which was charged with the duty of fashioning a Constitution for Independent India. Some of the best brains in the country worked on it.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Captain of Industry

A distinguished member of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Madras which Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar represented in the Madras Legislative Council from 1930 to 1936, Muthiah Chettiar was connected with this Chamber for more than 50 years — he was unanimously elected President of the Chamber at its 37th General Meeting held on 15-4-1941. On 23rd March 1942 Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar delivered the Presidential Address at the session of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Madras:

In addressing you this evening, I do not want to follow the usual practice of reviewing past business conditions. I shall only deal with certain outstanding problems connected with the present times and the mercantile community.

Present War Situation: One thing that is to-day uppermost in our minds is the menacing war situation and the grave danger facing us. We have at present moment to brush aside many of our normal problems and concentrate attention on the prosecution of the war, whether outside the country or within its own borders. The mercantile community has all along exhibited commendable realism in regard to the war and have made great sacrifices. We have to strain further and strive in an increasing measure in the difficult days ahead of us. The initial advantages our enemies have gained need not alarm us. The vast resources of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Russia and China harnessed now to a common and determined effort will stem the tide and there can only be one end to the great struggle — the ultimate triumph of the forces now ranged alongside humanity, freedom and justice. Therefore, with confidence, courage and calmness let us put forth our best efforts for the war. Thanks to the unexampled zeal and inspiring lead of our popular Governor His Excellency Sir Arthur Hope our Province occupies the pride of place so far as India is concerned in the matter of war efforts. That banner must be kept flying until, final victory is won. In this connection may I say that we welcome the mission on which Sir

Stafford Cripps comes to India and we sincerely hope that as a result of the visit, the Indian problem will be solved in a manner acceptable to all parties and interests and that the entire people of the country will soon be fully co-operating in all endeavours to successfully prosecute the war.

Foreign Trade: The war has necessitated numerous restrictions in imports and exports and the business community no doubt, has been hit hardly. But we know that the sacrifice involved in the restrictions is necessary for preventing the enemy from profiting by our trade. Thanks to the present Commerce Member, the Hon'ble Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar, interference with trade has been reduced to the very minimum.

We ought to be particularly grateful to the Hon'ble Commerce member for his timely help to the very important oilseeds trade which bears a big proportion in our exports and sustains a large section of the agriculturists of this province.

We owe to him the fixation of the minimum price for oilseeds for purchase of the Food Ministry and the consequent creation of a separate fund for groundnuts. The fund has now reached the considerable figure of about Rs. 25 lakhs, and our province will get a fair slice of it. The Local Government, have, I understand, prepared a scheme of warehouse-building primarily for groundnuts for the utilisation of the Fund. The scheme is bound to be of supreme benefit to the primary producer. The absence of warehouses has always been a great handicap in the matter of promotion of agricultural finance not only within the province but throughout India. We shall also be glad if a portion of the fund is utilised for the opening of a research institute which will explore the possibilities of varied uses of groundnut.

The cessation of foreign trade has begun to cause great distress over wide areas of the country but let it not be considered that the situation has to be handled entirely by the Central Government. Although the Central Government has the first concern in maintaining the foreign trade whether for tariff purposes or for the general economic interest of the country, the Local Governments are also bound to prosper or suffer by the ebb and flow of foreign trade. I am glad that the Government of Madras have lost no time in realising this and have made a provision of Rs. 15 lakhs for the relief of handloom weavers of the presidency whose markets in Burma, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies have suddenly slipped out of their hands reducing them to starvation and utmost misery.

Food Supply: In times of storm and stress like the present when we are more or less isolated from the rest of the world we should intensify the production drive not only for war efforts but also for internal requirements. We can no more depend upon external sources of food supply but have to bring in every inch of waste land under cultivation and practise intensive cultivation as well as popularise the use of oilseeds and other cereals for food purposes. It may even be that the transport system will become more strained and provinces and districts will have to depend upon themselves for supplies. That is why we find more and more attention of the public paid to regional development of agriculture and horticulture. The importance of this question was well stressed in the thoughtful Presidential Address of Sir Chunilal Baichand Mehta at the recent sessions of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. This province has perhaps a greater burden than others in as much as it has to supplement the production of all the South Indian States as well as Ceylon which has unfortunately been cut off from other sources of supply. I am very glad that the Hon'ble Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker whom we are proud to claim as having been a distinguished member of our business community is bringing all his talent and experience into play in organising and directing this food production drive.

War Production: We have a feeling that our share in the production and supply of war requirements from South India is far from being adequate. However that be, we may be confident that the Hon'ble Sir Homi Mody with his profound knowledge of the industrial potentials of the country will soon set matters right. In this connection I may say that Mr. M.A. Srinivasan, the local Controller of Supplies, is doing good work to push to the fore-front South Indian products with increasing success. Probably hereafter the distance to Government Headquarters will not matter very much against us as the authorities are steadily carrying out decentralisation plans. Apart from the immediate requirements connected with the war it is necessary in the interest of India to adopt and work out a long range policy in regard to industrial production. Our thanks are due to our esteemed friend Sir Frederick James, who, during the last Budget session of the Central Assembly urged Government to organise the production of the country on a war footing in a separate department working in close collaboration with the Supply Department. I hope his sound words of advice would have satisfied the Government about the need for taking early steps to institute a separate Department

of Production with a view to organise the immense potentialities of this country.

Industrialisation: It is difficult for us to estimate at this stage, the progress of the new industries that have been started and are being started as a result of the useful research work done by our eminent scientist Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar under the auspices of the Industrial Research Council and the Industrial Research Utilisation Board of the Commerce Department. It is necessary that industrialists should keep in touch with the work of these two bodies and try to work up some of the schemes investigated and approved by them. South India could have shown better initiative and enterprise and emulated the inspiring example of our neighbouring state of Mysore where, mainly due to the fostering care of the Mysore Government a high level of industrial production and efficiency has been reached. Under the present conditions, industries are bound to spring up and develop, but industrialists and the investing public should show real enterprise. What appears to be a set-back in stocks and shares that we witness now is only a passing feature which is more or less the result of panic. As soon as the Government of India's new war risk insurance scheme for industrial plant and machinery is brought out there will be a welcome change in the industrial out-look throughout the country.

Price Control: One great evil in disturbed times is the mal-adjustment of prices. Both the Central Government and the Provincial Governments set about the problem at a very early stage. Though the several Price Control Conferences convened by the Government of India rightly came to the conclusion that cut and dry schemes of price control were not possible, the proceedings of the Conferences have had a very good moral effect in steadying prices. The public of Madras have particularly to thank the Local Government and the various local advisory committees for the way in which this problem was so smoothly tackled. The business community also co-operated with the authorities and prevented the usual maladjustment and consequent economic unrest. They showed themselves fully alive to the danger of undue profiteering and overtrading. In this connection may I advise the business community not to show undue alarm at the progress of the war and convert useful assets into cash and bullion for hoarding. We all know that the policy of hoarding is absolutely sterile and futile. It is their duty to the country to use their resources productively in the form of loans and advances for financing trade and industries to keep business running. The

mercantile community has been generally maintaining a certain degree of calmness and courage in the present difficult situation and I fully hope that they will continue to resist any scare and alarm that may spread. At the same time I shall not omit to mention that it is the duty of the Government at this juncture to take all necessary steps to ensure internal security of person and property. Population has been shifting to new centres, and goods and properties have been left in many places by the owners. Government must further strengthen the police force and also take other civil defence measures that will infuse complete confidence in the minds of the public. I am happy to note that the Government of Madras have shown themselves alive to this responsibility and provided one crore of rupees to be spent on civil defence.

Transport: This Chamber has on numerous occasions during the year made representation about shipping freight or wagon shortage or closing of railway lines and so on. We are quite sure that the authorities have not wantonly curtailed transport facilities and that whatever policy they have been following is dictated by the exigencies of the war. The business community have been the worst victims of the consequent dislocation of transport. But they have shown commendable courage and self sacrifice in taking the consequences. However, I urge the authorities to make up for the shortage by a liberal policy in road traffic. Subject to the requirements of the war all available motor vehicles in the country will have to be busy moving on the roads whether on oil power or on gas. The business community is as much interested as the Government in trimming up the transport system to meet the increased requirements of the situation and it was therefore a matter of disappointment to them that Government excluded non-officials from the Provincial Transport Advisory Board which was recently formed. There can be no doubt that the non-official element would give the Board the correct perspective on many questions that come up before them for decision.

Evacuees: During the last few weeks we had the painful spectacle of the return from neighbouring countries, a large number of our countrymen who have been deprived of their jobs, their businesses and everything that they possessed. They have been left without any means or hope for the future. Happily, all over the country, non-official organisations have spontaneously come into existence to supplement Government Agencies in administering relief to evacuees. In our Province, our popular Mayor promptly

gave the lead and constituted a Committee to afford relief. The Mayor and his Committee have done exceedingly good work and we are confident that their humanitarian work will continue with unabated zeal and energy.

Here it may be said that we have to look beyond giving temporary relief. Many useful suggestions have been made by various bodies and persons regarding future relief measures also. We hope that the Central and the Provincial Governments concerned will take early and efficient steps in that direction too. The Government and the people of the country have a clear duty to do their best for those who have shown initiative and enterprise in going abroad and who have been mainstay of thousands of relatives and dependants left at home.

I consider that the very first step to be taken by Government in this direction is to open a register in which should be entered particulars of all evacuees. The maintenance of such a register will help Government in deciding the form of relief to be given to the different groups. In regard to relief measures may I suggest that new lands must be brought under cultivation, irrigation facilities provided, road works undertaken and factories opened. I am glad that the financial position of our province is sound to admit the undertaking of all such public utility concerns. The international restriction scheme for tea, rubber, and sugar should be given up for the time being and cultivation must be increased on a very large scale to enable more work being given to the working classes which will also help to fill the gap in the international supply of those commodities.

With regard to Indians resident in areas involved in hostilities, Government of India should take all necessary steps to ensure safety of life and property. Those who are left there particularly in Burma are now being subjected to looting, arson and murder. It is absolutely essential that the Government of India should demand of the Government of Burma and the Military authorities in Burma to give immediate military protection to safeguard the lives of Indian civil population. This is a very modest request based on humanitarian principle. If this is done immediately, it will partially solve the evacuation problem. Indians in Burma are more afraid of internal disorder than of the war situation. Here it may be said that it is a matter for gratification that the portfolio relating to Indian Overseas is in the hands of our veteran politician the Hon'ble Mr. M.S. Aney. He has been doing his best for the evacuees and let me hope that he will be able to still further increase the relief measures and also

ensure the safety of life and property of Indians abroad particularly in Burma.

In this connection particular mention has to be made of the demand for income-tax made in India on persons having businesses in Malaya, Burma and the Far East. The principals in India have besides losing their running businesses in those places, suffered great loss of property. At a time when they are not able to make contact with their agents and employees whose whereabouts are not known when their books of accounts and stock in trade and properties are in enemy hands and when they have suffered infinite losses of which no correct estimate can be formed under the present circumstances, it will be impossible for them to pay taxes or even submit statements or returns or adduce evidence in income-tax proceedings. This Chamber, several other Chambers, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and a special Deputation have made representations to the Government of India on this matter and let us hope that Government will agree to postpone assessments and collection of tax until conditions become normal.

Lease and Lend Scheme: We are glad that the Lease and Lend scheme of the United States of America is being applied to India and that our esteemed friend Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar has played a conspicuous part in the matter. There is some apprehension on the part of the public about the actual working of the Lease and Lend programme in terms of India's ultimate interests. I hope that our able Finance Member, the Hon'ble Sir Jeremy Raisman will, with his customary clarity of vision and clearness of exposition of financial problems, issue a press communique setting forth in detail the transactions that have taken place and will take place within the framework of the Lease and Lend Scheme.

USA Technical Advisory Mission: With reference to the need for increasing production all round I feel glad that the USA Mission will shortly be visiting this country to increase production of war materials. The announcement of this visit has no doubt raised apprehension in some quarters as to the real intentions of the Mission, which is mainly due to the fact that there is no information to the public as to how far it will benefit India. I do hope that Government will take an early opportunity to fully enlighten the public. I consider that the USA Mission should collaborate with a Delegation representative of the industrialists of India and arrive at a common acceptable scheme of industrialisation.

Before I close, I desire to thank the Vice-Presidents, Members of the Committee, Sub-Committees, and Members of the Chamber for their hearty co-operation. I should like to express my appreciation of the work of the Secretary and the Staff of the Chamber during the year.

Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's services to Trade and Industry were not confined to the South alone but were in demand at national level too, at a crucial juncture in the country's fortunes. The Second World War was still on. The country was in the final throes of its struggle for freedom. The challenges were stunning. Kumara Rajah was not slow to give the lead.

Burma Indians

In the sixteenth session of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi, on 27th and 28th March 1943, with G.L. Mehta in the Chair, a resolution on the position of Indians in Burma was moved by Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar and passed.

The resolution urged the Government of India to see that the status, position and rights of Indians in Burma of the future were the same as hitherto, asked that plans for reconstruction of Burma, now under enemy occupation, should be undertaken in close consultation and agreement with the Government of India who, in turn, should be guided by Indian Public and Commercial opinion.

The Federation deplored the delay in the settlement of claims of Indian merchants in Burma under the Burma War Risks' Insurance Scheme and in respect of goods supplied as requisitioned by the Burma Government and requested the Government of India to press upon the Burma Government the imperative necessity of arranging an early settlement of those claims.

The Federation emphasized the need for paying adequate compensation to Indian nationals for the losses sustained by them by the application of the 'Scorched Earth' policy or as a result of enemy action or war operations.

The Federation also stressed the need for giving allowance to evacuees more generously, promptly, regularly until the end

of the war as well as providing employment for such of them as were in need of it and urged that facilities be given to Indian merchants who has business connections in Burma to carry on business in India.

Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar was elected President of the Federation for the next year (1943-44).

The following report of the Annual Session of the Federation held at New Delhi on 4th March 1944 reflects the problems of the period and the serious thought that the captains of industry gave to these problems at the time.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce began its annual meeting at New Delhi on the 4th March 1944 with Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar in the chair.

Before delivering the presidential address, the Kumara Rajah made a reference to the death of Mrs. Gandhi (Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi passed away on 22nd February 1944 at the Aga Khan Palace, Poona) paying a tribute to her, he said she was the embodiment of Indian womanhood and that her memory would always be held in respect for generations to come. He moved a resolution of condolence which was passed, the audience standing.

Delivering the Presidential Address Sir Muthiah referred at the outset to the favourable turn the war was taking on the different theatres and said with regard to the political situation in India that 'the Indian commercial community has always held the view, that the political advancement of the country has much to do with its economic prosperity. Our commercial organisations, although they may eschew active politics cannot afford to remain absolutely imperious to the march of events connected with Indian freedom. We have as patriotic Indians to assist in all legitimate and constitutional efforts that aim at the political progress of the country. That our country should have been denied this atmosphere is indeed a tragedy. Opinions may differ as to who or what may be responsible for the position. A discussion of the blame to be apportioned does not at this stage serve any useful purpose, and I need but stress here, that it is the duty of every one to do all that lies in his power to end the present state of affairs.

Almost every political party and leader has demanded the release of the political leaders who are now kept in detention. Whatever might have been the justification for detaining these leaders, I feel

the time has come for the Government to release them. Personally I do not think their release would embarrass war efforts and I am afraid it must have come as a great disappointment to many in the country when Lord Wavell declared in the Assembly the Government's decision not to release political leaders. There is however hope in his assurance that the conclusions he has now come to may not be regarded as final.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ESSENTIAL

When I say a representative and National Government, I mean a Government composed of representative leaders of all important political groups and interests and not of any one political party, however, influential it may be for the time being. A truly National Government must embrace all the divergent sections of the country. What is needed now is a completely representative Government in which all important political groups and interests are included, and which will aim mainly at the effective prosecution of the war, the defence of the country and its future development. We are on the threshold of the most momentous period in history when the call comes to every nation to play its part to achieve a great destiny not only for itself but for the entire human race. India too must respond to this call. Whatever may be the reaction in the political world to the Assembly speech of the Viceroy, it must be recognised by all that His Excellency was very sincere when he declared from his military experience that no objective could ever be gained without the fullest co-operation of all concerned. The Cripps offer is still open and it is my strong conviction that with goodwill all-round, the offer may not only help to unite us but also bring about real transfer of power to Indians.

THE FOOD SITUATION

Sir Muthiah Chettiar then turned to the food problem facing the country and deplored the fact that political capital was sought to be made out of the tragic and harrowing miseries of the people by different factions within India itself and by British reactionaries whose undemocratic faith still stood firmly rooted in spite of the lessons of the war and unmistakable aspirations of the people of this country. He traced the policy followed by Government since 1930 with regard to agriculture and said that they were throughout the period negligent of the interests of the peasant and the agriculturist. He pleaded for radical change in policy and said that the Government of the day should always think of the real interests of the people of the country.

It was a matter of considerable gratification that the Viceroy had recognised that "the food problem must be our first concern. What was required was a proper control of the prices of foodstuffs at a level which would give to the agriculturist a fair price, and to the consumer, food stuffs at a price which he could afford. Rationing in all urban areas irrespective of whether they were deficit or surplus areas was also necessary, if equality of sacrifice at a time of stress was to be imposed on the whole population of the country. There was no incompatibility between a system of rationing and harnessing it to the usual trade channels. It was to be hoped that the policy of using the existing links of wholesalers and retailers for the procurement and distribution of foodgrains subject to any safeguards by way of supervisory control would be fully restored without any more hazardous amateur handling of this vital matter of food supply by Revenue officials.

With regard to the Government's drive against profiteering, the President said that the Federation had been whole-heartedly with the Government in any well thought out schemes to control prices or to prevent profiteering but they would not agree to ill-conceived and ill-digested proposals which far from achieving the objects in view merely tended to annoy and harrass the general trading population.

PROBLEM OF INFLATION

But this problem was closely linked with that of inflation and it was only during the last twelve months that Government spokesmen had expressed themselves in panicky terms of inflation. Their measures to counter it have been equally panicky and not the result of mature deliberation. Our currency has undoubtedly expanded but it would be wrong to measure the evils of inflation merely on the basis of currency expansion. The evils of inflation lie in the mounting prices and in the scarcity of the ordinary articles of consumption. To the fullest possible extent the evils of such inflation should be met by making available to the public large quantities of gold which could be obtained from the Allied Nations. As regards anti-inflationary measures in general a control of the price of foodstuffs and other necessities of life on reasonable levels and a proper rationing of these articles appear logically to be the first step that should be taken by the Government to counteract inflation. The next step should be to provide the working classes with those necessities of life which will help them to expand their increased incomes with profit and use to themselves.

Apparently the Government of India had come to the same conclusion but in actual practice they seem to have entirely missed the point when they decided to import certain consumer goods as a measure of anti-inflation. Without consulting any of the interests concerned the Government of India have framed a list of articles which ought to be imported as consumer goods for anti-inflationary purposes and in that list of articles Johnny Walker leads all the rest. It is not by the importation of such luxury goods which the rich want to purchase that the evils of inflation can be tackled. It is really by affording to the common man what he needs most and on which he can utilise his newly obtained purchasing power that a check can be put to the evils of inflation.

IMPORT OF CONSUMER GOODS HARMFUL TO INDUSTRIALISATION

The consumer goods which, it is stated, the Government had decided to import not only were not calculated to check the inflationary evil but may prove positively harmful to the growing industrialisation of the country. It may be remembered that the Government at the beginning of the war promised to safeguard industries which were developed during the war and it was categorically stated that the nascent industries should not be left high and dry to fend for themselves, and probably to be wiped out of existence by competition. Now that the shipping situation is a little easier and the possibilities of import better, the authorities already seem to be tending towards the old practice of preferring imported articles to indigenously manufactured articles. It is imperative that the Government should at once declare their clear and unambiguous policy in this matter. The industries that have been started virtually at the instance of the Government, and have come to their rescue under dire circumstances must be assured that they will be kept alive during the continuance of the war period, and that they will be adequately safeguarded against unfair competition at the end of the war.

EXPORT TRADE MONOPOLISED BY FOREIGN CONCERNS

As regards the policy regarding exports from the country, the President observed that after the fall of France, the Government decided without fairness to existing export and import interests, that only those who were doing business for three years before the war should be permitted to continue business on the basis of their average during that period. This involved a certain amount of injustice to those who had come newly into the field and also involved, owing to the methods adopted by the Government the substitution in many cases of banking houses and a few shippers

whose names appeared in the register of the Custom House, for the real businessman who canvassed orders took the risks and were responsible for the export and import trade of the country. Notwithstanding this injustice, the Indian business community reconciled itself to this new order as a short-term arrangement. They were now in the fifth year of the war and to-day were faced with the fact that a virtual monopoly had been created for a few big importing and exporting houses, mainly foreign and Indian businessmen were gradually being squeezed out altogether from India's foreign trade. It was an intolerable position requiring early revision at the hands of the Government. It was time that a system of licensing was introduced which would give a fair share of the business to Indian Commercial Houses.

AVATAR OF EAST INDIA COMPANY

In this connection Sir Muthiah Chettiar referred to the activities of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation in this country. In spite of repeated demands, His Majesty's Government have been unable to give a guarantee that its activities would be ended immediately after armistice was declared. No wonder there is grave apprehension among commercial interests that the UKCC may prove to be another Avatar of the East India Company and corner all the external trade of this country through its own organisation. The Federation had therefore asked that the Government should remove this grave injustice and restore freedom of trade wherever it was possible for Indians to make direct contacts. The least that the Government can do is to promote an Indian Commercial Corporation which will be solely responsible for the purchase of goods in this country and which would if necessary hand those commodities at port to the UKCC at reasonable prices the UKCC then taking charge of those commodities and delivering them to the Government or the people of the other countries concerned. This is what has been done in other countries like Australia, where the UKCC is not allowed to operate internally but is allowed to take the goods at port and transport and sell them at reasonable prices to foreign countries.

UTILISATION OF STERLING BALANCES

Sir Muthiah Chettiar then turned to the question of sterling balances in England and to their possible utilisation after the war. Those balances are now in the region of about £700 million and may amount to £1000 million before the end of the war. Certain articles in the newspapers and even in economic journals tend to give the impression that somehow or other this accumulation of

sterling balances in favour of India reflects a gross profiteering on the part of India and that is virtually tantamount to India not having played its proper part and taken its share of burden in the prosecution of the war. It should be remembered that a good portion of these sterling balances represents the value of goods sold by this country to Great Britain, countries of the Middle East, America and even Australia. For these, we have had hardly any return at all by way of the importation of goods. All these materials and services have practically not been paid for except by the I.O.U. which His Majesty's Government have given us and which represents the so-called sterling balances. Our troops serving overseas have according to the financial arrangement between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government, to be paid for by Great Britain, but we have been issuing rupee notes towards their pay for which Great Britain has again given us only I.O.U.s. All these factors have gone to make up the sterling balances. Verily it can be stated that these sterling balances represent the toil and sweat of the people and the blood and tears of millions of our countrymen. To turn round now for *The Economist* or any other paper or individuals and speak of these sterling balances as an unfair advantage which India has gained over England is to put it mildly to show rankest ingratitude possible.

CHARGE OF PROFITEERING UNFAIR

When they talk of profiteering by India in the accumulation of these sterling balances, I wonder, said Sir Muthiah Chettiar, whether they realise what a boomerang they are forging for themselves. Every article supplied to the British Government has been at controlled prices — controlled by the Government of India. It is well-known that from the very start of the war, the Supply Department through its contracts and otherwise has controlled these prices for the benefit of every nation except our own. I wonder whether there is any other country among the Allied Nations which has charged less for its overseas customers and more for the citizens of its own country. It is in these circumstances that the charge is lightly and glibly made that India has exploited the needs of the Allied Nations and by profiteering has built up these huge sterling balances.

NEED FOR BUILDING UP DOLLAR RESOURCES

'In dealing with sterling balances,' continued the President, 'one naturally comes across the problem of dollar balances. During the war, India has had a favourable balance of trade with the United

States and could have built up fairly large dollar balances. In the interest of the war effort, the Government of India decided that all the dollar resources should enter into a common Empire Pool. The time has now come when this arrangement should be reviewed and radically revised. The Empire Pool has played its part; Lease-Lend arrangements and reverse Lease-Lend arrangements enable Great Britain to get its requirements without having recourse to dollars to any large extent. The Government of India should therefore build its own dollar resources on at least current balances with the United States and should not allow these balances to be merged in any Empire Pool. We should like to have the assurance of the Finance Member that this will be done.'

The President then referred briefly to the international monetary schemes and said: 'We are quite willing to enter into any international arrangement if proposals are considered, not with a view to stabilise the prosperity and the financial strength of any one country or group of countries but with a view to raising the standard of living all over the world.'

The President also stressed the need for an early and radical revision of the entire transport system of the country, its railways, shipping, both internal and coastal and the airways.

POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION PLANS

Sir Muthiah Chettiar proceeded to discuss at length the problem of post-war reconstruction of India and said that the various problems that would face us during the period of reconstruction would require the greatest care and attention in their solution and call for the advice and recommendations of non-official opinion to help the Government to come to a decision. He hoped that the reconstruction would be planned on an all India basis and that the various schemes of reconstruction would be characterised by thoroughness, bold planning and a proper appreciation of the needs of the country.

Let us have no more of the blind leading the blind, observed Sir Muthiah Chettiar in conclusion. Let us have a bold and determined effort to put the economy of this country on a sound basis. I shall be told that all this needs money. It is common knowledge that money is always found for war but never for a fight against the more remorseless enemies of ignorance, disease and starvation. We in India are willing to make all possible sacrifice in our economy, if only well considered plans for vitalising our national life and bettering the lot of the common man are placed before the people of this country so as to capture their imagination and

inspire their faith. Such a plan for the building up of the India of tomorrow is the long term plan of economic development for India which was recently published over the signature of Sir Purushotamdas Thakurdas and others. On behalf of the Federation and my own, I wish to say how deeply they have laid the country in debt to them by their masterly plan of economic reconstruction. It is noteworthy that in his speech to the Indian Legislature the other day, H.E. the Viceroy said that the Government were examining the plan with interest. To think that the plan contains a fully-hatched practical scheme complete in every detail, is to miss the point of its importance. It gives rather a vision, an inspiration. It is a mine of suggestions based on a mass of facts carefully marshalled and weighed. It is a scheme which contains within it flexible basic principles of reconstruction, which if wisely followed and firmly put into practice, will, I have no doubt, assure the happiness and welfare of India of to-morrow. It is in this light therefore that I welcome the publication of this plan and congratulate the authors on the great and timely service they have rendered to the country.'

THE EMPIRE DOLLAR POOL

Sir Muthiah Chettiar, the President in his address to the session, referring to the Empire Dollar Pool, said that since he wrote his speech the Finance Member had announced that His Majesty's Government had agreed to set aside each year from now onwards a part of the dollars accruing from India's exports to the USA apart and in addition to our current dollar requirements which were met from the Empire Dollar Pool under the Sterling Area arrangements. 'While appreciating the Finance Member's efforts in this matter, I would like to observe that India's current dollar requirements have, so far, been fully covered from our own exports to the USA which, in fact, have provided a favourable trade balance in our trade with the USA and as such, the Finance Member's statement provides only a partial assurance and would not fully and adequately meet India's legitimate claims.'

TRIBUTES TO OUTGOING PRESIDENT

The Federation also adopted a warm vote of thanks recording the services rendered by the outgoing President Sir Muthiah Chettiar. Moving the vote of thanks, Mr J.S. Setalvad paid glowing tributes to the work of Sir Muthiah, both as President of the Federation and in other spheres, in the cause of the country and of commerce and Industry in particular.

Muthiah Chettiar's connection with Chambers of Commerce was close and constant. He was intimately associated for many years with the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry. His knowledge of Commerce and Industry and their problems was based on personal experience, which was close and upto date and many men in business often picked his brains with profit. He represented the Chamber of Commerce on the Railway Rates Advisory Committee and the Madras Income-Tax Board of Referees. His knowledge of Finance, both theoretical and practical, was the subject of considered encomium. For instance, a retiring President spoke of Muthiah Chettiar in the following terms:

You will all remember how every successive year for some years past, we have been relentlessly pursuing him for acceptance of the Presidentship. Having regard to the very keen interest he has been taking in the affairs of the Chamber we could hardly misunderstand him when he disappointed us each time. We are all singularly happy that he was free this year to accept the office and members of the Chamber have done well in electing him unanimously to the Presidential Chair. To all appearance the ensuing year is bound to be one of continued hardship to businessmen, but I am sure that under his guidance, organising capacity and driving power, we shall have a very eventful and successful year in the Chamber's life.

1941-42 was a very eventful year. Muthiah Chettiar took steps to ensure that restrictions on imports and exports were reduced to a minimum.

While he was President of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he was keen on Government starting an Automobile industry. He observed:

This province is one of the foremost in the whole of India in respect of development of its electrical resources, and electrical energy has been almost exclusively taken in the factories and mills in this Province, thanks to the success of the factories and Hydro-electric scheme. Similarly, there is plentiful supply of technical labour, owing to the existence of the Railway and other workshops, foundries, textile mills, tanneries, sugar mills and so on. A sea-coast town like Madras has many advantages for the starting of industries as the problem of transport in this vast continent, as well as for export to foreign countries, could be more easily tackled

by alternative means of transport at the ports. There is also, for instance, Mettur where there is the Hydro-electric system and also the Mettur dam across the river Cauveri. Mettur is in many respects a most favourable place for the location of the factory. Mettur has cheap electric power and there is plenty of water supply. The textile and chemical industries are fast growing in Mettur. The many textile mills of the Coimbatore District are all within 50 miles of Mettur, in Salem District, or any place in Coimbatore district will lend itself admirably for the location of the industry. The proximity of rubber production which is so much concentrated in South India is also a great factor making for minimum cost of production and for the ultimate success of the factory. Neither is there any doubt about the prospects of successfully establishing the paint industry in this Province having regard to the ample supplies of raw products necessary for vegetable oil, or barytes from the Ceded Districts and of lac from the Government reserve forests.

This province has no mean place in the matter of supply of industrial capital. The progress of the textile industry, for which this Province has been found to have great facilities, will prove beyond all doubt how capital and enterprise have readily seized the opportunity to promote an industry on a very large scale. Though there may not be a large number of rich men as in Bombay or Calcutta to enable each of them to invest large sums in the industry, the Chamber would like to bring to the notice of the Government, with great force, that in the Madras Presidency there are thousands of middle class well-to-do people who are prepared to invest in industrial concerns. The Chamber would also like to bring to the notice of the Government that in the industrial concerns recently started in Mysore, there are a large number of share-holders from Madras Province without any control over the affairs of these concerns. Similarly if the automobile industry is started in Mysore there will again be a large number of people from the Madras Presidency who will be contributing towards the share capital without having any effective voice over the management of the concern. The Government of Madras have been in a position to lay by large sums from the yearly revenue due to surplus of revenue over expenditure. Such savings have been placed in a separate fund presumably for some future Ministry to use. It is only proper for the Government of Madras to divert them towards the establishment of the automobile industry which will be of lasting benefit to the people of this part of the country in particular.

In his capacity as the President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 1942-43, he won their regard expressed in these terms:

It is very gratifying that the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce in many matters gave prompt and correct lead and also helped us very much in our correspondence with the Government of India on various matters. We are proud, that one of the distinguished ex-Presidents of the Chamber and now an active member of the Committee, Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad, who had distinguished himself as an able administrator, popular Minister and later as the Leader of the Opposition in the Local Legislative Assembly, has been unanimously elected President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. This fact, that he has been elected as the accredited leader of the Indian Commercial Community, speaks of his quality of head and heart and the confidence which the business community has reposed in him. We can be sure that with such guidance available, the interests of the business community will be well protected in the difficult days ahead. His presence in the Committee will be a source of guidance and inspiration to us. On my behalf and, on behalf of the members of the Chamber, I offer him our hearty congratulations and sincere good wishes, and the best way to express our appreciation is to co-operate with the Federation in all its activities. For more reasons than one you may expect that the coming year will be a much more taxing and difficult year, but we may all rest assured that the President of the Federation being not only on the spot but also on the Executive of this Chamber is a guarantee of harmonious and efficient work to protect the interests of the Indian Commercial community.

Extracts from His Presidential Speech on 4th March 1944:

Muthiah Chettiar, who saw the comic aspect of it, said:

Without consulting any of the interests concerned who are in the best position to know what sort of consumer articles are required, either through import or through indigenous production the Brain-Trust of the Government of India appear to have sat down and framed a list of articles which ought to be imported as consumer goods for anti-inflationary purposes, and in that list of articles Johnny Walker leads all the rest. The fact is that those who know little of the conditions of rural life and the needs of the people whose horizon is the Connaught Circus and whose list of consumer goods is framed by high society in Delhi are not really in

a position to solve such problems without proper advice and guidance. I have shown you where the real evils of inflation lie. Are you going to check that inflationary evil by importing Cuticura soap for the use of the coal miners in Jharia, tooth-paste and tooth brushes for the labourers from Gorakhpur, and face-powder and scent for the belles of Garu and Luzhai Hills? No wonder the tonsorial experts of Ferozepur are reported to have been considerably perturbed by the activities of the Government and to have passed a resolution at a recent meeting of theirs asking the Government of India in the interests of their ancient trade and hereditary occupation, to stop the import of safety razor blades and not to think of the establishment of such an industry in their post-war reconstruction schemes. Surely it is not by the importation of luxury goods which the rich want to purchase that the evils of inflation can be tackled. It is really by affording to the common man what he needs most and on which he can utilise his newly obtained purchasing power, goods like foodgrains, timber for his house, bricks, kerosene, and cloth to wear, that a check can be put to the evils of inflation.

The consumer goods which it is stated the Government have decided to import, not only are not calculated to check the inflationary evil but may prove positively harmful to the growing industrialisation of this country. The Federation has protested against this and has asked for a reversal of policy on the part of the Government.

On the question of Sterling balances he had sound views to which he gave clear and convincing expression:

The Federation has already dealt with the question of utilisation of sterling balances and I now feel it my duty to refer to a new phase of the question which has recently been discussed in the United Kingdom and even in the United States of America. Certain articles in the newspapers and even in economic journals tend to give the impression that somehow or other this accumulation of sterling balances in favour of India is something of which India cannot be proud, that it reflects a gross profiteering on the part of India and that it is virtually tantamount to India not having played its proper part and taken its share of burden in the prosecution of the war. I would not have taken serious notice of this kind of criticism or comments, if I had not felt that in some circles at least, not necessarily Governmental there is a tendency to ignore the origin of the sterling balances. How have these sterling balances grown up and what do they represent? Great Britain

required and still requires a number of articles from this country to provide for its own economic life or for its war purposes. A good portion of these sterling balances represents the value of goods sold by this country to Great Britain. We have been exporting to Great Britain hundreds of millions of pounds of tea valued at over £ 100 million during the last three years; we have been exporting jute goods worth millions of pounds, also pig iron, mica, manganese, ground-nuts and other oil seeds, coffee and rubber. For these, we have had hardly any return at all by way of the importation of goods.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Day's Work

Sir Muthiah Chettiar, as already stated, was endowed with many gifts. Memory was one of them. Not a memory which is just a store-house of good things and a great deal of rubbish. It was more like a sieve, retaining the grain and rejecting the chaff. He kept no diary, made no note of happenings or of things seen and heard. They were all engraved on the tablets of his memory too; remarkable indeed. Muthiah Chettiar had seen 'cities of men and governments,' held converse with all sorts and conditions of men and could recall them in after years with surprising ease. Books he loved but had no time to read them except casually. Therein lay his weakness. He had visitors all day long and nearly half the night long, very few of whom had the sense to leave where their business was over. And he could never bring himself to give them a hint to leave. One hint which most of them took literally was a polite enquiry if they would care for a cup of coffee. Of course they would, and most of them did, care for more than a cup of coffee, biscuits and cakes and snacks of every description which were offered. Sir Annamalai Chettiar's one regret was his son could never bring himself to say 'No' to an unwanted visitor or a visitor who stayed too long.

Muthiah Chettiar loved to read good books. Whenever he read a good review, he could not rest till he had read the book reviewed. He rang up Higginbothams for a copy if they had one. If it was available, sent a car to fetch it. When it came, he turned over the pages and if on some page, he saw something which caught his eye, he read it and a page or two following, then turned over the pages, read a paragraph here and a paragraph there, made a significant remark and handed it to a Secretary to keep it safe until call for. And he did call for it sometimes. To revert, his memory was such that years after a given event, he could recall it with all the attendant circumstances.

Once, at a meeting of a Municipal Council — Tiruchirappalli, I think — replying to an address of welcome, somebody said rather deprecatingly that in Councils and Committees there was much talk, mostly trivial and very little to the point. That was said during a preliminary tea, Sir Muthiah remembered a significant statement relevant to the point.* It was in a book among a collection of books in his suit-case. That was a book — or was it a speech in a book — by Lord Bryce. When his turn came to say thanks, he read out what Bryce had said:

Self-governing institutions help to develop common sense, reasonableness, judgement and sociality. They are potential schools of citizenship and they constitute the strength of free nations.

At the same meeting, he recommended big organisations to have Standing Committees as in the case of the Corporation of Madras. The Corporation had been an excellent training ground for him as one whose work lay in public bodies. He hadn't been a Mayor for nothing.

Muthiah Chettiar was supposed to lunch at one, but he rarely took it before three, unless he happened to have guests, when he advanced the time by about an hour.

He loved to rest for a few minutes but he did not always get the minutes. The telephone gave him no peace and once he got the telephone on his hand, he gave it no rest either. There was no getting away from it. It was, let us confess it, all in the day's work. The telephone kept ringing at all hours of the day and half the nights.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar had a strong sense of family and consideration for his kinsmen. Everyday, in the forenoon, after his visitors left, he went to the women's apartments, and spent an hour or two, with his wife, sisters and cousins and other relatives. His wife, Rani Meyyammai Achi, was wrapped up in her husband and made his comfort her main concern. When he was in the company of his wife and near relations, he was all

* One thing which made him an excellent talker in the company of friends was anecdotes of well-known personalities which he detailed with wit and humour.

smiles. He laughed and joked - all the time. His laugh was a joy to behold. He was exuberantly cheerful. Not boisterous but hearty, a smile which was half-a-sneer, not obsequious or a grudging concession to duty.

To those of his relations who were in trouble, he was ready with a word of comfort or advice and financial assistance, wherever necessary.

He had some good friends, all hand-picked and they were always at hand, a relief and a relaxation. Those nearest to him, apart from old time agents, employees and family servants were Narayana Nambiar, a close friend, and M.P. Damodaran both from Malabar. He nominated Nambiar to the Annamalai University Syndicate and, when he passed away, nominated Damodaran to it. The two were loyal to Sir Muthiah Chettiar and Damodaran, particularly, was helpful in handling University matters.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar was one of the kindest masters that ever lived. His agents and business assistants were loyal to the core. They won his affection and confidence. They had been in Sir Annamalai Chettiar's service, and continued in Sir Muthiah Chettiar's. A long tradition of faithful service, and cordial appreciation on the part of their employers, marked their relationship. Just to mention a few, there was Padmashri Dr. V. Vaidyasubramania Aiyar,* a gem of a man, pious and charitably disposed. He who assisted Sir Muthiah Chettiar's son and successor, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, till recently, has also passed away.

Mr. D.V. Venkateswaran, a most cheerful and willing friend and assistant, passed away three years ago, much to the regret of Sir Muthiah Chettiar and all the family.

Sir Annamalai's stenographer, Arumugham, is still in service, bravely carrying on at Chettinad House. If I should refer to others and those serving in the family's business establishments, this account will never stop.

* Dharmatma Padmashri Dr. V. Vaidyasubramania Aiyar entered Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's service as his Secretary in 1930. He was his trusted agent and adviser. His piety and generosity were such that he had won the esteem and gratitude of many people. And, on top of all, the blessings of the revered Kamakoti and Sringeri Mutts. He was an institution by himself.

The family servants were a feature of Chettinad House. They had succeeded their fathers in its service. The mutual affection of master and servant was most pleasing to witness. They reminded one of old Adam in *As You Like It* when, with faltering and slow steps, he accompanied the young son of his old master:

Master, lead on and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with love and loyalty.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

In the Legislature

The Legislature was the field where Muthiah Chettiar laboured almost continuously from 1937 to 1983 except for the period from 1939 to 1946 during the Second World War when the Governor and his Advisers ran the Administration and for two other broken spells. Of course he had had a spell in the old Legislative Council under Diarchy before 1937 right from 1929, being the elected representative of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The unanimous election of Rajkumar Muthiah by the premier Commercial association of South India — one so young — was no mean compliment. And Muthiah Chettiar's entire legislative career is a justification of the enormous confidence the electorate had in him. He was returned to the new post in the Madras Legislative Assembly by the Nattukkottai Nagarathar's Association in 1937 and he was re-elected unanimously to represent the same constituency for a further term in 1946. In 1952 he was returned again to the Assembly from the Tirupathur constituency. In 1957 he was returned at the head of the polls as a Congress candidate, from Karaikudi. Later, he was nominated to the Tamilnadu Legislative Council in 1980 by the Governor of Madras and he served on the Council till 1983. One may safely say he was cut out for the Legislature. He fitted into the environment, moved easily and, in the friendliest way, with his fellow-legislators. Wealth and social status did not go to his head. He was a gentleman every inch of him and his gentlemanliness was not just conformity with current social codes. He got on excellently with those he had to do with. His rich experience of men and affairs, ability to see the other man's point of view and reach agreed decisions made him a valuable asset in the legislative field. Muthiah Chettiar took his legislative responsibilities seriously. He was assiduous, studied the questions before the Legislature in detail, strove to understand conflicting points of view and to express his conclusions with a forthrightness which gained rather than lost by the scrupulously temperate way in which he

expressed his views. He was particularly good at supplementaries which, shot off on the spur of the moment, helped to focus attention on the heart of a problem. Perhaps Muthiah Chettiar's most engaging characteristic was his unwillingness or his incapacity to hurt anybody's feelings. He was one of the urbanest of men and the soft answer which precludes wrath came to him naturally. While he readily appreciated and lent his support to measures which he was satisfied were in the public interests, he was not slow to condemn what he thought was hasty or ill-conceived. He never lost touch with realities but displayed always foresight and a clear appreciation of the facts of life. He did not mince his words; at the same time he was courteous and fair.

That explains why he was rated highly by persons as differently constituted, as, say, the Rajah of Panagal, C. Rajagopalachariar, Basheer Ahmed Sayyid, Abdul Hamid Khan, Sir A.T. Pannirselvam and Sir Mohamed Usman. His utterances in the Legislature were well-reasoned and moderate in tone. C. Rajagopalachariar, not by any means an easy man to please, had the highest regard for him and gave expression to it not only in private but also on the floor of the House. Muthiah Chettiar was a Minister of State for a short while, and office did not make him cocky in air or speech. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar once said of Muthiah Chettiar in a public meeting in the Annamalai University that he never over-stated his case. He was, in Kalidasa's phrase, *Satyaya mita-bhashi*, moderate in speech in the interests of truth.

The story of Muthiah Chettiar's long experience in the Legislature will not be complete without a flash-back into the pre-1937 period, when he was a member of the Justice Party then in power, and he represented the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Madras on the old Madras Legislative Council under diarchy. Two references should be adequate to bring out the quality of the debates of the time and Rajkumar Muthiah Chettiar's weighty contributions to these debates.

Speaking on 29th January 1936, on the Madras Debt Conciliation Bill No.9 of 1934, Rajkumar Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Suppose a person borrowed in 1900 a sum of Rs.1000 under a mortgage and paid interest of a few hundred rupees and has not paid the principal, but renewed the bond somewhere about 1910 and again somewhere in 1920. A suit is filed in 1926. It may be that a suit is filed for Rs.4000 and another for Rs.500 for interest. Is it open to the debtor to say that he borrowed only Rs.1000 in 1900? Under the provisions of this enactment, is he bound to pay Rs.2000, though he had paid interest during the previous 26 years even more than Rs.2,000 and claim a further repayment from the person who lent the money first? I shall just illustrate an extreme case. Even assuming the whole transaction is re-opened from the beginning, it will come to more than Rs.2000 and wherever it is renewed, the renewed amount should be made the capital. There may be instances where the debtor might have paid a certain portion of interest and for the rest executed a renewed bond. Is it not fair that the amount becomes the principal; and if the debtor had returned the entire amount, the creditor would certainly have lent that amount to another person and earned interest in respect of the whole transaction. After all, one has to be careful that a suit is not filed for more than double the amount mentioned in the document. That is the object of the amendment. I do not think I am cutting against the main provisions of the bill in regard to the time limit.

Reacting to the interpretation of *tavanai* by Mr. K.R. Venkatarama Ayyar, the Hon'ble Member from Madura, Rajkumar Muthiah Chettiar pointed out:

With regard to what has been stated by the Hon. Member from Madura who knows *tavanai* transactions so much, I am very sorry to differ from him as to his interpretation of *tavanai*. With his long experience, I am sure he would have seen cases where *tavanai* transaction is considered very sacred; and in regard to date as to the payment of interest, it is considered to be the date on which interest automatically accrues or the principal and interest is paid. I am referring to *tavanai* alone because it is peculiar to a community of bankers who are accustomed to banking transactions and who are very careful about keeping credit on particular dates of payment; but I am referring to ordinary transactions which are covered by mortgages. Even in such cases there will be hardship felt. That is the object of my amendment.

In the General discussions in the Legislative Council on 2nd March 1936 on the Budget for 1936-37 Rajkumar Muthiah Chettiar brought out his reactions, particularly on the question of rural indebtedness:

Sir, the Budget that has been presented to us is for the interim period between the old and the new order of things. That being so, the Hon. the Finance Member was right in saying that it would not be expedient to embark on new projects. As he has admitted and as everyone admits, though the downward trend of the provincial finances has been arrested the depression has not been got through fully. As businessmen, we have felt the depression more than anybody else. I do agree that the ryots also have suffered equally along with other communities who are interested in trade and business.

Now, Sir, with regard to the question of rural indebtedness, I shall only say this much, that if the Act that we have passed quite recently should be a success, it all depends upon the working of it. I see that 20 lakhs has been set apart for the purpose. I saw a few days ago in the newspapers that they have begun the work in two taluks and that a lakh of rupees were spent so far, but I should say that the progress that has been made is rather slow. I would urge on the Member in charge of the department to set up the machinery in all the districts in order to implement the provisions of the Act and see that not only 20 lakhs is given but more is given for relieving the agriculturists. Sir, considering the indebtedness of our province which ranges somewhere between 150 to 200 crores, this 20 lakhs is only a drop in the ocean. Of course they have made a beginning and I thank the Government for having allotted so much for the purpose and also thank the Hon. the Finance Member for the assurance he has given, namely, that if more money is needed in the course of the year, he will give. I won't blame the Hon. the Finance Member, but I request the Hon. Member in charge who will actually direct the disbursement of the loans, to set up a big machinery throughout the province and go into the whole question of applications and distribute the money. I see that Government have so far committed themselves to issuing loans upto Rs.2000 to each applicant and there is no use in asking the Government to increase the amount at present, but the only thing I want to urge on the Government is that they must be able to distribute it to as large a number of people as possible during the course of the coming year. If they do so, they will justify the Act that has been passed by this Legislature.

As a businessman I should say that it is not at all a sin to present a balanced budget. If it is a deficit budget, I should say it is foolish, for, one should not always borrow and live. In view of the coming Reforms and in view of the inauguration of the new Constitution, we should not hand over a deficit budget or place the new

Government in a position to face deficit budgets in the future. It will be a great credit not only to the officials sitting on the Treasury Benches but also to the Members of the Legislature if we help the Government in seeing that a balanced budget is presented. Otherwise we will be rightly accused of having landed the new Government in difficulties.

Sir, this is the last occasion when a Member of the Civil Service, an Executive Councillor, will be presenting a budget to this Council and I should take this opportunity of openly acknowledging the services rendered by the members of the Indian Civil Service to this province. The fact that a member of the Civil Service and a member of the Executive Council has been in charge of the finances of the province, has not adversely affected the interests of this province all these years, is a matter of great congratulation to that great order of service. In the coming Constitution they will not be sitting in this Assembly and taking part in the discussions but they will, I hope, still give us their help in the administration and I have no doubt that their help will be very valuable and that we can reckon on their valuable support and advice.

Sir, in regard to Sir Otto Niemeyer Committee, I am sure the Hon. the Finance Member has put forward the case for Madras in a proper manner before that Committee. There is a feeling that because Madras has had a balanced budget and was the first to put her case and the other provinces showing deficit budgets followed later, they will have a march over Madras. I have no doubt the Hon. the Finance Member will be watching the work and progress of Sir Otto Niemeyer Enquiry Committee and if necessary make further representations to the Committee to the effect that we have been able to show a balanced budget this year and in previous years at great cost, sacrificing many of the projected schemes and also by not giving greater relief to the people by way of land revenue remissions. If we have not been able to give land revenue remissions in a greater degree it was because we were anxious to see that a balanced budget was maintained. For all these reasons, I am sure Sir Otto Niemeyer will do justice to this Province.

Muthiah Chettiar was a seasoned Parliamentarian. Next perhaps only to the Annamalai University, the Legislature was the field where he laboured for many years. When he ceased to be a Minister of the State, he was the Leader of the Opposition in the new Legislative Assembly. He was the leader of the Justice Party and hence the Leader of the Opposition (1937-39).

It fell to Muthiah Chettiar's lot in those fateful years to provide effective and well-informed leadership of the Opposition with Statesmen of the stature of Rajaji and Prakasam ranged against him as heads of Government. His experience in politics and deep study of the problems that faced the State helped him to bring a balanced approach to bear on political and administrative issues of the day. He voiced the Opposition, in his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition, in unequivocal terms, did solid home work, and took an active part in the debates on many of the important subjects that came up before the Legislature.

On September 1, 1937, a tricky point arose. There was a discussion as to how far the members could state their views on a matter which came up for discussion though it could not be put to the vote. The Premier, C. Rajagopalachariar — C.R. for short — said if a matter could not be put to vote, it could not be a matter for discussion either. The members had stated that Finance and Home which had been separate portfolios under different ministers had been made the province of the Premier and that they were too big a burden for one person. That obviously was a considerate — perhaps slightly satirical — way of saying they should not be one person's province. C. Rajagopalachariar preferred to treat the remark as showing consideration for him and seemed to repudiate the suggestion that "he was not good enough for all the weight and burden he had taken on" and gave the comforting assurance that such matters which could not be subjects of open debate could be brought to his notice in the privacy of his chamber. A sensible suggestion.

1st September 1937 - Minorities

Muthiah Chettiar was always mindful of the interests of minority communities. He said that there were apprehensions in the minds of some members that there may be a slackening of interest in them on the part of the Government. He said on 1st September 1937, in the course of the debate:

The interests of the minority communities in the province have been looked after by the Government during the last twenty years. I only wish to urge that communal justice for which my party stands and which other parties respect equally, should in no way be disregarded so long as the communal problem is there. I do not

know whether a time will come when there will be no minority problem at all but so long as it is there, it is irresponsible to ignore it. And I sincerely trust that the Government in power whichever it may be, will do their best to allay the apprehensions of the Minority communities.

Some members attributed the defeat of the Justice Party in the elections to the Colour Box system. The Congress box was yellow, the Justice Party's box red. Where did the trouble lie? In the colour of the boxes? Would a different colour have produced a different result? The blame, one suspects, was cast on the colour box system to give some colour to a specious argument!

Muthiah Chettiar observed:

I am free to own that the main cause of the defeat was not the colour box system alone.

Muthiah Chettiar was firm on the rights of the members of the Legislature. He stood for free discussion of the "policy of the Government on a particular demand and if that is not allowed, then it would be a serious curtailment of the rights of the members."

He said:

The main function of the Opposition is to serve the country well. If only we make the Government give proper replies on the various points raised by us on the various demands and declare their policy with regard to each department, we can feel we have done our job."

21st September 1937 - Agriculturists' Debt Relief Act

The Agriculturists' Debt Relief Act came up for discussion on 21-9-1937. He agreed that a Committee should go into the matter as envisaged by the Revenue Minister. He affirmed that he was speaking

not as a representative of the Zamindar but as a public man to demand justice to all interests. Recent events have shown that the trend has been to curtail seriously the Zamindar's rights. They now realise they have to change with modern conditions and agree to an equitable adjustment between them and the tenants.

The depression of the last two years has aggravated the problem.

He pleaded that the problem should be considered without any bias, without engendering feelings of bitterness and vindictiveness.

Prohibition:

Prohibition was the most controversial subject that the Assembly had to tackle. The Premier was not satisfied with the "qualified support" from the Opposition for the policy of Prohibition.* Muthiah Chettiar explained why the support was only qualified and not absolute. He spoke from the experience of other countries and of ours. That showed that unqualified support would not do. The financial implications could not be ignored. Muthiah Chettiar's attitude was, No hurry, please, Wait and see. He said:

Let us know the results of the experiment at the end of six months in Salem District. If prohibition were to be extended to other parts of the Province or the whole province, it will be more than a miracle for the Government to find all the money that they have been getting through excise. I hope the Hon'ble Premier realises that the country cannot bear any more taxation.

He warned the Government that any proposals for fresh taxation would have to be opposed. His attitude was, there must be no further taxation. He said:

Except for this objection, I wish the scheme
godspeed (25 September 1937).

* The author cannot help quoting the opinion of a distinguished Civilian on the question of exporting opium, except medicinal opium to England. It is inconsistent with the position we have taken at the Hague and Geneva. Of course people say that if we don't sell opium Persia and Turkey will, so why sacrifice revenue for the advantage of less conscientious countries? But to my mind that is a rotten argument from any point of view.

C.R.'s faith in prohibition was deep rooted and based on the best traditions of Civic well-being. Besides, it was basic to the Congress creed and its election manifesto. In his admirable *Life of C.R.*, the author K.T. Narasimha Char quotes CR:

When I see the bazars in Madras City studded with blazoned sign-boards of licensed wineshops and young men in small groups encouraging one another visiting these shops, my eyes are filled with tears. 'The extra revenue derived from drink,' argued Rajaji, 'was as immoral as it was undesirable for it would be at the expense of the poor and their health and their happiness. Drink revenue is deceiver even as the temporary stimulation that intoxicating drinks give is a deceiver.'

The question must naturally have occurred to many in the House and many more in the country if God would really "speed the scheme."

The real question was whether prohibition was a wise move. Was it practicable? In demanding it, was not one crying for the moon? If not and if Prohibition would make for their well-being would he not show the way to make up for the money lost? To deal with what was really moral, as though it wasn't cannot please right thinking men. Is what is just to be ignored for what is paying?

At base there was no disagreement between Muthiah Chettiar and C.R. Only Muthiah Chettiar noticed the changing world-scene and the increasing hold of drink on the vast majority of mankind. No wonder that Muthiah Chettiar, with unabated respect for C.R. acted on the precept, 'what cannot be cured must be endured.'

Referring to the Select Committee's Report on the Prohibition Bill and the proposal to appoint non-officials to supervise the work, Muthiah Chettiar said:

I am not decrying non-officials. But we must take account of party factions that are still alive in the villages and rural areas. This provision will give certain persons a handle to blackmail their neighbour. The bill contains harsh provisions.

My party stands for prohibition.

Muthiah Chettiar agreed with C. Rajagopalachariar about the drink evil, as his father did before him but he had doubts whether Prohibition would succeed. No, he was sure it wouldn't in the fast-moving world, where distance was being rapidly annihilated, prohibition had no earthly chance. That, however, was not the way C. Rajagopalachariar looked at it. He regarded it as purely a moral problem. There were communities in India

which abhorred drink. There were hundreds of people in the West who were teetotallers. George Bernard Shaw was one.*

Madras Agriculturists' Moratorium Bill (September 1937)

Legislation meant to give relief to agriculturists immersed in debt. Sensible but hardly any time given to think it over. Muthiah Chettiar was against this unseemly hustle and he said so strongly. All the parties agreed as to the need of relief, the difference was only in the method. Muthiah Chettiar expressed the hope that the measure which the Government proposed to introduce in the next session would be "reasonable" and "give relief by way of giving money; otherwise the measure will not be worth the paper on which it is printed." C. Rajagopalachariar was full of appreciation of Muthiah Chettiar's "very correct and generous advice." A compliment which all agreed was richly deserved. C. Rajagopalachariar was frank and outspoken.

If the Government's consideration leads to any trouble or mischief either the creditor tries to harass the debtor or the debtor tries to decline the credit, the Government will not hesitate to take quick action and adopt quicker measures.

I entirely appreciate the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition that what is needed is not a moratorium but a settlement and payment.

Muthiah Chettiar, on behalf of the members of the Opposition and the large public outside, said:

* A.G. Gardiner has referred Shaw's reply to Lady Randolph Churchill's invitation to him to dinner:

"I refuse to come and fuddle my brains with liquor."

Muthiah Chettiar's objection to prohibition was that it wouldn't work. Perhaps, he was more practical-minded. Perhaps he remembered "One cannot make a man moral by an Act of Parliament."

In his excellent Life of C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Narasimha Char has quoted C. Rajagopalachariar and summed up his views. He calls C. Rajagopalachariar the 'Champion of the under-dog':

Drink revenue is a deceiver, even as the temporary stimulation that intoxicating drinks give is a deceiver. We do not want a revenue derived by opening the floodgates of wasteful, unhealthy and ruinous expenditure by the poorest families of the nation, who even now do not earn enough to meet the cost of healthy family life, owing to high prices, which cannot be held mechanically or by force but only by a great change in Government policies. What will ruin the people cannot be good for State Governments because just a little more revenue can be got out of it.'

We are very glad that Government have taken note of the feeling of the public and responded in a very handsome manner.

That was the spirit in which C. Rajagopalachariar and Muthiah Chettiar reacted to each other very favourably.

On points of procedure, Muthiah Chettiar always took a firm line. Very few ventured to stand up to C. Rajagopalachariar, such was the mental understanding which subsisted between him and Muthiah Chettiar that Muthiah Chettiar spoke his mind freely and C. Rajagopalachariar took it all in good part.

For instance, at the conclusion of a debate on 27th January 1938 on the Agriculturists Relief Bill, the Speaker was going to put an amendment to the vote of the House. Muthiah Chettiar rose in his seat and referred to the convention that at the end of a debate, the Minister concerned should reply and appealed to the Speaker that the House should not be denied the opportunity of knowing the views of the Hon'ble the Prime Minister (as the Premier was then called) who was in charge of the subject and followed up his remarks by moving an amendment that the Bill be recommitted to the Joint Select Committee for further consideration. His point was that

if it was only a simple scaling down Bill with any money relief, it would have the unanimous support of the House.

"Most of the clauses in the Bill," he said, "are defective." *The Madras Mail*, *The Hindu*, the principal dailies have brought out forcibly the very well informed criticism and helped to focus public opinion on this matter."

The Bill is confiscatory in nature, discriminatory in its scope and subversive in principle." The Bill would adversely affect the thousands of agriculturists who come from the middle class.

The Government should accept the principle that the beneficial provisions of the Bill should apply to the man who tills the soil, to the man who derives his income from agriculture, whose living depends on agriculture alone.

The Bill does not take into account the capacity of the debtor to pay. Those who can afford to pay should not escape. We should attempt to give relief only to the needy.

There are several debtors who are in a better position than the creditors. I shall not refer to high sounding legal terms, referred to

by eminent lawyers such as Sanctity of Contract or Contractual relationship for which we should show great respect.

He added that he would not worry if the Bill did not affect rural economy. He referred to the complete absence in the Bill of any reference to Finance, involving large sums of money.

What is the earthly use, of this so-called scaling down of debts?

Muthiah Chettiar proceeded to quote to the Legislative Assembly as illustration a case which happened in Indo-China in 1933:

The Director of Co-operative Societies was given about a crore of rupees for distribution in this manner (Government placing some money in the hands of a few officers for trying reconciliation). But curiously enough, that officer wanted the creditors to go to him and sign a document agreeing to a reduction of the debts, without telling them at the same time that he was going to distribute money for the initial payment of the debts; he would not give them any hopes in that respect although he had been allowed more than a crore of rupees for this purpose by the Government. There was a lot of trouble over it; but subsequently, after about six months when the Government actually began to distribute the money through the Director of Co-operative Societies and when the creditors knew they could get some money, they were at the door of the Director and the Director was able to distribute Rs.56 lakhs in the course of six months.

I say this with some practical experience.

Muthiah Chettiar expressed the view that as there were nearly 250 amendments, the same Select Committee should examine these amendments.

The House then went into a lighter mood. That was when the Premier suggested that "the House should sit for longer hours beyond 5 PM or at night."

There was a certain amount of pleasant chaffing as Muthiah Chettiar was due to go away for a longish spell. On 1st February Muthiah Chettiar made the point that the Government should not shirk their responsibility of replying to the amendments and the Opposition are keen to participate in the discussion on the Bill and that the convenience of the parties should be ascertained as to whether it is possible for them to sit longer. Mr. W.K.M. Langley, a planter with a lot of experience

and friendly to Indians, said he would take an unbiassed attitude as he did not receive any salary. Muthiah Chettiar said that the observation was unfortunate. "Hours of sitting had no relation to the salary received. It was a question of convenience. After a late sitting, it wasn't easy for everyone to get home. Many do not own cars." But he forgot that the car-less members often got free-lifts.

For all his sincerity and good-nature, when a question of principle was concerned Muthiah Chettiar could be firm, frank and uncompromising. On 28-1-1938 Sir Muthiah Chettiar had to put his foot down on the airy way in which notice of amendments was given, they were ruled out without the Government offering any reason.

He said:

All amendments, good or bad, — certainly they are good in the opinion of the members who have given notice of them — should be replied to. I think the Government owes a duty to the House as a whole to explain their attitude in the matter. Otherwise we need not be sitting here at all. We shall straightaway pass the Bill into Law. We do not need to be here. I am sorry to have to say all this.

On the same day a question arose bearing on the new phase in the development of banking and credit organisation in the country during the last twenty years. Many of the Banks had done extremely well. After the failure of Arbuthnot people were very shy of making deposits in Banks and contributing to the share capital of these concerns. Muthiah Chettiar said:

Thanks to the endeavour of some pioneers it has been possible to start many institutions and they are very well on the way. I wish to name only one institution which was started soon after the failure of Arbuthnot and one could not but admire the pioneers of that institution for surmounting so many initial difficulties. In fact two or three persons had to guarantee the share capital of that Company to be subscribed and but for it the company could not have been started. That institution has been flourishing and has been attracting deposits which otherwise would have gone into the hands of foreign concerns. The amount of deposit is so large that if in any manner the financial position of such institutions is to be affected, the credit of the country would be seriously endangered if there is to be a run on them by panicky depositors.

You have not made any provision for a moratorium in favour of Banks preventing the run on them.

People may get scared as a result of this legislation and the inevitable result will be a run on these Banking institutions.

Nothing should be done by the Government to disturb the credit facilities which are now being enjoyed by the smaller Banks borrowing from the bigger banks.

Apparently there was a disinclination on the part of some speakers to try to avoid divisions by not putting controversial matters to the vote. Muthiah Chettiar who was an alert guardian of the rights of the members never failed to draw the attention of the Speaker to it. Muthiah Chettiar had again to draw the Speaker's attention to a matter of procedure. His speech on 29th January 1938 on Madras Agriculturists' Relief Bill speaks for itself:

I feel compelled to submit to you that it is the fundamental right of every member to claim a division and such a claim cannot be regarded as vexatious or frivolous or as wasting the time of the House.

I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker (Mr. Bulusu Sambamoorthy) that the equanimity of the Chair ought not in any way to be disturbed by the demand of the member for polls.

We shall be guided by Standing Order 55. The right attaches to every member to call for a division and have it. The only alternative is persuasion by other members and not from the Chair and the Chair ought to have left this matter to the good sense of the members of the House.

We have pointed out that a Bill of this magnitude ought not to have been brought before us for consideration within so short a time before us.

The fact that the Upper House is meeting in a particular day is no reason why our rights and privileges should in any way be curtailed.

We have not been frivolous. It is all difference of view points. We have been accommodative to the Government by sitting extra hours. This proves that we have not been obstructive.

As regards the right of demanding a poll, I submit it should be allowed for all time so long as the House is in existence.

The object of our urging the House to omit this section is not that we do not agree to any scaling down of the pre-depression debts, but we object to the manner in which the pre-depression debt is sought to be dealt with by these sections. This is a Parliamentary way of the Opposition telling the Government if they do not like any provision of this sort.

We propose the entire rejection of the clause because it is absolutely bad in principle and it is not just either in law or equity. I shall be foolish to develop the legal points in the presence of eminent lawyers present here including the Hon'ble the Advocate General.

I would say that the House should agree to the pre-depression creditor getting at least the capital irrespective of the arrears of interest. I agree with the Hon'ble the Premier that this is the most vital point in the Bill and if it is interfered with, it might interfere with the entire structure of the Bill. The structure of the Bill should be modified. It is never too late to mend.

C. Rajagopalachariar: I do not deny the right that the Parliamentary machinery can be used in any possible manner in order to raise a protest against a measure and it is therefore quite right for the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition to say that he has the legal right to make this amendment in order to pass a vote of censure on the whole measure. I do not deny him the right. Not only is he the Leader of the Opposition but I think he may be taken as the representative of all those interests that are opposed to this Bill.

Muthiah Chettiar's reply was characteristic of him:

The best thing would have been for the Premier to have a few other members sitting along with himself to draft the bill. But then they may retort that they know the art of Government and they do not want our assistance.

But I say that when my support is wanted, my suggestions also should be taken together.

It is very unjust to completely wipe away the principle.

Let the Premier think of a proper year as the dividing line so that the work of the Courts he is going to set up is not increased.

The Premier entirely appreciated the approach made by the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition towards the amendment.

In spite of his having differed in regard to the main methods of approach to this Bill, he has been very helpful in dealing with this

amendment. It is not a Shylockian approach. I appreciate it particularly.

Mr. Muthiah Chettiar never ceased to be grateful to C.R. for his very generous reactions to his fairness and practical commonsense. He never opposed for opposition's sake. He said (on 29th January 1938):

This kind of legislation on fresh loans will only help the unscrupulous creditor and unscrupulous debtor which latter class cannot get on without borrowing. I would suggest fixing a workable rate of interest.

As Finance Minister the Premier will have to devote himself to the financing of the scheme, apart from being a mere politician. Besides, being an idealist, he should also see to the success of any scheme he puts forward.

Late hours were slowly coming into causing inconvenience to many.

Muthiah Chettiar said:

The Hon'ble the Premier was referring to the convenience of the European group which I am also prepared to take into account. I will only remind him that he will also take into consideration the convenience of all the members of the House. We have given very careful consideration to the question of fixation of time and I think there should be 'give and take' on both sides.

When the Speaker said "11 to 5 is not the permanent time," Rao Bahadur Sir A.T. Pannirselvam reacted rather sharply:

Of course it is easy for the Hon'ble the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition to say we can sit late and finish the Bills. But may I say that we are absolutely worn out?

One can sympathise with poor Mr. Pannirselvam!

The Madras Local Boards Bill was the subject of discussion in the Legislative Assembly on 28th September 1937.

Muthiah Chettiar was all praise for the speech of the Minister for Local Administration (Mr. B. Gopala Reddy). He congratulated him:

on his beautiful maiden speech with the contents of which I do not agree but the manner of delivery of which I appreciate.

Though he put on a case for the abolition of nominated seats, he spoke effectively against the co-optive element being introduced in the District Boards:

If co-option is introduced, it will be worse than nomination. I would much rather trust a Minister for the Government responsible to the electorate and the Legislative Assembly to nominate members than the District Boards.

Speaking on 30th September 1937 on the Madras Municipal, District Municipal and Local Boards, Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Government wished to know the attitude of the Opposition to the measure. I mention my view-point: If an extra-ordinary or transitory measure is necessary, to carry on the work of the Government, we are at one with the Government. We are only anxious that the existing order should not be upset suddenly.

He only wished the Government to give the public an opportunity to express their opinions on any proposed measures of reform through the Press and in public meetings in order to help the Government to reach better decisions.

Mr. Gopala Reddy (the Minister for Local Administration) thanked the Leader of the Opposition for "his generous co-operation." Mr. Muthiah Chettiar, it was admitted on all hands was a generous opponent, far from petty-minded.

Madras Agriculturists' Relief Bill 29th January 1938

Speaking in the debate on the Madras Agriculturists' Relief Bill on 29th January 1938, Muthiah Chettiar dwelt at length on the position of land-lords and tenants in the province. "There are several land-holders who are as much in penury as their tenants. If the tenants have suffered during the depression period, the land-lords too have suffered." He was at great pains to point out that the landlords of the province are quite alive to the necessity of giving as much as they can to the tenants - particularly during the last ten years." He urged: "We should not discard one group or the other. We must see that the tenants and the land-lords live amicably and peacefully for the well-being of the country as a whole."

In a lighter vein he pointed out, having gone through the ordeal of 250 amendments, that he had hoped that if more time

for discussion had been allowed it would have helped to make the Hon. Premier 'more calm and considerate' but the Premier would not be led into the trap that we laid for him, to make him 'more easy-going.' He was also not slow to point out that "the practice of adopting an omnibus clause at the end of a Bill has unfortunately become the practice of this Government as also of the previous Government," to which CR reacted instantly, "Hear, hear."

There was a brief discussion on 1st March 1938, on the hours of sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Muthiah Chettiar submitted that the Leader of the Opposition should be taken into confidence earlier on the proposed sitting hours and "the convenience of all the parties should be taken into consideration before fixing a suitable time."

Muthiah Chettiar had some very pertinent observations to make on 4th March 1938 when the Budget for 1938-39 was taken up for discussion.

The Members seemed to have been in a happy mood. Muthiah Chettiar certainly was.

The usual commonplaces were in circulation.

Muthiah Chettiar observed:

The haunting ghost of old diarchy has terminated very happily. The restoration of good-will that prevailed on either side on the occasion is a matter of gratification and makes a great step forward in the constitutional progress of our country and I do not share the apprehensions of the Hon. Leader of the House with regard to the future of representative Government in this country.

To me, as a financier and a businessman, the most appealing feature is the great concern the Finance Minister has shown to maintaining the financial strength and stability of the province. The financial credit, the greatest asset of our province, should be the anxious care of any Government.

I am glad he has recognised that 'budgeting in any province should rest solidly on the foundation of maintaining a complete equilibrium between Revenue and Expenditure.

They have continued the essential services which have been taken care of by the previous Government.

They have put in more money for water supply schemes,

A

redemption of the small peasantry and for Harijans and for other institutions.

Pachaiyappa's College had come into its own. Muthiah Chettiar referred with pride to this institution:

I will mention the name of one institution only. Though the amount is small, the institution is big enough to be mentioned here, I mean the Pachaiyappa's College. I am glad that the Hon. Premier has recognised that the programme to re-house the Pachaiyappa's college in a new and suitable locality, can no longer be justly opposed or delayed.

Pachaiyappa had a first-rate record of educational activity. Muthiah Chettiar had, with like-minded friends, Sir. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Masilamani Pillai and others, laboured to shift the College to pleasanter and more congenial surroundings in Chetput and had succeeded in their object. C. Rajagopalachariar had been most co-operative and Muthiah Chettiar was right in giving public expression to their gratitude and appreciation.

Muthiah Chettiar rounded off his observations on the Budget for 1938-39 with these remarks:

In regard to the measures for economy I am of the view that economy and cuts will not affect efficiency. There are certain services which have kept up a high level of efficiency, particularly the judiciary. They should not become discontented.

I see no necessity for fresh taxation. The middle and well-to-do classes are no better than the poor people in the country to-day.

Hindi - March 1938

In March 1938, Hindi was a subject of controversy — whether it should be made a subject of compulsory study in schools or not. The overwhelming feeling in Tamilnadu was against making Hindi a compulsory language in schools and colleges. They had not the slightest objection to the language which many spoke with ease but they objected to forcing the students to study it.

Visiting the Hindi-spoken areas, staying there for at least a few weeks, mixing with the local people and speaking the language was the best way to learn it. That, in fact, has

happened since. There are thousands of people in Tamil Nadu who speak Hindi with facility and ease. English is compulsory and yet, how many can speak it or write it with ease?

In a discussion in the Legislative Assembly in March 1938, Muthiah Chettiar made a forceful plea against the imposition of Hindi as a compulsory subject.

Public opposition was intense and Muthiah Chettiar gave voice to it. He said:

I refer to the education policy of this Government relating to the teaching of Hindi in our Schools (the Congress party being pledged to support the Congress policy regarding compulsory introduction of Hindi).

The objection to the compulsory introduction of Hindi is absolutely genuine. It is not a political objection. This objection is not born of party faction. It is not the objection of the Justice Party or any other party. It is an objection founded on the grievances of the people. People feel genuinely that the curriculum of study is already overloaded and that it is not possible for the young boys to be burdened with this addition. They have no objection to Hindi being made an optional subject instead of a compulsory subject.

When Hindi was again the subject of attack, the Premier had taken up arms against those who opposed to it and mentioned two prominent names - characterising one as Non-Aryan and the other as anti-Congress. By merely decrying them in such uncomplimentary terms, Muthiah Chettiar commented: "The Premier cannot belittle the opposition to Hindi.

"The agitation against the compulsory introduction of Hindi," Muthiah Chettiar added, "is genuine and not born out of party faction. It is purely an expression of genuine feeling at least in the Tamil Districts. I do not know so much about the Andhra country. We do not say we are against the introduction of Hindi as such. It may be optional. We are against the compulsory introduction of Hindi."

The right of a member to ask for a poll was again to the fore. Muthiah Chettiar said:

The right of a member to ask for a poll is an important right and should not be denied.

On the abolition of College Committees, Muthiah Chettiar cautioned the Minister for Education against passing over the prevailing impression that this abolition is detrimental to the minority communities. "These Committees were created in the interests of the minority communities. These members were all unofficals who have rendered useful service."

The way appointments of Public Prosecutors was made called for a revision, said Muthiah Chettiar:

The new method would only affect the interests of the communities other than the community predominant in the Bar. Under the present method, they are practically shutting out the Minority communities. I ask the Hon'ble Minister for Local Administration whether under the present system it is possible for a person of any community other than the one which predominates the Bar being selected. You may go on entreating the predominant community in the Bar to be good enough or sensible enough to select other members of the minority community. How can the Government justify the departure? Is it real democracy? After all, the ablest men may not be chosen. Have you no confidence in the District Magistrates in the matter of appointment of Public Prosecutors?

And he went on to express dissatisfaction with the way Government rushed Bills through and treated the Opposition and sincerely hoped that in future at least Government would show more consideration to the public at large and the members of the Opposition. "It is my fervent hope," Muthiah Chettiar said, "that we will not be disappointed in the future."

Speaking in August 1938 on the Madras Minor Ports Fund Bill, Muthiah Chettiar pointed out:

As a representative of the commercial interests, this is not a thing to which we will easily agree for not only the commercial bodies but also the public should be consulted, as they are also concerned (to use the money which has been locked up for years). Government must consult public opinion first.

*Removal of disabilities among certain classes of Hindus:
Mr. M.C. Rajah's motion on acceptance of Select Committee's
report (17th August 1938)*

Social Reform was proceeding apace. It was very much in the air. Most thinking people were frankly for it. There was a

Bill pending before the House seeking to accelerate the pace of reform. Mr. M.C. Rajah was keen on getting acceptance of the Select Committee's Report.

Muthiah Chettiar was generally ahead of the times. Only he did not wish to lose sight of the country's healthy traditions. No standing still. He was all for advance and uplift of the under-dog. He was delighted when the Maharajah of Travancore issued the Temple Entry Proclamation, throwing open the doors of temples to all persons without any distinction of caste or creed or colour and the Legislature too passed a resolution congratulating the Maharajah of Travancore. It removed a disability under which the depressed classes had lain for centuries. His party, he affirmed, had always worked for the uplift of the depressed classes.

That there were people who were against the removal of disabilities should not handicap those who were all for reform and for removal of disabilities. That was Muthiah Chettiar's view. Sir Muthiah's appreciation of the Maharajah of Travancore and his Government in issuing the Temple Entry Proclamation was whole-hearted, sincere and genuine and a pointer to the further removal of difficulties in the offing.

Speaking on Mr. M.C. Rajah's motion, Muthiah Chettiar observed in the Legislative Assembly:

Thanks to the social reformers of the last two or three decades in this country irrespective of various parties or groups to which they might belong, who have given their blessings to this social reform, the object of their agitation has at last been achieved.

Muthiah Chettiar counselled that mere speed in drafting will not do and that

the success of the measure for social reform and removal of social disabilities would be in the manner in which it will be acceptable to the public.

He was confident that "the Bill will go a long way and educate our brothers about Temple Entry. This measure will not only please the particular communities of the Hindu group who are going to be benefitted but also please those enthusiastic reformers, political bodies and social parties who have worked through the last two or three decades towards this great cause."

I congratulate my Honourable friend Mr. M.C. Rajah, the veteran leader of his community, on this great move of to-day and I congratulate him on the great effort he has made. I congratulate the Premier and the Government on having accepted the Bill. The good-wishes of the House will be a guarantee of the success of the measure in the country.

Speaking on 17th August 1938, Muthiah Chettiar made his credo clear on the subject of social disabilities of those who were referred to as Depressed Classes:

I may say on behalf of my party that as a political party, it has always stood for the emancipation of the depressed classes in all possible ways.

We have given our unstinted support to the removal of the Civil disabilities Bill and with regard to temple entry our view is that it should be made possible with the consent of the people so that a greater measure of success is ensured.

Mr. M.C. Rajah has put such a memorable Act on the Statute Book this morning and our intention should be to help him in the great task to which he has devoted himself.

Muthiah Chettiar went on to ask why, if the Temple Entry Proclamation was possible in Travancore, Government could not introduce it in Coimbatore, Salem and other Districts?

If we are not satisfied with the provisions of the Bill, it will be open to all of us to say 'No' to Government's measure.

Mr. M.C. Rajah thought fit to interrupt:

You have no strength to say 'No' and reject it.

Muthiah Chettiar observed in reply:

We are not functioning here to test our strength... ..

Good sense has always prevailed in this House. (Hear, Hear).

What is expected of the Honourable members of the House is good sense and I think the public will approve that this House is functioning effectively so far, irrespective of the strength of the parties here" (Hear, hear) and I do hope that a measure like this does not bring in the question of Congress versus any other party. A measure of this type brought forward by Mr. M.C. Rajah, got passed not because of the strength on this side but because of the good sense of the House as a whole.

He appealed to Mr. Rajah to rely on the other members as a safeguard for the measure he wishes to pass and wait for sometime till the Government bring forward the Bill.

Alleged Repressive Policy of the Government against Anti-Hindi Propagandists. 18th August 1938:

As a fall out from the question of the compulsory introduction of Hindi, which he and his party felt was absolutely unnecessary and which had provoked serious opposition, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar pointed out to the Government (C.R. was the Premier) that the opposition to it was not a political move by any means that there was a strong feeling in the Province that the Criminal Law Amendment Act should not have been invoked by the Government to counter the vigorous propaganda against the move and it ran contrary to one of the electoral promises of the Congress party that no repressive laws would be passed if they came to power.*

I believe strongly that this opposition is being carried on to-day not only by political opponents of the Congress party but by many persons who had never been in politics all their life. I only wish to impress upon the Government the natural apprehensions created in the minds of many persons interested in the welfare of Tamil culture and literature. I do want the Government to appreciate the sincerity of quite a number of persons in the Tamil country in opposing Hindi and to understand that these persons have been actuated by very good motives for the future of Tamil literature and culture.

It has been a surprise to many people in this Province to find that the Congress Government are still trying to use this Act which they never intended to use. The bitterest critics of the measure have all been Congressmen, and one of their election pledges was that these repressive laws would cease to function as soon as Congressmen came to power. Perhaps they may say now, that circumstances have changed. But I do say that circumstances have not changed so as to warrant the use of such measures however provocative the Government may consider the methods

* It may be recalled that Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar had actively participated in the 'Anti-Hindi Agitation' meeting at Bethanayakanpettai in Madras. He led an 'anti-Hindi' procession through Mint Street and organised many public meetings, urging the Government to release Periyar E.V. Ramaswami from prison.

of the anti-Hindi agitators. The present laws are quite enough to deal with the situation without resorting to Criminal Law Amendment Act. It is the firm conviction of friends like me that the present laws are quite enough to deal with the situation, even if the Government want to put down this agitation.

My main argument is that the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act is absolutely not necessary and is not warranted by the situation, and we expect the head of the Government to recognise that for a popular Government it is absolutely unnecessary to continue the application of the said Act and that repressive laws must cease to apply.

C.R. (the Premier) warned the House against communal hatred and justified the Government's approach to the compulsory introduction of Hindi.

C.R. said:

It is because I have no communal feeling in my heart and because I can instinctively understand what is good for people of all communities that I said 'No, this shall not be optional.' Because, these few will take advantage of it and we will be opening ourselves before those who come behind to the charge that we began a thing which gave preference for certain boys and it did not give equal justice to all boys.

Let me tell Hon. Members, in the Government Order about which all this fuss is made, there is no use of the word 'compulsion' at all. The order simply says, 'this becomes an essential part of the daily curriculum of the schools.' There is no more compulsion in it. Not as a result of this opposition — it does not matter even if it is, if at any time it is found to be not good — agitation or no agitation — it will be given up.

18th August 1938: Recent Happenings in Burma

Speaking in the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the Recent Happenings in Burma, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar referred to the serious tension, the precarious position of Indians in Burma, the considerable loss of life and property by wanton destruction:

I think when an emergency of this character arises in foreign countries and our brethren are subjected to brutal treatment, the Government of India as well as the Provincial Governments should put their heads together and send a mission to the spot in

any possible manner not only to restore confidence in the minds of the distressed brethren but also to impress upon the conflicting elements that the legitimate interest of the Indians should not be trampled under foot.

Emphasizing that since Indian citizens in foreign countries are from different parts of India there should be close co-ordination between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments Muthiah Chettiar observed:

What this House wants is that the Local Government should investigate the conditions not only in Burma but also in Ceylon, Malaya and other countries and vigilantly watch the interests of their people in these countries.

We are all very pleased to see that leading Burmese and Indians in Burma have issued an appeal for peace and it is my fervent hope that the appeal will have the desired effect. It is gratifying to note and it is a consolation to know that the Hon. Dr. Ba Maw the Premier of Burma whose personal acquaintance I have the honour to possess — a very able statesman himself — is trying his best to strengthen the forces of peace.

Ways and means of preventing such occurrences and establishing goodwill between Burmans and Indians should be speedily devised. The President of the Indian National Congress has very rightly said, that we Indians cherish feelings of friendship and cordiality and esteem for Burma, for her culture and religion with which we have so much in common. He has rightly added that we Indians expect the Burmans to do justice to the Indian community, seeing that Indians have in no small measure contributed to the welfare of the country and that close relationship has existed between them in the past. There is no reason, Sir, why the same relationship in the social and economic sphere should not continue to exist to-day. There are several Indians who have completely made Burma their home and some of them have had now to come here as refugees. These Indians have taken life in Burma as a permanent feature of their lives and that being the case, great consideration should be shown to them on these occasions.

There is one serious suggestion I have to make in this connexion with regard to the welfare of the Indian nationals even in normal times. Mostly our brethren have gone over there for business, trade and labour. I believe these subjects come under the portfolio of the Hon. Minister for Industries and Labour. During normal

times, the Minister in charge of Industries and Labour should be deputed on goodwill missions to countries like Burma, Ceylon and Malaya so that he may establish personal contacts with Ministers of those Governments there, so that if an emergency arises he would be able to get into touch with the Governments of those places quickly. The visit will not be an inquisitorial visit but a good-will mission.

Participating in a later debate on the Burma situation on 27th January 1939, and on the Budget on 24th February 1939, Kumara Rajah thanked the Premier for the vigil with which he is looking after the position of Indians in Burma, protection of their lives and property.

26th January 1939: Madras Estates Land Act Enquiry Committee:

Kumara Rajah urged that the rights of the ownership of the soil should be given due consideration while considering the case of the ryots and it should be our endeavour to better the lot of the ryot and examine his other difficulties, particularly the issue of fair and equitable rent and tackle the problem of devising ways and means to ensure permanent harmony and good-will between the land-lords and the ryots. The land-lords must not be made to feel that they are agreeing to their total extinction. The Zamindari system cannot be abolished without recognising the valuable private rights the zamindars have acquired over a century — not clandestinely but by deliberate policy and solemn engagements with the previous Governments. Compensation is an important part of the question. It is the paramount duty of the Government of the day and the Legislature not to deprive anyone of valuable property, whether it be that of the ryot, the middle-class man, the trader, the zamindar or land-holder, without adequate compensation.

20th February 1939: Madras Electricity Duty Bill 1939

Kumara Rajah observed, in the course of the debate:

Hon. Members should realize that the use of electricity is not a luxury to-day as the use of petrol. That being the case, one has to consider who is going to pay the tax under this Bill; whether it is the company shareholder, the consumer or as sometimes happen, the consumer share-holder.

In cases where the Government are forced to realize that the tax has necessarily to be transferred to the consumer, it is definitely a clear case of taxation on the consumer first.

It is a well-known fact that we are only in the early stages in the field of development. Thanks to the forward policy that was pursued by the Electrical department for the past 15 years, we have made considerable progress and we compare very favourably with other Provinces in this country in the matter of hydro-electric schemes and thermal schemes.

It is just the time to make a start of the growth of this electric industry in this country. I may also state that by this Bill the Government will make people shy to invest in an electrical concern. I am afraid that this will also affect the investment by the public in any general public utility concern also. I feel the time has come when people are beginning to feel that to-day this kind of utility company, and tomorrow another kind of utility company, will be taxed. Therefore, Sir, in the larger interests of the hydro-electric schemes and many other industrial schemes which have to flourish by cheap electrical energy, I hope the Government will take into consideration all the facts I have stated above, before imposing such a duty.

20th February 1939: The Madras District Municipalities and Local Boards (Amendment) Bill 1939

Kumara Rajah made four significant points in the debate:

I have always felt that though it is a difficult problem to control and administer the local boards' affairs, the Government need not get frightened at the vagaries of the local boards since they have the paramount power to rectify any wrongs that may be committed by them. However, I think they should not cripple the rights of the local boards.

I would like to tell the Government that they need not be frightened at the fact of a particular board abusing its powers. It is not a thing which they cannot remedy.

I concede in certain cases that a Government Order removing a particular chairman is perfectly justified, and I am perfectly certain that whichever Government may be in office, with the help and assistance of the various civilian officers under them, who will make enquiries in advance, they will come to a right decision. I throw out a suggestion that there may be a time-limit fixed to

prevent a man who has been removed from his office of chairmanship or presidentship from getting re-elected until a particular time elapses.

24th February 1939: General discussion of the Budget for 1939-40

Kumara Rajah was forthright in his reference to the Premier's position:

The Hon. the Premier, introducing the third Budget has referred to the uncertain political conditions that are prevailing and called upon all in this country to give him and his Government the utmost co-operation, sympathy, good-will and support. I can tell him that the Congress Government constituted to-day have probably been the luckiest Government that so far had the fortune of occupying the Treasury Benches since 1920 from the point of view of co-operation and sympathy. (The Hon. Sri. C. Rajagopalachariar: "We have earned it"). The Hon. the Premier says that he has earned it and I only wish and hope that he should live to earn it. My mind now goes back two years when after their huge success at the polls the Congress were hesitating to accept office. I would only ask Hon. Members to recall to their minds what the atmosphere was at that time in the country and ask whether it was not a fact that almost all the groups and parties who were opposed to them in politics before, said with one voice that the Congress should not shirk their responsibility, that they should not throw away a great chance and that, in their opinion the country had given them the vote to further the progress of the country under provincial autonomy, though some sincere members of the Congress party doubted the wisdom of that advice. I can only say that those who advised that much good would ensure to the country by the Congress accepting office were right as is evidenced by the various statements that the Hon. the Premier has made both on the floor of the House and on other occasions in the country that he has had the best of co-operation from the services and that there has been an absence of interference on the part of the Governor, which was a nightmare to them at that time. They asked that the special powers of the Governor should not be brought into play to restrict the constitutional activities of the Ministry before they accepted office. After some struggle, for some months, they accepted office and they have found that they have no such interference; on the other hand, they have handsomely acknowledged that they have had the utmost co-operation and support from the Governor. His Excellency the Governor, if I may

say so, has always been helpful and sympathetic at all times to this Government; if it is not so, the House would always be very happy to know it; but I am sure the Hon. the Premier has no cause to say anything on the matter in the negative.

With regard to the services, he has the best of co-operation from them. We have no doubt in our mind that the services in this country are quite loyal to the Government irrespective of the parties at the head of affairs. I think even to-day not only the Government servants but also servants of public bodies, local bodies and quasi-Government institutions are acting according to the orders of the Government. That bears eloquent testimony to the fact that the services of this Presidency can be trusted to carry out orders loyally and faithfully; so there is not much need for the Hon. the Premier to call again for support and sympathy, particularly in view of the fact that he has had it in plenty from all quarters including political parties. I should only say that he has troubles elsewhere. He has troubles from the extreme section of his own party, from persons who believe in things far advanced.

He refuted the charge of the Premier that 'the Centre has been irresponsible':

If they have done anything I am sure I will be the first person to start the agitation and join in doing all things to make the working of the provincial autonomy a success in this Province.

On the misgivings over the Federation Scheme, Kumara Rajah expressed his views very clearly:

Men of my persuasion have always said that whatever may have been the working of the Montford Reforms in other provinces, particularly in this Province they have been worked with very good success, and similarly, it lies with the Congress party to work provincial autonomy for the good of the people. I feel that with good-will and understanding on both sides Federation should be possible, particularly in view of the fact that there is a consensus of opinion in this country that Federation, as it is now before us, is defective in many respects, and that it should be remedied; and with the usual safeguards as a guarantee for the non-use of the Governor-General's powers and similar other things, I do feel that it will not be beyond the wisdom of Indian statesmen to work Federation. I think that should be the correct approach to Federation, and I do not think Federation should in any way frighten members administering local Government, on whose sympathy and support depends the chances of working Federation early.

Speaking on the Budget Proposals, he said:

I agree with him that the circumstances are very depressing as also the circumstances that have preceded in the last twelve months; and as we are situated, what with bad seasons and cyclones, I feel much for the lot of the agriculturists.

On the Sales Tax, he had a pertinent point to make, adding that a graduated tax may be partially good:

I do not want to take up the time of the House by relating to the House the places where the Sales Tax has been a success, places where it has been a partial success, and places where it has been a failure. One thing I can say, that this should not be understood to be a tax on very rich men or that it is a just tax. I have information from small businessmen during the last few days — there are many people in Madras — that they are affected by this tax.

Now, I think that as regards the measures that have been introduced I can say confidently, Sir, that they will affect practically almost all people. It is very difficult to say to-day who are those people who could bear taxes, and the sales tax in particular of which I am now speaking, I can say, is going to affect practically all people connected with small and big trades in this country. I may also say that it will work very great hardship in this country.

Kumara Rajah proceeded to remind the Government of the discussion in the previous year on the question of compulsory introduction of Hindi and the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act by the Government:

I would only remind the Government of this discussion that we had last year on the Budget and the subsequent discussion on the answer to a short notice question, a discussion on the floor of the House with regard to compulsory introduction of Hindi and the way in which the Government are dealing with this agitation. I straightaway confess, Sir, that it passes my comprehension why the Government should make it compulsory, when responsible men in the Tamil country, men who have nothing to do with this or that party, come forward and suggest that the Government should drop the compulsory introduction of Hindi. As a matter the Government, the Congress party, through their various organisations have to an extent spread the study of Hindi — through the Hindi Pracharak Sabha and other associations — in a voluntary manner. I ask the Government whether it is not possible for them to introduce Hindi in our part of the country through these

voluntary methods. Why should they resort to compulsory introduction? The Government should take note of the agitation, the feeling and excitement in the country. Why have these not been responsible for changing the mind of the Government in this matter? I plead with the Government to take note of the very serious feeling that is prevailing in the entire Tamil Nadu with regard to the compulsory introduction of Hindi. When on the floor of the House last time we raised the question of compulsory introduction of Hindi the reply was that only two men were connected with this movement. Probably they meant Mr. Ramaswami Naicker and Mr. Somasundara Bharati. But to-day, Sir, it is unnecessary for me to tell the House that it is not the work of two men, or the feeling of these two men. There is a real feeling in this country which has been responsible for this agitation. I do hope that the Government will take note of the wide feeling in this country with regard to compulsory introduction of Hindi particularly. In my opinion, Sir, it is absolutely waste of energy on the part of the Government to think of putting down this agitation. By one stroke of the pen they could say, 'Hindi is not compulsory,' and they will find that they are in a better position than they are now. I do hope that the agitation and the feeling of people will be taken note of by the Government.

What happens to Mr. E.V. Ramaswami Naicker? He has to be in jail, however old he may be. I am only stating this to illustrate (The Hon. the Premier: "and however friendly he may be"), I am told, Sir, however friendly he may be. I only ask the Government, is there any justification in keeping Mr. Ramaswami Naicker in jail any longer? What they wanted was to gag the person. That has been done. Even there the people question, is it necessary to gag these people who speak for their mother-tongue? When I spoke last time I did not speak with so much confidence. But to-day I am confident that I am not speaking for myself alone. I am speaking for a very large number of persons in the country who honestly and sincerely feel that the Government ought not to continue the policy of compulsory Hindi followed with arrests and incarcerations of persons opposing it. When I say this I reflect public opinion.

He opposed the proposed cut in the salaries of officials. Have the Government become bankrupt because of the Government's theories" he asked.

25th February 1939: The Madras Sales of Motor Spirit Taxation Bill 1939.

Kumara Rajah expressed the hope that every effort would be made to exempt from the scope of this Bill, oil required in rural parts to run pumping sets and urged that the Bill should not impose any hardship "on the appalling countryside" and aggravate their suffering:

So, I hope every effort will be made to exempt oil required in rural parts to run pumping sets from the scope of this Bill. I hope my suggestion will be taken serious notice of, as it is entirely in favour of the rural folk of the Province.

21st March 1939: Demand on 'Jails'

Speaking for the first time on the Demand on 'Jails' during the previous two or three years, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar expressed the feelings of apprehension in the public mind and his own on the "treatment of the present day political prisoners" — the attention likely to be paid to prisoners who may be suffering from disease in jails. The way that slogan-shouters were treated in jails was an offence against common humanity. That roused Muthiah Chettiar's conscience to protest strongly in the Legislature. Those who were committed to prison should at least be spared the pain of being put in the 'C' class - especially women offenders.

On March 21, 1939, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar protested:

There is one other point also which I want to raise on this occasion; and that is, the classification of these offenders. What is the grave offence for which these people are put into prison? They simply say, 'Long live Tamil' and 'Down with Hindi.' These are the two sentences that they say. The Prime Minister says they say something more. So far as we have read the court proceedings, the offence for which persons picketing before the Hindu Theological High School every day are convicted is the uttering of these two sentences. And for this offence, Madam, why should C class be given even to women picketers? I ask the lady members of this House to join with me in telling this Government that they are not justified in giving C class to these ladies. The Hon. Prime Minister wants the lady members here to appeal to the lady members of the public not to resort to picketing. Very well; let them do so, I have no objection; but if any lady member of the public does not heed any

such appeal and if she still persists in uttering these two sentences and picketing the school and then going to jail, then is it not the duty of the Government to see that they are put in the proper class, especially considering the nature of the offence they commit? "What is their offence?" I again ask. They want to decry Hindi and say: "Long live Tamil." I should be very glad if the lady members sitting on the Congress benches adopted the policy suggested by the Prime Minister and attempted to persuade ladies not to picket; and if they fail, I hope then at least they will agree with me that their offence is not certainly one for which all this suffering is called for.

My Hon. Friend sitting to my left says that these lady members might join the picketing. Well and good if it happens; it will not only mean an addition to the picketers, but I am sure as soon as they return to this House, they would make an addition to the Opposition; because the Congress would take disciplinary action against them and the result will be that instead of the lady members sitting on that side of the House, they would come over to this side and that would make a very fine addition to our strength. What I am trying to show is that the offence for which these people are convicted - they are not connected with any robbery, they have not committed any perjury, nor are they connected with any murder case or any such thing - is very small. It is for the sake of saying a few words that they are convicted and sentenced. And even assuming that they are misguided, according to the interpretation of the Hon. the Prime Minister, the offence for which they are being sent to prison does not deserve a C class and rigorous imprisonment.

There is absolutely no justification for placing them in the C class. They are people who seek imprisonment as a matter of conscience and nothing should be done to them beyond placing them in internment. But if they want to break the spirit of these people, it is a different matter and they can do what they please; but I can assure them that their spirits are irrepressible and cannot be crushed by the rigours of jail life. So they can as well be placed in a sort of concentration camp. It is nothing unusual for Members to draw the attention of the Government to conditions in jails. Hon. Members will recall instances when the difficulties undergone by many people who had made enormous sacrifices for the sake of the country and were undergoing imprisonment were taken up, and the Government were censured and their attention drawn to the difficulties.

I am sure the Government have powers to change the classes awarded by the Magistrates and if they had exercised the powers, my complaint would not arise. The only thing that they are entitled to do in their case is to treat them as interneers and nothing more than that. But then, the Government have a great responsibility with regard to their health and I would urge upon the Government to remember the circumstances attending the death of Natarajan. Early steps should be taken by the Jail department to give them proper treatment and they should inform their close relations about the condition of their health. All precautions should be taken so that ill-health may not end in fatal consequences as in the last two cases; and patients should be removed to best hospitals for timely diagnosis and treatment. If the relatives come forward to look after their treatment I should think it reasonable on the part of the Government to release them at least temporarily for the sake of treatment and they can later on be taken into the jail if they are lucky to survive their sickness.

I shall have to end with an appeal to the Hon. the Premier to translate his sympathy to his friend Ramaswami Naicker into action.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: He has been placed in A class.

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: I admire the suggestion that a concession has been made to Mr. Ramaswami Naicker by his being placed in A class. You had not given it before. But all the same, now that he has been given the class as a great concession Hon. Members on this side of the House are thankful for it. We have to be thankful for small mercies.

The importance of the subject is such that I hope you will allow me the indulgence for over-stepping the time limit by two minutes.

What I wish to say is that Mr. Ramaswami Naicker did not picket but the Government thought that the people who were there might be influenced by his presence and the agitation might gain strength. Even if that be not their intention, why should he have been removed to Bellary? It is said that the climate of Bellary is very salubrious. This word can be applied to the several beautiful stations in the Nilgiris and in the Coimbatore district and in the adjacent district of Salem from which the Hon. Minister of Law hails and I even wish I were a native of that district. I do hope that the Hon. Minister for Law will seriously think over the question of transferring him to Coimbatore. From their unwillingness to send him there, I am tempted to ask whether they are afraid to send him

there for fear he should get into touch with people there. Do they suspect that the officers of the Jail department of that district will help him to communicate with the people outside? I would ask them whether they have no confidence in their officers of the Jail department, from the smallest to the highest officers? Even if they think so, I can assure the Hon. the Premier that Mr. Ramaswami Naicker is not the person who will try to get behind the rules and the Hon. the Premier knows it only too well. I would also like to ask him whether there are any records to show that he violated any of the Jail rules.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: While he was with me in Coimbatore he did not violate any of the Jail rules.

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: He did not violate any rules and I am glad that with the first class personal certificate that the Hon. the Premier is able to give him, he should be entitled to transfer to Coimbatore. I do contend that Coimbatore is more salubrious than Bellary. Further, Madam, I submit that for a person so ardently working for the Tamil language to be confined to a jail in the Telugu district is nothing short of cruelty individually to him. Therefore, I contend on behalf of the Tamilians of this place

C.R. replied handsomely:

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: If the Leader of the Opposition can speak for the prisoner he has been pleading for, I can tell him that if that gentleman will behave as a prisoner in his own house, the Government will have no objection to send him to his own house in Erode.

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: It is surprising that one who knows Mr. Ramaswami Naicker more than I do, does not know what answer he can expect from me. I will anyway tell him that he would not like to have freedom on conditions. He is not at all for release on conditions. The implication of the offer is that you still want him to be gagged even in his own house. He will be gagged within the four walls of the prison and may acquiesce in that position. But in his own home, he cannot be gagged and if this is what is wanted, the purpose could as well be served by putting him within the four walls of the Coimbatore jail rather than in his own house under such conditions. During the coming hot months, Coimbatore will be a much better place than Bellary.

I am in a position to say that there is a growing feeling in the country — I have myself visited some places where this feeling is

pronounced — that Mr. Ramaswami Naicker's detention in Bellary jail is not proper. I am not voicing my own individual opinion.

My only object in intervening in this debate is to urge upon the Government that more and more attention should be paid to the political prisoners in their jails. Not that I am voicing these opinions on the grounds of political opposition to the Government. The Hon. the Premier may say that they are only ordinary prisoners. But I would like to remind him that the expression 'political prisoner' is a time-honoured one in this country and everybody knows that those who are convicted of offences other than such offences as perjury, murder etc. which involve moral turpitude are political prisoners. But the type of political offences may vary and the degree to which you respect the political feelings of such persons may vary; but that ought not in any way to detract the sincerity of their convictions and the selflessness that prompted them towards committing the offences, for in a different state of things, they would not be offences. Therefore it is, Madam, that I contend that these people should be given better treatment in the directions in which I have already indicated.

They should be given consideration during their internment in jails; and when they are ill, the utmost care should be taken to have them treated with efficient doctors in immediate attendance and in better hospitals.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar hastened to assure the Premier that he was not making this appeal on any political consideration or on "my objection to the compulsory introduction of Hindi," "I am dealing with the question only in a humanitarian spirit."

29th March 1939: Debate on Public Health

Intervening in the Debate, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar expressed the view that the Hon. Dr. T.S.S. Rajan, the Minister for Public Health, in his anxiety to introduce the system of Honorary Doctors, has overdone it. Muthiah Chettiar hastened to explain that what he was referring to was those Doctors who are not in the service of the Government but are engaged to get themselves associated with honorary work with the idea of getting the services of the topmost men in the profession. He was disappointed to find that "all and sundry" are being appointed even down to the Assistants. This, he submitted, would undermine the efficiency of the hospitals, the hospital work should be in charge of full-time employees of the

Government and in addition to having a certain number of beds in their charge, they should also be available for consultation.

Kumara Rajah also cautioned the Government against a charge of discrimination in the engagement and termination of services of Honorary Doctors. He urged the Government to appoint eminent specialists as Honorary Doctors in order to increase the efficiency of hospitals and medical teaching institutions and to inspire confidence in the minds of the people.

31st March 1939: The Madras Tobacco (Taxation of Sales and Licensing) Bill 1939:

The debate on tobacco proved interesting:

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: I am never in the habit of using tobacco and I do not know the effect that it produces, whether it depresses or stimulates.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: Tobacco has been well known as a depressant. It is a narcotic and depressant and it is not a stimulant like alcohol.

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: There is no wonder, then, that the House seems to be dull.

I am at one with the Hon. Premier in the principle that it is a luxury. But so far as the financial aspect of taxing that commodity and the implications and reactions it will have upon the industry and the retail trader are concerned, I wish to make certain observations. It need not be understood that I am against the principle of taxing tobacco. The question that has to be considered is the manner in which the Bill has been placed before the House. When the Hon. the Premier informed the House in his Budget speech of the proposed tax on tobacco, we had no indication as to whether he was merely going to republish the old Bill as amended by the Select Committee of the old Legislative Council, or bring forward an altogether new Bill. We now see that the most obnoxious and dangerous provisions of the old Bill which were left out during the Select Committee stage, find a place in this Bill. It would have been an entirely different proposition if the Government had restricted themselves to the idea of taxing the higher grades of tobacco, such as cigarettes, particularly foreign-made cigarettes and cigarettes manufactured in India in recent years. There might not be any objection to it and perhaps it would have been unanimously passed by the House.

My contention is that the proposals as they are contained in the

Bill will not only mean that the small trader will have to pay the tax but also he will be placed at the mercy of the monopoly vendor. It has to be remembered that the small trader does not sell tobacco alone; he sells it in addition to other articles. It may be that out of the twenty things that he keeps in his shop, only ten may be productive of profits, and the other ten he may either have to sell at cost price or even lower than that, so that he may not lose his customers. There are more than two hundred thousands of such small shops. These people will be put to considerable hardship.

Then there is the other thing that a new trade is being set up by the Government on behalf of the monopolist. I do not think that it is the intention of the Government to set up a trade for such persons. If money is all that is wanted, let them go to the country straight for money alone, instead of putting people to much difficulty. The proposed system of getting revenue from the persons selling tobacco by means of the monopoly vend will be detrimental to the interests of thousands of persons who are now engaged in retail trade. What will happen as far as I could guess, is that the monopolist, even if he pays a very high fee or a moderate fee, will be inclined to make as much money as possible in view of the fact that his getting the monopoly vend for the next year is uncertain. My Hon. Friends that have spoken on the Bill have clearly explained how the monopolist will so arrange things that those who are now in that trade will go out of it altogether, thus intensifying the already pressing problem of unemployment. Tobacco is being sold by many shop-keepers, almost all the shop-keepers; and to drive them out of that trade is indeed a catastrophe. Therefore, I submit that the present trade arrangements should not be unduly upset. There may be persons who oppose the tax but even those that do not object to the imposition of the tax will agree with me when I say that these persons should not be put out of employment. The shop-keepers may be very willing to pay the licence fee of Rs.5 or Rs.10. According to the Old Bill the wholesale vendor was to pay a fee of Rs.25 the retail vendor broker or commission agent Rs.5 and the hawker was expected to pay Re.1. If the Prime Minister is not satisfied with the rates, it is up to him to suggest higher rates and we shall bargain about it. That is a different matter; that is a straight way of collecting taxes. But if any one class of people are to be given advantages over others, therein comes the difficulty. The present Bill, I am afraid, creates a class of monopolists who will make much money. Further it may well be that the person having the monopoly of vending may not

be the person who is in this trade; even financiers may come in. I submit, therefore, that such opportunities should not be given.

Under the present system the grower has got a very restricted market for his goods and he would not be having the forces of competition operating in his favour. It would be in his interests, it would be to his best advantage that there ought to be as many people as possible to purchase his produce. It is a well-known fact that tobacco is used in our country not always as a finished product. It is used practically as a raw product. But under the monopoly system these people cannot purchase direct from the grower and the opportunity that was given to the grower of accepting the best offer and rejecting the rest, does not present itself under the proposed system. I am definitely of the view that the wholesale people will form a ring and come to some arrangement as to the prices to be paid; they will have a quota system just as they had in Ceylon with regard to the trade in cigarettes. If such a system obtains in our Province — say if a ring were formed in the Trichinopoly district or in the Coimbatore district — who will be the people that will suffer? It will be the growers.

I am sure the Hon. the Prime Minister will say, 'What is all this pleading for? Is it really made on behalf of the growers or is it only for the purpose of avoiding the tax?' I am not coming to the question of taxation now; I will take it up later. We are now considering the merits of the measure. My submission is that in addition to setting up a tax machinery, the Board of Revenue, they are also setting up a class of monopolists which is going to be oppressive. I hope that when this House passes the motion referring this Bill to a Select Committee, the House does it with the fervent hope that when the Bill emerges from the Select Committee, all these objectionable clauses will have been deleted. But the Prime Minister may like to get the maximum amount of money by means of this Bill. We see from the Budget that has been passed that only a sum of 17 lakhs was not found; and I say that considering the amounts that have been voted, this is not a large sum. He can get it easily from any one of his numerous taxation proposals; and if he wants money for the next year, they will be here and we too will be here; and if only all the sixteen thousand or twenty thousand small retail dealers pay a sum of one rupee per head the amount may be made up. Perhaps he may say, 'We want to have a larger sum.' He is going to have a sales tax. If there is trouble next year the same net may be spread as is now being done; we know the net will not be removed. So let there be an easy measure; let the Government get all the statistics of the people

selling tobacco; let them say any person selling tobacco, even in remote villages, shall pay a tax. It can be easily collected, even as land revenue is collected, from the small provision merchant who sells tobacco along with other provisions. Therefore, the first attempt should be to tax all persons selling tobacco!

It is not a question of very rich merchants alone or of the middlemen merchants. Such people will find themselves affected by the sales tax. The small retailers for whom I plead are persons who will not be affected by the sales tax, as their turnover per mensem will not exceed Rs. 30.

With regard to the issue of special licences there is an inconsistency. While adopting a monopolist system they should not have special licences. If you increase special licences the monopolists will suffer.

If he wants more money from this source he should think of removing monopoly altogether and be at the same time reasonable in fixing the rate of tax.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: Sir, whatever might be the reasons, I am gratified to find that the opposition to this Bill has been considerably narrowed down.

Kumara Rajah explained that the Opposition have not condemned the Tobacco Bill in toto. "They have agreed even partially to taxing certain kinds of tobacco."

Participating in the resumed debate on the same subject on 24th April 1939, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

I do concede that tobacco is a luxury; tobacco and particularly manufactured tobacco, being a luxury should be taxed. I am very glad that the suggestion I made earlier that unmanufactured tobacco will not come under taxation has been accepted by the Premier.

1st April 1939: The Madras Sales Tax Bill 1939

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar made a weighty contribution to the debate on this important measure the Rajaji Government brought up before the Legislature:

This measure affects merchants of all types. The merchant community and the traders have not been taken into confidence and they have not even had the benefit of consultation with the Government, though, no doubt, the Government have been good enough to consult them after the publication of the Bill. Sir, as this

is a matter which affects the trade and industry of the Province, the merchant community, the Chambers of Commerce and the various merchants' associations would have very much liked to have an opportunity to discuss with the Government beforehand these matters; and probably if that had been possible, the Government could have come out with a better Bill.

Sir, the objection to the Bill is more because of the vagueness of it. The Bill says or speaks of half per cent turnover tax. They say 'sales tax' but it is an out and out turnover tax and an indirect income tax. They use the word 'sales tax' just to be in conformity with the latest judgment of the Federal Court, which is the only saving feature for Governments situated as they are today with difficult theories being put into operation. I have no objection to the particular form of drafting employed in this Bill; but I only wish to say that if the Government had come forward with more details in the Bill and if the Hon. the Premier, when he introduced the Bill, had stated what he expects to be the revenue which this Bill will yield, it would have helped criticism to flow on proper lines. My Hon. Friend Mr. N.S. Varadachari said that it is not the job of a Finance Minister to anticipate revenue. I do not know what else is the job of a Finance Minister, Sir, if it is not to anticipate revenue and anticipate expenditure. That is the main purpose of the budget and that is the main purpose of any taxation measure. I expect the Government to say how much they expect from this financial measure for the very good reason that arguments have been placed before the Government that they do not have even a register of the various merchants. So, the first thing to be done before bringing the merchants under a taxation measure is to make an enquiry as to how many thousands of merchants there are, how many classes of them there are and in what commodities they deal, what is the volume of the trade passing through their hands and what is its value. If this information had been collected and placed before the House, it would have enabled the members to know whether it is enough if a small licence fee is charged on the merchants, whether wholesale dealers should be taxed or whether retail merchants and petty shop-keepers also should be charged this tax. If this information had been made available, it would have enabled the Government to know the country's trade condition and it would have been possible for them to say how much revenue a half percent tax or any other percentage tax would yield. Mr. Varadachari would not then be put to the necessity of dogmatizing on matters concerning the duties of the Finance Ministers. It was strange that he should

have asserted that the Finance Ministers need not anticipate revenue. I only say this with a view to bring home to the Government the fact that they have failed to consult public opinion and that they have failed to make an enquiry as the first step.

One thing I must say in this connexion and that is that those countries which levy a sales tax have completely exempted the exports. Therefore there is a strong case against the Government imposing a tax on exports.

I wish only to say that it should not be assumed by Hon. Members of this House that even the big traders and businessmen would be able to bear this tax.

My Hon. Friend Mr. Reid has told us elaborately how the handloom weaver for whom tears are shed by members of the public, will suffer by this tax. The handloom industry and the handkerchiefs manufactured here have a good name and, if you do not want to increase unemployment among the labouring classes, you should not impose those tax on the handloom industry. Hon. Members opposite may ask why I should stand up and make this plea on behalf of the labourers. I have every reason to point out to the Government the directions in which Bills of this kind will show their bad effects.

It has been stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that the Government intend to exempt small dealers and that in that manner they think that food-stuffs would be exempted to some extent preventing a rise in the price of that commodity. They also say that agriculture would be exempted. I question that statement. Agriculture would be exempted only so far as the sale by the tiller of the soil is concerned and no more. Sir, in the brochure sent by the Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce they have pointed out that a tax on rice and paddy at half percent will bring in 21 and odd lakhs and that on cereals about 14 lakhs and on chillies, coriander etc. another 14 lakhs of rupees. So, this measure will bring in Rs. 50 lakhs from these three items alone. Are these not agricultural products and if so, where is the exemption spoken of? From my own experience I can say that as these commodities change hands three times, the Government will be making Rs. 150 lakhs out of these three items alone. Is it right to take one and a half crores of rupees from the food-stuffs and these provisions alone? Will not this course result in the prices of these articles being put up?

The tax as envisaged in this Bill is unacceptable to the merchants, even the small merchants who have sales for Rs. 30 per day. Even in non-panchayat areas the village shop-keepers have a turnover of Rs. 30 per day. As it is wrong to subject them to this tax, I hope it will be possible in the Select Committee stage to raise the minimum to Rs. 20,000.

This Bill does not take into consideration the ability to pay from the point of view of income. Any taxes collected from the merchant classes should always be understood as being paid out of the income that is derived from business. It has been brought to the notice of this House that some of the small merchants will not come under this tax. However that may be, I only wish to say that it is sheer injustice to ask any person to pay the tax even in years when he has not earned a profit.

Finally to put forward the case of merchants and petty traders, I wish to say that it is wrong on the part of the House to assume that merchants do not contribute to the provincial taxes. It may be that they do not directly contribute to the provincial taxes as pattadars or licence-holders in municipalities, etc. But then they contribute very heavily to the Government of India, and I shall not harp upon the point that the Provincial Government are getting a portion of the income-tax. Probably Hon. Members of the House will question my statement and say that they are not getting much money from this income-tax revenue. I only say that if the Government of India were not allowed to collect income-tax from us, they would have made other inroads into the provincial sources of taxation. Such of those persons who are contributing to the income-tax revenue of the Government of India are helping by enabling the Government of India to leave the other sources of revenue to the provinces. To that extent the merchants are paying in an indirect manner to the provincial exchequer. Without considering this important aspect of the question, it is said that the merchants are not paying any tax at all to the Provincial Government, which, I would submit, is wrong.

When the debate on the General Sales Tax Bill as amended by the Select Committee began on 9th May 1939, Kumara Rajah participated actively in the discussion, as the Leader of the Opposition.

3rd April 1939: The Madras District Municipalities and Local Boards (Amendment) Bill 1939

Kumara Rajah observed:

Sir, I wish to say in this connection that the history of local

self-governing institutions in this part of India with which I am familiar does not go to show that they are perfect. I am supposed to be familiar with the Premier and I shall accept his statement that I am familiar, and too familiar also with the administration of local self-governing institutions. But, Sir, it is because of the fact that I am too familiar with them that I am able to speak with some authority, though my own limited direct experience of local self-governing institutions, which has been very happy, is confined to the City of Madras and I have not had the fortune or the misfortune to be connected with any local self-governing institution outside the City of Madras. That probably accounts for my optimism that it is unnecessary to take very drastic measures to reform local self-governing institutions. I only wish to say that while I agree that it may not be possible to keep away from any reform for any particular period and that Government should come forward with legislation to meet any errors and defects in the working of local self-governing institutions, it is not necessary to have the Bill as it is passed.

20th October 1939: The Madras Sales of Motor Spirit Taxation Bill 1939:

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar noted, in the course of the debate:

I can assure him that the class of persons affected will be always the same class of people, the consumers. The whole thing turns upon the question whether any particular class of persons whom the Bill will directly affect, can stand the tax. It has been contended that the user of the bus will not be affected. But who are the owners of the bus? In spite of the fact that one or two bus companies have amalgamated or formed a joint-stock company, I feel I am right in saying that most of the buses in the Presidency are private and individual owned; and many of them are persons belonging to the ordinary middle class, and there are many bus-drivers, inspectors and conductors who depend on the financial stability of such private concerns. Already owing to the recent high taxation on motor vehicles these small private concerns have suffered from high taxation, and any new taxation like this will only affect the average private bus concerns.

It is therefore, I say, that this tax should be a graded tax and also it should be collected on the wholesale business basis and not in the name of retail tax.

26th October 1939: Resolution on the War Situation

The Government tabled a resolution that England was not justified in dragging India into the Second World War without her consent. A regular battle of words ensued. Muthiah Chettiar took an old-fashioned line that England was in peril and it was India's duty to stand by the King who, say what you will, was India's King. Not the time to bandy words:

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the resolution that has been put down in my name:

This Assembly regrets that the British Government have made India a participant in the war between Great Britain and Germany without the consent of the people of India and have further in complete disregard of Indian opinion passed laws and adopted measures curtailing the powers and activities of the Provincial Governments. This Assembly recommends to the Government to convey to the Government of India and through them to the British Government that in consonance with the avowed aims of the present war, it is essential in order to secure the co-operation of the Indian people that the principles of democracy be applied to India and her policy be guided by her people, and that India should be regarded as an independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution, and further that suitable action should be taken in so far as it is possible in the immediate present to give effect to that principle in regard to the present Government of India including arrangements whereby all war measures in this province may be undertaken with the consent of and executed through the Provincial Government. This Assembly profoundly regrets that the situation in India has not been rightly understood by His Majesty's Government when authorizing the statement that has been made on their behalf in regard to India.

Speaking on the Resolution, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

On a point of order, Sir, according to rule 51 (iv) of the Assembly Rules, a member while speaking must not reflect upon the conduct of His Majesty the King or of the Governor — General. It is my contention that if it is not possible to have a free discussion of a resolution without infringing this rule, such a resolution must be ruled out of order. In considering the advisability of a resolution, the Chair has to take into consideration the fact whether free and unfettered discussion of the resolution in question can take place without infringing the rules or standing orders. Applying this test,

it will be found that the resolution of the Hon. the Premier is out of order.

The resolution expresses the regret of this House that the British Government have made India a participant in the war between Great Britain and Germany without the consent of the people of India. My contention is that the British Government have not made India a participant in this war. It is His Majesty the King Emperor who is at war with Germany. According to constitutional law and international law, when the King is at war, his subjects are automatically at war; the enemies of the King are *ipso facto* enemies of his subjects also. The participation of India in the war is therefore not the result of any action on the part of the British Government but is the direct outcome of the act of His Majesty the King in declaring war against Germany. Any discussion of the way in which India has been made a participant in the war must therefore necessarily imply criticism of the conduct of His Majesty the King. It is therefore impossible to discuss this resolution without casting a reflection upon the conduct of His Majesty the King. I would therefore submit that the Chair must rule the resolution out of order on this ground.

In his own way and true to the principles of his party the Prime Minister has justified his resolution. Sir, it has been said that the British Government has not taken this country into confidence with regard to involving India in the war. We must bear in mind the deep significance of this war. The battle is being waged by the Allies not for the liberation of one set of people alone, but may I say, it is for the preservation of peace and freedom and democracy. With this aspect, every party and every leader in this country has agreed so far. Victory for the Nazis would mean the end of all democratic principles for which all parties in the world and particularly in this country have been working; it would mean the domination of one nation over another and the application of brute force to entrench the philosophy and methods of Fascism and Nazi aggression.

Sir, it was stated that 'to secure co-operation of the Indian people, India should be regarded as an independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution.' This ought not to be the attitude. We must support without question Great Britain in this hour of great peril. This is not the time to bargain or to barter. That was the view of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for some time. We yield to none in our desire for Swaraj for India, we say that the opportunity for India to win Swaraj remains. This is not the time to press our demands when Great Britain is in trouble. We have to

remember that the destinies of Great Britain and India are linked together. Swaraj for India will mean nothing and will resolve itself into an empty phrase if Great Britain does not emerge out of the war victorious.

The crux of the question in this connexion is whether it is part of the policy of Great Britain to exclude India from her rightful place in the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Viceroy in a recent statement issued by him reiterated the declaration of the former Secretary of State for India on behalf of the British Government that Dominion Status was the natural goal of India's political progress. We are told that at the end of the war India's position would be reconsidered and her people and princes would be called upon to assist in the revision of her constitution which they have all declared to be unsatisfactory. This is an important announcement, particularly in view of the Parliament's refusal hitherto to reconsider the Government of India Act 1935, in spite of the pressing demands from many sides. It will be seen that it is not a part of British policy to exclude India from her rightful place. Mere words like 'independence' and 'constituent assembly' do not help us. With regard to the constituent assembly there are many parties to question that principle in toto. The Viceroy has, if I may say so, rightly pointed out that, 'there is nothing to be gained by phrases which, widely and generally expressed, contemplated a state of things which is unlikely to stand at the present point of political development the test of practical application, or to result in that unified effort by all parties, and all communities in India on the basis of which alone India can hope to go forward as one and to occupy the place to which her history and her destinies entitle her.'

Sir P.S. Sivaswami Ayyar, who is not an unfriendly critic of the Congress, describes as fatuous 'the belief of Congress leaders that it is possible for them or for a constituent assembly to devise a constitution which will be acceptable all round.' I think this is a very wise statement summing up the present political party's aims and the manner in which they are thinking regarding the change of the constitution.

The Viceroy, no doubt, has not accepted the claim of the Congress to speak for all India. The claim of the Congress that it is an all-inclusive body entitled to represent India without a rival will not stand a moment's scrutiny. The Muslim League has made it clear that the Congress not only does not represent the Muslims of India but is even opposed to the interests of Muslims. The statement issued a few weeks ago from Bombay by certain parties proves that a good many other interests too do not accept the

authority of the Congress to represent them. Here in our Province we have always repudiated the claim of the Congress.

13th February 1947: The Madras City Municipal (Second Amendment) Bill 1947

As the first Mayor of the Madras Corporation, Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar had an intimate knowledge of the subject.

Among the points he made in his speech were:

If, Mr. Speaker, I speak on this occasion for special representation of communities and interests, I should not be accused of being partial to them. I only justify my statement by saying that this is an evil which has been continued for forty years and that it has not been proved as an evil in practical working for I know the Councillors of the Corporation of Madras who represent various institutions and special interests have had the peculiar advantage of dealing with the problems that came up before the Corporation Council. It is an open secret that the Councillors representing the various divisions have necessarily to speak about their divisions; times without number, time and again, day after day we have seen that they always vote in a parochial manner. When the Council takes a vote on the divisional allotment, you find it is the European Group, the Indian Christian representatives and the representatives of the Chambers of Commerce that take a dispassionate view, and especially on financial matters, considering the availability of funds, they bring forth into the discussion a dispassionate view and sometimes I may say, they are successful in bringing home to the members the reasonableness of their point of view.

In regard to the representation of the various interests in the City Council, my Hon. Friend representing the Indian Chamber of Commerce forcibly put before you the position of the mercantile community; they have a real interest in the Corporation, they contribute to the revenues of the Corporation to a very great extent.

Sir, I am not going to put forward the plea of my British friends; they have conducted themselves usefully and effectively all these years in the City Corporation. I find that their representation has been reduced from six to two under the new Bill. I am very sorry for it. It may be that the European Group may not ask for more representation, but I shall not be sorry if they are given more representation than the two given for, they have functioned in the

past in such a manner that they deserve more representation. They have not shown any special favour to anybody and they have also considerable interest. I wish to strengthen my argument by pointing out how the representatives of the European community, the Indian Christians and the commercial interests have behaved themselves in the past. They have behaved themselves very well in the City Corporation. (Sri B. Gopala Reddi: 'They have behaved well in the country also.') My friend Mr Gopala Reddi says that they have behaved themselves well in the country. What a pleasing statement coming from an ex-Minister of the Congress Government! He gives a good chit on the eve of their quitting India. It is very pleasing to hear Mr. Gopala Reddi saying that the Europeans had rendered a good account of themselves in the country. Such people are really dubbed as reactionaries, but I am very glad that my Hon. Friend has joined their company and thereby removed the word 'reactionary' from our dictionary.

Sir, it is very pleasing to see the resolution before the House not only by non-official members but by the Hon. the Prime Minister that there should be four linguistic provinces in this country and that it has a great prospect of being passed, particularly in view of the fact that the Leader of the House is going to sponsor the resolution in the course of the session. That being so, I consider it is desirable to have representation for the Andhra Chamber of Commerce, the South Indian Chamber of Commerce and the other four or five Chambers of Commerce, for the day is not going to be far off when the separation of the Province is going to take place and it is only fair that these various Chambers functioning separately are represented separately, in order that they may collaborate as much as possible; therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to see that separate representation is given to these separate Chambers. As a matter of fact, the Muslim demand is to have a separate seat for the Muslim Chamber of Commerce. I support this also.

I find the representation given to the Anglo-Indian Association is for two purposes. That community is functioning properly through an association and they have got a proper representative body. My friend, representing the Anglo-Indian Group, Mr. Fernandez, has put forward effectively the reasons for the continuance of the seats instead of earmarking the seats in a division. Sir, the Anglo-Indian community is a compact community in the City and they can muster their strength at one rally and can discuss matters very freely in the association. With my knowledge of the association, I can confidently say that the

association has been functioning usefully and effectively for the last fifty or sixty years. I therefore earnestly plead for the representation of the Anglo-Indian community for the association itself, instead of earmarking the seats for them in one of the divisions which will not be acceptable to the community.

Sir, I do hope that the Government will consider these suggestions in a very sympathetic manner, for, I am making all these suggestions not in a parochial manner. From my experience of the working of the City Corporation I consider that the House should not fight shy of giving more representation to special interests and it is only by doing so, we will be balancing the representation on the City Council. I have no doubt that if the finances of the Corporation have in the past been looked after well, the representatives of the special interests have played a great part in the past. I am sure the Hon. Minister will give serious consideration to the various suggestions put forward in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I may point out that the late Moulana Muhammad Ali, whom the Hon. the Premier often quotes, thus declared even at a time when he was a Congressman, when presiding over one of the sessions of the Congress: 'Friends, let me tell you plainly that I do not consider it likely that for some time yet we can afford to dispense with separate electorates.' Look at his words, what did he say? He said that we could not 'afford to dispense with separate electorates.' Those were the words of one who was a Congressman at the time. Later on, he went on to explain what he meant by the expression 'sometime yet.' He explained that that 'sometime' would be a time when the minorities themselves would feel that there would be no necessity for such protection. But, Sir, I am afraid that such a time is not likely to dawn, particularly in a Province such as ours, where the major party is in such overwhelming numbers that they are in a position to crush the minority if they so wish and were in the words of the Persian poet, Omar Khayyam:

'The Moving figure writes and having writ,
Moves on; nor all our Piety nor Wit
Can Lure it back to cancel half a line.'

5th March 1947: General Discussion of the Budget for the Year 1947-48

The country was in the throes of momentous changes in the constitutional structure. The freedom of the country was round the corner.

Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the presentation of the budget by the Hon. Prime Minister for a whole year has coincided with a time in the history of this country when it is passing through momentous changes in the constitutional structure. The Prime Minister has commenced his speech with a brief reference to those momentous changes and the statement of the British Prime Minister. It is an unfortunate circumstance in our politics that it has not been possible for the great Indian communities to agree even at a time when the Britisher has agreed to quit India within a reasonable distance of time from now, and before fifteen months it can be expected that the great change-over will come about. It is the fervent wish of one and all that not only at the Centre but in all the Provinces also, things will be carried on in such a way as to enable the smooth transfer of power to Indian hands. The part that a Province can play to help in that smooth change-over, I cannot exaggerate. Particularly hon. Members of this House, who are fully aware of the responsibilities of the Provincial Government and the Legislature for such a state of affairs, can realize the harm that could be done to such a change-over if things get unsettled even in one or two Provinces. When we realize that something untoward happened yesterday at Lahore or four months ago in Bengal, we immediately ask ourselves: Are we not putting back the hands of the clock of constitutional progress? Why I am referring to the part that the Provinces can play will be understood when I say that, if there is no peace and tranquillity in a Province, it will not be possible to help the progress of the country as a whole. In this Province it has been possible for the various communities to live in peace and amity during the last few months. This should encourage us to give a lead to the other parts of India and see that we help in the smooth transfer of power for, let me say honestly that a free and united India alone can take its proper place in the comity of nations. Sir, I repeat that the stability of the Provincial Governments is equally necessary for this purpose. When I say 'stability' I find some smiling faces on the opposite benches. Let me not try to go into the reasons for the smile. Let me only remind the people that whatever be the outcome of the Provincial Autonomy, it should be the responsibility of this House to see that there is peace in this country. If even the members of the Opposition could bring to bear upon this House that amount of responsibility, if it is lacking on the official benches, we shall consider that we have done our duty on this serious occasion. Are we going to show ourselves as a nation before the other nations of

the world is the question. I have no doubt, Sir, that I can join with many publicists of this country in fervently hoping that in the next fifteen to eighteen months we shall achieve that cordiality; let me hope that the Hon. Members of this House and the public of this Province will give their wholehearted support in that great attempt.

Turning to the budget that has been presented to this House, I wish first of all to refer to those happy lines in the concluding paragraph of the Prime Minister's speech wherein he says: 'I should like to quote at this point an observation by a French economist: 'There are some sciences', he says, 'so lofty and serene that they leave in peace those who are not concerned with them, but Finance is not one of those; it has a way of taking a terrible revenue upon nations and individuals who neglect or despise it.'

The test is the open market. What amount of credit the public give you in subscribing to the open loan? Open market will be the proper test. I am not sanguine that the loan which the Government may raise will be a success, particularly considering the changes that have taken place in the market due to the Central Government's budget. Markets have broken down. It will be impossible to raise loans at the present rates. If the rates are not high, one has to pay through the nose; if you increase your rate, people will be anxious to subscribe to the loan. There cannot be a single supporter to the present budgetary position, to the present financial position. This is my humble experience in the past. I have no doubt that this position of mine will be agreed to by all those who have knowledge of financial markets in this country.

The most interesting suggestion regarding taxation is the agricultural income-tax. My only suggestion is that the tax on land should be equitable and should be commensurate with the return which each group of persons connected with land is getting; let it be the ryot or the mirasdar, zamindar or the intermediary. I would say on this occasion that this province can legitimately demand justice from the Hon. Prime Minister who has devoted all his life for zamindari legislation. This is a golden opportunity for him to do good not only to the zamindari ryot. I should say that he should tackle the entire problem of land in this country including the ryotwari area. He will be doing greatest injustice to the ryotwari areas if he carries through the zamindari legislation alone.

The tax on petrol and motor spirit should not be raised in the case of public transport at any rate, though it might raise charges for individuals.

We are told now that the five-year post-war development schemes require enormous money; only part of the schemes will be taken up and the whole of the Budget speech mentions that only certain items of work will be taken up.

I can only say that allotments for irrigation schemes have been reduced; they require greater attention and larger amounts of money. Let me not be considered parochial if I mention my own district which has not so far had the benefit of irrigation schemes.

It has been long talked of that a branch of Cauveri from Trichinopoly should go into Ramnad and that a branch of Vaigai should be taken to certain part of the Ramnad district.

With regard to the Industrial Finance Corporation, I am not one of those who is very much enamoured of the Government's control of the Corporation. We are only too well aware that businesses run by Government cannot make much progress and I can only say that the Industrial Finance Corporation which the Government are going to start cannot command the confidence of the people. You cannot attract the necessary finance. If you want to run it as a business proposition then you must give a chance to non-officials also to come in. We are told that the capital of this Corporation is only one crore. If you really want to support industries in this Province, you must really have big schemes and schemes that are well-planned. You must tell the people which are the particular industries which will get support from this Corporation and which are the industries you are going to nationalize. That will be the proper way of approach.

I am not against nationalization of certain key industries. But there is a condition of doubt and uncertainty prevailing in the minds of the industrialists to-day. Today we do not know which of the industries the Government of India is going to nationalize and which of the industries the Government of Madras is going to nationalize. They are merely talking of nationalization but they do not carry it out actually. In the meantime, this talk of nationalization of industries discourages and prevents those who are connected with the industry from making improvements and giving their best service. For instance let me mention the case of bus traffic. It has been freely mentioned for some-time past that the Government is going to nationalize the bus transport in the City. But they have not come forward with any concrete schemes and in the meantime the bus owners have

not made any improvements in the transport service either by way of providing additional comfort or by ensuring reasonable fares to the public. Therefore the public are the real sufferers. If the Government come forward quickly and say openly which are the industries they are going to nationalize and which they are going to nationalize for a certain period, thereby enabling those concerned in those industries to carry out improvements, then, that will be the right approach to the question. They must also be given a definite assurance by the Government that industries which are going to be nationalized will be given adequate compensation.

Industrialists need not be told that there is not going to be nationalization for ever. If they are told that certain industries will be nationalized, say after ten years, or fifteen years or twenty-five years, then they will have an incentive to improve those industries and go ahead with their plans of development, fully believing that reasonable and adequate compensation will be paid when those industries are nationalized and I am sure that that policy would help the growth of industries in this country.

I cannot but notice the absence of any reference to educational institutions in the Budget. I only find a few lakhs of rupees being allotted for the purpose of building some Government colleges. In answer to questions and supplementary questions during the last few months, the Government have been saying that it is the intention of the Government to help private institutions also. If that be the case, I should like to know how much money the Government have provided for grants to private colleges and institutions. As far as I can see they have not provided any very big amount. I shall only say that higher education should not suffer in our enthusiasm for primary education. If you really want to support primary education in this Province, it is absolutely necessary that you should have graduates and well-trained teachers. I am glad to see that some money has been provided for training, but that is not enough. We should have more money for collegiate courses. We have not provided sufficient money for higher education. I would urge on the Government of Madras to put up a fight with the Government of India and get a good portion of their allotment intended for grants for Universities and Colleges.

We were told that the Government of India have set up a Universities Grants Committee.

I would indeed like the Government to fight with the Government

of India and get as much money as possible for this Committee for distribution to Universities. I should also like to know the working of this Committee at an early stage and I shall raise this subject under the Education Demand in more detail.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as the Vice President of the Interim Government of India has rightly said that unless you increase production, it will not be possible to pay higher wages, whether in private industries or in the Government file industry.

If the prices could not be brought down, it is necessary to give them adequate amount to meet the increasing cost. We are, as it were, in a vicious circle. Till we bring down the price level, we shall have to continue the increased bill. But on the other hand we must try to increase the national income of the country as a whole. Therefore we are concerned not only with the Budget of the Province, but also with the increase of our national income, in order to enable the Government to pay higher wages and salaries. When we do that then this Government and this Legislature have every right to demand the worker in the mill or the non-gazetted officer in the Government office to work for greater hours and with more efficiency.

There is one happy feature of the Budget which I should like to refer. It is the very remarkable way in which the Government have dealt with the food situation of the Province during the last six or seven months. The food situation was discussed separately for two days in this House. Then we had a grave situation and the discussion was also very grave. Subsequently we had another discussion when the rice ration was reduced from 10 ounces to 8 ounces. The country as a whole has now got out of the grips of famine and it behoves not only the Government but hon. Members of the House as a whole, to congratulate the public of the Presidency in having put up with such privations during the last seven months and we are thankful to God that we have been able to manage things so well.

Sir, there are one or two matters which I should like to refer very briefly. We find that there is a proposal to acquire the Madras Electric Supply Corporation. Sir, hydro-electric schemes have become very profitable and they have been of great help to the industrialization of the country. Coal crisis has always been threatening us and it is therefore very necessary to develop hydro-electrical energy in this country. Sir, we fail to see any new schemes for hydro-electricity in this Budget. We shall be glad if the Government would take up the execution of such projects. We are

merely confining ourselves to certain thermal electric schemes, but it is only hydro-electric schemes that will be of great help to the industrialization of the country.

We have seen during the last few months in the country as a whole and in this Presidency in particular, criticisms and discussion in this House and outside about the acute housing shortage. We are not told in this Budget how the Government is going to tackle that situation. It is stated that a City Improvement Trust has been constituted and that a Chairman has been appointed. It is no good appointing a Chairman without putting him with funds to carry out improvements in the city. The City of Madras has always been unfortunate in not having the benefit of grants from the Government. The general impression of the Government is that moneys should not be spent in cities. It is very wrong impression. I can very well say that if the Madras City is not developed properly, other cities in the Province would imitate this bad example. If the City of Madras is kept clean and if there are reasonable housing accommodation and health and welfare schemes in vogue in the city, then I have no doubt that some of the smaller municipalities and bigger municipal towns would begin to copy. If you have a good improvement trust here, they will have an improvement trust in Madura also. I will ask the Government to put up a proper housing scheme. I will also request them to flush the Cooum and see that we do not get the odour in this House also. I request the Government to put up a proper housing scheme, not entirely with Government money, of course, they can draw up a scheme and with Government help it can be encouraged; and you can get private help also. And private enterprises also should be encouraged; and it will surely come forward when there are proper assurances given not statements made now and again that they will sooner or later be acquired. I may say that the housing situation not only in this city but in most of the cities of this Province has become very acute during the last two or three years, and I request the Government to take serious note of the situation that has arisen.

It is time that the Congress party, in its conferences and meetings and on public platforms comes to a decision and says to the public: 'Here is the situation; would you prefer the land-tax to be increased; would you have the agricultural income-tax doubled or trebled; or would you have us revise our programme and would you give us a different mandate? We cannot do good to the country otherwise. That, Sir, is the honest way of approaching this Budget. I have no doubt everybody will agree that it is better to

face facts; and if facts are faced, that would do immense good to the country. Sir, it is with this fervent hope that I would conclude my speech today.

15th March 1947: Land Revenue

Participating in the discussion on this subject, Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar observed, *inter alia*:

Regarding the measure for the abolition of zamindaris, I am not putting forward a special plea for zamindars, nor are they in the picture to defend themselves. I think the zamindars have done a great mistake in not putting forward their case before the Government. The zamindars need not be ashamed. I am now giving them the warning that they will not have the sympathy of members on any side of the House. Till this moment, I do not know the case of zamindars. The zamindars have not cared to publish memoranda in English and distribute them to the members of the Assembly. If they feel that their case is just, what prevents them from putting up their case before this House? I see two of the zamindars sitting behind me. I think the zamindars are terribly afraid of the Congress party. On the other hand, the Congress Party will very much appreciate if they come forward and say: This is our case, please listen to us.

In reply to a speculative remark on the composition of the Congress Ministry, Kumara Rajah reacted quickly:

I am prepared to step in and carry on till you settle the Ministry and come back to office. If Section 93 was put in operation, I would have told the Governor that the application of Section 93 was not right and that we were prepared to run an interim Government. Don't think it will be an interim Government without legislature. I will ask the Legislature to be convened and if there are seven groups, probably — who knows? — five out of the seven groups may support me! You need not be surprised if a minority is able to run the Government. It is not an unusual thing. I am repeating the past history of this very House, when there was a minority Government functioning.

Referring to the zamindari problem and taxation measures, he went on to say:

Whether the zamindars defend themselves or not, I think they owe a duty to the country as such.

With regard to taxation measures, I take strong exception to the levy of agricultural income-tax. It is a most unpopular measure,

and I can challenge the Government today to take a referendum on that. They will be defeated if they hold an election on the issue of levying agricultural income-tax. It is because they have no necessity to face an election, they are thinking of imposing the tax. I request the Government not to proceed with the measure. If at all the tax is to be levied, the limit should be very high so that agriculture may not suffer. If the owners of 5 or 10 acres are taxed, food production also will suffer. You will not be helping the economy of the province by fleecing the small land owners.

I see there is an attempt to impose a sales tax on produce. I can only say this much that it will be very cumbersome in its working, for it will be very difficult to assess the produce which each agriculturist has got. You will certainly provide an exemption limit, and there will be a number of borderline cases. I do not think sales tax was ever intended to be levied on agricultural produce. It is intended more for consumer goods sold in urban areas. Therefore, I would suggest Government deferring action on their proposal to levy sales tax on produce.

The Hon. Revenue Minister has indicated a possible rise in the sales tax. If the rise is with reference to luxury goods, it can be tolerated. If it is going to affect the necessities of life, it will not be proper. With reference to the exemptions that he referred to, I would like to impress upon him that exemptions in the past years were given after careful consideration and not otherwise. I am sure the Hon. Minister will make out a good case before he raises the tax.

18th March 1947: Voting of Demands for Grants for 1947-48

Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar made some useful comments on various subjects affecting the people:

On certain issues before the country to-day, I may be permitted to say, the party will not get the people's support. Presently, I will show that with regard to some items of their policy, the Government will not be able to get even a single vote. I shall not mention the zamindari legislation straightaway. To give more prominence to what I want to say, I shall mention first the tax on agricultural income. I have no hesitation in throwing out this challenge to Government that if they go to the country asking for a vote in favour of agricultural income-tax, they will be voted out terribly and they will not find themselves on the Treasury Bench next morning. I only wish the Government take a snatch vote in the country. If they take a poll I am perfectly certain the country will

be against them on this issue. We have not forgotten the Congress programme and the Congress pledges that they will attempt to reduce land tax by fifty percent.

I can only say that the Congress have always said that they will attempt to reduce the burden of land tax. Far from reducing the rate of tax on land, they are now trying to levy a tax on agricultural income. The position of the agriculturist in the last forty-five years is very well known to us. It is only in the last three years he has been able to get something out of land. Even out of that money, he has to spend a lot on the necessities of life, the prices of which have gone very high. You have not seriously attempted to reduce the cost of living. If you reduce the cost of living, then you can have an all-round cut in the income groups and also incidentally save money by the stoppage of dearness allowance. You are in a vicious circle. You must concentrate your attention entirely on reducing the cost of living and raising the national wealth of this country by more production in the agricultural field as well as the industrial field in both of which I may be permitted to say, we are very much lacking. We have yet to know the great benefit which has come out of the Grow More Food Campaign or the industrial planning idea.

I no doubt appreciate the sincerity and earnestness of the Hon. Premier who has devoted all his life to the reform of the zamindari areas. I only plead with him that the evil connected with land tenure will not be over if he deals with zamindari areas alone. I think it will be a grave injustice to other areas in the country if piecemeal legislation with regard to zamindari areas alone is undertaken by this Government. It is essential that Government should devote their time immediately to the condition of the tiller of the soil, the ryot, the mirasdar and all connected with land in ryotwari areas and also in zamindari areas. The word 'ryot' is a misnomer to-day. The ryot has no great attachment to the land. He is an investor now. He is a person who depends upon his land for income. He does not touch the plough at all.

You will be surprised when I tell you that I, on behalf of my community, accepted to give occupancy rights in ryotwari areas to a man who has tilled the soil for a continuous period of six years.

That is the first piece of reform that should take place. Let us start from the bottom; let not anybody suggest that you have not done anything for the tiller of the soil. What is the minimum income or wage that he gets? I shall now illustrate the latest order of the Government of Burma with regard to fair rent. Fair rent is fixed

after taking into consideration the minimum income which the tiller of the soil should get.

Let him enquire about the total income from land and let him decide what portion the four sets of people connected with land should get. That will be the proper way of dealing with all the people from Cape Camorin to Vizagapatnam and from Madras to Mangalore, straightaway in one Bill. Then I shall certainly agree to the abolition of the zamindari, to the abolition of the jenmi system in Malabar: I do not know the correct name by which they are called in South Kanara.

There is no use saying you will be able to get money; till you get money, you should not talk of nationalisation and of the purchase of the zamindari; it is a very injurious talk; you have to do very many other things before you actually take up the question of the abolition of the zamindari system.

I know lot of zamindari estates are in the hands of many people, including retired Government officials, advocates, doctors and many other people who have purchased them with their own hard-earned money. That being so, it is not proper to say that the case of land holder is the case of a few people alone. Therefore, it is not right that you should do any injustice to enormous number of people who have done so far, very much to improve land. If you improve the position of the ryot throughout the country both in the ryotwari and zamindari areas, well and good. When you have money, nationalize it.

Which are the industries the Government propose to purchase and in how many years? It is necessary that you should give proper lead to the people in these matters; you should explain your nationalization schemes and make it known how you are going to put forward your schemes.

Several times on the floor of this House, there have been arguments both ways, for the abolition of the Board of Revenue as well as for the retention of the Board of Revenue. I am a bit orthodox. I think the Board of Revenue should continue. You have no other alternative, if you are going to take away the Board of Revenue. You are going to post four or five Commissioners to supervise the work of the Collectors. You would not be able to save money; you will not have the benefit of the joint consultation of the Board of Revenue. I do urge that the time has not come for the abolition of the Board of Revenue. The Board of Revenue is essential so long as the present land revenue system exists in this country.

I may be permitted to mention that in the case of the Houses of Parliament and of the Government in Great Britain, though the Government is being run by the Prime Minister and other Ministers, each portfolio has attached to it an Advisory Committee; many meetings of these Committees take place and there are discussions on various matters. I would ask the Hon. the Prime Minister and other Ministers to revive these Committees for each portfolio and have the benefit of discussion so that members of the Legislature might have greater confidence. Such Advisory Committees should meet from time to time; there should be greater consultation among all concerned in this House; and above all it will conduce to better Legislative work on the floor of the House.

I submit that hurried legislation is detrimental both from the point of view of the Opposition and of the Treasury-Benches.

If any point is asked, or if any allegation is made, it is the duty of the Government to enquire into the matter to see whether the allegation is true or not. Of course we have no right to question the ultimate decision of the Government, but the questioner is entitled to know what action the Government have actually taken in the matter. I hope that this healthy convention will be developed in the future.

My grievance is that some Ministers even when their subjects were discussed, were not present in the House to hear them. Sir, the general discussion of the Budget covers all the departments of the Government though it is the Premier that is to reply in the end. If the other Hon. Ministers have no use for the speeches of the members of this House, then they may as well say, 'Please send your speeches in writing, we shall read them in leisure and do the needful, failing this the only alternative for them is to come to this House and listen to the speeches though in some cases they may be boring. (Laughter)

(A voice: They are certainly boring.)

I shall now refer to a certain serious omission in the Budget and that is that the Government have not addressed themselves seriously to the provision of money for big schemes of development in the country. With regard to higher education, they have hopelessly failed to make any provision. The Government are fully aware of the need for higher education. They are not able to satisfy the claims of the public in the provision of more colleges and we find that no money is provided for higher education at all. In regard to elementary education, I am sure, everyone will agree

that you cannot have elementary education without an adequate number of trained graduate teachers and you will not be able to get such teachers without providing money for colleges and for higher education. In our enthusiasm for elementary education, we should not starve higher education and I do hope that in making the budget for the coming years, there will be some supplementary demands placed before the House asking for the allocation of more money for higher education and also more money to enable institutions to pay decent, living and reasonable salaries to the teachers.

No scheme has been put forward by the Government for housing. Now, housing has become as important as education, public health and other similar measures. If proper housing is ensured, it will, to a great extent, help to solve the public health problem. I should be glad if the Government comes forward with some big housing schemes. It can be said that private housing schemes could come, but how can they come if this threat of nationalisation is hanging on our heads. Thus, in the matter of housing and also in the matter of higher education, the Government has not come forward with any special schemes.

Lastly, I have to refer to one more point and that is with reference to the elections to the district boards and municipal councils. The policy of the Government with regard to the dissolution of the district boards is rather questionable. It was stated that immediately after the dissolution of these district boards new elections would be held. Sir, within three days after dissolution of the present district boards it appears that a situation has arisen threatening the peace and amity of the province and so the elections were postponed. It was stated that this postponement was necessary as otherwise these elections would mar the peace and amity of the province, and so they appointed special officers immediately. Sir, I ask, why did the Government abolish the existing district boards? They should not have done so. They should have continued them, if they really thought of postponing the elections.

It would have been much fairer if they had continued these district boards until they could settle their party matters. It is a great misfortune that public affairs should be allowed to be held up in this manner and there is an unreality about the whole conduct of affairs. We have to thank ourselves for such a state of affairs.

Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar expressed the wish that the Hon. Minister for Law should push forward the scheme

for the separation of the judiciary from the executive with greater speed.

Speaking on District Administration in the debate on 20th March 1947, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar advised the Government that Members of the Legislature should not get mixed up with the executive committees in the Districts - which he said was an injustice to legislative work and a disservice to the country:

While I am referring to revenue matters, I am tempted to refer to the question whether the hereditary system among village officers should be retained or removed. I am an orthodox man. I feel that the hereditary village officers have been doing very useful service to the Government. I do not mean to suggest that their work cannot be done by anybody else. In certain parts of the Province, the hereditary system prevails, and in other parts it does not prevail. There should not be a sudden abolition of the hereditary village officers. I suggest that the system should be continued so long as possible, and there should be gradual elimination when vacancies arise. In that manner, they can effect the change. I think the village officers deserve great credit for helping in the revenue administration of this Province.

28th March 1947: Demand on Education

Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar pleaded with his friend, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Finance for more funds being provided for education. "Unfortunately, he is in charge of Finance," he added referring to Mr. B. Gopala Reddi.

In the course of the debate, he made the following points:

In our enthusiasm for elementary education, we should not neglect higher education. I only wish to point out that increased admissions in existing colleges, if forced upon by Government, have necessarily to be abided by the institutions. There will be deterioration for want of accommodation in hostels and classrooms. The educational institutions are already over-crowded and on top of it Government say that 10 or 20 percent more should be admitted on pain of withholding the usual grants. So, I would implore on the Government that they should devise ways and means of starting new colleges and if they cannot start more colleges, it is up to them to point out to these young men who have

passed their examinations that they have got other avocations in life. If they are not able to say so, I should think that the Government have failed in their duty in not providing alternative education. Sir, we are talking of technical education, technological education and other alternative courses of education. All these talks have been in the air for several months past, but nothing has so far taken place and everybody is right in impeaching the Government for their complete failure in this respect. Again, Sir, you are ordering the institutions to admit 20 percent more students, in the month of June. It does not bring any credit to the Ministry if they should force the institutions to admit more students. I only wish that more money is provided for opening extra colleges and not only that, even with regard to higher scientific research, Government have not provided as much money as is required. Since science is a growing subject, it requires all the attention of the Government and unless a large amount of money is provided it is not possible to encourage this subject. Even with all their intentions, they have not been able to find money and they want to go to other items of taxation. They cannot even raise money loans as experience has shown. Then the only question is if they are not able to do that, they should go out. I do hope they will change their financial policy to enable them to be in a position to improve the conditions and to carry on with ameliorative measures and that such a promise will be made early.

Let me not take up much time except to mention something about technical education. It is always remarked that the Madrasi is a very good technician and even during the recent war many thousands of our men have proved themselves good technicians and it will therefore be a good thing if many technological institutes are started. Of course, I do not wish to say that there should be only higher technical institutes which go by different names like technical or technological colleges, engineering colleges and so on, but I wish to refer to the many mechanical institutes which may be started here and there, so that they may absorb an enormous number of students who would otherwise demand admission in the Arts Colleges of our Universities.

If you are keen and sincere on improving and increasing the scope of elementary education, you must have trained teachers. Government must open many more educational institutions to train teachers. Without trained teachers it will be impossible to extend elementary education in any manner. The training facilities in this province are very inadequate. Even the higher grade training for the LTs and BTs are inadequate and I think that you should

put more money in the hands of the existing colleges and schools and Universities to start such institutions. It will be very difficult for the Government to start all these by themselves. It will be easy for them to give aid to private bodies so that all can put their heads together to solve this problem.

Let me refer to the question of salaries. The question of non-gazetted officers took a serious turn in this province and the Government and the Legislature took notice of it. They realized the enormity of the problem. The question of the salaries of teachers is an even greater problem

I am no less enthusiastic than any other person in the matter of the spread of elementary education but the best method of encouraging elementary education is by way of providing mid-day meals for the children. I find that provision for this is being curtailed or otherwise removed. One would have hoped that the provision for the mid-day meals would be increased by several lakhs of rupees. Without this, it will not be possible to spread elementary education to any reasonable extent.

I should say, Sir, that the Government of Madras should raise big cries for a big slice of money from the University Grants Committee for the Universities in Southern India.

He pressed the Government to move the Government of India for the allotment of more funds for Research institutions. He suggested that an Institute of Oil Technology should be located in South Arcot District from which the Premier (Omandur P. Ramaswami Reddiar) hailed.

29th March 1947

Touching on the question of the land tenure system and legislation to regulate the relationship between the tenants and the land-lords in ryotwari areas, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar cautioned the Government that their object will not be achieved by regulation for zamindari areas alone. They should demand, in a single voice, justice being done to the tiller of the soil. The Government should come forward with comprehensive legislation both for the ryotwari and zamindari areas simultaneously. Piecemeal legislation will not help.

19th April 1947: Redistribution of Provinces on a Linguistic Basis:

Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar, participating in

the crucial debate, made the following observations:

I am glad this House should have been given an opportunity of discussing the partition of this Province into linguistic areas. Sir, the question of the separation of this big Province into linguistic areas has been engaging the attention of the public of the Province for a very long time and there is no necessity to assess the length of time that the Andhra took to agitate or the Karnataka took to agitate for it. It is wrongly stated that the people of Tamilnadu were not anxious for separation or rather they would like the whole Province to be together. Sir, permit me to mention on this occasion that the people in Tamilnadu are not in any way less anxious for separation. I shall not say that the separation of the Tamilnadu is going to be a great boon or a financial boon. I think the separation of the Province into Tamilnadu, Andhradesa and the other two areas will probably ensure a more cultural development of the poor areas and, as has been demonstrated in recent months, it may probably ensure more political stability to each of the four provinces.

It is good that the Province is separated, but there are some orthodox persons who do not feel that it would be for the good. Of course, I was also once holding the orthodox view because of the financial implications which might be involved if this separation is brought about. Though I held that view strongly, now as things have developed during the last few years, it has been demonstrated more than ever that in spite of the feeling of internationalism, and in spite of the feeling of nationalism, it is difficult to satisfy the feeling of the common man, that he must have a Government in which his own mother-tongue is spoken.

23 April 1947: The Madras Hindu Bigamous Marriages Prohibition and Divorce Bill, 1947

Welcoming this Bill, Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar observed:

The Hindu society is most tolerant and we are expansive in our views and we are charitable. We are people who would like to go with the times. I think today times are such that the Hindu feels that he should in no way lag behind such social reforms. I am very glad, Sir, that at this opportune moment such a legislation has been brought forward. If the Muslim League members have offered any remarks against anything it is not against the measure. They are only trying to say that certain points mentioned in this Bill are in line with democratic principles of Islam.

Now that they also approve of this, I hope the House will give its unanimous support to this measure. With regard to the Hindu reforms and the Hindu society many legislations have been brought forward like the Temple Entry Bill, uplift of the Harijan community and many other backward communities. But, if there are some religious defects and social habits which we have to get rid of, I think this is just the time to do it. When we are now on the threshold of getting freedom, we should not lag behind any other country in the world in matters of social life.

2nd February 1948: Condolence Resolution on the Death of Mahatma Gandhi

Associating himself with this resolution in the Assembly on 2nd February 1948, Kumara Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar paid his homage to the Mahatma:

None in modern times has more profoundly influenced world thought than Mahatmaji. He has been aptly described as 'Christ returned to Earth.' He was one of the dearest servants of humanity that ever lived. He had won the love, the respect and the admiration of the entire world. The voice of the world in many languages has already paid tributes to the greatest man of the age who died a martyr for a Great Cause. The inheritance that Mahatma Gandhi has left us is the privilege of completing his mission of peace on earth and goodwill among mankind. Perhaps his martyrdom may hasten the accomplishment of the sacred task he left unfinished. But that thought alone will not do. If we are to prove ourselves worthy of the Father of the Nation, we must take to heart his priceless teachings and earnestly endeavour to propagate his gospel so that the whole world will catch his spirit and move towards the concord and the amity which Mahatmaji prized so much for the peace and good of mankind.

1948-49: General Discussion of the Budget for the year 1948-49

Speaking on the Budget presented by the State Government, Kumara Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar complimented the Finance Minister, B. Gopala Reddy on the Budget Speech itself:

He has shown that he continues to be the embodiment of art and beauty of that great University, Viswa Bharathi, from which he has come. But we are concerned with the material aspects of the Budget which he has explained and I think he deserves the congratulation, support and the goodwill of one and all of us.

Today, more than ever, we have a feeling that we are one with the Government, and that the Budget is not the concern of the party in power alone but the concern of all of us. I have no doubt every useful and constructive criticism will be welcomed by the Government.

Sir, as any one could see, that the one thing on which the entire Budget is based is on the question of prohibition. The Budget takes its shape, takes its stand and takes its course and mainly centred on the question of prohibition. If it has not been possible to do any one thing, it is probably due to prohibition. At the same time I should not be misunderstood as decrying prohibition. It is a very good thing and it is bound to give some benefit to the people as years roll on.

Everybody should keep in view the present budgetary position. There is a deficit of about five crores of rupees. If he is to balance the budget, then he should necessarily levy extra taxes. Sir, I think I am right in saying that the poorest man in the country to-day will be asked to pay that tax. More than the direct tax, the poor man has to pay such taxes as sales tax. My own feeling is that the cost of living index to some extent at least has gone up on account of this sales tax. It is true that the effect of the sales tax has not been felt so much as the rigours of some other taxes which are on the upgrade. It is no doubt the function of the Government to tax people but the country, as it is to-day, cannot bear any further taxation which the Government may think of imposing in the coming months. Continuous drawing from the Revenue Reserve Fund is, of course, not a step in the right direction and so, I plead with the Government to devote their attention on indirect taxes rather than increase the direct taxes, so that the people may not feel the burden heavily.

Then, Sir, coming to the question of death duties proposed to be introduced, my own feeling is that it is going to affect large agricultural lands as well and I am sure, the Hon. the Premier who is connected with the Agrarian Reforms Committee will examine this question. I am also sure that many zamindars and industrialists in the country will get clear off the death duty as successfully as possible. The Death Duty bill will affect not only the ordinary man with a few houses, the middle class people, but also the rich men and well-to-do people and thus this death duty will be extended to landed property in a period of about ten years by any Government whether it is a Congress Government or an extreme form of Government. Therefore, the Provincial Government should make a representation to the Government of India to drop

this tax. I feel it will upset the financial position of the Province in the course of a few years.

While I am on the question of the general financial position of the Province, I am rather amused at the piquant situation with regard to the loan policy of the Provincial Government. The public debt of this Province is only Rs. 25 crores, about half the annual revenue. It is very insignificant and in my opinion the Government can afford to have a public debt equal to several times its annual revenue. Why then is it that it has not been possible for the Government to raise a loan?

I now come to the industrial Finance Corporation which was referred to by the Hon. the Finance Minister. Sir, it is a most welcome thing. I only wish that the capital of the Corporation whether it is subscribed by the Government or the public is large enough to support many new industries and also the existing industries. I am afraid the capital of Rs. 51 lakhs is not enough; it should be increased. It will not be possible for the Government to raise the necessary capital in the ordinary way. I therefore suggest that the debentures guaranteed by the Government may be issued, on the lines of the debentures issued by the Provincial Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank.

While on this question of industrial Finance Corporation, I should like to ask how far we have progressed in the matter of scientific research, which is very necessary for industrial progress. I should ask the Government to take the support of this House and press on the Government of India our claim to have one of the big research laboratories costing a few crores of rupees located in the south. By 'south' I do not mean Poona, as it is sometimes thought by people in the north. It should be our own Province.

Sir, I want to say a few words about the University Grants Committee at Delhi and a similar committee at Madras. We know nothing about the Delhi Committee except that they have been successful in giving immense grants to Universities in Northern India. It is very necessary that the Government should lodge a protest with the Government of India with regard to this Committee (Interruption). I am glad that a former Education Minister who is the present Leader of the House is a Member of the Delhi committee. We shall live in the hope that it will be possible for him to get more grants for our Universities. I am very modest in my hope that it will be possible for him to get a few million rupees from the Committee and we can assure him that the Universities in the south will spend the money very usefully and will justify every pie of expenditure on research.

Sir while on the question of the University Grants Committee, I should say I am glad that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has very kindly mentioned that he is likely to consider very favourably proposals for scientific research and has indicated certain sum of money as being available for the purpose. Let me hope that it will not be lakhs, but millions of rupees. We have many things to do. We can have for instance oil technology. Our presidency abounds in groundnut and we should have more of oilcake and fertilizers in order to increase production. There are many schemes of research which deserve the full sympathy of the Government and I have no doubt that Government will encourage them and give them necessary grants.

Sir, there is one item with regard to which I want the Government to be liberal. I have the right to ask the Government to be liberal in view of the fact that the Government are subjecting the people to heavy taxation. Sir, I am not pleading the case of the zamindars. The zamindars and the landholders would willingly agree to any necessary legislation, but only they want they should be paid equitable and adequate compensation. I ask the Government to take courage in both hands and deal with the situation. They should not fight shy of payment of fair and equitable compensation. To-day it is the question of zamindars and landholders; tomorrow it may be a question of ryotwari landholders. It may be said that no one should own more than 100 acres. Then it may be a question of small factory owners and big factory owners and then it may be a question of people owning one house or more than one house. It may be said that a man should not own more than one house, or two houses — one for his residence and another for his office — and that the remaining should be taken over for public purposes. Then also there will be the question of adequate and equitable compensation. In this connection I am very glad that the distinguished Deputy Prime Minister of the Union Government Sardar Patel had the courage to say that in such circumstances we should give adequate compensation or it would amount to highway robbery and so on. I hope the noble example set by the Deputy Prime Minister will be followed by this Government and that they will stand by their pledge and pay adequate and equitable compensation.

28th February 1948: Position of Indians in Burma

Speaking on the debate on Indians in Burma Sir Muthiah Chettiar said:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of Indians overseas has been

enagaging the attention of Indian politicians for a long time, whether it be in relation to the Indians in South Africa, or Malaya or Burma or Ceylon. Myself and many others like me who are rather intimately connected with Burma feel very grateful to the Hon. Minister-in-charge and to the Government of Madras for considering this matter and bring it up before this Assembly during the Budget session to-day as a Government resolution and inviting this House to express its opinion on this most vital question. I shall presently show how South India and particularly this August Assembly are vitally concerned with this problem. Let not any Hon. Member be under the impression that this subject relates to the Indians in Burma and not to the people in South India. It is not a question of Indians in Burma with vested interests. It is the question of the common man and many people who are much below the average level of richness.

Sir, I should like to mention that the contribution that the Indians in Burma have made to the welfare of Burma is a matter about which the Indian Community may feel proud at all times. Indians in Burma have played a worthy part as the representatives of this nation. They have been always showing a good record of their activities with reference to the progress and prosperity of Burma. Might I say, Sir, that for the last ten years, and particularly during the difficult period of the war, the Indian community who were left there have had to undergo untold privations and sufferings.

The Indian community in Burma have always co-operated with the Burmans in any legislation, so far as landed property was concerned. The agrarian reforms to which the Indian community has agreed to in Burma will not be agreed to in any legislature of any province in India for another 25 years. The Indians in Burma have agreed to the tenancy legislation from time to time and the rent that is due to the land-owners is very very insignificant and it has been reduced to such a low level that it will not be possible to keep land going on for any length of time. For long, normal acquisition of properties by Burmese tenants has been going on. The lands that happen to be in the hands of the Indian community are not lands that have been taken over from the people of Burma. They were all forest lands before, and the Indian community, particularly the Indian labouring community have helped to bring about 85 lakh acres of forest land under cultivation between 1880 and 1920 and during the course of these 30 or 40 years, about 50 to 60 lakh acres of lands have gone back to the Burmese people. They were able to buy back such lands and redeem mortgages during all these years and it is only 25 lakh of acres of land that

still remains in the hands of Indian owners. This process was arrested because of the depression of 1930. If the depression had not come or if the war had not come in the East, the Burmese people would have brought back these lands by now and there would not be this problem to be solved. The Indian community had always understood it and they had made it clear that they were always willing to part with the lands on getting equitable compensation. They are not asking for adequate compensation but they are only asking for equitable compensation.

In this connection I may mention that the latest ordinance affects not the land-owner alone. The land-owner was affected by the earlier ordinances of November and December last. The latest ordinance which was issued at the beginning of this month is one by which only citizens of the Union of Burma can sell property, can buy property, any property - not only landed property but also house property - or factories or mills. Supposing there is a small shop-keeper who is not a citizen, owning Rs. 10,000 worth of provisions and a building worth Rs. 10,000 he cannot sell the building or mortgage it. We now understand that the implication of the ordinance is that people cannot borrow money on the security of the property from a bank.

On 28th February 1949 there was a general discussion in the Assembly on the Budget for 1949-50. In his speech, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar focussed attention on the urgent and important problems that faced the State namely food, clothing and housing:

It appears some attempts are made with regard to the Grow More Food Campaign" and other schemes. Here, again, I have to say that still the question of food presents a very serious problem in the coming year. While I am on this question of food, I must necessarily bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister in charge of Food who is absent here, that the deficit areas were suffering very much when decontrol was first introduced but now when control was re-introduced, there is deficit of rice in the rural areas. I should say that rationing should not be introduced in the rural areas. If there is only enough supply in the relief shops in the rural areas, it will be enough for them and people will adjust themselves according to local conditions. Sir, I am not an expert on rationing. It is only a suggestion I have given. Rationing in the municipal areas alone will do for this purpose.

Speaking on Education, Sir Muthiah Chettiar said:

The Hon. Finance Minister referred in high style, to the provision of nine crores of rupees for education as against two crores spent in 1921. I should like to assure the Hon. Minister that the two crores spent in 1921 is five times more valuable than those nine crores spent to-day, if you take the inflationary conditions into account, as they exist to-day. Therefore, this provision of nine crores for education is a small amount when compared to its requirements. Provisions for new schemes in the field of education are very meagre. I am rather doubtful of the impartiality of the allocations made for different areas in the Province. For saying this, let no one mistake me. I am a man who believes that there should be no separation of Tamil and Andhra areas. There should be a joint province. Because of the strong view I hold on this matter, I am not concerned about the allocations made to Tamil and Andhra areas.

I submit that higher education is absolutely necessary even to promote primary and secondary education. Without efficient teachers, it is not possible to have higher elementary education. So higher education is a necessity. You have to provide for Universities and Colleges. The provision made for universities and colleges is not worth mentioning at all. In this connexion, I must refer to the provision of 20 lakhs made for the Arts College, Rajahmundry. Sir, I only say that more money has not been provided for other colleges and universities. There are three universities in this province and grants should be shared equally between them. But even in the matter of grants to these institutions, they are not liberal. They have given only a half-grants to them. The same is the case with regard to aided schools. I do hope the Government will come forward with a Supplementary Demand so that they can allot more money for universities and colleges.

I should like to mention the reference made by the Finance Minister in his Budget speech about the industrial schools. While we are glad that so many industrial schools have been started by the Industries Department, still these industrial schools would not do. It is necessary that higher technological education should have the support of the Government and I do not see any big provision made for technological education in the coming year.

Madam, let me come to the vexed subject of medium of instruction with which the Government have been tinkering — I venture to say — for the last two years. The question of English is an unimportant point. It is no shame to say that our country has lost

nothing by having English as the medium of instruction. But I am not one who is against another language becoming the national language of India. As the Prime Minister of India has stated, you cannot force a language on the people of this country. The common language of the country must grow of its own accord. It may take years, decades and centuries to grow. Do not throw away the good things. English has been good; English has helped you. We have been accustomed to the British courts and under the British jurisprudence we have progressed. Our minds and the legislators' mind have all been trained in that line and I do not think we have anything to lose by continuing the English language. In fact, English has been used in the colleges and universities and also in schools. I submit that for many years to come English has to remain as the medium of instruction in the universities and colleges. I am not one who is less enthusiastic about one's mother-tongue. In the international conference, English is profusely used and our politicians have got to speak English. Let students study Indian languages and a smattering of English too in schools. Let me express the hope that the Government will not lower the standard and quality of our education.

Madam, while I am on this question of education I am pained to make a reference to the Government's mistake, I should say, of not having practically a Muslim College for the Muslim community. We are still living in this country as communities. We have not come to the state of one community in India. Is there anything wrong in developing the culture of all the communities? The Muslim College, with its great traditions behind it, has been giving a great lead to the Muslim community and vast hopes have been raised in their minds. In the Muslim college, even non-Muslims were admitted. Therefore, I do hope that prestige will not stand in the way of the Government reviving and conducting the Muslim College. I feel that it is the duty of this House to see that the grievances of Muslims are redressed in this matter.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar made a passing reference to the Industrial Finance Corporation for which the Government had allotted another fifty lakhs of rupees. While he was glad that nearly a crore of rupees had been given to industries, he emphasized that it was absolutely necessary that the set up of the Industrial Finance Corporation should be fully known to the House, and that the Government should come forward with a resolution or a scheme for contributing the additional sum

and also make a full statement on the Industrial Finance Corporation.

Touching on the question of nationalisation, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Now let me come to the question of nationalization. Madam, nationalization is a thing which cannot be attempted and encouraged in every industry. It has its own restrictions. Only in certain industries can nationalization succeed. At present the Government do not have technical and managerial people. The Deputy Prime Minister of India, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, when he was here recently, went to the full extent of explaining the implications of nationalization and how it cannot be attempted in other fields. I want to know how is it that, when the Government of Madras want to heed to the advice of the Government of India in certain matters they do not heed to the advice of the Deputy Prime Minister of India on this vexed question of nationalization. Even the small experience of the Motor Transport has shown them that it is not possible to extend it to the rest of the Province. So it is not an easy thing. So also is the case with the electrical undertakings started by the Government like the Pykara and Mettur Hydro-Electric systems. Even certain companies find it difficult to manage these electrical undertakings. Therefore, the question of nationalization is a vital matter so far as the exchange market is concerned. What is the use of this talk about nationalization without actually putting it into effect?

Sir Muthiah Chettiar went on to observe:

I suggest that the Government must come to a particular decision on the industries to be nationalized and they should come forward openly saying that in the Provincial field, they will nationalize such and such industries and the period within which they would be taken up.

Speaking on the Zamindari situation, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar said:

The condition of the zamindari areas is appalling. I am not speaking of the zamindars in this connexion who are going to get 17 crores of rupees — if all these formalities are gone through — but I am concerned with the loss of income to the country by the neglect of cultivation in those areas. The zamindars are not interested and the Government are not looking after them nor do the ryots because they have not yet become full ryotwari pattadars. No doubt some sort of cultivation is going on. The tenants are not

paying their rents to the zamindars who in turn are not able to pay peshkash to the Government and the irrigation sources are not looked after. No one is interested with the result that the zamindars are not benefited, the ryots are not benefited and the Government are not benefited. I am not bothered about the question of payment to the zamindars; let the Governemnt say they would pay them two and a half years from now but I would urge upon the Government to take over the maramat so that the production may be stepped up. You are not now getting it in the zamin areas; cultivation is not properly done. I feel that the Government have failed in their obligation to the people in not having carried out their public statements and announcements. I am sorry to note that for two years nothing is going to be done with regard to the zamindaris and I say, if you had husbanded your resources properly there would be no difficulty in taking over the zamindari area and easing the appalling conditions existing there at present.

Touching on the role of the Police department Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar moved a cut motion-not to criticise the department nor the Minister in charge of the portfolio but simply to draw the attention of the Government to certain features. He went on to say:

I congratulate the Police not only on their efficiency but also on their loyalty, because more than efficiency the loyalty which they have shown to the Government of the day on important and crucial occasions, particularly during the last few months and in the last two years, is a thing which has to be very much admired and appreciated. Sir, the loyalty of the services is a favourite theme for me and while I am speaking in glowing terms on the loyalty of the police service, I must also say that the Government of the Province should be able to exact the same kind of loyalty from every section of that service. It would be very difficult on the part of the Government of a country to exact loyalty from such an enormous number of people employed in the police service. I am very glad that the Hon. Minister for Revenue is also here at this time. Sir, the Revenue Department is the biggest department in this Province and contains the largest number of people and we have also been saying how they have been overworking.

Sir, while I am on the subject of loyalty, I am sorry to note that on certain occasions, there is a tendency towards deterioration in certain services. This deterioration in the services, if I may be permitted to say so, is due to the action of the legislators. This

legislature is responsible for the good administration of this Province. It is its duty and its responsibility to see that the tone of the administration of this Province is kept very high and that level of administration can be achieved only by infusing confidence in the services, high and low, and today we find that the police service has been extremely loyal which is a matter of great gratification not only to the Government, not only to the legislators but also to the general public at large, for we know that if the Police and the military of a country are not loyal, it would not be possible for the Government and the citizens to maintain law and order. We know, Sir, how in the year 1942 and later in 1947 when the partition of India took place, it was not possible to maintain law and order in certain places in this country, in spite of the efficient police and military, because the loyalty of the services was divided. Therefore, Sir, they do require the encouragement and support both from the Government and from the public. In this connection I wish to take the opportunity to refer to the very refreshing speech of our distinguished Deputy Prime Minister of India yesterday in the Central Assembly about the conduct of the legislators with reference to these services. He advised the members of the Legislature to be very careful and cautious in their remarks and in their speeches about these services and he even went to the extent of warning them that they might not be legislators soon, if they went on in that manner. But, Sir, I am not here to repeat the same warning. I would only remind the House that we, Members of the Legislature owe a great duty to the public and to the good men in the services and we must support the latter whenever an opportunity presents itself.

Now, Sir, I have a feeling that if we have been able to avoid the Railway strike which was threatening us only a few weeks ago, it has been possible because of the vigilance of the Home Department of this Province and of the vigilance of the Home Departments of certain other Provinces also, for which rightly the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister of India, Sardar Patel has paid the greatest tribute.

I know something, Sir, of what is happening in this part of our country. The Home Department was very alert during the last few weeks and their orders have been prompt and the police were ready. I am glad that because the police were ready nothing has happened in this country, and there has been no hindrance to the movement of food, etc. Therefore, Sir, this Legislature should recognize the good work done by the police services. I have reasons to believe that there will be times in the very near future when

people will tamper with the loyalty of the rank and file of the police service. I am not concerned with the Police officers, Sir. If I speak of the Officers certainly people will say that I do so simply because I have friends among them or because someone is known to me. The officers can take care of themselves and they will be loyal to the Government. What I am concerned here is with the thousands of the rank and file on whose loyalty the success of the officers will depend. I have a feeling, Sir, that the rank and file are underpaid and I think it is absolutely necessary that the Home Minister should come forward with a supplementary grant before the House to give increased emoluments to the rank and file of the Police Service (Interruption). It is not a vote of censure. I am giving this for very serious consideration of the Hon. Minister because I have heard some reports and it is my duty to place them before the House as to what is actually happening in the country. I am told that there are serious attempts to tamper with the loyalty of the rank and file. It may be within a month or two, but one month or two months are not too long a period. The Government must immediately come forward and see that these people are guarded against temptation and intimidation. Otherwise it would be very difficult. I would earnestly urge on this occasion, Sir, that it is the elementary duty of the Government to see that the rank and file are contented and then they will see results very shortly. Today it is an accepted fact that even for the supply of food to the millions of the country it is necessary to keep law and order and an efficient police and military are the two elementary requirements of the people.

It is a notorious fact, Sir, that our police stations are short of men, guns and even lathis. Therefore it is necessary that we must increase the number of men for the stations.

I have also been told, Sir, that the Police force, particularly the Reserve Police and the Detective staff are not able to put in efficient work for lack of mobility. They are not provided with enough number of lorries or jeeps to go round and check crime. Crimes go unchecked on this account. I do not want to mention the areas of particular officers, Sir, and it would not be right for me to give publicity to such things through speeches made on the floor of the Assembly.

12th January 1950: The Madras Village Panchayats Bill, 1949

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar made the following comments:

I was one of those who felt that the election of the president directly by the voters might not be advisable. If there are no

bickerings, direct election of president will conducive to smooth administration. If the president is elected directly by the voters, he will be an outstanding man who can run the panchayat well and the members will not be divided into camps over the election of president. To that extent, this innovation is a somewhat happy feature. It is these considerations that made the Hon. Minister put in this clause. Let me join him in the hope that the experiment will be a success and that the panchayats under this Bill will also be a success.

Let me also hope that it may not be necessary to have executive officers for all panchayats. I feel that executive officers generally, whether in panchayats, municipal councils or temples, are not justifying the confidence that the Government and the Legislature have put on their offices. Though I was myself responsible for drafting the Bill providing for the appointment of executive officers to municipal councils and the Government accepted and moved the Bill, on many occasions several persons like me have had occasion to criticise the conduct of many municipal commissioners. Even in the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill, the amendment to omit the clause providing for the appointment of executive officers for temples was keenly debated and lost six members voting for and nine against.

Executive officers sometimes arrogate to themselves the position of masters, think that they are policemen and that the non-officials are mere nothings. That is a wrong approach to the duties of the posts which the executive officers are called upon to fill. The executive officers of these panchayat boards are certainly like the clerks of the Manchester and Birmingham County Councils and it is their primary duty to carry out the resolutions of the panchayat. If there is any mistake in the procedure or resolutions of these panchayat board meetings it is their duty to point out those errors and mistakes and also to take action on those resolutions and to keep the Government in touch with their activities and working at the other end. Therefore, Sir, it is our hope that these executive officers will confine themselves to carrying out their duties in the proper spirit and not to think that they are the top-dogs in the panchayat area. I have no doubt that the new Panchayat Act will ensure a lot of success so far as the administration of the village panchayats is concerned.

Speaking on the occasion of discussion on His Excellency the Governor's Address on 13th February 1950 when the Assembly met for the first time after the inauguration of the

Republic of India, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad said:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very unique occasion and a memorable day as the Assembly meets for the first time after the inauguration of the Republic of India. New conventions are likely to grow in the wake of the inauguration of the Republic in this country. We have just emerged from the celebrations throughout the length and breadth of India connected with that inauguration. While we rejoice we also feel the responsibilities that are cast on the leaders of the country particularly with reference to the working of the Constitution. In the first meeting of this Assembly after the inauguration of the Republic, we are naturally inclined to feel retrospectively and think of the past achievements of the people of this country. The history of this country for the last sixty years has been the history of the great struggle for self-government. The climax of that struggle has now been reached and we cannot but remember with gratitude the great services rendered by that one man, the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. His name will go down in the history of this country for his great services in emancipating the people of this ancient land. I do not want to dwell on the subject at length as I want to contribute to the conservation of the time of the House in my own humble way. The sacrifices of many distinguished sons of our country have been responsible for this self-government. But further sacrifices are necessary on the part of the people of this country, particularly the leaders. It might be that in the past it has not been possible for some of us to make the same amount of sacrifices as others. But today we all have a common purpose and that is the raising of the standard of the common man and the raising of the status of our nation in the world. This is a responsibility which everyone should undertake. This is an occasion when everyone, irrespective of his political leaning, should co-operate and put forth his best effort in this direction.

Among the problems mentioned in His Excellency's address, the main things relate to the needs of the common man, namely, food, clothes and housing. Of these three, probably food has the top priority. While we are glad that the Government are aware of the famine conditions and the need for more food, let me be permitted to mention that the Government of Madras should be banging at the door of the Government of India day in and day out. Unless they do it from now, in few weeks or months, there will be starvation in many parts of this State. I do hope that the Government will take up this matter very seriously and be

banging at the door of the Government of India. There is no use in saying that the representations have been made. I think the Minister for Food must remain in Delhi for at least fifteen days in a month.

Sir, while I am on the question of food and famine, I should be permitted to say something about the plight of some of the districts in the Tamil Nadu, like Tirunelveli and Ramnad. Sir, in this connection I should like to recall to the mind of the Hon. Minister for Public Works the cut motion that I moved during the last budget session and which I formally withdrew on the assurance given by him at that time. While I appreciate the Government's efforts in trying to improve the conditions in the Rayalaseema by setting up a Rayalaseema Development Board, I should, at the same time, like to urge upon the Government the immediate necessity of constituting a similar Development Board for some of the districts in the south. The Hon. Minister gave a categorical assurance when I moved a cut motion on that subject last year that he would take steps to form such a Board. Till now, we have not heard anything about it nor has the Hon. Minister for Public Works taken any action to set up such a body. Let me tell the Hon. Minister for Public Works that if it is not formed as early as possible I will not withdraw any cut motion at the next occasion, if I happen to move. If only they study the real conditions in the State then I am sure the Hon. Minister for Public Works will realize the need for the setting up of such a Board.

The cost of living index is showing no signs of going down, but on the other hand, it is going up day by day. Unless the cost of living index is brought down by ensuring more food production and supplying food to the people at cheaper rates, I do not think the economic crisis that is facing the country and the acute food shortage that is threatening this State in particular could be successfully tide over. I would therefore emphatically urge upon the Government to examine the question of the colossal expenditure with which they are now faced and see in what ways it could be curtailed.

Sir, while I am on the subject of the Government expenditure, I am naturally tempted to refer to the advice which the Government of India and our leaders in North India have given to this Government, to go slow with regard to their various schemes and policies, for instance prohibition and the abolition of horse races. This Government did not give heed to their advice and to that extent they are not benefited by the directions from the Centre. The

supply of cotton is stopped and the mills closed down consequently. Such a situation is now brewing and in the course of two months the breaking point will be reached. Unless the Madras Government go the Government of India immediately and appraise them of the real situation in these mills the situation would get out of control and disaster would follow.

Unless more cotton is supplied immediately and at subsidized cost, to these mills, and unless the yarn prices are put on a stable basis the South Indian mills will have to close down, with serious consequences on the labour situation. I must also mention on this occasion that the mill owners are not anxious to close down their mills themselves, because they do not want to invite trouble from labour. I do hope that the Government will realise the seriousness of the situation and make immediate representations to the Government of India and see that the situation is eased.

I cannot but congratulate the Government for the strenuous work they had been putting for the last two years in restoring law and order whenever and wherever it had been threatened in this State.

Intervening on 1st March 1950 in the general discussion on the Budget for the year 1950-51, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Madam, Deputy Speaker, I will not be far wrong if I may take the liberty of saying that we are glad the Hon. Finance Minister has on this occasion, taken more trouble to give us more information and taken us into his confidence in regard to many details of figures, so that we may have a full picture of the financial position of our Province. He deserves congratulations from the House for breaking away from the usual way of not giving much details of the Finance Department. No doubt, the House and he could have felt even more happy if he were able to show here and there certain reductions in taxation as had been expected by the Public either with regard to the Central budget or with regard to the Provincial Budget. He had to content himself by saying that in spite of the difficulties that lie ahead he has been able to manage it in such a way as not to come forward with new taxation proposals.

I see the Government are interested in the improvement of the slums. The City Improvement Trust has been constituted to provide better housing. I am not however satisfied with the work done by the recently constituted Harijan Welfare Committee. I do hope that the Hon. Minister in charge of that portfolio, when he moves his Demand will explain to us what has been done by the Committee. The City Improvement Trust has been constituted

with a small fund consisting of two and a half lakh contributed by the Corporation of Madras and two and a half lakh given by Government. So far it has not devoted its attention to improve the slums. It has been building bungalows for the upper middle classes who can look after their interests themselves. I would request a sub-committee of the Cabinet may be formed consisting of the Hon. Minister for Housing, the Hon. Minister in charge of Harijan Welfare Fund and they should divert some fund from the Harijan Welfare Fund for the improvement of the slum areas in the City. For it is a well-known fact that in our city, the slums are populated mostly by Harijans and as such a portion of the Harijan Welfare Fund may be diverted to the City Improvement Trust and earmarked for bettering the conditions of the slums.

Speaking on 13th March 1950, on the Budget Memorandum wherein the provisions for Labour including Factories and Harijan uplift, had been explained, Raja Muthiah Chettiar said:

I am not able to see therein any allocation of money for the improvement of the Harijan cheris although it is a main item of Harijan welfare. I do not decry, Sir, the policy of Government in spending so much money on other items of Harijan welfare. I have already mentioned in the general discussion on the budget that cheris are mainly occupied by Harijans and that these cheris should be improved so as to make them habitable. Particularly in the city of Madras, these cheris are in a very deplorable condition. I can assure the Hon. Minister for Housing that the object of the City Improvement Trust is not to build bungalows in the City for middle class and upper middle class people as has been their policy so far. I am glad to tell this House and the Hon. Minister in particular that even at the first meeting of the City Improvement Trust, I have been able to change the policy of the Trust, from one of building bungalows for richer people in the City to one of improving the cheris and slums and providing quarters for the people living in these cheris and slums. People who want to build houses for Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 15,000 can very well be looked after by the housing co-operative societies. I do hope, Sir, that the Government will come forward with a token demand for an additional allotment or for the variation of the allotment already made, for improving the condition of the cheris and slums in the City of Madras and also provide some lakhs of rupees for constructing houses for these slum dwellers. I submit that the money that is so far given by the Government, namely Rs. 2.50 lakh and, the another Rs. 2.50 lakh that is provided by the

Corporation of Madras is most insignificant for their improvement and for housing these people. I do hope that the Hon. Minister for Rural Uplift, the Hon. Minister in charge of Housing and the Hon. Minister in charge of the City Improvement Trust will form into a Sub-Committee of the Cabinet — not a Sub-Committee for merely drafting a beautiful report — but an active Committee to provide money for the improvement of slums in the City.

While speaking in the Assembly on 14th March 1950 on shortage of cotton in the Province, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar observed:

I have said on a former occasion that though certain subjects are entirely within the jurisdiction of the Government of India, yet any shortcoming in the administration of that subject may adversely affect our local economy and that therefore it should be the concern of the local Government to make vigorous representations from time to time. Control over cotton is one such subject. I have not heard that the Hon. Minister for Industries has waited on deputation on the Government of India and represented the cotton situation in our State. Thanks to all concerned to-day the relationship between labour, industry and Government is cordial. I only wish that this happy state should continue in the coming years. There should be complete peace and perfect law and order when we launch on the great experiment of elections based on adult franchise in a year's time. Nothing should be done to deflect the people's support to the members of the present Government. We wish that such people are in power at least for some years to come. It is in that fond hope I say that the situation should not be allowed to deteriorate, particularly in the economic field. If there is shortage of cotton-mills will have to close down either fully or partially. The resulting unemployment will give a handle to those who are opposed to the Government to do propaganda against them. I do not want such a situation to arise. It is well within the power of the Government to avert such a situation. Bombay being nearer to Delhi, the Minister for Industries in the Bombay Government has the ear of the Government of India. I do not see why the Minister for Industries in the Madras Government should not have not only one ear but both ears of the Government of India. There are instances of the Government asking the mills not to close down but to continue work and saying that they will supply cotton somehow. How long can they do like this? From reports that I have heard, I see that the voice of Bombay, Sholapur and Ahmedabad dominates in the Textile Board, though there are

representatives of Madras on it. It is the duty of the Government to step in and support our non official representatives on the Board. They should make immediate representation to the Government for the supply of enough cotton for the mills in South India.

9th August 1950: Delimitation of Constituencies and the Conduct of Elections to Legislatures

The question of delimitation of constituencies and the question of conduct of elections loomed large in August/September 1950. P.S. Kumaraswami Raja was the Premier and B. Gopala Reddy was the Finance Minister. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was a member with years of experience, the Nestor of his tribe, the Assembly or, as we may prefer to say, the Bhishma of the Assembly. He knew the Franchise story from 1931 when a Franchise Committee had been constituted of which he was a Member. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar recapitulated:

I cannot refrain from blaming the Government of India or the Government of Madras, whoever is responsible for it, for not having taken this House into confidence with regard to the delimitation of constituencies earlier. We had a franchise committee as early as 1931. I was a member of that committee. It was followed by the Hammond Committee for the delimitation of constituencies. I shall not refer to the Southborough Committee and other committees which preceded the 1931 committee. The question of a franchise committee does not arise now, as the franchise has been settled at the Centre itself when the Constituent Assembly of India passed the Constitution. However, as the delimitation of constituencies is a matter of vital concern, we were hoping that the people of each locality would be given an opportunity to express their opinion on the most convenient form of delimiting constituencies. I would like to ask the Government, particularly the Leader of the House who takes such a keen interest in electoral matter — it has almost become a hobby for him — why it has not been possible to constitute a delimitation committee for this State in an informal way. If there was any difficulty in constituting a committee in an official way it could easily have been constituted in an informal way with some members of the Legislature and some outsiders. To-day the people in this part of the country are conscious of the transformation that is taking place in the electoral and the political fields. They should have been given an opportunity to look into the delimitation of constituencies. I was hoping that simultaneously with the Hon. Leader of the House expounding the views of the Government he

would lay on the table the plan of the actual delimitation that they have proposed. It is a well-known fact that the Government through the Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioner's office have drawn up a scheme for delimitation of constituencies after considerable deliberation. I cannot understand why it was not possible for the Government to have placed that scheme before the House. When the Election Commissioner of the Government of India came here and held a conference of a very perfunctory nature, some of us, who were invited told him that that was not a representative gathering, that the Legislature should be consulted and that an ad hoc committee consisting of members of Legislature and outsiders should be constituted to consider the delimitation of constituencies. We were told that it was left to the Government of Madras to do so if they liked. We were definitely hoping that the Government of Madras would constitute a committee. That has not been done. As the Hon. Leader of the House has not mentioned the details of the delimitation plan, we were unable to express our views fully. He has said that he will take another opportunity to tell us the details. It is better that he takes the House into confidence and gives the full details before the proposals are finalised. The discussion in this House will be of little use if simultaneously with it the Government are forwarding to the Election Commissioner of the Government of India their plan for the delimitation of constituencies. I hope the Hon. Leader of the House will say in his reply what he proposes to do and whether the plan has been sent.

We are now concerned with the very great step that this country is going to take, namely, adult franchise. I shall not take up the time of the House by referring to its dangers, as they have been referred to times out of number. Adult franchise is a *fait accompli* and all I can say is: Let us wait and see. With the large illiterate population that we have got, it will be very difficult to work it as successfully as one would expect. It is capable of doing much good as well as great harm. It all depends upon the way in which the people take to it and the consciousness of the people towards the coming reform. I only wish that in view of the impending discussion in the House he had not given a lead or inkling in favour of single member constituencies.

The majority party will be in charge of elections and there is no alternative to it in democratic countries. This will be the first election after the advent of the new Constitution. The party's responsibility is all the more because it framed and passed the constitution and it is also going to be in charge of elections. It is all

the more the responsibility of the Government in power to see that equal opportunities are afforded to the other parties and other communities also to serve the country by getting into the Legislatures. In a democratic country, the Government do not organize parties themselves but leave it to the people and the popular leaders to organize parties to fight the elections by getting the support of the people. That being the case, it is the responsibility of the party in power to see that other parties also come up and take up their place in our democratic Legislatures. It is in that view I am putting forward my suggestions.

Madam, as regards the colour-box system, it was introduced only in 1936 when the Congress first contested the elections. The Franchise Committee have elaborately dealt with the colour-box system and its advantages in elections where the majority of the voters are illiterate. But we have our own doubts about it. In Ceylon the colour-box system had not worked well and they have given it up. They found that sometimes voters instead of depositing the ballot paper into the colour boxes, used to take it away and sell it to the party agents, and these agents used to send it again through their reliable friends for being deposited again in the colour boxes. Because the watcher system was not in vogue, they were able to do this. It was also very delicate to search the pockets of the voters and so the colour-box system without watchers was found to be unsatisfactory. The same thing may happen here also, because we have abolished the watchers system. In Ceylon they are now adopting what is known as the symbol system, by which the parties use certain definite symbols in their flags and also in their boxes and the voters are given a card in which these symbols are printed and they are asked to deposit it in the particular box of the candidate whom they want to vote and which bear this symbol. Let me explain the system by means of an illustration., Suppose two candidates contest a seat in a certain constituency, one candidate will be given the symbol of a hand while the other, that of an elephant. The former candidate would carry on his election propaganda with that symbol while the other with the symbol of the elephant. Both the picture of the hand and the elephant will be pasted in the respective box of the candidate and both these pictures will be prominently displayed in the election posters and in the polling booths for the purpose of educating the voters. In the voting paper, both the picture of the hand and the elephant will be printed and the voter who wants to vote for the candidate of his choice would take the paper and deposit it in the particular box in which the particular picture is pasted. It is more or less like the colour-box system, but in addition

to it, the voter is asked to mark the picture in the voting paper. This is the only additional safeguard that they take, so far as I am able to understand that system.

The Hon. Sri B. Gopala Reddi: Even there, cannot the voters walk away with the voting paper?

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: It may be possible Sir, but I am not quite sure what additional precautions they are taking to prevent such things happening. I was talking with the Mayor of Colombo who was here yesterday and he was telling me that the colour-box system has been given up in Ceylon and that the symbol system coupled with marking has been introduced and that this system was found to be more satisfactory. I do hope, Sir, that our Election Commissioner would get into touch with the Ceylon election authorities as early as possible and find out how that system is actually being worked and whether it is better than our system of colour boxes.

Madam, while I am on this question of the conduct of elections, I should like to say a few words with regard to the malpractices that are likely to be committed at the time of the actual elections. I want the Government to take ample precautions to see that such malpractices are prevented. For instance, if a candidate knows that he is likely to get a less number of votes and get defeated, it is possible that he might resort to all sorts of malpractices in order to spoil or nullify the elections. Perhaps he might throw acid into the ballot-box or perhaps he might set fire to the polling booth or might man-handle the polling officers. In order to prevent such things happening, I want to suggest that there should be ample police protection. Moreover, if anything happens like that, I want to know whether a fresh election would be held in that particular ward or particular constituency or whether the voting in that particular booth would not be taken into consideration at all. That is a matter on which the Hon. Leader of the House has not given us any information. This point was raised at the recent conference held by the All India Election Commissioner with certain party leaders in this City and I thought that some light would be thrown on this point by him or by the Government. But he skipped over the matter; nor has the Hon. Leader of the House given us any enlightenment on that point.

The Hon. Sri B. Gopala Reddi: What is the suggestion of the Hon. Member?

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: I will make my suggestion only when I sit on the Treasury Bench in the place of the Hon.

Leader of the House. My job is only to criticise and to point out the defects in the system.

As for the actual conduct of elections, I reiterate the suggestion made by the Hon. Lady Member, Begum Mir Amiruddin, that the polling booth should have a manageable number of voters. I think, 1000 voters is the maximum that a polling booth could manage without difficulty, but in thickly populated areas or wards, there must be more than one booth and necessary arrangements should be made to see that crowds are avoided and that voters do not come in a rush and that voting takes place in a smooth and orderly manner. There has been a suggestion regarding the part played by the All India Radio. I should like now to recall to the members of this House what the distinguished person who presided over the Franchise Committee in 1931, Lord Lothian said. It is a Government of India Committee. In Madras we had a committee, and I believe Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar was a member of that Committee. Madam, you might know that before the All India Radio came into being in Madras, we had a private broadcasting system run by the Corporation of Madras for eight long years. Even Lord Willingdon sitting in Ootacamund was able to make use of this broadcasting system through the telephone. When Lord Lothian was here we wanted him to speak on the radio. Just before he finished dictating his address, he took it to the meeting. The first heading there was the part played by the radio in elections. We did not know this till he spoke. It was a five or six pages document. He stated that franchise might be extended, and when larger number of people were enfranchised, it would be impossible for the candidates to reach the homes of the electorate, and therefore the only vehicle through which parties or individuals could appeal to the electorate was the radio. He also stated that opportunities should be given for all candidates, and that while giving opportunities, there should be equal time for all, because the majority party was there, and therefore, equal time was not possible. He meant only judicious allocation of time. I have no confidence in the All-India Radio, Madras. I am Enemy No. 1 of the Madras station. I openly say it here. I have complete mistrust of that body, and it has not improved in spite of the criticisms in the last ten years. It is absolutely a one-sided body, and I do hope that the Madras Government will look into this matter. It is because the Madras Government have no voice in the All India Radio, Madras, that we the people of South India have no voice in its administration. It is an institution completely partial..... (Interruption by the Hon. Sri B. Gopala Reddi). It is politically partial also.

The Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member cannot speak on the administration of the All India Radio. But he must speak on the question of elections.

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad: Madam, I justify my remarks with regard to the All India Radio, Madras.

Radio has got a very important part to play in the conduct of elections. It is absolutely necessary that the election machinery shall have complete control over the allotment of time for the various parties and for the various candidates also.

I hope the All India Radio will improve and help the people of this Province. To-day more than ever, it is absolutely necessary that the All India Radio should help the candidates in their approach to the voters. This is one of the conditions of fair elections. If the All India Radio functions in a fair manner, it will be very good. But it will not function in a fair manner overnight unless it is reformed from now onwards. All on a sudden it cannot be said to function in a fair manner on the eve of the election.

10th August 1950: Food Situation in the State

Speaking with some vehemence on this subject, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad made quite a few pertinent points:

1. There should be a 'food debate' at the beginning of each session of the Legislature.
2. Unless a buffer stock of rice is built up, it is not possible to get over this difficult situation.
3. Rice should be made available to the poor. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is one who will change his mind if he is convinced that here, in Madras, we cannot do without rice.
4. What prevented the Government from taking steps six months earlier to avert famine conditions?
5. Industrial labour has been estranged on account of the food position. Labour trouble may have to be faced if the food scarcity is not relieved early.
6. My point is with reference to the immediate present. What have the Government been doing these six months? I will not say anything about the tree-planting scheme initiated by Mr. Munshi. To say anything disparaging about it will be cheap criticism and I shall not do it and it is not for me to

do it and I shall content myself with asking the Food Minister of this Government to move in the matter. I want him not to be in Madras; let him leave for Delhi tomorrow and the other Ministers will look after Food. Let him stay there for fifteen days and if he is not able to achieve anything let him come back. If he is not in Madras the other Ministers will carry on the Government. I am very glad that the Chief Minister is leaving for Delhi.

7. Self-sufficiency in food cannot be attained in December 1953 so far as Madras is concerned. This should be made clear to the Government of India in unmistakable language.
8. Our representatives in the Central Assembly (C. Rajagopalachariar and N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar) can move in the matter only if we give them the figures.
9. A Five-Year Plan regarding food should be drawn up by the Government.
10. Sugar is scarce; though some are able to get it in the black market.
11. The Central Government should correct themselves when they are wrong.

12th August 1950: Study of Languages in Secondary Schools

Intervening in the debate, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar observed:

I have taken a fairly leading part in the controversies over language during the last fifteen years.

I am not 'unnationalistic' when I ask for giving more importance to our mother-tongue and making Hindi optional. These two things are the cause of the controversy.

Those who speak in the name of nationalism, those who want the progress of our country and those who want Tamil to be the medium of instruction even in the University classes should see even from now that full importance is given to it so that in course of time it may be the medium of instruction from the lowest class right upto the highest University class. To give due recognition to the mother-tongue, the first and foremost necessity is not to give any option to give up the mother-tongue.

By making it optional they are putting a onerous responsibility on persons like me who advocate the study of Hindi. I realize the responsibility. To the extent to which my voice counts, I shall certainly advocate the study of Hindi voluntarily. I can speak Hindi in a conversational style and that knowledge stands me in good stead even now. For persons who go to North India knowledge of Hindi is essential. Willy-nilly we have to learn Hindi. Otherwise we will regret fifteen years later. If the language is made compulsory, there is agitation. We want full proficiency in our mother-tongue. It is to the compulsory study of other languages that we object. I emphasize that all the other languages should be made optional so that the boy's attention may be devoted completely to the mother-tongue.

On the need to continue the study of English* the Rajah Sahib expressed his views in the clearest terms:

I may also mention — not because of my love for the English language — the need for the study of English. India's progress and freedom would not have been possible without English language. If we had not English education, we would never have become equals with the British, American and other nations of the world. If we want to keep up our position in the world, English is necessary. Even now the percentage of India's population who know English is very small. To reduce it still further will not be in the best interests of the country. We cannot also reduce the standard of English instruction. Boys find it difficult to follow the subjects in English in the college classes because there is no grounding of English. If the Government are going to reduce the standard, there is very great danger. I shall not be tired of urging that the importance of English will continue for another twenty-five years at least. The Constitution fixes the transition period at fifteen years. Why should we think that the period will not be extended by another ten years for the sake of South India? We know the controversy over Hindi. We must keep the importance of English till such time as we are able to prepare enough books, especially on technical subjects, in the mother-tongue, regional language or national language as the case may be. I have advocated the study of mother-tongue in a full measure even to the B.A. Class.

* A great lover of the English language and its great literature, Rajaji urged on the Government and the people of India the necessity of its retention for all time so that its vast treasures of thought may be a continuous inspiration to Indians for generations to come.

2nd September 1950: The Madras City Improvement Trust Bill

When the Madras City Improvement Trust Bill, 1950 was taken up for consideration by the Assembly, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar brought to bear on the discussion his intimate knowledge of the subject and made some very valuable suggestions:

The Government must come forward with more money for poor housing in the City of Madras, the Hon. Law Minister has clearly explained the scope of the amendments that have been incorporated in the Bill by the Select Committee. I generally agree with what he has said, but I should have been more pleased — and every one here would have been more pleased — if he had thought it fit to put in an amendment to the effect that the contribution to the Board by the Government was not to be Rs.2.50 lakh but Rs.5 or Rs.10 lakh; that would have been a real service to the City Improvement Trust. I only wish that an amendment had been made to the effect that it was to be 'not less than Rs.5 lakh or Rs.10 lakh. I am not of course pleading for the City Improvement Trust as a body, but I just want to know what the Government are really doing with a view to encourage poor housing in the City of Madras. I was hoping that the Government would come forward with proposals for larger grants. I strongly appeal to the Government or at least give an assurance on the floor of this House that what the Hon. Finance Minister said just now, viz. that 'not less than Rs.2.50 lakh' is actually given to the Trust and what is put in the Bill is actually translated into action. I also appeal that in the coming Years the Government should increase the grant as much as possible and they should also ask the Corporation of Madras to increase its share of Rs.2.50 lakh.

It is very necessary Sir, that persons with business knowledge should be put on the Board, who will look at the work of the Board from a business angle and see that it is run in a business like manner. I may assure the Hon. Minister concerned that the members representing Chambers of Commerce are now doing very useful work on the Trust and it will be a great pity if the representation of the Chambers of Commerce is removed. I may also assure the Hon. Minister for Law that the representation given to Commercial bodies on this Trust is very useful and the members representing commerce thereon are discharging their duties very efficiently; they have brought into the work of the board a business aspect and we all know what thorough change the work of the Board has undergone. During the last four months,

we have deviated from the old rut of providing bungalow areas for rich people and have turned our attention to poor housing. If only the Government can provide more money for poor housing and entrust the work to business representatives on the Trust, I am sure that the money will be usefully and well spent. The work of the Trust Board depends mainly on the men composing the Board and the Chief Executive Officer who, I am glad to say, is very energetic and puts enthusiasm in his work. And if only more money can be allocated by the Government and the Corporation of Madras, I am sure much good work can be done.

11th September 1950: The Madras Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Bill, 1949.

The observations of Rajah Muthiah Chettiar on this important subject show deep insight into the working of Religious Endowments:

The question of the control and superintendence of our ancient religious institutions in this part of the country has been engaging the attention of the Government, whichever party was in office, for the last thirty years. I well remember the chorus of opposition raised against the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill proposed by the revered leader of the Justice Party, the late Raja of Panagal in the year 1923. I shall not take up much of the time of the House by narrating the genesis of the Bill, the agitation against its introduction and how the Government of the day overcame the opposition. But I may say this much. A good number of the agitators came from my own community though they had nothing to do with the religious functions taking place inside the temple. They were not so much interested in the management of the temples as they were in the building of temples. All the same, they felt to a certain extent that the temples under Governmental control would not enjoy that amount of sanctity which would otherwise attach to them. I may be permitted, Madam, in this connection, to mention that it was given to my father to convince the members of my community at that time about the benefits of Governmental control. He had to tour the Chettinad for pretty long time to tell the people that it was in the interests of the Hindu community that the temples were sought to be controlled by the Government with reference to their revenue and expenditure. It was with great foresight and thought that the first set of Commissioners were appointed, after having been selected by a

pecially constituted committee. From my own experience as Minister in charge of Hindu Religious Endowments Board, I can say it is not an easy job to hold the portfolio.

Recalling that though he knew the problems connected with the administration of temples, and he had been asked to be the Chairman to go into the working of the Board, he sought with the approval of the Government the assistance of Justice P. Venkataramana Rao, to draw up the report, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar observed:

I agree that the actions of the hereditary trustees should be controlled and checked, but ordinarily a hereditary trustee should be given a better place than other trustees. The one main question is, "Do you want to retain the temples or not?" If you do not want to retain the temples it is a different matter. Once we decide that the temples should be retained, we should consider how the administration of these temples should be controlled, and whether it is not in the interests of the temples themselves to leave the administration of certain temples in the hands of the members of the old families who have been responsible for the establishment of these temples. These people have deep piety and a sentimental and psychological feeling towards these temples. Their feeling is such that if any child or anybody in the family falls ill, they imagine that as trustees they have done something wrong. That is the kind of sentiment that is attached to these temples. We are still living in the land of sentiment and psychology. Therefore, it is worthwhile giving more power and more duties to the hereditary trustees. At the same time, the very charter should contain complete provisions for the control of the actions of these trustees if they do wrong. Where it is a question of the recognition of the hereditary trustees, I would suggest that they should be given full recognition. It should not be easily possible to dismiss their claims for succession as hereditary trustees.

If charitable endowments are of a big nature, they may call for control from the Government. But there are many charitable endowments which are not big enough to be controlled by the Government. If such small endowments are controlled now, what will be the net result? The net result will be that there will be no charity forthcoming. Already charity has dried up and it will dry up still more.

Now I come to a very important point. I have always held a middle view with regard to the control of Mutts all these 25 years. I know

about the Saiva Siddantha Mutts in this State — the Tiruvadhurai Mutt, the Dharmapuram Mutt and the Tirupanandal Mutt. I have no personal knowledge about the Mutts in the Upipi area and about these Mutts in Tirunelveli. The Mutts are institutions representing the various subjects of the Hindu community. As far as possible, they should be left alone. My fear is that if the Government begin to control these Mutts, they may lose their significance and importance with reference to the various religious sects and their sentiments.”

I am not for the abolition of the Mutts. I am not for the abolition of the Matadhipathis. I want their incomes to be secured properly. Executive officers approved by the Hindu Religious Endowments Board or the Government should be compulsorily appointed for these Mutts. It should not be left to the Matadhipathi to choose the executive officer; it should be left to the Government entirely. Incomes of lakhs of rupees are involved. The duty of a Saiva Siddhanta Matadhipathi is to propagate Saiva Siddhanta.

Let us first of all ensure the income of these Mutts and then let the Matadhipathis draw up the scheme and fix the *dittams* and so on. With regard to the spending of the excess income, the income that is left after meeting the expenditure on the pujas and so on, I held the view in that Committee itself, that that money should be spent for religious propaganda, for Saiva Siddhanta propaganda so far as Saivite Mutts are concerned. I am totally against these excess moneys being spent for medical relief, for leprosy relief and so on. That is not the duty and that is not the purpose of the people who endowed these properties and that is not the object of the worshippers who are likely to come up in future. Of course, medical relief and leprosy relief are very laudable objects, but they may be left to other private charities.

1st December 1950: Death of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

The Hon'ble Mr. B. Gopala Reddy, the Finance Minister, moved in the Madras Legislative Assembly on 15th December 1950 a condolence resolution on the death that had occurred that morning in Bombay of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Deputy Prime Minister of India.

Coming on the heels of Mahatma Gandhi's in 1948, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's death came as a shock and cast a gloom all over the country. He was a great leader of men, a man of steel. His death at what was a time of crisis was something that would daunt the minds of men.

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar, associating himself with the sentiments expressed by the Hon'ble the Leader of the House, gave expression to the country's grief:

Suffice it to say that the period that has followed the struggle for freedom has been of greater importance to this country's welfare and during that period the part played by Sardar Patel in stabilizing this country and in advising his countrymen to be steady and to work to deserve the freedom attained is a matter which will go down in the history of this country. It is an object lesson for every one of us and for the generations to come that there was one by name Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who has done this kind of service after freedom was won. There are people who after success lapse into enjoyment and self-satisfaction at their past glory, but he was one who felt that the success attained after 50 years of struggle meant greater responsibility and greater anxiety, greater skill and greater strength, to carry the people to safety and prosperity. In that struggle he was one who had been able to instil great confidence in the minds of the various sections of people. It is difficult for a person leading a political party to infuse confidence in the minds of various other political parties and persons of different political persuasions. He was one who was remarkably gifted with that ability to instil confidence in the people who did not belong to his way of thinking and make them feel that they must support him in the cause of the preservation of peace in this country and the rest of the world. If there has been some amount of peace and stability in the country even in spite of various attempts to disrupt peace in various parts of the country, credit should largely be given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The ideals for which Sardar Patel worked should always make us feel the responsibilities that we owe to ourselves, to our countrymen and to the country at large and in that spirit of veneration to the departed leader, we should carry on our work. That is the best way of our paying homage and tribute to the great Leader.

8th December 1950: Food Situation

Participating in the discussion on the Food situation in the Legislative Assembly, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad moved the following amendment to the motion of the Hon. Minister for Food (Mr. P.S. Kumaraswami Raja was the Premier of the day):

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the amendment which stands in

my name to the motion of the Hon. Minister for Food. My amendment runs as follows:

And on further consideration, this Assembly urges upon the State Government--

1. the imperative necessity for securing from the Union Government at least 1.50 million tons of foodgrains for the year 1951, out of which one million tons should be rice, from out of the foodgrains imported from abroad and procured from the surplus States in the Indian Union;
2. to confine statutory rationing to municipal towns and informal rationing to major panchayat areas only and to suspend rural rationing from the 1st January 1951 as an experimental measure for three months and if it becomes successful to continue it;
3. to continue the present organisations including foodgrains distribution shops in the rural areas even during the experimental period, for the purpose of distributing foodgrains supplied to such areas;
4. to continue procurement of foodgrains from surplus districts and areas only;
5. to make arrangements to maintain buffer stocks of foodgrains at all taluk headquarters in the deficit districts to ensure continuous supply of foodgrains to the people of those areas;
6. to arrange to allow or give to the people 16 ounces of foodgrains per day per person, out of which 12 ounces shall be rice.

I have to submit to you, Sir, that you may be pleased to ask the Hon. Minister for Agriculture also to be present during this debate.

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar continued:

Sir I am indeed glad that the Government and yourself have been able ultimately after a long time to agree to have a food debate, which has been asked for by many members of this House. Sir, I wish to recall to the Hon. Leader of the House and the Hon. Food Minister that a food debate we are having practically in every session. I wish to request them that till the entire food crisis is over, it would be well if they make it a regular feature of having a food debate in the Assembly for one day in each sitting of the Assembly. It is to their own interest they do so; for, it gives them an opportunity to explain to the public what they have done and what they propose to do in the matter of food distribution to the people of this State. I only hope that in future at least the Government will

come forward regularly with a food debate without our asking for it will the entire food situation improves to a great extent.

A main feature of the statement placed before the House is that the Government of Madras have done their best. It is not right. The Government should have told the Government of India their total requirement on the basis of 16 oz. per adult per day. I can prove to the House that the total requirements as given in the statement is very low. It is said that an alarmist view should not be taken, as it encourages blackmarket in the country. At the same time if we do not tell the real state of affairs, we do not get the required supply of foodgrains and that also creates blackmarket. We have got to choose between the two and I think the better of them is to tell the Government of India that we require so much and that that quantity must be supplied. I hope that the Government of Madras will not be under any sense of false prestige that they have tide over the crisis. The crisis has been there for days, weeks and months. The expected rains are not coming. As I have often brought to the notice of the House, in some places 6 or even 4 oz. of ration has been given for a whole week. Very responsible persons who are not prone to exaggeration have testified to this fact. He has told me that even 2 oz. per week has not been given. Every Member of the House knows about the complete breakdown of the rationing system. It is not the fault of the Government of Madras as they are not unwilling to get the necessary supplies. They are not alarmist enough to tell their requirements forcibly to the Government of India. This Government must be either respected or feared. I am sorry that they are not feared. If their words are not respected, they must bully the Government of India. The Public and the Press are behind them and they cannot find a better atmosphere to support their demand in Delhi.

Our statement that there was rice available for export in Burma has proved true. The Hon. Food Minister said that there was no stock and subsequently the Government of India entered into an agreement with Burma for importing rice.

It is the import policy of the Government of India that has ruined the rationing system in this country. Rationing will never succeed unless there are adequate imports.

Madam, Deputy Speaker, after I came here, and after reading the statement of the Hon. Minister for Food, I have noted a few points and for the sake of brevity, I shall merely mention them, without elaborating them at any length. The Government of Madras have

been giving us an overall ration of 12 oz. consisting of 6 oz. rice and 6 oz. of wheat, milo, etc. This, they must continue and they must not resile from this position. But, at the same time, it is not enough that they should be simply content with this quantity. They should endeavour to increase this quantity till they are able to supply the people at least 16 oz. of rice and until then they must go on urging for a greater amount of supply from the centre. Now the Central Government are not feeding the people of this State properly nor do they allow us to import food directly from foreign countries.

Why do the Government propose to abolish rural rationing? It is not because people do not like it, but the manner in which rural rationing is being carried on by the Government, people have become disgusted with it. The Government have not been able to feed them properly and for many days in the week, there is either no stock in the rural ration shops or the ration that is issued is quite inadequate. Therefore, out of sheer disgust, people in the rural parts want that it must be abolished, so that they might at least be able to buy their requirements in the villages themselves without having to wait and hang on these ration shops, for 2 oz. or 3 oz. and for only 2 or 3 days in a week.

Madam, my own view is that the present rural rationing is simply a drift. I did not like it personally from the beginning, but somehow or other, opinion is gathering more and more around, out of sheer disgust and on account of the failure of Government to maintain enough stocks, that it must be abolished. It would not have failed, if sufficient stock of food had always been maintained in these shops. But anyway, the Government have proposed to abolish it altogether and therefore, I have suggested in my amendment that they must confine statutory rationing to municipal towns and informal rationing in the major panchayat areas only and to suspend rural rationing from the 1st January 1951, as an experimental measure for three months and if it becomes succesful, to continue it.

Next Madam, we must continue to import food even after the year 1952. The Government of India have been telling for the last two years that their policy is to stop all imports after 1951, but now they are saying that by 1952 they will stop imports completely. That is a wrong policy and they should not make announcements like that. This Government should impress upon them that we shall have to import rice from other countries even after 1952 until such time as we are able to produce enough food to make our

Province self-sufficient. They must also tell the Government of India that they should supply this State only rice and rice alone and that the people in our villages could eat rice only and that they must be able to supply them a ration of 16 oz. per day.

The Madras Irrigation (Betterment, Contribution and Inclusion Fees) Bill, 1951 was under discussion in the Madras Legislative Assembly in August/September 1951. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was quite outspoken in his views. He said:

While I am prepared to concede that this House should appreciate the enthusiasm of the Government and particularly the Hon. Public Works Minister for pushing through many schemes of irrigation — major and minor irrigation work, tank improvement scheme, etc. I only like to impress upon this House the necessity for recognising the conditions of those connected with land. We have been put to the necessity of taking up several irrigation projects not out of any special love for the agriculturists, but out of sheer necessity. The agriculturist is not able to find water to carry on cultivation. For this main reason only, the Government are coming to the aid of the agriculturists.

This question of betterment levy and inclusion fee, has a history behind it. It has had a chequered course. If this inclusion fee is allowed to be collected, my friends from some of the Telugu districts, viz. East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna will realise that their heads will be broken. If a person goes and tells the people of those parts that inclusion fee is to be collected from them, I will not be surprised if personal injury is caused to him and he is taken to the hospital the next moment. It is a notorious fact that in the early days of representative Government in this part of the country, those civil servants who were nominated to the Board of Revenue annually sent up proposals for the levy of inclusion fee and thus embarrassed the Ministry. In those days we had diarchy; Ministers were functioning and there were also Executive Councillors giving instructions to the Ministry also in the matter. I know of a number of occasions when the Justice party, headed by that distinguished politician the Rajah of Panagal, was at its wit's end to find ways and means to reject the proposal sponsored by the Revenue Board and Executive Council. It was a question of consenting to the proposal of the Revenue Board or giving up the Ministry. I know how many anxious moments, difficult days and weeks were passed.

I submit that there are many areas in this State in the Tamil and

Telugu districts which will be affected by this provision. I concede that income from land has been augmented and has now increased but the Government must concede that the cost of living and the cost of agricultural implements and other things have also increased.

It is mentioned in the Bill that the contribution will not exceed 50 percent of the increase. They can even go upto 40 percent as the maximum has been fixed at 50 percent. In that case, it is not a fee at all and is practically a capital levy on land.

The Hon. Sri H. Sitarama Reddi interjected:

It is not a levy but a fee." (Just a play of words).

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar replied:

The Hon. Minister has made a distinction. I am sorry I cannot accept his distinction.

He concluded by saying:

I wish, in all seriousness that the Government drop the Bill.

The Hon. Sri Munshi advises the people to take non-cereal food! How can the poor people prepare food out of wheat without oil or fats? The poor people are unable to get even a pinch of salt and chilli to take with this minimum food of cooked rice. Even the clerical staff of the Government are in this position. When this is the state of affairs, it is incumbent on this Government to feed the people with rice and nothing but rice.

I am glad even the Prime Minister of India has now admitted that this self-sufficiency plan is a pernicious one. He has now revised his opinion. If Burma is told that the Government of India will take 10 lakh tons — even if it is not possible to get 10 lakh tons, it will be somewhere between 5 lakh and 7.50 lakh tons on account of the reduced exportable surplus. I am certain the Burma Government will allot to us the quantity they can. So, I would entreat the Hon. Minister to place this suggestion before the Government of India and tell them that they should negotiate with the Government of Burma even now and probably revise the agreement which they entered into earlier regarding the supply of 2.50 lakh tons or 5 lakh tons. Then only the rice problem of South India will be solved.

I do hope that the Government of Madras and the Food Minister will bestir themselves and bully the Government of India in the matter. I think the time has come when this State cannot have any more patience.

The food situation at the beginning of the year 1951 was positively alarming but the Government did not seem to be aware of it. At all events they took no serious steps to face it. Half-hearted measures, delay and procrastination were all that they could show for it. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was thoroughly alive to the situation and drew pointed attention to it. He made a powerful plea for timely steps to meet it which was hourly getting worse and threatening to get out of hand. He wanted the Ministers to go about the country and see things for themselves. He cited the example of the Governor of Madras, the Maharajah of Bhavnagar, go to the spot, see things for himself and "you will get a clear grasp of the position which you can't if you just sit in a comfortable chair in the Secretariat, signing papers and calling for reports and more reports."

He spoke his mind freely during the discussion in the Legislature, made his points which were unanswerable. A speech to remember, indeed.

Speaking on a Government motion regarding the Famine and Food, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

While I am on the question of personal visits, let me tell the Ministers that they have no business to be in Madras after the present session is over. All the twelve Ministers must not be seen in the precincts of Fort St. George for ten or twelve days after the 14th. (Hon. Members: "Some of them have already left on tour".) I am indeed glad to hear that they have left, but I am sorry to see they have not left on tour for the purpose for which I want them to leave; they have gone out probably because of prior engagements, for perhaps they did not expect the Assembly to be sitting today; they wanted the sittings to be completed last week itself and if possible, to put off the food debate for a later occasion. It is the request of some Hon. Members of the House including myself that was responsible for putting down this debate for to-day. We are glad, Sir, the food debate is conducted here in the absence of the Chief Minister and the Leader of the House; there are other distinguished Ministers here to hear us and to give us the reply. But 'reply' as I said, we shall not take as anything more than empty words to be printed on blank sheets of paper. I shall, however, say this much, that the Ministers will have done their duty, not by themselves but only by the Government of India, if they simply stopped with the reply. I believe this session will be over by the 14th and 15th and the Assembly will meet again only

on the 25th and 26th thus, the Ministers will have full ten days. It is no use a few Ministers going out and seeing things for themselves; the Government of India must be told that most of these representative Ministers have had an opportunity of seeing the deficit districts themselves. And the deficit districts come to 15 or 16, I do not think there are many districts which are in a happy position; on the other hand, it will be true to say that large parts of this province are affected by adverse seasonal conditions. Therefore, I submit it will only be right if all the Ministers go round the province, make a tour of the areas affected then report and send an S.O.S. to Delhi telling them that if food is not rushed down immediately, it will not be the responsibility of the Madras Ministry. Let Mr. Kuttalalingam go out as the Collector of Tiruchirappalli, let the Food Minister not be in charge of Food and let there be no Health department too. Let everything be done from the next moment by the Government of India; let famine be taken care of by Delhi; let Mr. Munshi and Mr. Thirumala Rao come down to Madras and administer the Food department.

If the Government of Madras threaten to resign, what will be the alternative for the Government of India to-day? Are they going to come down here and rule? It is impossible. Which is the party to take charge of the administration here? Probably persons like Mr. Kuttalalingam Pillai and other Secretaries, when they become glorified Advisers of this State, may probably be able to feed the people of the State. As I have said times out of number, the present Ministry, is not feared, if not respected, in Delhi. They should bully the Government of India if they do not succeed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest to the public and the Government that they should forget all their activities regarding the Grow More Food Campaign, well-subsidy and so on, because these will not help us for the next six weeks or two months. Last time when I demanded a food debate, I suggested that there would be starvation deaths from the first week of April. How I am correct in my statement, has been proved by statements made by experienced Collectors of the districts who have had experience as such of those districts for several years, like Mr. Dorairaj of North Arcot, who said that there will be starvation from 1st March. Of course, he did not use the word 'death.' What is starvation today leads on to death. Instead of amendments and arguments in support thereof, what is needed today is food, whether it is from Delhi or anywhere else. The only thing that is at present needed is food. Sir, Hon. Members would have seen from the representations made by the public to His Excellency the Governor in his recent

tour, that they are prepared to take any food. That is the actual situation. Let it be wheat, let it be millet, milo or anything.

Now Sir, with regard to the food situation, I have referred in general, but I shall not make much of the shortage in acreage under paddy cultivation, except to make a reference to what the Government themselves have stated. This is what they have stated. Forty-nine lakh tons of rice was the expected yield and what they have got is 41 lakh tons, that is a shortage of 8 lakh tons of rice. The question is, should not the Government try to make good at least this shortage of 8 lakh tons. I would like to reiterate on this occasion that the Government should make all efforts to get this 8 lakh tons rice at least and not merely the 4 lakh tons promised by the Government of India. Here, I would like to make a reference to what the Government of India are giving to Bombay. Bombay is short by 10 lakh tons of rice, but Bombay has been promised 7 lakh tons of rice already and for the remaining 3 lakh a S.O.S. message was sent by the Hon. Food Minister and not satisfied with that the Union Food Minister flew to Bombay and the promise to give was given. Then, not satisfied with this Food Minister's promise, our great Prime Minister, while on his way to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London, was able to snatch 10 minutes of his time in Bombay to discuss the food question with the Food Minister of Bombay. What I want to point out here is, apart from the promise to give 3 lakh tons, Bombay was able to get 7 lakh tons out of 10 lakh tons required. In regard to the balance of 3 lakh tons, we find from newspaper reports that this shortage of 3 lakh tons will be spread over the surplus States of India, so that the requirements of Bombay will be fully met. Now I ask what is the Madras Government doing? As I said the only alternative for them is to resign, because it is useless for any set of South Indians to sit on the Treasury Bench today.

He gave the heartening information that the Government of India were aware "that there is rice in Burma" and that "they are willing to negotiate with Burma not only in respect of our requirements this year but for future years also."

He continued:

Let me again repeat the question of Burma rice, Mr. Speaker, for the Government of India are supposed now to agree that there is rice in Burma and they are willing to negotiate with Burma.

We are very glad, Sir, that the Prime Minister of India who is a very bold man and who is not afraid of owning his faults, admitted on the floor of the Parliament that the policy of self-sufficiency

and of not importing food has not proved to be a right one and that he is now prepared to reconsider the question of food imports. Though much time has been lost and harm has been done, I am glad that there is a fuller realisation of the position by the Prime Minister of India and we hope that the officers of the Government of India and elsewhere will now switch on to it because the dictum of 'No food from outside' has demoralised the administration from Delhi down to the villages."

He quoted the example of Ceylon. He said:

It was on the day when I was speaking in the Assembly that on the 4th August that Ceylon entered into a contract with Burma for 3 lakh tons of rice against their total requirement of 4 lakh tons and exactly the previous March, exactly eleven months before, they entered into a contract for 2.50 lakh tons for their requirement of 4 lakh tons.

Referring to the textile situation in the State which was getting worse and worse day by day. Muthiah Chettiar warned that if cotton is not immediately procured and given to the mills at the prices announced by the Government, cotton will not be available to the mills with the result that the yarn prices will go up, there would be less production and closure of the mills and Government will have to take upon themselves the job of feeding 500,000 textile workers. He said:

This situation is not immediately in the offing but it is likely to arise within a period of three or four months. Therefore, let our Minister for Industries and the Government of India procure and give the mills the raw materials with which they could keep the machinery going and keep the labourers employed.

Referring to the famine conditions in the country Muthiah Chettiar said:

Let the Government of India be aware of it that if they (Government of India) do not give this Government this quantity in full, there will be riots immediately. This is what will happen immediately in more than two-thirds of the State; famine conditions are already staring us in the face and within a period of three or four months there will be starvation deaths not by thousands but by lakhs and lakhs. Let the Government of India remember what happened in Bengal and let them remember that the oncoming of that famine was anticipated and feared six or seven months before it actually broke out."

Sir, I have it on the authority of Mr. S.V. Ramamurti, who was a

member of the Bengal Famine Commission, who enquired into the famine in Bengal, that the Commission were told during the course of their enquiry, that six months before actual famine set in in that state, the Government were warned not only by non-officials but even by officials, that sure as certain, famine would set in in Bengal. But that warning was not heeded and what happened there is all well within our recollection. Now, Sir, in Madras, we have been warning the Government for the last few months that the food situation is getting grave. Not only non-officials have been saying that; even officials have been saying that famine is threatening our province. Now it is the duty of this Government to transmit this warning to the Government of India.

On 17th March, 1952, there was a general discussion on the Budget for 1952-53. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar referred to

the seasonal conditions in the districts of Salem, South Arcot, a part of Coimbatore, Pudukkottai and parts of Tiruchirappalli and Ramanathapuram which were suffering badly on account of scanty rainfall. There is no drinking water in some of these places.

Referring to the accumulated reserve of 43 crores of rupees during the Adviser's regime he said:

24 crores have been depleted in less than five years. The Government have now proposed to spend about 5 crores of rupees out of the remaining 19 crores in our Reserve, to relieve the distress in the famine-stricken areas of Rayalaseema. The Government have approached the Government of India for substantial assistance by way of loans and grants. Madam, I say that the amount that the Government have proposed to spend on famine relief is very insufficient. If the Government of India refuse to grant any substantial assistance, what is it the Government are going to do? I say, Madam, the Government would be perfectly justified in spending as much as 14 crores out of our Reserve of 19 crores leaving a balance of 5 crores instead of spending only 5 crores now. I would be the first to give a certificate to the Government and praise them for what they have done, if they do so. I ask, Madam, what is the main purpose of our keeping reserves? Is it for the purpose of saving for posterity? Of what use is it, if it is not spent for the right thing and at the right moment? I sincerely trust that the Hon. Minister in charge of Finance and the Hon. Food Minister would seriously consider my suggestions and act quickly.

I saw in to-day's paper that the control with regard to rice has been completely lifted in Thailand. I would request the Government of

Madras to lose no time in urging the Government of India to send a purchase mission immediately to Thailand to get rice. Many countries were able to get rice from Thailand in exchange for consumer goods. Surely we have also exportable consumer goods. We have exportable surpluses in handloom cloth, groundnuts and groundnut oil. As we have these, certainly we can fare far better than Japan in getting rice from Thailand. We see the slump in prices that is obtaining in the market today.

In his first broadcast to the people of the State, the new Governor of Madras has emphasised that food shall have the first priority over all other problems facing the Government at the moment. Even an old civilian of Madras, who has been away from South of India for twenty years and who is now the Chairman of the Mercantile Bank, has kept himself abreast of things happening in this State during recent years, and has stated that the food problem is the first and foremost problem facing South India today.

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was a believer in visits to famine areas by those who matter. He observed:

I sincerely hope that after the return of His Excellency from his tour of the famine-affected areas of Rayalaseema the Finance Minister and the Food Minister would be apprised of the real facts of the situation.

I insist and I think the Government of Madras will also insist on the Central Government stationing a permanent Purchasing Mission in Burma and Thailand. The Mission can go on purchasing. They can send today 10,000 tons of rice. Tomorrow they can send 20,000 tons. They should see that enough rice is made available to South India. No one should be allowed to starve and die. When food that is available in plenty in other countries and is not brought to us for our needs what is the good of this lip-sympathy?"

He also pointed out that "besides the famine areas of Rayalaseema and Chittoor there are areas which are bordering on famine conditions. The whole of North Arcot and Pudukkottai come under this category." He stressed the discrepancy "between the estimated expenditure of six crores of rupees and the grant of only 248 lakhs." He continued:

Let the Government of India be told that the Government of Madras will not be satisfied with anything less than 6 crores. Whether the sum is given as a loan or grant does not matter. We are expected to do the right thing on the right occasions.

Muthiah Chettiar did not confine himself to big things alone. "Minor irrigation works and tank restoration can be carried out with great profit and I would reiterate the demand that that area requires special attention." He instanced one such and that was a bridge on the Tiruchirappalli-Madurai road which is called after Sir C. Rajagopalachari as Rajaji Bridge.

It is in the midst of a group of hills which separate the Tiruchirappalli and the Madurai districts. The waters of this stream which could be dammed up here are meant for the needs of a good part of the Tirupattur taluk of Ramnad district. I would draw the attention of the Revenue Minister to this scheme which has already been considered by the Government and request him to push it through.

Muthiah Chettiar never forgot minor matters while dealing with major ones even as one cannot forget the poor while dealing with the rich. He said:

It has been stated, Madam, that the Government has depleted about 24 crores of rupees from our unattached reserves built up during the Adviser's regime. I say that they have depleted 124 crores of rupees. For, assuming that the loss in revenue due to prohibition is estimated to be 20 crores a year, our total loss during the last five years amounts to 100 crores and that, coupled with the Government's figure of 24 crores, totals 124 crores. I do not object to prohibition as such, But I do wish the Government will review their Prohibition Policy after their experience with it for the past five years. Some time ago, the Madhya Pradesh Government constituted a Committee to enquire into their Prohibition Policy, with the retired Chief justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court and four members of the Legislative Assembly. I have no information to give to the House regarding the report of the Committee. I trust that our Ministers would take into account the various findings of that Committee and review their Prohibition Policy in the light of their findings.

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar closed with a rich deserved compliments to the Leader of the House.

His wide knowledge of the relevant historic examples was evident in every idea and in every turn-up of phrases. Speaking on the occasion of review of the work of the Assembly on 27th March 1952, Muthiah Chettiar said:

I call this a historic House because the Parliament of Britain is the

model which Indians have adopted and which Madras in particular has so ably copied and followed. British connection with India started first in Madras and Madras has always vied with other provinces in India in setting up good traditions in legislative practice. It is to our credit that South Indian legislatures — particularly Madras — have functioned so well all these years. This part of India has produced great men who have distinguished themselves in the Provincial Legislative Assemblies, in the Central Parliament and in the Councils of the world. Men who have been legislators have distinguished themselves as Ambassadors of India and rendered yeoman service to the country. Sir, we have contributed not a little towards building up great traditions and Members of the present House, though they may not all be in the next House, have also done their bit in the last five years.

Allow me, Sir, to say a word about your reference to May's Parliamentary Practice in which the Leader of the Opposition also is referred. Now it is possible for the Chair to have access to the Library as often as needed and refer to May and this has indeed saved almost all Hon. Members from turning the pages of May on important occasions when rulings are given.

His good nature and general friendliness were evident in his happy reference to the reporting staff and the Press. He concluded in a happy vein:

With your leave, Sir, I would like to say something about the relationship that has existed among the several Members of the House. We have been having a jolly good time here, to use an English standard phrase. We have been a jolly good set of fellows and all of us — 215 members have had a fine time here under your leadership. We have enjoyed our life immensely in the Legislature and our Assembly can stand comparison with any other Legislature in the world in point of efficiency and quick disposal of work. Our question hour has always been lively and interesting. It was so because the Ministers have been good enough to answer almost all the questions that were put to them. They did not generally ask for notice though they were entitled to it."

The needs of education came up for discussion. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar pressed for generous grants to education, Primary, High School, College and model schools. He pleaded for more Model Schools. Regarding higher education he said

that there had been a steady deterioration in standards both in the High Schools and Colleges. He said:

It has been suggested that the young students are far less responsible nowadays when much reading has to be done, and that they do far less work. But I would blame the teacher as well as the student. I have been pleading with the Universities including the Universities of Travancore and Mysore to appoint a commission of experts to go into the question of syllabus and suggest ways of upgrading the standards of University education. I would also urge the Government to appoint a committee of experts to revise the curriculum of studies for boys in the high schools so that they may get decent education there. Our enthusiasm for our vernaculars is one thing. Nobody in Tamil Nad will suggest that I am second to any one in my enthusiasm for the study of Tamil. But at the same time, my enthusiasm should not cloud my vision as regards the necessity for higher standards in the Universities.

Muthiah Chettiar referred to the scandal regarding Text Book Committees:

Madam, one pernicious practice that has entered into our educational system at the present day is the prescription of text-books by Text-Book Committee constituted by Government. Canvassing goes on on behalf of particular authors and publishers and the Committee is made to prescribe books whose authors or publishers successfully bring pressure to bear upon it. Madam, there are poor families. There are parents with three or four children studying in the school who can use the same text-book when their turns come if the text-book is not changed, say for five or ten years. Now what happens? There is change almost every year and parents have to spend a lot over the purchase of books. All this is due to the terrible canvassing that goes on in the committee meetings.

Muthiah Chettiar drew pointed attention to water scarcity in Madras. On 27th March 1952, while speaking on the Madras Appropriation Bill, 1952, Muthiah Chettiar said:

As regards the water scarcity in the City, it is incumbent on the Government immediately to appoint an expert committee with the Minister in charge of Health as chairman and the Mayor and the Commissioner of the Corporation as members. The Government should not stint if the Corporation needs help. Otherwise, as I have said once, there will be evacuation in the city. The next few weeks will present a problem to us, leave alone long-range plans for relieving scarcity such as the construction of the Krishna Pennar conduit line.

20th July 1953: Andhra State Bill

This was a case of worrying over spilt milk. Andhra had separated from Madras and was on her own. There had been serious difference of opinion on matters of importance, agreed conclusions had been reached and what remained to be dealt with were, what G.K. Chesterton would have called 'Tremendous trifles'. Andhra-born and-bred officers, Madras officers serving in the Andhra country or in other parts of Madras Presidency and Tamil officers who preferred to come to Madras, all matters easy of solution.

The Andhras were agitating that Madras should not have an upper chamber (of the legislature). Why on earth should they be exercised over it, a matter entirely of the Tamils.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar dealt with all of them more than ordinarily good-naturedly. He said:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am rather surprised at the turn the discussion has taken. I might even say that I am rather amused at seeing the difference of opinions among the Andhra Legislators themselves. Some favour abolition of the Council, while some others had waited on deputation on the Prime Minister and demanded its retention. I could well understand the Andhras saying that they want an Upper House or they do not want it after the appointed day, i.e., 1st October 1953 when their new State would have been born. But I am surprised at their participating in the discussion regarding the continuance or retention of the Upper House in the residuary State (mind you, not Andhra State) when all of them would have gone when the residuary State is born. Why should they shed their tears for the retention of our Upper Chamber, I do not know.

After mature consideration they decided in favour of the retention of the Upper Chamber in the States in which it already existed. Can we say that their decision was an off-hand one? Why should our Andhra friends show extra kindness to us by advising us to abolish our Upper Chamber after their separation? I am unable to understand the mystery behind it.

We do not stand to lose anything by having an Upper Chamber. In fact it is a blessing for the minorities. This has been recognized by the Congress also. Mr. Viswanatham knows all those things. In fact he had been all these years a Congressman. Now only he had changed.

The necessity of an Upper Chamber had long ago been realised. In fact when my revered leader Sri Rajaji was running the administration during 1937-39 I had the privilege of being the Leader of the Opposition. It was there that I found the necessity of an Upper Chamber. The minorities, the voice of those who had been defeated in the elections, cannot be so easily brushed aside. In fact the case of minorities stands to gain by having an Upper Chamber, for if not in the Assembly at least in the Council it would be referred. In fact I like the gradation process starting from the Assembly, then Council, then House of the People, then Council of States and then the Supreme Court.

The existence of an Upper Chamber would exercise a balanced check against such hasty legislation. That should not be lost sight of. I could very well understand Hon. Members saying that we may alter the procedure of nomination, we may reduce the number of persons to be nominated by the Governor or some such thing. I can understand that. In fact we want to encourage democratic methods.

Let me not be mistaken as though I am favouring the retention of the Council in the residuary State of Madras for the sake of Rajaji. Eminent men like Rajaji need not have any back-door entrance. On any day and at any moment they can contest any seat in the Assembly and nothing short of success will attend their efforts. Rajaji has served in the past, he is serving and he will continue to serve the public irrespective of the fact whether he is inside or outside the Legislature. The Opposition have much to gain by the existence of an Upper House for there will be more opportunities for presenting their view points to the country.

We have necessarily got to take a decision in respect of the officers. The amendment of the Government is that we should lend officers for a particular period. If the officers are prepared to serve permanently in the Andhra area and the Andhra Government is prepared to take them, well and good. But if this is not to be the case and if officers from the residuary Madras State should go, they should go there in complete security. They shall not be subjected to depromotion which will affect them in the future in the transferred State. Mr. Viswanatham's intention seems to be not to take any non-Andhra officers to the new State. We will be very happy indeed if the Andhra Government does not take any non-Andhra officers. No non-Andhra officer is anxious to go there.

With regard to the transferred officers even for temporary period, the residuary Madras State should not force anybody to serve in

the new State. The officers should be permitted to make their choice voluntarily. But if no officer is prepared to go voluntarily and if the allocation is to be made by a compulsory order, I would like the Government to take extraordinary circumstances of the officer into consideration. It may be a question of family circumstances or any other situation. It may be that the officer concerned is likely to get a promotion here in the near future. I am not talking with reference to any particular person or particular set of circumstances. But I know that there are several set of circumstances and I would request the Government to seriously consider the circumstances of each officer who is likely to be transferred and see that no harm is done to them. It is in that way that the Government can ensure loyal and dependable service. If you send persons who are fairly willing to serve for a specified period, it will be good. I would also like to say that Mr. Viswanatham's amendments are confusing and would not help the issue. The only amendment which is most comprehensive and which will not offend anybody and which will secure the purpose for which this resolution is intended is the amendment moved by the Government. It will safeguard the interests of the officers and the Government concerned.

Sir, this question of assets and liabilities has been gone into by the Partition Committee much earlier and by Mr. Justice Wanchoo also before whom memoranda relating to stores were submitted by our Andhra Friends. The Partition Committee recommended the allocation of rupees one crore to the Andhra State. The Advisers had left some money and therefore, Rajaji did not object to the allocation of one crore of rupees recommended by the Partition Committee. Now these people have not even rupees one crore. As we understand it, a sum of Rs.33 lakh is due to the Andhra State and a sum of Rs.66 lakh to the residuary State. Sir the Madras Government have no money. But I can assure the Andhra Members that we have the least objection to the Government of Andhra approaching the Government of India for the grant of any number of crores of rupees for building their capital and for meeting any other expenditure they have to incur. If they have no money to start with, the residuary State also has not much money to give them. That being so, we should not waste our time and time of the public by having a Commission like the one contemplated and go on quarrelling. I have heard Members here saying, 'Once we divide, let us divide happily'. Therefore, we should co-operate with each other. If the Andhra Government have no money we also have no money. With regard to the partition of assets and

liabilities, in my humble opinion, even the one crore of rupees that was mentioned was wrong. We have got liabilities. There are many old buildings. Now our friends have multiplied the buildings and want a division. I will be very glad if they dismantle the buildings and take their share of them proportionately. We have no objection to it.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari interjected: "I have great objection to it."

That statement of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari led to an amusing exchange of banter. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar countered good-humouredly:

I am a very orthodox man in politics, more orthodox than the Chief Minister himself. I am not a gambler. He is a gambler in politics. He is prepared to gamble with many schemes, times without number. But he is not prepared to gamble with old buildings.

The Hon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari: "The only thing I stand for is non-demolition of what stands."

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar continued:

I am indeed grateful to my Leader for trying to be more orthodox than myself on this occasion. While we are vying with each other with regard to orthodoxy, I am indeed proud of the very old historic buildings in the State which have been built by the toils of the people of the old days. Therefore it is that we are anxious that the Andhra State should have good buildings, hospitals and colleges. We are friends, we are good neighbours, and we shall help each other.

29th July 1953:

There was a modified Elementary Education Scheme before the House. Disapproval of the scheme on the part of a few people had led to riot and dis-order resulting most unfortunately in the loss of some lives. Sir Muthiah Chettiar said:

Sir, the new elementary education scheme has come into prominence because of personalities more than the scheme itself. If the scheme had been introduced by a person of much less importance than the Hon. Chief Minister, I mean, our Rajaji, probably this scheme would have even remained unnoticed for some time. Probably it might have drawn public attention only sometime later. But we have to take stock of what all had happened and I am

not here to question the sincerity of the Government. I am cautiously using the term 'Government' in the place of Rajaji. A number of, I might even say thousands, references had been made against a particular individual who leads the Government. Let us first of all clearly understand the principle behind the scheme. It is because many had not understood the principle but had only concentrated their attention on personalities, that so much confusion and cry had been caused.

Sir, are we not anxious that there should be compulsory universal elementary education? Can anyone deny it? Are we not aware of the fact that we are short of money, short of school-buildings, short of teachers and all that? Well, when such is the case and when the hands of Government are crippled for want of finance to construct more school buildings, what is wrong in their arranging shifts in the elementary schools to admit a large number of pupils? Then why this hue and cry against such a shift system? That is why, I say, Sir, if Hon. Members were patient and careful enough to go through the fundamentals of the scheme, they will fall in line with me and appreciate the principle behind it, viz., the spread of elementary education, which is one of our most cherished aims.

Let me now come to the agitation proper. A great deal of public attention has been focussed on the agitation against the modified scheme of elementary education. No doubt the leaders of the agitation started it with a good motive behind. They wanted to demonstrate public feelings against the new elementary education scheme. It is perfectly legitimate that they had some fears that such and such type of modified scheme may not mean well for the society. They thought perhaps that their criticisms might not be taken due notice by the Government. But once the agitation was started, other factors came into play. The situation went out of control. It is really unfortunate that it took a bad turn and some lives were lost. That is really sad indeed. But let not people misunderstand that Rajaji will not take heed of constructive criticisms. Time and again here in this House as well as outside, Rajaji had said that he would always appreciate well-meant criticisms. He was always amenable to reason. They wanted to start a constitutional agitation but it transformed into an unconstitutional one. No one likes that peace and tranquillity of our State should be disturbed. I am not using the Government phrase of 'law and order'. That is Government phraseology. I shall not use that lucid phrase. The agitation has served its purpose. No one can deny that fact. What did the agitators want to do? They wanted to focus public attention. That has been achieved. That is

why I now say that the leaders of the agitation can put a stop now to their agitation in as much as they have already focussed public attention on this modified scheme of elementary education. Let not the peace and tranquillity of our State be disturbed any longer. Let the Government be allowed some time to go through all the criticisms levelled against the scheme in a calm atmosphere. After all the scheme has been put into operation only just now in all the elementary schools.

The new Scheme was a harmless one. As the Hon. Sri K. Uppi said, it was only a reduction in the hours of work from 5 hours a day to 3 hours a day and the children concerned were of the age of Seven to Ten.

The agitation was all "Much Ado about Nothing."

The session closed on a happy note. Valedictory speeches were made with right goodwill by Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar -the man for it. Referring to the traditions upheld by the Hon. Premier and the contributions of the Speaker Sri C. Rajagopalachari and Sri T. Prakasam, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in Madras particularly we take a natural pride in the great success that has been achieved in the Legislative field, let alone democracy in general and the fight for freedom in our country. We are very happy that this august body has among its Members two distinguished persons who have fought for this country, Sri Rajaji and Sri Prakasam. It is a matter for gratification to every Member here, Sir, that at a time of such great importance when this Andhra State is going to be formed, this House has had the benefit of the experience of such distinguished people who won the battle of freedom under great stress. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you know more than anybody else the great tradition that has been built in the Legislature in Madras and how the Madras Legislature has been spoken of in high terms by people not only in India but also outside India. You are one of those persons who have succeeded a distinguished line of Speakers who have adorned this Chair right from Sri C. Rajagopalachari (Cheers). Mr. Speaker, it is no flattery or exaggeration if I express my feeling which I am sure is shared by every one in this House that you have raised the traditions to an even higher level. You have been alert, impartial and humorous. With regard to your impartiality, there can be no two opinions. We have been very fortunate in securing the services of an experienced Speaker like

you because you were the Speaker of the previous Legislative Assembly also. If very controversial measures have gone through this House easily and in a parliamentary way, it is mostly due to your influence.

The Members of the future Andhra and Residuary States are parting as friends and hereafter we will be meeting at two different places. When we are meeting in a common Assembly for the last time, it is very appropriate for me to say that this House has been fortunate in having had a Government led by no less a person than Sri Rajaji who stepped into the shoes of the Government at a very critical time. The success of the administration during the period of his Chief Ministership is largely due to his personality.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not say how deeply we appreciate the able, graceful and responsible manner in which the Hon. Sri. C. Subramaniam, the young parliamentarian as he wishes to be called, but with which I do not agree, for he has already had previous parliamentary experiences in the Constituent Assembly in Delhi, conducted himself as the Leader of the House. The responsibility of the Leader of the House is very great. Without the co-operation of the Leader of the House and with the Leader of the House taking a realistic view of things and giving weight to the views of the opposition, it would not have been possible to carry on. I say what Mr. Subramaniam might perhaps be saying later on that his success is largely due to co-operation of all parties and Members. It must be said to his credit that he has conducted himself wonderfully well and that he can be proud of the part he played as Leader of this House.

The Andhra State is being formed. I am an old-fashioned fellow like Rajaji in saying that the State need not have been formed. I know my position in the Tamil country and I can convince my Tamil people against the division of this State. But the division has come about. People are talking of linguistic States. I only feel that if the State had not been divided, our position in the Centre would have been better and the development of South India would have been more. Probably the Dravida Kazhagam also thinks that old State of Madras need not be cut up and I believe it thinks that every part of the country below Hyderabad is one country. However, we need not feel sorry for the separation. Let us give our best wishes to the new State. I may reciprocate the feelings expressed by Sri Nagi Reddy and others that the two States shall be friendly neighbours and prosper together. In my humble -

opinion the Andhra State is very rich as against the Tamil country. We need not be envious about this. I shall not be surprised if two years later Mr. Prakasam were to say that the Andhras are well off and that they have got enough food. I hope he will say so and I am only too anxious to visit the Andhra Assembly whether it be in Kurnool, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam or any other place. I shall be only too happy to visit the Assembly. I believe that the only way of ensuring a prosperous future for the Andhra State is to make Sri T. Prakasam its Chief Minister. I am giving my very best wishes to Andhra and the Andhra State coupling it with the name of Sri T. Prakasam.

We also wish well of the Residuary State. We shall be happy if both the States march together and progress. We shall always remember more than anything else the fine time that we have had under your distinguished Speakership. You have treated everyone with very great consideration and we are deeply grateful to you for that.

March 1, 1954: Debate on the Budget for 1954-55

Those who were in touch with Rajah Muthiah Chettiar or had followed his career and activities carefully could not but be struck by his absorption in politics, especially in the legislative field. There lay his relief and relaxation. As business which was far-flung and wide were well organised and well-staffed they may be said to have run themselves. He followed public events carefully which he used to discuss with men of affairs. No wonder his statements in the Assembly were characterised by fidelity to fact.

Sensational developments were taking place in the diplomatic world. There was Pakistan's Military Pact with the United States that was feared would gravely affect Indian economy. India had to be watchful and alert. In the Budget discussions of March 1, 1954, he stressed the importance of the regionalisation of industrial development. He said frankly that on the standing committee there was only one South Indian leader and he was mainly interested in Calcutta.

He observed:

Now, turning to industry, I do not agree with the Hon. Finance Minister when he says that industrial development is largely a matter concerning the Central Government. It is as much the look out of the State Government. If the State Government feel that the

Central Government should do something in the industrial field, they must persuade the Central Government to render all help. Unless there was adequate regionalisation of industrial development the needs of the South will not receive proper attention. The question of regionalisation of industries in the South should be actively taken up by our State Government and the Central Government should be induced to render all possible help. This is not a question concerning the Central Government alone who are far away. With due respect to my distinguished friend in North India, I am never tired of saying that the industrial interests of South India are not well cared for and I am sure Hon. Members on the opposite will agree with me when I say this. Regionalisation of industries in the South only can provide more employment. In this connection, I can tell Hon. Members that I was required to give evidence before the Industrial Finance Corporation sponsored by America and I made a strong plea that adequate representation should be given to the South. Even in the Steering Committee, out of five members who constitute the new Board, there is only one member from the South, namely, Sri A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.

Everybody knows that I am not in a position to accept any membership and therefore there is no personal interest involved. I have already mentioned to the Hon. Finance Minister and to some extent to the Hon. Chief Minister that they should suggest to the Government of India to stop forthwith the further proceedings of the Steering Committee and reorganise that Committee by including more than one South Indian in it. As I said, Sri A. Ramaswami Mudaliar is only one out of the five members of that Committee. (The Hon. Sri C. Subramanian: "Does he not represent South India?") The Hon. Finance Minister is provoking me to say what I have been feeling rather delicate to say. He represents the interests in Calcutta and I do say openly that he represents the interests in Calcutta at the moment. He is a great man, but I am not ashamed of saying that he does not represent properly the best interests of South India. He will not represent truly the South Indian interests though he has more connexion. But Sri Ramaswami Mudaliar is no doubt a proper person to be a member of that Committee. I have a feeling that active businessmen should not be associated with the Industrial Finance Corporation. If they are associated there may be scope for favouritism or people may allege favouritism even when there is no favouritism. I submit that Shri. Shroff and Sri Ramaswami Mudaliar are the only persons who are fit to be on the Committee.

We get sympathy merely in words. We do not represent our view

points in time and that is the view of North India. Whether it is Malaya or Burma or Ceylon we suffer because we do not have a South Indian as the High Commissioner. If Indians in Ceylon are sent back to India the unemployment in four or five districts of the residuary Madras State will increase. I mention this to point out the indifference of the Centre so far as the South is concerned, and I shall not be tired of repeating this till the situation is remedied.

Deficit financing did not scare Rajah Muthiah Chettiar; He said:

Community projects are a part of the Five Year Plan and there is no harm in borrowing. There is nothing inherently wrong in deficit financing.

Deficit Financing is not a thing to be afraid of. The Principle that when the income is Rs.500 the expenditure should be only Rs.499 or less is not right in all circumstances. We must take a long-range view, and, if necessary pass on the burden to the next generation or spread it to the next few years. Only when the deficit is very high the position becomes serious.

We are not spending the full amount earmarked for the Plan. We can get more assistance from the Centre for the execution of the Plan. The Hon. Finance Minister says that the entire Budget is changed. Sir, a time may come when there is no rain. Let me not wish for it, but it is possible. For seven years successively in the past, we had no rain. As long as there is no rain, we cannot collect any land revenue. Then, we will have to carry on with the help of loans. It may not be possible then to get loans also. If the loan policy should succeed, we should not introduce new taxes. We should leave some reserves with the people.

If the Plantation industry is going to be taxed, how is it possible to increase the avenues of employment? I am not the owner of any big plantations, but already the plantation industry is suffering on account of labour legislations. Today that is one industry which can absorb more people and give employment to more people. The Government want to kill that industry, and at the same time say that capital is shy. If the Government provide more capital for the plantation industry under the Five Year Plan how is it possible to give employment to more people? I can definitely say that the tax on plantation products is absolutely unnecessary. I think that it is only for mere self-satisfaction that some taxation measures have been proposed. If I had anything to do with advising the Government on this matter I would suggest them that there should be no new taxation now. If there is no new

taxation they will get more votes from the people. Really, if this Budget session had commenced some ten days ago and if it had been announced that there would be no new taxation in Madras, it might be that the Congress party would have been returned in a large majority in Travancore-Cochin state. But unfortunately it was not foreseen by the people concerned. The Hon. Finance Minister has expressed fine sentiments that capital is shy and that industry must develop. I reciprocate all those sentiments and good feelings. That is why I started with congratulating him on his masterly review of the situation. But unfortunately there is no link in his sentiments. The proposal for new taxation appears suddenly in his speech. It looks as if the proposal had been forced upon him. He has been ill-advised to accept the suggestion whoever might have given the advice.

The Hon. Sri C. Subramaniam interjected: "It was not forced upon me."

Rajah Muthiah Chettiar parried:

Well, I can only say that he has been ill advised by himself.
(Laughter)

Referring to Housing Schemes, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

In the City of Madras there is a Slum Improvement Scheme and a sum of Rs.1.50 lakhs has been provided for it. But it is a very meagre allotment. I do hope that the Government of India will be persuaded to give more financial assistance for Housing Schemes in the City of Madras and other industrial towns like Madurai, Coimbatore, Tirunelveli etc. Even here there is a snag. Under the Housing Scheme only industrial labour is contemplated. There are many labourers who come within the purview of the Factories Act, but who fall outside the scope of Industrial Housing Schemes. The Government must, therefore, get necessary exemption from the Government of India in this regard so that in the houses built by the City Improvement Trust and other house construction organisations, not only workers employed in 15,000 worker-mills but even those in 100-worker mills can be accommodated. Now the Government of India say that it cannot be done because the small mill or factory does not produce more.

Muthiah Chettiar advocated the Government's take over of Electricity Undertakings. He said:

Government must take a bold step. The former Minister who is here did so much for the electrical and irrigational development.

But I may mention to him and the Members of the Government that they should have gone on quickly. However much they may grant loans to these undertakings, they will not develop; for there will be partisan work and partial treatment. Therefore, I suggest to the Government that they should take over the undertakings themselves. It will not mean much money and it will require only a small sum. Instead of giving loans, they themselves should take over the undertakings. After all, loans will not be repaid and will not be managed properly. Therefore, my suggestion is that instead of granting loans to individual concerns, the Government should take over the institutions and develop rural electrification and extensions. There are certain areas - parts of Ramanathapuram, Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Pudukkottai etc. These are the Rayalaseema of Tamil Nadu and Government should consider these areas as such hereafter. Unless speedy irrigation and electricity facilities are provided in these areas, we cannot help these areas. Rural electrification has been the Prime necessity. In spite of the fact that our Reservoirs are full, there is no electricity.

I do not know what the people were doing when electric connexions were cut off and when electricity cut was there. But now there is a possibility of giving new connexions. I therefore request the Government to go into the question thoroughly especially in regard to districts like Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli and Sivaganga and other places and see that more electric connexions are provided as early as possible before the next Kuruvai season starts.

Muthiah Chettiar congratulated the Government on the step taken by them to open a Medical College. He said:

This should have been done much earlier. At least they have done this at this late stage and I congratulate them on their decision to start the College in July 1954.

He emphasized the importance of the National Cadet Corps and of the necessity of getting students to enrol themselves. He said:

I shall not go into the much debated question of elementary education; there is time enough to discuss it later on. Now, Sir, I am concerned with the discipline in the colleges and schools. Discipline in schools and colleges will be all right only if the National Cadet Corps is developed in educational institutions. India is threatened from all parts of the world, from all sides. When our Defence Minister and Prime Minister are interested in

putting up proper defence, it is necessary that our young men should be put under colours. There is not even 10 per cent who are under colours now.

May 13, 1954: Indian Nationals Abroad in Ceylon

This had been a burning question. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar had been constantly focussing the attention of the Government on this question as well as the problem of Indian Nationals in Burma. Participating in the debate on 13th May 1954, Sir Muthiah Chettiar said:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the question of treatment of Indian nationals abroad has been engaging the attention of the Government of India and this House for a long time. It is not as if this is the first instance wherein in this House we are discussing the question of treatment of Indian nationals abroad. Even in the year 1937 when Sri Rajagopalachari was the Chief Minister of Madras, I think the Government themselves placed before the House a resolution regarding the treatment of Indian Nationals in Burma. It must be clearly said in this connexion that the majority of Indian nationals now living in other countries hail from South India and most of them have gone from Tamilnadu. It is a notorious fact that the Government of India have not taken the right action at the right moment. What would have been right action in 1949, they have taken only in 1954, five years later when it is too late. This is to a great extent due to the attitude taken by the officials of the Government of India over this question of treatment of Indian nationals, majority of whom are our brethren, abroad. I am not tired of attacking the officials of the Government of India. What could the poor Prime Minister, who is already overworked, do in this matter? He must be advised and apprised of the day-to-day position by the officials. I must also repeat my charge against the Members of the Central Parliament, now called by the fair name of the House of the People, who hail from South India, and that too from Tamilnadu. What prevented those Members of Parliament from Tamilnadu and other parts of South India, I ask, from waiting in deputation on the Prime Minister of India and urging upon him the urgent necessity of solving this vexed problem of citizenship rights for Indian nationals in Ceylon by direct negotiations with the Ceylon Government? Recently Mr. Kamaraj Nadar, our Chief Minister now, visited Malaya a month ago. He had been to Ceylon three months ago. When he returned from Ceylon he told me that the situation in Ceylon was worsening.

I was really surprised at what the Hon. Leader of the House told the House ten or fifteen days ago that this Government of Madras was not at all consulted in the matter of drafting the Indo-Ceylon agreement when the fact is that agreement involves the very lives of a majority of people of our soil, I mean, the people who have gone to Ceylon from Tamilnadu; it ought to be a matter affecting this Government. During the time of the Britishers there was a department called the Emigration Department in the Government of Madras which dealt with the welfare of Indian nationals in Burma, Ceylon, Malaya and other countries. I do not know whether that department exists now. I believe it does not. I would earnestly request the Hon. Minister for Finance and Hon. Chief Minister to immediately open that department, which is very necessary especially at this time when thousands and thousands of our people are suffering in Ceylon. We must be in touch with the latest position of our nationals abroad. When the Emigration department was in existence we used to get periodical reports about the conditions of our people living abroad. But now no such news is made available to us. That is why I say that department should be revived immediately. I should like one Minister to be in charge of this subject. He should keep himself fully possessed of facts regarding what is happening to our people abroad. He should take steps to see to the welfare of the Indian nationals living abroad. I am sorry that our Hon. Chief Minister and Hon. Leader of the House have not flown to Delhi when the Indo-Ceylon Agreement was drafted. I would like to inform the House that the High Commission for India in Ceylon has now come forward and said that he would not recognise the identity certificates given to workers in estates in Kandy and other places. It has now been said that identity cards and certificates given to estate workers would not be recognised by the Government of India from 18th June 1954. This is what the High Commission has told us. Our own brethren toiling from dawn to dusk in the soil of Ceylon will not be in a position to visit their mother country for a short-while with identity certificate. Why should they not be allowed to go to India for fifteen days? Then why should we tolerate the Ceylonese or Jaffna people coming to India for fifteen days?

I would ask the Hon. Leader of the House not to treat this resolution as an ordinary resolution. I would have been immensely pleased if the resolution had been moved by the Government themselves and such resolutions had been moved as Government resolution in the past. Anyhow, this resolution is likely to be accepted by this House unanimously and it becomes a resolution

of the Government in as much as the Government is a part and parcel of this House. The Hon. Leader of the House will be doing his duty by this House and by the public concerned if he would take the trouble of visiting Delhi along with the Chief Minister. That is the only way in which he could do real service.

I would also entreat the Hon. Leader of the House to send this resolution and the speeches on it to the Government of India. Ordinarily proceedings of the Assembly are printed long after the date of the meeting. I hope that on this occasion the Secretariat of the Legislature and the Secretariat of the Madras Government will be alert, prepare the proceedings within a few days, and send it to the Government of India at least within a week so that they may know the real feelings of the people. They will not be able to appreciate the feelings of the people from the scrappy newspaper reports. Though we are grateful to the newspapers for giving publicity to the feelings and opinions of the people, it will be desirable if the Government and the Legislature will take steps to send a copy of the speeches along with the resolution. Very good speeches have been made today in Tamil and in Malayalam by eminent Members of this House better speeches than the speech that I am now making. I do hope that the Legislature Office and the office of the Leader of the House will take steps to translate them into English and send all the speeches to the Government of India and bring them to the notice of the Prime Minister and his Secretariat. Let us hope that the Prime Minister will be pleased to reopen the matter and come to a settlement with the Government of Ceylon which will have the desired effect.

March 3, 1955 (Budget for the year 1955-56)

Participating in the Debate on the Budget, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar made the following comments:

I must congratulate the Finance Minister and the Government on the bold step that they have taken in exempting from the payment of school fees upto and inclusive of Form III all children whose parents derive an annual income of less than Rs.1200/-. This is a step in the right direction and I hope the schools will be run well.

While I am speaking generally about the budget, I may be permitted to mention that the Government could have easily avoided the levy of surcharge on lands. Sir, this two-anna surcharge on land revenue will affect the general public in the country and particularly the persons who own patta lands.

Sir, I now come to education. While I congratulate the Govern-

ment on their decision to exempt all poor children from the payment of school fees upto III Form, I would be happy if they provide more funds for school buildings. They must revise the old rule by which a grant of Rs.35,000 is given to a school and Rs.75,000 to a college. I hope the Hon. Minister for Education will consider this aspect of the matter and increase this grant to educational institutions and also consider each application either from a school or a college on its merit.

I can say, from personal experience, that the National Cadet Corps is a very useful institution. It is a very popular institution. The Government must grant more money to this institution. I understand the Government of India would contribute an amount equal to the one given by the Government of Madras. Therefore, this Government should come forward to grant more money so that we can get as much money from the Government of India. After all, it is worthwhile spending money on this institution which is inculcating a sense of discipline among the young students. We want that our young men should be trained in discipline so that when necessity arises they can join the army. It is only by encouraging and helping such an institution which trains our young men in discipline and makes them fit for army career that we will be making our contribution to the defence of the country. This is an essential thing and I do hope that the Hon. Minister will grant more money to this useful institution.

I would like to take this opportunity to suggest that the Second Five Year Plan should be more dynamic than the First Five-Year Plan itself.

There is a feeling that there has not been a proper allocation or proper choice of the areas in the matter of executing these schemes. The attitude of the Government in this matter savours of favouritism. That is certainly my honest criticism which should not be taken amiss.

If they have not got so much to spend for them, let them choose poverty - stricken places or places with drought conditions or dry places.

Sir, I hope that I shall not be called parochial in outlook if I say that certain areas in the Ramanathapuram district have not been chosen for the execution of these schemes. For instance, backward and dry areas like Tirupattur, Sivaganga and Thiruvadanai have not been included for the execution of these schemes." I am saying this not because I happen to represent Tirupattur.

I find from the Hon. Finance Minister's speech that he is almost satisfied with the development of irrigation in Tamilnadu. I am very sorry for such an inference. I can understand it if he has said so about the Andhra area. Irrigation under the Cauvery is almost an eaten-up scheme and there are many other big schemes. I find that in the Second Five-Year Plan only Rs.25 crores have been provided. It really ought to be Rs.250 crores and the Hon. Finance Minister will not be far wrong if he has put it at this figure. Though we have lost the official Rayalaseema, the Tamilnad Rayalaseema with all the characteristics of Rayalaseema is with us comprising a bit of Coimbatore, most of Salem and North Arcot districts, half of South Arcot and Tiruchirappalli districts and three-fourths of Ramanathapuram district and a part of Tanjore.

Coming back to the subject of irrigation, let me mention a very big scheme, the dream of one of our Engineers Sri Ayyadorai Ayyar who later became the Chief Engineer of Rajkot. I also mentioned this about six or seven months ago to the Hon. Finance Minister. Many a dream does come true. The irrigation project in the Bombay State about 38 miles from Poona which was approved during the Governorship of Sir S.V. Ramamurty has now come into fruition. Similarly, the waters from the Coorg are now running to waste. As in Periyar, they must be harnessed and tunnelled to flow into the Cauvery and the day must come when we should have three or four dams in the Cauvery like the Mettur Dam, so that water may be available for irrigating all the districts that I have mentioned. The whole scheme may cost about Rs.125 crores. The headworks alone may cost about Rs.20 crores and the four or five dams may each cost about Rs.20 to Rs.30 crores. If this work is taken on hand it will come to fruition within another ten or fifteen years. It will be a great mistake if this generation does not undertake this scheme. As compared with the vast amounts contributed by the Centre for the various parts of India, this sum of about Rs.200 crores will be nothing. To-day because of the strong sentiments expressed on the floor of this House, the Government of India are now paying more attention to Tamil Nadu.

Sir, I am very happy to say that when the Union Finance Minister Sri C.D. Deshmukh was here I mentioned about this scheme and he said that he would certainly consider it. Till now my talk about this has been only casual and there must be some seriousness about it and that is why I am now officially mentioning it here. I am told that this Engineer, Sri Ayyadorai Ayyar was sent for and that the matter was discussed with him by the Hon. Chief

Minister, the Hon. Sri. M. Bhaktavatsalam and the Hon. Minister for Public Works. I think the Hon. Sri C. Subramaniam was also present. They should give serious consideration to this scheme and include it in the Second Five Year Plan. Then the estimated expenditure under the Second Five Year Plan will not be Rs.25 crores but Rs.250 crores.

Then there is also another scheme somewhere near Rajapalayam -Pambiar -about which Sri P.S. Kumaraswami Rajah, the present Governor of Orissa, has also made mention.

I do hope that at least a few thousands of tube wells will be put up throughout our State just as they have done in the North in the Punjab.

I would like to mention that industrialization in this State is very much behind the times. We must have regionalization and we must have industries in the various districts and round about the lignite project area. I do hope that the State Government will persuade the Government of India to give the best help they could in the matter.

The next point is that the Government should start a number of multi-purpose schools in every taluk in every district instead of talking about basic education and other kinds of education. Then there will be a lesser number of students seeking admission to the colleges. Really we are in short supply of ordinary overseers.

Another important matter which I want to mention is in regard to making Pudukottai the headquarters of a district. I do not know whether the District Administration Reorganisation Committee has gone into this question. I am told it is outside their terms of reference. But I want the Government to seriously consider the question of putting into use the buildings that are available in Pudukottai. All the members coming from the Ramanathapuram district including the Hon. Chief Minister are agreed that Pudukottai can become the headquarters of a district. I am not worried about the allocation of taluks nor do I want to enter into any controversial topic as to which taluks are to be added. My submission is, let a district be started with Pudukottai as its headquarters.

I wish to refer to one other point. The Government have allotted only Rs.1.77 lakh as against the Rs.2.5 lakh allotted last year by way of loans to the City Improvement Trust. The City Improvement Trust has been doing a very important work and will not be able to do anything unless sufficient funds are given to it. The Government of India have been spending crores and crores of

rupees towards housing programmes in various parts of the country. The Madras Government must press the Central Government to provide Rs.25 to Rs.30 lakh to the City Improvement Trust to enable it to do its work well. This Government must also give the usual advance of Rs.2.5 lakh to it and not Rs.1.77 lakh as has been provided for in this Budget, in addition to getting more money from the Government of India.

Lastly I wish to say a few words with regard to the Government's policy towards the Public Service Commission. I was very distressed to read in the newspapers a few days ago that there was an alleged attempt to diminish the powers of the Public Service Commission. Let not its integrity, efficiency and usefulness be diminished. My earnest prayer to the Cabinet is that they should see that the reputation of the Madras Public Service Commission is maintained and must not interfere with the working of it. The Public Service Commission is a sacred body. It is a sacred asset of the Government. After all, we are proud of the Madras Services. We have got quite a good service. Our Madras people are not only doing excellent service here in Madras but also in Delhi and other places. They should not have a feeling of insecurity. They must feel that the Public Service Commission is there to protect their rights. The Public Service Commission has done much good to the people. The Madras Public Service Commission has a fine tradition and similar Commissions in other States are looking up to the traditions built by our Commission. If at all the Government can do anything in the matter it is that they must strengthen the hands of the Members of the Public Service Commission.

On 29 September, 1955 there was a discussion as to what would be the official language. There was a move to make Hindi compulsory, give the regional tongues a secondary place and rule out English altogether. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar had clear cut views about them all. He was unconcealedly against making Hindi compulsory and kicking out English. He stressed the importance of a sound knowledge in the scheme of education in practical politics. It should have primacy of place in his view. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

Sir, the question of the official language has been before the country ever since the Constitution of India has been framed. Some of us who happened to be in Delhi attending the Constituent Assembly, felt strongly that we should not have a sudden change in respect of that matter and, of course, protection has been given for fifteen years. Hon. Members would know what happened to

that protection for fifteen years. Within five years after the introduction of the Constitution, we already find post-cards and money order forms in Hindi which do not enable the man in the street to understand what they are. Why not the protection be continued till the time-limit fixed in the Constitution is exceeded? Therefore, I would request the Government to take that aspect of the matter into consideration and make representations accordingly to the Central Government. My plea is that the time-limit of 15 years should be extended to 30 years and there is nothing to prevent the Parliament from meeting and extending the time-limit by amending the Constitution. After all, the Constitution has been amended from time to time and now also it can be amended to extend the time-limit. It is a misnomer to say that the unity of India will be achieved by having one language. What about Switzerland? Is it not a united country having more than one language? For the last 15 or 20 years that country is carrying on administration in more than one language. So, language or religion will not stand in the way of the unity of the country. Religion or language is not going to make the people united and thus preserve the unity of India. We had foreign rule in our country and we wanted the foreign domination to go. Mahatma Gandhi came to our rescue and under his leadership it had been possible to achieve our freedom much earlier than what we have expected.

I would respectfully submit that the question of language should not be connected with the unity of the country. Certainly our country should be united.

We have many national languages in the country. Tamil is also one of the national languages. Hindi is *not* the *only* national language in the country. It is one *out of the 14 national* languages in the country. Technically speaking, that is the present position of Hindi. But, I am afraid, enthusiasts and protagonists of Hindi want to spread it even by compulsion. If Mahatma Gandhi had been alive, he would have forced Hindustani and not Hindi. Apart from the feeling of the people of Tamilnadu against the compulsory study of Hindi - or for that matter of the people in the South - I may state that there are areas in India where the feeling is much more. I am glad that the Hon. Leader of the House has stated that there is no advantage in introducing an element of compulsion for the study of Hindi. We, South Indians, are very materialistic and we hope it will be possible to convince the people in the North about the rightness of our cause.

I hope that more than two-thirds of the Members of the Parliament come from the non-Hindi areas and I do not know what prevents

those Members from expressing their views. In this connection, we must thank the Prime Minister of India who is not forcing the issue. He is leaving it to public opinion to express itself freely. I do not think that the Prime Minister of India has so far expressed a view in favour of the compulsory study of Hindi. But the protagonists of Hindi are very clever people and they feel that if they do not push through it within one and a half years it will not be possible to do after the next election. Because in the next election, it will be a live issue and everybody will have to go to the people and say that he is not going to support the compulsory study of Hindi. Otherwise, it is difficult for him to win the election. As the Hon. Minister for Education has pointed out, if it is not compulsorily introduced, things would go on well and that is the right attitude.

With regard to the official language of the State, it is almost agreed that Tamil or for that matter the regional language should be the official language. Even during the British days Tamil had been largely used and even English words were written in Tamil in some of the forms used in the Revenue Department. It is not a difficult thing and it will gradually fit in and no special plea is necessary for it in the year 1955.

With regard to the language in which the examination should be conducted, my plea is that our young men should not be put under any handicap. We do not want that our children above the age of 5 or 6 should be put to the necessity of writing an examination in Hindi after 20 years. Therefore it is that some of us are pleading that the time-limit should be extended to 30 years so that it may not affect them. When I ask for a time-limit of 30 years, I do not mean that is the only solution. Even then it should only be an alternative. After all, there are countries which have solved successfully the Language problem even in respect of the proceedings of the Legislature. At the meetings of the UNESCO and other international organisations, a simultaneous translation in different languages is rendered by mechanical devices. When the UNESCO meets next year in Delhi, we are going to have some such arrangement by which there will be simultaneous translation in five or six languages. Even our State Legislature can have such a mechanical device by which there will be simultaneous translation in Malayalam or Kannada.

The Madras Government also should see that the assurances they have given in this regard are implemented. Otherwise we will see the spectacle of many brilliant young men of our State remaining unemployed as against others from other States getting employed.

Then, Sir, I wish to say a few words with regard to the educational policy. With regard to the policy pursued in the matter of secondary education, there is no quarrel about it. Even beyond the High School standards, regional languages can be introduced. Please note, I am using the words 'can be'. I only say it should not be introduced compulsorily. If you do that, you will be doing a disservice to the student population. We do not have enough textbooks in regional languages. We do not have qualified teachers who can undertake teaching in regional languages. If we introduce straightaway Tamil, Telugu or Malayalam as the medium of instruction in the colleges, with the equipment we have at present, our whole experiment will become an utter waste. For providing a proper alternative equipment we need 100 lakhs of rupees. If we offer a thousand rupees to any one for writing a book, it will not be of any use. He will write only something trash. If we offer Rs.20,000/- perhaps, one will be able to take proper care and write a book. Then only standard books will be published. Particularly in regard to technical subjects, it is very essential that standard books must be written, because at present we have not got a proper vocabulary. I am glad that the Government have made arrangements to appoint a Committee for this technical work. I am only pleading for time. I am not opposing the new movement for introducing the regional languages as the medium of instruction in colleges. Till such time as we are able to provide for the University Classes proper tuition by way of good teachers, books and libraries and other things it will be necessary that regional languages should not be introduced compulsorily as the medium of instruction. That is all the more necessary why we should continue to have English as the medium. Quite apart from the use of English as the medium in colleges, we should consider English language by itself. English language today is an international language. In Germany, in France, in many other countries of the world, English language is taught. English language has become an international one. It is not the language of our past rulers only. It is the language of the world. We must call that language by some other name and not English. We may call it as an international language. For the sake of knowledge, even though we study Tamil or Hindi, we should not give up English. Our students are capable of studying English. Our young students can read the regional language, English language and any other language. They can read Hindi even if it should be adopted later on as one of the languages to be read.

I have no objection to Tamil being the medium of instruction. I

find that only hundred lines of Tamil poetry are to be got by heart. Now-a-days it has become fashionable to speak of visual education. Why not prescribe more lines of Tamil poetry to be got by heart? Education must be given for education's sake. It must be given in a proper way. People talk of Gurukula system. It is all wrong to talk of that. In olden days, students used to learn at the feet of their Guru for hours and hours and for years and years. But who are our teachers? The boy of yesterday is the teacher of today. Luckily our State is much better in this respect compared to the conditions prevailing in Poona and Bombay where 6,000 and 7,000 students study in each college and where shift systems are being observed. Such a situation had not arisen here because of the large number of colleges that have been started. Our boys are capable and the only thing required is that the boys should be properly taught.

Let us hope that our own representatives in Delhi will lead a deputation to the Prime Minister and tell him that two-thirds of the legislators in India who represent the non-Hindi speaking people, though they are not against Hindi language as such, feel strongly that English should be retained for a long time. I congratulate the Madras University on the very useful suggestions that they have made in this connection. In that resolution, they have pleaded for the retention of English for 30 years. It does not prevent the introduction of the regional language as the medium gradually. We object to the Government of India introducing Hindi as the medium. At the same time let us not be open to the charge of our being against the introduction of Tamil as the medium. My only plea is that our support for Tamil should not delude us from seeing the realities.

In the beginning itself I said that the regional languages of Tamil or Malayalam could be adopted in the colleges and the Legislature. I do not object to changing the official language of the State thirty years hence. But I do object to saying that from tomorrow morning no member shall speak in English. For some thirty years at least, members should be allowed to speak in Tamil, Malayalam or English at their option. Could anyone have imagined twenty-five years ago that a majority of the members of the Madras Assembly would be speaking in Tamil? One by name Sri B.V. Narasimhaswami was a member of the Madras Legislative Council about thirty years ago. When he began to address in Tamil, a very eminent member of the House said: "Your Excellency, I propose that the House do adjourn for lunch." That was the kind of thing that happened then. I am supporting the

change, but I only want that atleast thirty years should be allowed for the transition. There should be no force or compulsion till then. What prevents the Government of India from saying that Hindi shall not be made the official language of the Union for thirty years? This country has been there for thousands of years and what will the country lose if we maintain English for some more years? I am supporting the retention of English in schools and colleges. We should not be behind world knowledge which could be acquired only through a knowledge of English. A certain proportion of the students may be allowed to learn English as a second language. A certain percentage of English-reading student population may go to countries like England and America for higher studies and utilize the knowledge that they derive for the benefit of our country. I am only pleading for tolerance and for allowing some more time for the transition period.

The word 'Dubash' means Do basha. Dubashes had knowledge in two languages of which one was English. Pachaiyappa Mudaliar was proficient in two languages. It has taken nearly a century for us South Indians to get proficiency in English language. English has been an asset and we are really proud of South Indians for their proficiency in that language. It is only those that have come out of the colleges in recent years that are weak in the language. A Literature M.A. student who has passed the examination, say after 1951, is not able to write an application in correct English language for the post of a Lecturer in a college. India cannot remain isolated from the rest of the world, and English is an asset so far as world politics are concerned.

November 21, 1955: States Reorganisation

A States Reorganisation Commission had been at work for some years regarding the allocation of border areas to Madras or Malabar and so on. Speaking in the Assembly on the Report of the States Reorganisation Commission 1955, on 21st November 1955, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar said:

I am one of those who regret the future size of the Madras State vis-a-vis Indian politics. In a way there is no use of wasting time in discussing it or repenting over what has happened. Now at least, there is a strong case for the addition of the Tamil areas in the South to this State. The Hon. Leader of the House has made out a very good case and it should be our wish and prayer that he would continue his fight in Delhi and win the case for the Tamilians. The Hon. Minister has stated that we should do it in a peaceful manner. It is a notorious fact that we in the South are permanently

peaceful with regard to our representations unlike those in the other parts of India. I am afraid Delhi has not cared for the South because it puts forward its representations in a peaceful manner. I think it is time that Madras tells Delhi that just because we are accustomed to doing things in a peaceful way we should not lose our case. There is a limit to one's patience. It will not take long to foment trouble in the South if needed. I do sincerely hope that it will not be necessary to take that step. The Hon. Leader of the House who has put forth his case in a very persuasive manner will succeed in his attempt. This should be done as early as possible, for we see in the newspapers that the Chief Minister of Travancore-Cochin State and his associates are very active in making representations at Delhi. There is a feeling in Madras that the Madras Government are not taking as much steps as the Travancore - Cochin Governments are taking in this connection. In reality it may not be so. Information should be given to the newspapers about the steps taken by the Government and it is very necessary to publish in the papers and the Madras Government should send a Cabinet delegation immediately to Delhi to make the Government at Delhi accede to our demands made already.

The Members from Malabar should take a dispassionate view so far as Peermede and Devikulam taluks are concerned. After all, these two taluks are not going to really affect the people in Malabar, who are going to leave us shortly.

There is one other small matter with regard to Palghat and Chittur taluks. It may be that a few villages are not purely Tamil. Excluding them I think there is a very good case for the other areas in the Madras State being added to the Coimbatore district. The Hon. Finance Minister has referred to the forests in Kollegal and Kollengode. I need not take up the time of the House by repeating them. My main point is about Devikulam and Peermede taluks. These are predominantly Tamil-speaking areas and their integration with Madras State will conduce to the harmonious working and development of that area.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN - PART II

In the Legislature

For many years prior to 1937 and from 1937 to 1983 Muthiah Chettiar served in the State Legislature in different spells before and after the Reforms. His long experience of affairs was rusting in disuse and it was time that it was turned to account. Those in authority realised this and nominated him to the Madras Legislative Council in November 1980. And he proved to be an acquisition to it. His rich experience proved to be an asset. There was no aspect of public life or administration where his knowledge and experience did not come in useful. He had winning ways, made his points fairly and squarely and had no use for the arts of the demagogue. When a member, whatever his party affiliations, spoke or acted sensibly, Muthiah Chettiar was warm in appreciation. He was ready to give praise where it was due. No half-hearted or left-handed compliments. He was popular with all parties and that was because of his urbanity and good-nature, as one who kept his temper even under grave provocation. As a matter of fact, nobody ever tried to provoke him for he was respected by all but sometimes one or two, in their enthusiasm, were caustic in their remarks. Sir Muthiah Chettiar was unruffled and kept a smiling face.

Electrification of villages was the demand of the hour. The Minister in charge had done a good job with heart-warming results. There were 64,000 villages in the State and of these, all but five hundred villages had been given electricity supply. He contended that, in order to combat power-shedding, there should be a larger supply of generators. As an example, he cited the cement industry where the use of generators would be unduly costly and would lead to increased cost of cement. He advocated the starting of new projects. He observed: "I am not able to understand why the Kalpakkam project is being delayed. They say that some units are not ready but we do not know when they will be ready, so many years have gone by." The wheels of Government habitually move slow and here was

an instance of inexcusably slow movement. Explanations were given, all equally unconvincing. Muthiah Chettiar pleaded for the creation of a Planning Cell with experienced Engineers on it. "There should be a separate Planning Cell in the Electricity Board itself," he said.

Referring to the talks between the Chief Minister and the Minister for Electricity with their opposite numbers in Kerala in which some dams were mentioned, he observed:

I have been telling every industrialist that they should place not 25 percent but 50 percent reliance on generators to combat the power-shedding also. But, there are certain industries which cannot have power-generators. For example, it is impossible in the cement industry because it is a continuous process industry. To use generators in that industry will be too costly and the public cannot afford the increase in the cost of cement. Therefore, it is necessary for the Government to have new projects. In this connection, I am not able to understand why the Kalpakkam project is still being delayed. There must be something in that; they say that some units are not ready but we do not know when they will be ready because so many years have gone by. I think that the Government must request the Government of India immediately to go into the matter and set things right.

I am glad that the Chairman and other officers posted to the Electricity Board from time to time function well. But, I would request the Hon. Minister to appoint a Planning Cell permanently for the Electricity Board. I do not think there is at present a permanent Planning Cell in the Electricity Board with experienced Engineers on it. Quite apart from attending to routine items of work like giving connections, power-shedding attending to repairs in units at Neyveli or Ennore etc., planning has to be done for the future. I do not think that the State Planning Commission can be expected to attend to this planning. So, there should be a separate Planning Cell in the Electricity Board itself which would function independently. The people in the Planning Cell can work out and give details to the Hon'ble Minister and to the Board so that they may tell the Government of India that they want so much money for the various projects. To-day I can assure the Government that they need not be anxious about money. There is plenty of money in the market and there is plenty of money with the people who have small sums like thousands to invest. Now they have no opportunity to invest in shares because there are no

new industries. Further, investment in shares has also become not much remunerative. The Reserve Bank of India has plenty of money to spare. Other Commercial Banks have also got money. Why? There are no new industries seeking financial help from the banks. The Electricity Board can easily float a loan and it will be fully subscribed because it is a well equipped institution and the people will be sure of their investment and return because of the guarantee by the Government. I would, therefore, request the Government to push through new schemes.

It is mentioned in the speech of the Hon'ble Minister that there are about 9 lakhs pumpsets and if half of them work simultaneously 1500 MW will be required but since that much power is not available, they could not be given continuous power supply. We want them to prosper and we should supply them sufficient electricity. No Hon'ble Member will differ from the views expressed by Hon'ble Thiru. Arumugam and Thiru. A.R. Damodaran. We are making our suggestions so as to strengthen the hands of the Hon'ble Minister to get more money from the Government of India and from the Public. The speeches made here will enable the public to subscribe more for the loans raised.

I hope the Hon'ble Minister will explain the purport of their talks. I do not see the reason why they have not taken up the scheme which we have been speaking about for a very long time, even during Thiru. Kamarajar's period. There are hills 50 miles south of Madurai on the way to Courtallam and the waters flowing in the rivers go to the Arabian Sea. The original programme was to take that water after having a tunnel in the hills and it was not at all implemented. The Government of Kerala had 23 Hydel Schemes at that time but it had completed only 7 of them. I would request the Government to ask the Kerala Government why the remaining schemes were not implemented and what the snag was. Money will not be a problem because money is available. If they had implemented these schemes, they would have plenty of electricity. There is no doubt about it.

March 10, 1983: Speech in the Legislative Council

Speaking on the Budget, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar made complimentary references to the Finance Minister, gave credit where credit was due and drew attention to various matters where reform and re-construction were necessary. He was always interested in forests. There had been a department pledged to their proper maintenance. Latterly denudation rather than afforestation and preservation was the invariable

rule. Whenever visiting dignitaries had to be honoured, one invariable practice was to request him to plant a sapling or two. They were planted with impressive ceremony and optimistic speeches and that was all that happened. Very rarely — if ever — was attention bestowed on the saplings which, in due course, withered and died. Those which survived were the lucky few. Sir Muthiah Chettiar drew pointed attention to the position and made an impassioned plea for a far greater deal of practical and sustained interest in forest administration and “stringent regulations” which should be enforced. His observations were laid to heart and forests came to receive greater attention than before.

Like his father, Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was interested in the proper maintenance and administration of temples. That was in keeping with the ancient tradition of the Chettiars. He was practical-minded too. If change was called for, he was ready to make changes.

March 10, 1983: Speech in the Legislative Council

Mr. Vice-Chairman, If I begin to talk in Tamil it will take much time. As there is no sufficient time, I hope you will give permission to speak in English. First of all, I am very happy to see that the Lower House has passed a resolution relating to the successful holding of the Non-aligned meet at Delhi. Though such a resolution has not been passed in this House, I am very glad that such a resolution has been passed in the other House and they have done a very good thing.

With regard to drought situation, I am glad that thousands of tubewells have been dug and it is not enough. I am glad the Hon. Minister Thiru. Raghavanandam, who is the Chairman of the M.M.D.A. is here. The number of tube-wells should be increased. Unless we take up Krishna water scheme in right earnest, because Telugu Desam Government are willing to give water, we will not be able to solve the water problem.

With regard to water transport in the City, though a railway line is going to be put, it would not be sufficient and we have to clear the Cooum river and see that it is used for transport. Thiru. Thiagaraja Chettiar who was the Leader of the Justice Party put up a proposal for water transport at a cost of Rs.1 crore but because of diarchy it was not accepted. If sufficient water is let into the

Cooum, steam boats carrying 20 to 25 persons could be plied. The bridges could be remodelled and it will ease the transport problem.

Sir, regarding destruction of forests, I am glad that the Government have taken note of it. Because there has been no rain, the area under forests has dwindled. I am sure that the Hon. Minister will take interest in afforestation. Besides that there should be more stringent regulations and they must be enforced. The Hon. Minister for Forests is also in charge of Temples and I would like to implore one thing from him. Of course, the Government are now busy with various other matters. I am sure that, at least, after the current Budget Session, the Hon. Minister will find time to fill up the Trustees' posts in both the old renowned temples and the small new temples. The old system of having hereditary Trustees has been given up. But if a member of a hereditary Trustee's family is available and if he is a good person, then he can also be considered for the post of Trustee. I am sure that the Government will be able to find respectable persons to fill up these posts because the people should get a feeling that the funds of the Temples are spent usefully. In the past, the Trustees appointed under the old system have done well. Now, the system of appointing Trustees has changed. But still, in certain cases where a member of the family of the old Trustee is found to be good, he can be appointed Trustee. Sir, the same Minister is in charge of Art and Culture also and I would like to say something on this subject. Even this morning, I heard the views of Thavathiru Kundrakkudi Adigalar to the effect that family planning was quite necessary. For propagating this scheme, folk dramas should be arranged in the villages. If that is done, people in the villages and in the slum areas in the towns will spend their time usefully without remaining in ignorance. Therefore, it is very necessary for the Government to have some drama troupes. I think that even now there are some folk drama troupes but the services are utilised only during Election times. It would be better if their services are utilised throughout the year.

Speaking of irrigation projects, he emphasized the need for "small dams" which would be of help in generating electricity.

Sir, I am glad to see that allocation of funds has been done for some irrigation projects. In the Budget speech, I do not find a complete list of irrigation Projects. But, I would like to suggest that, besides the major schemes, we should also have schemes for the construction of some small dams which would be of help in generating electricity also. Here I would like to remind the House

of what I have been saying very often. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, while introducing the Pykara Project said in the same breath, that he wanted thermal schemes also to be implemented. My own view is that every Municipality and every big Panchayat should have a thermal station under its own control. Of course, the Electricity Board should have control over the staff of these Municipal and Panchayat thermal stations. The staff may not like to serve under a Municipal Chairman. Therefore, in the matter of the staff of these thermal stations, the powers of transfer, grant of leave, enquiry, dismissal etc., should remain with the Electricity Board. But the responsibility for the installation of the thermal plant should be with the local body. To find the resources for starting thermal plants, loans may be floated and debentures may be issued. By issuing debentures a few crores of rupees could be raised. The electricity generated in the thermal stations managed by the Municipalities can be utilised for starting small-scale industries in places within a radius of 5 miles or 10 miles. In that case, the load on the main grid will be reduced and, as a result, we will not be put to the necessity of waiting for better days to improve the power situation or to depend upon the neighbouring States for electricity. In fact, all the three southern States are short of electricity. Because of shortages of electricity, the continuous process industries are facing difficulty. The cement industry is a continuous process industry. The sugar industry also requires electricity continuously for four or six months in a year during the crushing season. The paper industry also requires electricity throughout the year. These industries cannot run on a reduced supply of electricity at 40 percent of the required supply of electricity. The cement factories, sugar mills, paper mills etc., have to be supplied electricity continuously for all 24 hours."

He advocated more practical interest in facilities for tourists. There were beauty spots like Mahabalipuram and Pichavaram, but reaching them was a trial - because the roads were often just a succession of pot-holes.

While talking about Tourism, the Hon. Minister has mentioned about Pichavaram but there is not much work done in that direction. It is one of the tourist centres and work should be done early to make it a tourist centre. What about the East Coast Road? We have been talking about it. Unless the East Coast Road is fully developed and laid, Pichavaram and Mahabalipuram will not attract tourism. If that road is completed, there will be a straight road from Madras to Pichavaram via Mahabalipuram and Pondicherry. I hope the Hon. Minister will be able to impress on

the Government of India the need to make haste in regard to East Coast Road.

On education, he pleaded for more polytechnics:

Regarding Education, a large amount of money is being allotted. I have been shouting at the top of my voice that we must increase the number of polytechnics and other Engineering institutions. Such technical education will alone help our younger generation. I am glad that the Education Minister has been responsible for increasing the number of polytechnics in recent years and it is good. He is also introducing many new courses. But that is not enough. I would like to implore him as well as the Hon. Chief Minister and the Hon. Finance Minister to see that a polytechnic is started in each taluk. There must also be Junior Polytechnics and they should be later on converted into Senior Polytechnics. The whole country will prosper only by starting technical institutions and by introducing new courses of study.

Medical relief was a subject which was dear to his heart. His father had started hospitals and provided for their maintenance at a high level of practical utility, the Lady Pentland Hospital, for instance which Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was maintaining with care. The Hospital at the Annamalai University was a subject of unremitting attention. Rajah Muthiah Chettiar observed:

Regarding Health, I would like to mention that in some of the hospitals, though the sanctioned strength of doctors is five, two or three posts remain vacant for almost 8 or 9 months.

Still, we find from the newspapers that there are many unemployed M.B.B.S. doctors. I do not know why the department of Medical Services has not been able to post doctors to fill the vacant posts. Especially, where there is no woman-doctor people do not send cases of child-birth to the hospital with confidence. In one place, the post of a woman-doctor is vacant for the past eight years. All these years, a single doctor is attending to all the work that two doctors should do and that doctor is a male doctor. There are some people who are conservative and who do not want a male doctor for attending to cases of child-birth. Therefore, it is necessary for Hon. Minister for Health to look into this matter. I will give the name of the hospital, which I referred to just now, later on. Right now, I do not know the name of the hospital. But I know that there are one or two hospitals which suffer from this

kind of disease, I should say. I think that this malady should be removed.

Say what you will, the Madras Police has always deserved well of the people. In the old days, they did not have the facilities now so abundant — the aids to quick and efficient service which they have now-a-days. Sir Muthiah Chettiar made a forcible plea for increased facilities. He represented to the House:

As regards the Police Department, I would like to make a suggestion. I think I am making this suggestion for the 100th time in my experience of nearly 40 or 50 years in both the Houses of the Legislature. The Police stations are now very ineffective because they do not have jeeps or other means of quick transport. The Inspector or Sub-Inspector of Police goes about only by cycle. If he is given a motor-cycle, the Inspector of Police can move about quickly. I would even suggest that a jeep may be given for every three Police stations. There should be three jeeps in charge of every Deputy Superintendent of Police. One jeep should be under his own control. He should set apart two jeeps for use by the Police stations in his jurisdiction. Now, the Police Department is using microwave transmitters for sending messages. Recently, there was a highway robbery committed by some people who were identified as speaking Telugu. They stopped a bus and committed robbery. Because of the micro-wave facility, the nearest Police station was able to inform the Deputy Superintendent of Police and, within 10 or 15 minutes a Police van was able to come. It is very good to have such facilities. At the same time we should see that each Inspector of Police and each Sub-Inspector of Police has a jeep ready at hand. If he has got a jeep, the Inspector of Police can go along with 6 or 7 Policemen with arms. In the absence of a jeep, he can go only by cycle. If a case is reported to him, either he does not go at all or, even if he goes, it is of no use because he goes late. Therefore, I feel that it would be worthwhile and even more economical, in the long run, to give jeeps to the existing Police stations, instead of increasing the number of Police stations. If jeeps are given to all the Polices stations, there may not be any necessity for opening more Police stations. At present these are not at all given to any Police station as such. Only one jeep is given to the Deputy Superintendent and one jeep is given to the Inspector of Police at the District headquarters. This, in my humble opinion, is not at all enough.

It is worthy of note that Rajah Muthiah Chettiar was not scared by deficit financing and budgeting. Revolutionary

changes had taken place in life and practical-minded persons were not frightened by them. He said:

Sir, I am glad that the Tamil Nadu Government stand first in the implementation of the Twenty-Point Programme. I am delighted to know that I would like to say a few words about deficit financing. The Budget for the coming year shows only a small deficit. To make good that deficit partly, Government have proposed to levy taxes to the tune of Rs.26 crores. I think that this is not at all necessary. If there is good investment, there will be more income and nobody will cringe to give loans in respect of good items of work. Such loans are taken for the benefit of the present generation as well as for the benefit of the future generation. Deficit financing is not at all bad. I have always been speaking in favour of deficit budgeting in this House, in the other House and in many forums like Chambers of Commerce. It is not bad to have deficit in a budget. There is only a deficit of about Rs.200 crores and I would request the Hon. Finance Minister not to worry about the deficit. There is inflation due to various factors. Deficit budgeting of such a small extent is not going to add up to the inflationary tendencies to a large extent.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Indo-British Co-operation

Indo-British Co-operation in trading ventures was found to yield good dividends, and the appetite grew with the eating. Such joint ventures increased. In earlier days, there were *dubashes* employed by European merchants, persons familiar with two or more Indian languages *and* British. They were profitably employed as intermediaries between Indian and European merchants. With the passing of the years, Indians came to be increasingly employed in European firms.

The Chettinad family had good contacts with European firms, of whom Messrs. Gordon Woodroffe & Co., was one. Its leading man, Sir James Simpson, was a good friend of Sir Annamalai Chettiar, who held some interests in the firm. Messrs. Gordon Woodroffe & Co., were agents for the Clan Line of steamers and Sir James Simpson, an Aberdonian Scot, was a leading figure in Madras Circles. He and the Chettinad family continued to be on terms of friendship all their lives. Muthiah Chettiar was Chairman of the company for two years.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar developed close connections with Messrs A and F Harvey. The Harveys came from Selkirkshire and had established a Spinning and Weaving Mills at Ambasamudram which was later merged with Madura Coats. Sir Muthiah Chettiar was a member of the Board of Directors of Madura Coats for thirty-six years — initially as Director from 1948. He became the Chairman in 1959 and continued to hold the office till his death in 1984. The members placed on record their profound grief at Sir Muthiah Chettiar's death and their indebtedness to him for his services to the company.

Every year marked a milestone in the march of the Company's progress. In the Centenary Year, 1984, a sophisticated Dipping Plant was commissioned. The plant is said to represent the latest stage in dipping technology. Every side,

and every aspect of the Company's operations has been marked by improvements every year.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar took the initiative in reducing the Company's foreign share-holding to forty percent, thereby obtaining 'Non-Fera' status which gave it more opportunities to diversify and expand its activities.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar's relations with the staff, both European and Indian, could not have been better. Their relations were marked by mutual trust and confidence. Mr. Henry as Managing Director made a substantial contribution to the progress and prosperity of the company which was gratefully recorded in the minutes of the Company's proceeding. He was succeeded by Mr. Pratt, who added to his University record a considerable aptitude for work in the Mills. Equally competent members were on the Indian side of the staff. Mr. Sivasamban for one, Mr. C.S. Vidyasankaran and Mr. M. Ganapati Chettiar, to mention only a few. When Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar died after 36 years of association with the Mills, the members, at an extra-ordinary meeting of the Board, passed a resolution of condolence, expressing their deep sense of loss. His personality, to put it moderately, was unique.

He must have joined the Mills in an auspicious hour. He had a pronounced mechanical bent for, from the moment he joined the Mills, he warmed to his new mistress, and soon mastered the craft. That was his way. When his interest was aroused by any particular field, he laboured to get to know it thoroughly. And he was in daily touch with the business, attended all its meetings which were held mostly at Bangalore, and acquired all the expertise needed. Such was his hold on the business and its ramifications that his suggestions and criticisms were listened to with respect and faithfully carried out.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

European Tour

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was a seasoned traveller. He had travelled extensively in Ceylon, Malaya and Burma and in the Far East. Of these several visits and the contacts he had established he had gracious memories.

Though fond of travel, it was only much later he visited Europe and Japan.

In 1961, Sir Muthiah Chettiar visited Europe — a long —cherished wish which, for one reason or another got put off repeatedly. Once he told an English friend at lunch that he had long wanted to visit Britain and the Continent but somehow he had not been able to bring it off. His friend told him half-banteringly, "Apparently you did not want it enough" "Perhaps not" replied Sir Muthiah Chettiar. "But I shall not put it off any longer." Then he set to work. He collected all the relevant travel literature. He consulted his friends, fixed on an auspicious day — that was the essential Hindu in him — and set out.

It was in Britain that the Rajah Sahib was naturally most at home. There he was among friends whom he had known for a long number of years, men in business, industry, politics and in the sphere of education. He was very keen to do London thoroughly, see the historic places, meet old friends — he had several. He borrowed my copy of Harold Clann's "The Face of London" and followed the Seventeen-day plan prescribed in it. And when he returned home, for a long while his talk was all about the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, the Mansion House, Madame Tussaud's the British Museum and indeed all the advertised sights. He visited the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and St. Andrews. In Aberdeen his old friend Sir James Simpson, was his host. Rajah Sahib's wife, Rani Meyyammai Achi, who accompanied him, enjoyed the trip hugely. Sir James Simpson was among

the oldest of his friends — he had spent the best part of his life in Madras and was a close friend of the Chettinad family. From his lovely retreat at Bildside in Aberbeenshire, he had kept in touch with the family. For many years he was the Managing Director of Messrs Gordon Woodroffe and Company Ltd., Madras and President for sometime of the Imperial Bank of India and a colleague of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar in the Legislature. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar and his Rani, Lady Meyyammai Achi, spent a day with Sir James Simpson among the 'banks and braes' of Bildside, talking over old times and again, in Edinburgh, where Sir James went to see them off. For the Rajah, it was an emotionally satisfying experience that he could meet a valued old friend on his native land.

There were other friends of the family whom the Rajah and the Rani met - Sir Charles Cunnigham, Sir Fredereek James, Sir Cyril Jones of the ICS (an authority on Finance in his day), Mr. Arthur Moore, former Editor of *The Statesman*, Sir Francis Low, former Editor of the *Times of India* and Sir Patrick Spens (Since ennobled). Old friendship had a fragrance for him which Sir Muthiah Chettiar could not resist.

His visit to Great Britain also gave him the opportunity to pay his respects to Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. In 1959, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar had the honour of entertaining Prince Philip (the Duke of Edinburgh) at lunch in Chettinad House, Madras. He and the Rani Sahiba were granted a special audience by Her Majesty the Queen when she was in Madras in 1961. When he visited Britain in July 1961, Her Majesty and Prince Philip accorded an interview to them both and recalled their visit to Madras.

In Germany, the Rajah Sahib met industrialists and men in seats of power and obtained a valuable slant on the plans and policies which have enabled it to make a remarkable recovery. He visited the Krupp's works in Essen, and industrial units in Dusseldorf. In Berlin he was received by Mr. Willy Brandt, the Governing Mayor.

France and Italy also figured in the itinerary. In Paris, he spent a day with the Rothschilds (the Baron and the Baroness) who, like the Baron's Sister, had been his guests in Madras.

Rome captured his fancy. He felt an ancient history coming to life. He and his Rani visited the Vatican and received the blessings of His Holiness the Pope. Father D' Souza, one of Rajah's most valued friends, brought about a special audience.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Industries

With his long experience in the Legislature and close knowledge of Banking, Finance, Industry, Education and Civic Administration — a spectrum of achievement not within the easy reach of many others — it was not surprising that very early in his career, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar had acquired a sure grasp of industry and its problems in all their variety and facets and brought to it the benefit of his immense contacts and understanding of the possibilities of industrial growth in South India.

Chettinad Cement Corporation

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar became the Chairman of the Chettinad Cement Corporation in 1962, when it was incorporated with a projected capacity of four lakh tonnes of cement per annum. The Licence to set up the cement plant was granted on 17-6-1963. The cement factory came up at Puliur, near Karur in Tiruchirappalli District. The first unit which produced 600 tonnes per day was commissioned in April 1968 and the second unit in November 1970. The revised capital cost of the project worked out to Rs.5.73 crores.

Three factors influenced Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's decision to locate a cement factory near Karur. The Chettinad family had been operating some religious charities, including a Veda Patasala at Karur for many years. Like Chidambaram, Karur was a spiritual home away from home for the Chettinad family. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar had a part of his early schooling at Karur. The copious limestone deposits near Karur held out the hope that it would be an ideal location for a cement factory in the vicinity of Karur. The Rajah Saheb had often confided to his friends that while the Chettinad family were complete strangers to the cement industry, the late Sri K. Kamaraj, the Chief Minister of Madras, who was keenly interested in the rapid industrialization of the State, applied his

powers of persuasion on Rajah Muthiah Chettiar to locate a cement factory at Karur — an enterprise which entered the field at the right moment. This, in brief, is the story of the birth of Chettinad Cement Corporation at Karur — a sapling of 1962 which has now grown into a mighty tree. It was nurtured by Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar himself as its first Chairman for many years. The going was not easy in its early years. The unit had its share of teething troubles between 1962 and 1969. A suitable pattern of production, marketing and movement of the product, coal and oil, had to be evolved with the active co-operation of the Ministries of Industry, of Railways and of Petroleum. Schemes for expansion of the unit, Railway siding facilities at the factory were worked out in order to make the cement unit viable and prosperous. In developing and running the cement factory at Karur, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, as Managing Director, was ably assisted by seasoned industrialists on the Board of Directors and his first son, Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah — after whom the Cement factory township has been named. After Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah's untimely death in 1970, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's second son, has given the project the much-needed impetus and a firm direction and has secured for it a prominent place in the cement industry in India.

Cent percent capacity production has been achieved from 1978 onwards except when its production capacity was under utilised (inescapably) during the last few years owing to the acute power shortage in the State. Appropriate and timely remedies were, however, applied in order to keep up the cement production and efficient distribution of the product ensured. The Chettinad Cement Factory at Karur is now recognised as one of the leading Cement Plants in the country — whose product finds a ready market in Northern and Western India too, apart from the nearby markets in the Southern States.

A reference has already been made to Madura Coats of which Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar had been a Director for more than twenty-five years. In 1972, he became its Chairman — a position he held till he passed away in May 1984.

The Rajah Sahib was the founder of Chettinad Corporation, Ceylon; Chettinad Plantations. He was Director of E.I.D.

Parry & Co., Consolidated Coffee Limited, Pottibetta (Coorg), Coonoor Tea Estates Ltd., Coonoor, Director of Binny & Co. Ltd.

The South India Corporation

To the end is reserved a mention of the South India Corporation Private Ltd., of which Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was the Managing Director for many years.

Set up in 1935 by Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the South India Corporation is the Chettinad family's long-standing business head-quarters. With Coimbatore as its principal office, it has a nexus of branches at Cochin, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Its main branch is centrally located in the Armenian Street in George Town, Madras and has been, so to speak, the heart and nerve-centre of the far-flung business of the Chettinad family. Pudukkottai, next-door to Chettinad, was an Indian State, independent with its own Ruler, its laws and regulations which were a replica of the laws and regulations of the adjoining British Indian territory. There was no income-tax in the State. Pudukkottai seemed ideal to be the head-quarters of the Chettinad business organisation which operated over a vast area, which included Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu. The main lines of business since the inception of the company, were structural engineering. The Corporation took up a number of contracts for structural works particularly during the Second World War when the situation needed construction companies which would execute works quickly and had sound financial backing. In Willingdon Island, Cochin, the company has been actively involved in transport, clearing and shipping, stevedoring operations and have worked as steamer agents for many years. Perhaps the most complicated operations they were engaged in were the transportation of foodgrains to various districts of Kerala at a time when Kerala State was in the grip of an acute shortage of foodgrains and the food requirements of that State had to be met from the Northern States and Andhra Pradesh.

Since 1945, the company has embarked on considerable diversification of its activities. The Hardware Department at Cochin were agents for Tata Chemicals, Travancore Cements, and Iron and Steel both under control and after decontrol. The

company are distributors of Tata Products in Hardware, Timber, Paper and other goods.

After Sir Annamalai Chettiar's death and the merger of Pudukkottai in the Indian Union, the burden fell on Sir Muthiah's shoulders in 1948 and he bore it capably over a span of 36 years. The staff was composed of old hands, who had grown grey in the service of the Corporation and its ramifications and that greatly lightened the Rajah's burden. The South India Corporation can now look back on fifty years of solid achievement.

Note: The relevant information on these industries has been kindly provided at my request by Mr. V. Vaidyasubramania Iyer, Mr. L. Sabharetnam, Mr. V. Jayaraman and Mr. R. Narayanan.

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Passing of Time - Sir Muthiah at Three - Score

August 6th 1965 was a landmark in Muthiah Chettiar's life. He attained the age of sixty and at sixty a devout Hindu is expected to gradually renounce worldly cares and start a life of contemplative serenity and prepare for the life beyond. The day itself is marked by religious ceremonies, old-time ritual and chanting of *Vedic* hymns and scriptural texts by an assembly of sixty learned Brahmins, experts in religious ritual. They sit in a row, or, in more rows than one, on the floor decorated with geometrical patterns drawn with rice meal, in front of pitchers of brass in the case of poor householders or of silver, in the case of those who have the means, with coconuts at the mouth set amid green mango leaves. They invoke the gods in their Heavens who are believed to respond to the call and confer all blessings on the house-holders concerned.

Outside the circle of the purdits and the priests, there is a mammoth gathering of friends and relations. In the case of the wealthy, the gathering is dense and the scene one of jubilation and general jollification. 'The hero of the hour' has a look of benignity and satisfaction. He feels very much a hero and bears himself with becoming dignity. Those younger than him prostrate themselves at full length and he with a solemn air, blesses them. There is feeding and feasting on a scale consistent with his worldly standing and means. Now-a-days there are speeches at the close of the proceedings. The sixty-year old hero is "praised high and low, as sweetest friend and noblest foe" and the rest of it.

The celebration costs a pretty penny and is nearly balanced by presents as rich and as varied as wedding gifts.

In Muthiah Chettiar's case the celebration was on a scale truly magnificent. If a parallel were needed, one should go to the

palaces of Indian Rulers where the ceremony assumed the proportions of a national festival.

At Chettinad the scene was dazzling in splendour — reminiscent of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's Sixty first birthday celebrations in 1941. An enormous gathering of friends (from all over the country) and relations had collected, all of them agreeably and usefully engaged in deputising for the host. Every dignitary in the neighbourhood, in Madras City and the State was present. Near Sir Muthiah Chettiar sat His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore and the Rajah of Pudukkottai, which is next door to Chettinad. There was feasting all day long and half the night long. Distinguished and not-so-distinguished guests, those on still lower levels, dependents, servants and the entire poor of the neighbourhood had mustered in force. Greetings and good wishes poured in from all the world over from the highest in the land.

That was from abroad. As for India it was a regular deluge of praise and good wishes. They recalled the services of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the Founder of the Annamalai University and the dispenser of charities of all descriptions, feeding houses, hospitals, educational institutions, temples and festivals which were really the merry-making of the masses — a tradition which Sir Muthiah Chettiar sedulously kept up, adding his own contributions for the welfare of the public.

The celebrations at home over, congratulatory meetings were held in different parts of the south country, the Chettinad terrain, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Coimbatore and others and in far off Malaysia. The celebrations were the talk of the countryside for several weeks.

The Annamalai University naturally was to the fore. It sent contingents to Chettinad and followed it up with a celebration of its own. It was all a resounding testimony to the esteem in which the Chettinad family and its current head, Sir Muthiah Chettiar, were held.

Renunciation? No. Not at the present day. Fifty or sixty years ago, Yes. The ceremony and the ritual only marked a fresh plunge into worldly activity. Muthiah Chettiar felt refreshed in body and mind. He walked with a statelier tread

and an added lustre in his eyes. That was just as it should have been. Sixty now-a-days — one takes in one's stride - too early a time of life to renounce the world, to wear lengths of ochre-coloured cloth and a string of sacred beads and the make-up of anchorites. All that was long long ago. Now-a-days one may pray to God for some light. Some guidance to a good life.

Here is a list of some of the gifts which Sir Muthiah Chettiar gave on the occasion.

As on other significant occasions, the Rajah made several gifts to commemorate the occasion. Here is the list:

1. Two and half lakhs to the Annamalai University.
2. A similar sum to the Nattukottai Nagarathars' Association.
3. Rs.50,000 to Rani Meyyammai High School.
4. Rs.25,000 to the Kanadukathan Town Club and other donations to the tune of over Rs.50,000/-.

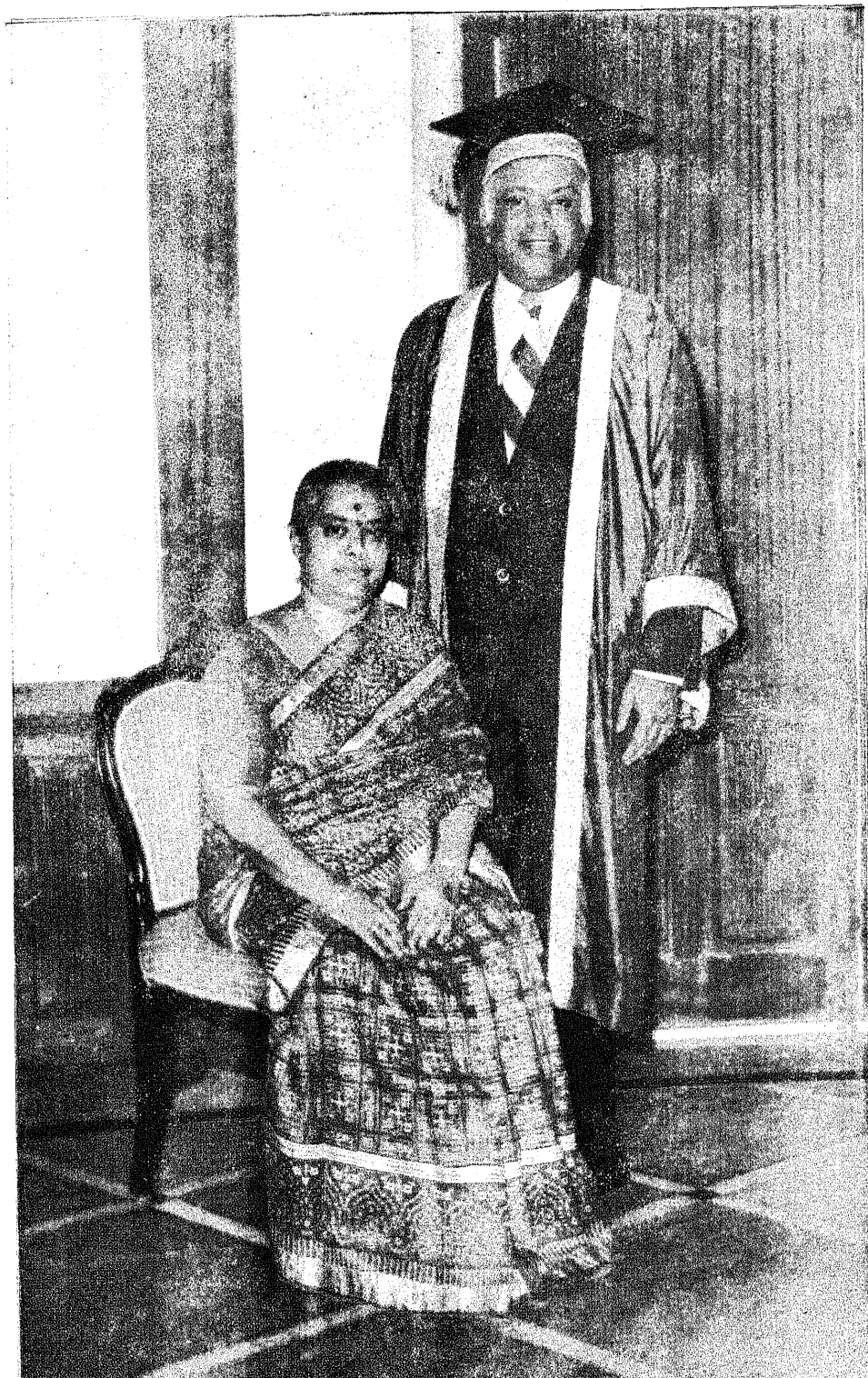
The Corporation of Madras presented a civic address to Sir Muthiah Chettiar, its first Mayor, who had the rare honour of being a Mayor for a second term. His services as Mayor and as member of the Corporation of Madras were the theme of their speeches.

There was a civic welcome at Tiruchirappalli, marked by garlands and bouquets and adulatory speeches.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Tamil Isai

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's interest in Tamil literature and Tamil Music was, in a sense, a part of his inheritance. His father had, as one of his main ambitions in life, the desire to re-create in the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu a real pride in the literature and the language of the land of their birth and to give to Tamil Music the honour and the position which it had enjoyed previously, but which had been dimmed during a period of about a hundred years. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's devotion to music was symbolised very early in the establishment in 1929 of the Music College attached to the Annamalai University. Musicians of repute, Sangeetha Kalanidhi T.S. Sabhesa Aiyar, Sangitha Kalanidhi K. Ponniah Pillai, Sangitha Kalanidhi Tiger K. Varadachariar, Isai Arasu M.M. Dandapani Desikar — to mention only a few — built up this institution on the highest musical traditions. Dr. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar was the Founder of the Tamil Isai movement in Tamil Nadu, in the 1930's. It immediately won public support. During his father's lifetime, Kumara Rajah Muthiah Chettiar followed his father's footsteps in the promotion of the cause of Tamil. Work on the beautiful building in Madras, Rajah Annamalai Manram, was completed in 1952, in front of which there is an imposing and commanding statue of Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar — the venue of the Annual Tamil Isai Festival which comes off in December every year. After Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the Founder-President of the Tamil Isai Sangham, passed away in 1948, distinguished Tamilians have served the Tamil Isai movement as Presidents, Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar, Thiru C.S. Ratnasabhapati Mudaliar of Coimbatore, Thiru T.M. Narayanaswami Pillai, Justice Thiru S. Maharajan, Justice Thiru P.R. Gokulakrishnan. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar helped the movement actively in the role of Vice-President and attended to every



minute detail. Apart from Madras, the Tamil Isai movement has spread to other cities in Tamil Nadu like Tiruchirappalli and Madurai. The Rajah Sahib gave substantial moral and financial support to the Tamil Sanghams at Tiruchirappalli, Bangalore and was actively connected with the Tamil Sanghams at Karaikkudi and Devakkottai. He used his good offices with All India Radio, Tiruchirappalli with a view to getting more time allotted for broadcasting of Tamil songs in the Radio programmes. As a member of the Radio Programme Advisory Committee, he got his ideas on the promotion of Tamil music implemented by the Radio authorities.

Besides being a University centre now, Madurai, the ancient seat of the Sangam, has always been the home of Tamil culture. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was the Founder President of the Tamil Isai Sangham, Madurai. A magnificent structure named Rajah Muthiah Manram was erected by Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, work on which was completed in 1974 — a standing monument to his devotion to the cause of Tamil culture.

The Rajah Sahib's services to the cause of Tamil music were publicly recognised in various forms. The title 'Tamil Isai Kavalar (தமிழ் இசைக் காவலர்)' was conferred on him by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. M.G. Ramachandran at a well-attended public meeting at Madurai on 29th April 1979.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's instinctive faith in Tamil Isai was noticeable as early as 9th December 1934, when as Kumara Rajah, he inaugurated the Seventh Annual Conference of the Music Academy, Madras, at a special pavilion in the People's Park.

In his opening address, Kumara Rajah M.A. Muthiah Chettiar said:

By inviting me to open this conference, you have overwhelmed me with kindness. I am very grateful to the organisers of this conference for the opportunity given to me of participating in this evening's function. Though I may be a poor successor to the illustrious persons who have preceded me in the years past, let me assure you that my interest in the advancement of music and the progress of the Academy is as great as theirs. The pleasure, which

I feel in being associated with this function, is being enhanced by the fact that you have as the president of this conference Vidwan Sabhesa Aiyar, Principal of the College of Music founded by my revered father at Annamalai Nagar.

Friends, the Music Academy, under whose auspices this conference is being held, has done yeoman service in the cause of South Indian Music during the comparatively short period of its existence. The conference has become an annual function of great importance. Music-lovers all over the presidency look forward to this annual carnival of Music with the greatest delight.

The Academy has solid achievements to its credit. The Teachers' College of Music and the Faculty of Music in the Madras University owe their existence mainly to its labours. The Academy is trying to disseminate music on right lines among our people and to keep it at high level of perfection it has reached under the fostering care of discerning patrons and zealous masters of Music. To-day there is a greater recognition of its aims, and aspirations; its progress has been steady though slow. It is full of vitality and vigour and we can look forward to greater achievements in future.

In recent times music is spreading everywhere. What was confined to some select cultivated homes has now spread to the average household. Science has had its share in making the people music-minded. Its discoveries have now made possible what formerly was well nigh impossible. The Gramophone and the Radio have so popularised music that there is hardly any man or woman who does not hum a tune sung by some well-known artist.

While we feel gratified to see this rapid spread of music, we cannot help deploring the fall in the general standard of music. What was gained in expansion was lost in quality. Of late the tendency to appreciate and imitate the kind of music commonly heard in theatres is becoming general. When artistes begin to please every common taste, the dignity of music is likely to be impaired. The musician is a creative artiste. Standards take their bent by the turn given by the artistes. They therefore become responsible for creating the right taste in music. Let not our music be pulled down to the average level but rather let us try to push up the average level into the higher realms of music.

In this Conference, where are gathered most of the Sangita Vidwans of this Presidency, a great deal of discussion is sure to take place. It is upto the Academy to turn to account and evolve something useful. Our Vidwans, who have gained name and fame in the musical world owe a duty to their less fortunate brethren.

They must train them in the best traditions of exposition and method so that their experience may not be lost to the public. The ancient gurukula system is gone, probably never to return, but the spirit which animated it may be adapted for our use with changes suited to the needs and circumstances of modern life so that by consistent association with the master minds, the students may be enabled to imbibe their distinctive contribution to the art and science of music.

We in South India have long been accustomed to hearing songs composed mainly in the Telugu language by the great Tyagayya and others. Is it not high time for us to give Tamil the place in music to which it is legitimately entitled in Tamil Nadu. It is the duty of the Tamil musicians to give it that amount of prominence which it undeniably deserves. The beautiful soul-stirring devotional hymns of the Nayanmars and Alvars captivate the hearers, throw them into ecstasies and help them to become at one with the Maker. I hope also that the Academy will take early steps to trace, secure and publish rare and forgotten compositions in Tamil of musicians of repute.

Let me again thank Dr. Rama Rao and all those associated with him in the work of the Academy for the honour they have done me in inviting me to open this Conference. May this Conference add its annual quota to the sumtotal of achievements in the field of music is my earnest prayer. Friends, it is with great pleasure that I declare the Conference open.

His plea for the restoration of Tamil music to its rightful place in Tamil Nadu was unambiguous and forthright.

It was also significant that while welcoming the Kumara Rajah and requesting him to inaugurate the Conference, Mr. S. Satyamurti, a distinguished savant and a Vice-President of the Music Academy, emphasised that 'musicians should also give a larger place for Tamil compositions in music performances, for the Sahitya of a piece appealed as much as music.

Mr. E. Krishna Aiyar, General Secretary of the Music Academy, while proposing a vote of thanks to the Kumara Rajah pointed out that the three institutions — the Madras University, the Annamalai College of Music and the Music Academy — were working in harmony in promoting the study of music. Nothing could be nobler than harmony in the sphere of music.

Besides actively involving himself in the music sessions of the Tamil Isai festival in the Christmas season every year, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar took a prominent part in the discussions with the experts that took place in the morning sessions and Pann research was one of the subjects in which he took lively interest and to which he made a substantial contribution by giving the research scholars the lines on which Pann Research should go forward.

CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

Annamalai University

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's public activities started even before he had done with college. He was his father's unpaid apprentice and was very much in his father's confidence. He kept himself abreast of the running of the Sri Minakshi College, Chidambaram, right from the start and subsequently of the Annamalai University. He was also a member of the Syndicate of the Madras University in the years 1940-46. That was only a side-activity until June 1948 when (at the age of 67) his father passed away. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's death was a loss to the whole nation. It was a very great loss to the Annamalai University. His vision, courage, faith, genius for organisation and philanthropy to all noble causes, particularly education, were without a parallel. Muthiah Chettiar was forty-three at the time he succeeded to the family honours and responsibilities. He had been thoroughly groomed for the position of Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University which he came to be on his father's death. That was his birth-right, and guaranteed by statute. The Annamalai University Act provided that the eldest son of the family should succeed to the Pro-Chancellorship. Elaborate provisions had been enacted as to the succession to the office of Founder-Pro-Chancellor.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar was very much in request to advise and assist in the administration of the University. He was quite an authority on matters relating to education. It was as the Chief Trustee of the Pachaiyappa Charities, of which Pachaiyappa's College was the best-known, that he may be said to have made his debut in the administration of a college. He had been Minister for Education in the Government of Madras and, in that capacity Pro-Chancellor of the University of Madras and that had given him a good grasp of university administration. Many were the offices which he had held, all of them with distinction. As the first Mayor of Madras, he had evinced considerable interest in the educational problems of the

City Corporation and augmented the educational facilities substantially, particularly for the poorer and weaker sections of society. His official status and outstanding position in public life seemed but steps qualifying him for the Pro-Chancellorship of the Annamalai University. In all the fields of activity in which he had been engaged, he had rendered signal service but after his father's death, it was to the Annamalai University that he devoted himself entirely and strove to increase the University's areas of activity, and took a deep interest in the teachers and the staff and, above all in the alumni, who flocked to it in increasing numbers every year for admission. In a recent pronouncement Mr. R. Venkataraman, Vice-President of India, referred to the part which Sir Muthiah had played as Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University. On 7 February 1985, he unveiled a portrait of Sir Muthiah Chettiar, in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. In doing so, he observed:

Though Annamalai Chettiar founded the Annamalai University, it was Muthiah Chettiar who worked all his life to develop it and introduce new disciplines. I hope the family will continue its efforts to make the University a premier institution of learning and research.

A sincere eulogy by one qualified to make it. It was not — what most eulogiums are, permissible exaggerations of fact but a considered assessment of the position, by one every inch qualified to make it. Mr. Venkataraman had been a student of the Sri Minakshi College, which burgeoned into the Annamalai University and had watched it grow from modest beginnings to its present position.

Muthiah Chettiar had certain powers (statutory) which enabled him to keep a careful eye on the University and its administration. He was on two important bodies, of which he was President, of the Finance Committee and the Board of Selection (of the staff) and had a voice in the selection of the Vice-Chancellor. Like his father, he knew that unless one was watchful the University funds ran the risk of being improvidently spent. Candidates for appointment to the post of Registrar and the teaching staff had to appear before the Board of Selection who interrogated them and selected those they considered the best qualified for Professorships, Readerships

and Lectureships. As for the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor, the Statute gave the Pro-Chancellor the right to submit a panel of three names of whom the Chancellor was to select one for appointment. In point of fact that selection was made by the Chancellor — the Governor of the Presidency — (as the State was designated until Independence came), and the Pro-Chancellor over a cup of tea. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Pro-Chancellor was the linch-pin of the University. He could also call for reports on any aspect of the administration which he thought required to be looked into, make his comments and ask for re-consideration, if he felt it was necessary in the interests of the University. Happily, such a contingency never arose.

All that was as far as the statute went. Muthiah Chettiar's real strength lay in his accumulated experience in handling problems connected with Education which covered nearly twenty-five years when he took over the Pro-Chancellorship. Vice-Chancellors came and went after serving for three years (one term), sometimes for two terms, that is, six years. And it took them sometime to get to know the ropes. They naturally looked to Muthiah Chettiar for advice and guidance. He discussed the subject in question *in extenso* with the Vice-Chancellor, and gave his views which, invariably, the Vice-Chancellor accepted. Everyone of the Vice-Chancellors who served in Rajah Muthiah Chettiar's term as Pro-Chancellor — and there were nearly ten of them — was willing to follow his suggestion and advice on financial and administrative matters. The Vice-Chancellorship fell vacant in November 1948 and as a result of Sir Muthiah Chettiar's initiative, the right man was appointed to the vacancy. That was Dr. Manavala Ramanujam, a distinguished educationist. The Vice-Chancellors were men of light and leading and hand-picked. Among them were such stalwarts as Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir R.K. Shanmugham Chettiar, Retired Judges of the Madras High Court, like Mr. P. Chandra Reddy, Mr. V. Subrahmanyam and Mr. B.S. Somasundaram, Professor S. Chandrasekhar (an authority on problems of populations, who had also been a Minister in the Government of India). Professor S.P. Adinarayana and Mr T.M. Narayanaswami Pillai. They were all in Sir Muthiah Chettiar's confidence as he

was in theirs. All of them and the present Vice-Chancellor Professor S.V. Chittibabu have been appreciative of the help and guidance that they have received from Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar as the Pro-Chancellor. No wonder the wheels of administration ran smoothly with never a jar or a jolt.

The moment he became Pro-Chancellor, Muthiah Chettiar made some resolutions, not just pious ones, but carefully thought out plans of action. In his own mind, he gave the primacy to Tamil — its literature and its philosophy, including the popularization of its classics and to the resuscitation of Tamil music, which had faded into obscurity. He encouraged the composition of new songs. The best musicians in the Tamil country were appointed Heads of the Department concerned.

In his priorities, the revival of Tamil literature and music ranked high. Many Tamil classics — the *Silappadikaram* for instance — were languishing on account of neglect and it was of the first importance that they should be given their rightful place in the scheme of studies. The late Mahamahopadhyaya U.V. Swaminatha Aiyar, a Tamil scholar of the finest vintage had, by his own efforts, rescued the *Silappadikaram* from oblivion and his work was hailed as a work of the first order. Other Tamil scholars also were at work, striving to bring out the richness of other Tamil works. At long last, Tamil had begun to come into its own. Muthiah Chettiar discussed it all with his friend, Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar, who made a beginning in the way of translating into English the *Silappadikaram*, written in the first century by a *Chera* prince and a mine of information on the life and times of the first Century of the present era. The scene was laid at *Poompuhar Puhar* for short — a flourishing emporium of trade, to which the merchandise of Greece and Rome, Burma, Ceylon and Malaya came regularly for sale and barter. It is an enthralling account of the achievement of the Tamils in the arts — dancing and music. But the Hand of Destiny was at work. As already stated, one night, the sea, the Bay of Bengal wrought the city's destruction and turned it all to dust and ashes. At midnight, when the entire city was locked in sleep, the flood-gates of Heaven were opened, the waves of the sea rose in wrath, rose mountain-high and submerged the city, leaving no vestige

except a small shrine, at *Chayavanam*, which happened to escape the deluge and was left as a mute witness to the destruction.

Muthiah Chettiar was in the habit occasionally of having the *Silappadikaram* read and explained to him, and he used to wonder whether any vestige of the destroyed city would ever be brought to light. Scientists gave him hope that some day the sea would give up its secrets and enable the Tamils to recover some material evidence of their past. He waited in hope. And, the step which he took, hoping it would lead to the realisation of his hope, was the institution of a Centre for the Study of Marine Biology. Botany and Zoology were departments of study in the University. R.V. Seshayya, the Professor, was deeply read in those subjects and he was an authority on Zoology. Muthiah Chettiar had a good deal of personal regard for him. One day, Seshayya called on Muthiah Chettiar in the University Guest House and got into conversation with him. He held Muthiah Chettiar's attention. Zoology and Biology had been included in the syllabus but that was about all. They were included more as a *mamul* matter than on any special consideration and there it remained. And when Muthiah Chettiar became Pro-Chancellor, Marine Biology became a live issue. Seshayya's presentation of the case was impressive. He caught Muthiah Chettiar's attention and Muthiah Chettiar listened spell-bound as Seshayya laid it on thick. He dwelt on the deep-sea soundings which had been made and the secrets "which the dark, unfathomed caves of the ocean bear." Deep-sea soundings had been made even in Biblical times. Muthiah Chettiar questioned Seshayya and cross-questioned. His imagination caught fire. "Can we discover relics of *Poompuhar*?" He asked. "We can, provided God is on our side", said Seshayya. To Muthiah Chettiar, Science too was high in his list of priorities and he decided to take the necessary steps to start a Marine Biology course in the light of his discussion with Dr. Seshayya.

It was then that Dr. Manavala Ramanujam came on the scene. In 1948 Professor Ruthnaswami had retired from the Vice-Chancellorship, which he had held for six years — two terms — and with distinction. When the question of a successor came up, Muthiah Chettiar thought of Manavala Ramanujam.

They were both of them, city-men, with a life-time of educational affiliations. Manavala Ramanujam had taken a Master's degree in Botany and Zoology from the Madras Christian College, having been a student under Professor Raesheriffs. Muthiah Chettiar had a considerable regard for Manavala Ramanujam. To make a long story short, Manavala Ramanujam was appointed Vice-Chancellor. Muthiah Chettiar had discussed the Marine Biology idea with him and found him responsive. Manavala Ramanujam came to Annamalainagar with the idea simmering in his brain. He discussed the question with Professor Seshayya. They began to look for a centre and a suitable place. They went round and fixed upon Porto Novo as the most suitable. Standing on an estuary with its tidal-creeks and sand-pits, it seemed ideal, and ideal it proved to be. It had a long tradition of scholarship. Generations of scholars had flourished there, a mixed company, Hindus, and Muslims, who wrote easily and effortlessly on religious topics. And more than all, they lived in peace and amity. There was no hint of communal discord, not even in later times, when some parts of the country were torn by communal strife. That tradition of scholarship was a point in favour of Porto Novo. Not that Manavala Ramanujam or Seshayya gave a thought to it. George Saintsbury would have approved of it. He was of the opinion that a sanctuary of learning should have a tradition of scholarship and religious associations. Porto Novo filled the bill. Mosques and *masjids* it had in plenty, temples and wayside shrines, the call of the *muezzes* to prayer, sounding alongside of temple-bells just the place where a House of Learning should be established.

Manavala Ramanujam went into action. He met the President of the District Board of South Arcot, in which district Porto Novo lay. The President was most co-operative. He addressed the Government and recommended the assignment. Government readily agreed and directed the assignment of ten acres of vacant land (*poramboke*, as it was called) and a Travellers' bungalow which had seen better days. Work was taken in hand, the ground was cleared, the derelict bungalow was demolished and a new one put up. Government went further and made an initial grant of twenty thousand rupees. Thereafter, it was smooth-sailing. Other necessary construc-

tions were taken in hand. The sea-god blessed the venture the wind was favourable and continued to be so. A Marine Biology Centre was established and it developed fast and on the right lines, till it came to be recognised as a first-rate Centre, the best of its kind. That was the work of Professor Seshayya, a silent worker, the least of an advertiser that was. He was wedded to his work, he was a bachelor, one of the strictest, and the current joke was that all his love adventures were with the mermaids of the sea. He succeeded all along the line and that was largely due to the encouragement and support of Sir Muthiah Chettiar, who made a hobby of the Centre, visited it, now and again, made helpful suggestions and speeded up the construction. His earlier loves were Tamil and Music, he had set them on their feet and now he began to concentrate on Marine Biology and Marine Biology became an accomplished fact.

Muthiah Chettiar envisaged the future. He looked forward to the day when Marine Biology scholars would dive into the unfathomable sea, explore its secrets and bring to light the inexhaustible resources of food and energy, which it was believed to contain and which would come in like manna from under the sea, when the resources of the earth should prove inadequate for human needs.

1957 was a landmark. Dr. C.D. Deshmukh visited the Centre, and was greatly impressed with its work. He was the live-wire of the University Grants Commission and he was all praise for the Centre. He didn't stop with words and he arranged for liberal grants. The meeting arranged for Dr. Deshmukh's reception was a notable success for Professor Seshayya. His services were the subject of hearty adulation by Dr. Deshmukh and Sir Muthiah Chettiar, who presided on the occasion. The praise showered on Professor Seshayya was very pleasing to Muthiah Chettiar's ears. So pleased was he that, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he got up, took off the magnificent lace-garland with which the Centre had honoured him and put it round Seshayya's neck, observing, "He deserves it more than any of us", a tribute acclaimed with hearty cheers.

Porto Novo was a late-comer in the political history of Madras, which was the name bestowed on that ancient village by the Portugese. It was really a Porto Vecchio. There is a tablet

which records the services of Sir Eyre Coote, who put to rout the forces which Haidar Ali had brought to conquer the country round.

The recent off-shore drilling of oil in Porto Novo basin promises to make Porto Novo even more important in the years to come.

While Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the Founder, functioned as the first Pro-Chancellor of the University from its inception in 1929 till 1948 — a span of nineteen years, his son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar served the University as its Pro-Chancellor for a much longer period — thirty-six years — from 1948 to 1984.

In 1954, the P.E.N. held a conference at Annamalainagar. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India, presided, and the Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurated the Conference. A large number of visitors including some of the outstanding literary figures of the day took part in the proceedings. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar welcomed Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and the Prime Minister. He said it was a great occasion and the sense of greatness was enhanced by the presence of two of India's greatest sons. Both of them were impressed by the great strides which the University had made. The Prime Minister was fascinated by its sylvan surroundings and expressed the hope that the aims and objects of the Founder, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, would be fully realised, and complimented the University on the devoted care which Sir Muthiah Chettiar and Sir C.P. Ramawami Aiyar, the Vice-Chancellor, were bestowing on it.

Silver Jubilee (9-2-1955)

1955 was a vintage year. The Annamalai University had been at work for twenty-five years, years of sustained activity. The University has made progress all along the line and a celebration was called for. The University was good at celebrations and, at the Silver Jubilee, it excelled itself. The decorations were a feast to the eye. There was an unprecedented gathering at Annamalainagar, among whom were some of the highest and mightiest in the land. All Chidambaram was *en fete*. Buntings, flags and decorations met the eye at every turn. And the towns-folk mustered in force at the University as they always did at University celebrations. His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore inaugurated the proceedings. He knew the Chettinad family intimately and had always been in touch with them. He was full of praise for Sir Annamalai Chettiar and his services, his fostering care of the University. He paid a warm tribute to Sir Muthiah Chettiar who was "nobly carrying forward the worthy traditions of his father". His Highness, in accordance with his family tradition, was one of India's ripest scholars soaked in Sanskrit and Hindu philosophy. In his speech, one of the most thoughtful speeches ever heard at the University, he referred to the *Siva-Sakti* concept *Siva-Sakti Samatmanam*, the reconciliation of knowledge and wisdom as the real aim of a House of Learning. That reminded one of T.S. Eliot's wistful lines,

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

Sri Prakasa, Governor of Madras spoke, referred to Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's services to the University and to the public good, one to whom "so much good has been owed by so many".

There had been so many speeches that one was tired of speeches and longed for the lunch for which the table had been laid. The audience cheered Sri Kamaraj lustily and it looked as

if the cheers wouldn't stop. The best speech in a sense was that of Sri K. Kamaraj, the Chief Minister who declared open the Rani Seethai Achi Hostel — in honour of Lady Annamalai Chettiar (Sir Muthiah Chettiar's mother). It was one of the shortest speeches ever made, one of the most sensible. All that he said was:

I declare the Rani Seethai Hostel open.

Messages were received from most of Society's leaders all over the country from Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice President of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, Governor-General of Ceylon, Colombo, Hon'ble Sri K. Kamaraj Nadar, Chief Minister of Madras, Hon'ble Sri C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, Madras and others whose names will make a long list. Everybody of consequence in the country had sent messages of good wishes on the event, expressive of the warmest praise. His Holiness Srila Sri Subramania Desika Gnanasambanda Paramacharya Swamigal of Dharmapuram, His Holiness Srila Sri Subramania Pandarasannithigal of Tiruvaduthurai Mutt, His Holiness Kasivasi Arulnandi Tambiran Avergal — all of them Men of God — were not behind hand. They sent their blessings.

The speeches were worthy of the occasion. Dr. Sir A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar said:

Indeed the greatest service of freedom to mankind is that it unties the hands of reason and sets her free and once free, she breaks the fetters of prescription and prejudice, exposes superstition, fanaticism and intolerance, and forces and helps men to see things as they are. She shows them "The high, white star of truth," There bids them gaze and there aspire.

The Rajah Sahib conveyed to the assembled guests his profound satisfaction and sense of thankfulness. He observed:

This is a memorable occasion. The Annamalai University has reached a stage in its career which justified us in celebrating it, and obtaining for the University the blessings and good wishes of those interested in it, and in the cause of education.

This day, we had the good fortune — the extreme and exceptional good fortune — of having the Silver Jubilee inaugurated by His

Highness the Rajpramukh of Mysore, the Chancellor of the University founded by his Royal House. It was an act of great condescension on his part to come here and inaugurate the Silver Jubilee Celebrations. It is an honour of which the University is deeply sensible, and which we will remember and cherish with gratitude. The Royal House of Mysore has been renowned for its patronage of arts and letters. Under their patronage, poets and dramatists have flourished, musicians have derived inspiration and launched forth into newer and newer flights of song. In architecture, in painting, and indeed, in all the arts which help to brighten the lives of men and women, Mysore has led the way. Besides being the inheritor of a rich tradition, His Highness is himself a scholar of the finest vintage. He has this day spoken to us words of wisdom, worthy of this great occasion, and in keeping with his august position. Truthfully, and with pride, can we say that this day is a *Sudhinam, a nannal*.

His Highness has been pleased to unveil my father's statue. I know it has given the keenest pleasure to all those who knew or knew of my respected father. Apart from the honour which it implies to his memory, it has given me and the members of our family — if you will forgive a personal note — the greatest possible gratification.

Your Highness, I beg to thank you most sincerely for the high honour you have done us by coming here and giving us on this memorable occasion the distinction and grace of your presence and participation.

His Excellency the Chancellor, Shri Sri Prakasa, has been pleased to deliver an inspiring address on this occasion, a further proof of his abiding interest in this University. He has always been ready to do everything in his power to advance the interests of this University which he has so much at heart. We, in this University, are never happier than when we can have his genial personality in our midst. His Excellency is going to preside at the Special Convocation this afternoon and also lay the foundation stone of the "Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Library", both of which functions, we know, he will perform with his accustomed grace and distinction.

Our thanks are due to our popular Chief Minister, Sri Kamaraj Nadar, who has come here at considerable sacrifice of time and convenience, and opened the Rani Seethai Achi Hostel. We all know how keenly interested he is in all measures which promote the common weal. His rich experience of men and affairs his

resolute patriotism and public spirit, have won for him the regard and affection of the people of Madras State. Again, if you will forgive the personal note, we are supremely happy that a hostel named after my mother, whose gentleness and graciousness our family can never forget, has this day been opened by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sri Kamaraj Nadar, to whom I express my grateful thanks.

If I started thanking Dr. Sir. A Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar for his presence here to-day and for the address which he has delivered, I should never stop. Our obligations to him are too long to recapitulate. His interest in the Annamalai University is as old as the University itself. It has been close, constant and inspired by the liveliest ambitions for its usefulness. The University has frequently called on him for advice and assistance, and it has never called on him in vain. He has the healing touch. To afflicted bodies, he has brought relief and remedy; and it is only an extension of that God-given gift that he should be in a position — and use that position — to heal the battered mind, to diagnose our educational maladies and to prescribe the appropriate remedies. His appearance on the dais on this auspicious day has greatly helped to intensify our happiness.

I am afraid I have taken a little longer than anticipated in rendering thanks to our distinguished visitors. But I hope you will bear with me a little longer, while I say a word of thanks to the countless others who have helped this Jubilee to come off. I recall with pride that it was my father, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, who planted the seed which, by the grace of God, has grown into the Annamalai University. He planted the seed, but the seed could not have sprouted and grown into the gracious, shade-giving tree which it is now but for the loving care with which hundreds of others have fed and fostered it.

The University has been specially fortunate in its Vice-Chancellors. It has had a succession of distinguished Vice-Chancellors. The very names — Sir Samuel Runganadhan, whom I am very happy to see on the dais to-day, the Right Hon'ble V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir K.V. Reddy Nayudu, Mr. M. Ruthnaswamy, Dr. S.G. Manavala Ramanujam, Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar and Dr. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar — the very names show that the succession to the Vice-Chancellorship has been almost apostolic. To us who are gathered here, to such of us as have a sense of the past, it is a matter for special gratification that the University's first Vice-Chancellor, Sir Samuel Runganadhan, is here to-day to see the infant which he tended grown into a lusty

youth. Grey-haired and gracious, after a distinguished official career, at home and abroad, he has come here to take part in the celebrations organised and conducted under the auspices of the present Vice-Chancellor Dr. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar who, after a public career of well-nigh unequalled usefulness and distinction for nearly fifty years, is giving to this University the benefit of his ripe wisdom and experience. The University professors and teachers have been of the best and they have been giving the University the best of themselves. They have sent forth into the world countless young men who are serving the country in various fields, here and abroad, and I have no doubt that they will fashion a tradition of cultured and useful living, which will be a beacon to their successors here. I see among those assembled here, several from among the old students and staff, who knew the University when it was started. It is not possible to name them all, as the time is short, but I should very much like to refer to Rao Bahadur N. Viswanatha Aiyar, happily with us now on the dais to-day, who was the University's first Registrar, and who retired not very long ago, after nearly twenty years of faithful and devoted service as Registrar.

On this happy occasion, I wish to express how greatly we are indebted to the Governments — both Central and State — for the continued support which they have been giving to the University in all possible ways, and I take this opportunity to express to them our deep sense of obligation.

We are all very happy to have the Minister for Education Sri C. Subramaniam, in our midst to-day. It was very kind of him to have taken the trouble to come here and give us the pleasure of his presence on this happy occasion. As Minister for Education, Sri C. Subramaniam has been evincing very keen interest in the cause of education and in the welfare of this University. I thank him very sincerely for his presence here to-day.

I must express my special gratitude to Mr. Kanakarathnam and those responsible for offering felicitations on behalf of the students of Ceylon to the University and may I wish the students from Ceylon all good luck in the future.

Once again, Your Highness, Your Excellency, Mr. Chief Minister, Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, I thank you most sincerely and whole-heartedly for all that you have done to make this memorable day truly memorable.

We are also very grateful to all the ladies and gentlemen who have come here on this auspicious day and graced it with their presence.

It has been very kind of them to come; we appreciate their company and presence and on behalf of the University I sincerely thank them all."

There was a special Convocation where degrees *honoris causa* were conferred on His Highness the Maharajah of Mysore, (the Rajpramukh of Mysore), Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir Samuel Runganadhan, Sir A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Thiru S. Somasundara Bharatiar. An Honorary Degree was also conferred on Dr. S. Radhakrishnan *in absentia*.

Then the day became a carnival. A tea-party, a dance performance, fireworks display and other entertainment made the day one to remember.

A few weeks later the Rajah Sahib invested Sir Samuel Runganadhan with a robe of honour (*ponnadai*). Dr. P.V. Cherian, who was acting as Vice-Chancellor and whose association with the University was close and valuable, presided on the occasion and welcomed Sir Samuel Runganadhan. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar considered it was a proud day for him, for Sir Samuel Runganadhan was his guru and as Vice-Chancellor of the University, had guided its infant steps and set it on a career which had been marked by signal success. The University had shown its appreciation by admitting him to the degree of D.Litt (*honoris causa*) and he was happy to be able to add his own personal tribute as well.

Sir Samuel, who was visibly moved, paid his "homage to the revered memory of the great Founder of the University and the way his work was being carried on by his son, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, who was "devoting his great talents and wealth to the furthering of the University's aims and objects." He noticed with extreme gratification the great strides which the University had been making.

During the Pro-Chancellorship of Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, the University expanded in many directions. The Faculties of Education, Fine Arts, Agriculture and Law have been instituted in the years 1953, 1954, 1951, 1978 respectively. The Dental College scheme was put through as part of the plan envisaged in 1980 for the early inauguration of the Faculty of Medicine. 1979-80 was the first year of Correspondence

Courses. These have already about 6,500 students on their rolls and they promise to be an ever-expanding source of the spread of knowledge and culture. It is again during the Pro-Chancellorship of Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar that the two University Grants Commission Advanced Centres of Study — Marine Biology and Linguistics (to which a detailed reference is being made later), came into being. The Engineering and Technology Department has developed into a Post-Graduate Centre, and the experiments in the use of Solar Energy have already won national recognition. The University has thus witnessed an all-round expansion under his stewardship as Pro-Chancellor.

During the twenty-five years after the Silver Jubilee Celebrations, a number of buildings have come up largely with grants made by the University Grants Commission., the State Government and the University. The list is impressive and long. Of these special mention may be made of the following:

1. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Library Building
2. Sir R.K. Shanmukham Chettiar Building
3. Linguistics Building
4. New Arts and Science Block
5. Three Year Degree Course Building
6. Day Scholars' Building
7. Student's Study Centre
8. New Post-Graduate Building
9. New Engineering Block
10. Chemical Engineering Block
11. S.M. Library
12. Marine Biological Station at Porto Novo
13. Post Graduate Hostel
14. New Women Students' Hostel for Post Graduates
15. Agriculture Faculty Building.
16. Agriculture Hostel
17. Research Scholars' Hostel
18. New Hostel for Engineering Students.
19. Rani Meyyammai Hostel
20. Open Air Theatre
21. New Education Faculty Building
22. Central Instrumentation Laboratory Building

23. New Guest House
24. Staff Club-cum-Guest House
25. Kalai Arangam
26. Additional quarters for staff

The Library building named after Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar is a spacious one, constructed under the personal guidance of the Pro-Chancellor. It provides ample facilities for members of the staff and students to sit down and read and store themselves with that abundance of knowledge which a Library alone can give. The Pro-Chancellor's wish is that the halls of the Library and the class rooms of the University should become endowed with those rich associations of Scholarship which the great halls of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge possess. He is very keen that the University should become the nerve centre of modern research in Tamil and other languages, in the Social Sciences, in Engineering and Technology, in Agriculture, in Tamil Music and in Marine Biology and Linguistics. Annamalai University, he has often said, is not merely a teaching or examining body. It is and should be the home of research. It is the place where new horizons of thought enlarge from time to time.

The Muthiah Polytechnic situated in Annamalainagar was started in the year 1958, and the Pro-Chancellor had been greatly interested in its progress. The same is true of the Annamalai Polytechnic in Chettinad, also started by Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar. They remind us that while the Pro-Chancellor had been keen on the development of the University at the highest level, he was equally keen that the knowledge imparted in the Polytechnics should enable young men and women to qualify themselves for professions of a high utility value.

23. New Guest House
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mind, and there was hardly any subject on which he could not throw an informing beam of light. It was his life's ambition that he should make the stores of learning, garnered through the ages, available to the people of Tamilnadu; and this desire found its most significant expression in the founding of this University. He believed, as all people of his time did, that a good knowledge of English is indispensable in the modern world. He himself had acquired a considerable mastery of the language, which he spoke with ease and precision.

His ambition was that the younger generation of Tamil Nadu should realise the richness of their inheritance, alongside of the gifts which we had received from the West. I may, in parenthesis, mention, that it is an attitude which is as valid today as it was in his time. His elder brother, Diwan Bahadur Ramaswamy Chettiar, had already established a High School at Chidambaram, named after him; and the school is going strong. My father went one step further. He decided to establish a college at Chidambaram, an obvious choice because of its association with the name of Lord Nataraja. He selected the eastern part of the town and established the Sri Meenakshi College and followed it up with other colleges with the set purpose of constituting them all into a unitary university. In less than ten years, the Annamalai University came into being. In this noble task, he had the generous support of the then Government of Madras. The necessary legislation was passed at a single sitting of the Madras Legislative Council; and it is with a thrill of joy that I recall the delight and enthusiasm with which all the people of Tamilnadu hailed the birth of this residential unitary University in 1929.

My father became its Pro-Chancellor. He was particular that the University should not be a mere replica of the existing universities. After careful consideration he decided to break some new ground.

The emphasis had all along been on English, and that was good as far as it went. The existing pattern of education had produced a number of great men and women deeply learned in the literature and thought of the West. But it was clear that they were little more than a handful. My father was convinced that greater importance should be given to Tamil studies than they

had been receiving. The people of Tamil Nadu had come to realise once again the richness of Tamil literature dating back to the Sangam days and coming down to the present. Their re-awakened interest in it, it should be admitted, was quickened by the researches of Western scholars like Bishop Caldwell, the Rev. G.U. Pope and Father Beschi—affectionately known as Viramamunivar — the author of *Thempavani* (தேம்பாவணி) the life of Jesus Christ. Tamil writings from the *Tolkappiam* down to the present day cover a period over twenty centuries. They reveal a way of life which was full, varied and ethically sound and form a rich and permanent legacy. Epic poetry like Kamban's and the moving precepts enshrined in the *Tirukkural*, existed alongside of the homely verses of the poetess, Auvayyar, and ballads which enshrine the folklore of the people of Tamilnadu. They had long been neglected, but luckily they had not been altogether forgotten. Much of them had been lovingly preserved in mutts and monasteries or in the lofts and attics of private homes.

My father shared that re-awakened interest in Tamil to the full. He regarded it as a sacred duty to redeem its rich literature from the obscurity into which it had faded, and secure for it its rightful place in the scheme of studies. This was one of the objects with which he founded this University. His decision was hailed with enthusiasm on all hands. It is a well-known fact that the University has been having, during these forty-five years, renowned scholars on its staff, who spared no pains to make it a model of its kind and who have been working in a spirit of dedication. Those who were in charge of Tamil Studies were scholars of very great repute.

Research in Tamil Literature and in Tamil Music was given special importance in the University and has been in very competent hands. I may mention with special satisfaction the variorum edition of *Kambaramayanam* and other classics which constitute the University's outstanding research work in Tamil. Thanks to the generous endowment of the State Government, our great classic *Tirukkural* has also been made a subject of special research. This emphasis on research work represents a departure from the conventional curricula of college in the State. They are the expression of the lofty idealism of my father translated into action.

The foregoing observations should not be interpreted to imply that the Founder's interest was only in the past or was confined to the study of Tamil. He was alive to the part English had played in the education of our youth. It is recognised on all hands that English is a language with international status. It is the window to the knowledge of the West. Apart from its great literature, it is the only key in our hands to the rapidly increasing knowledge in Science and Technology. Proper encouragement is being given to the advanced study of English in this University. This is essential for the younger generation to enable them to play a significant role in the multi-sided development of our country.

In the past, the emphasis was on the Humanities. Science and Technology did not receive proper emphasis in our educational curriculum. My father's visit to Europe in the spring of 1935 (his second visit to the Continent) was a revelation to him of the tremendous advance in Science and Technology that had been made there and of their important role in modern life. My father realised that our future lay in the study of Science and Technology and that it was up to the Government, public bodies, colleges and universities to go all out for advanced scientific and technical education. The University Authorities shared his views. An Engineering College was started here and it is gratifying to note that, owing to a number of favourable factors, the Engineering College and the Department of Technology have been doing excellent work. Every country which wishes to develop should do everything to promote the cause of technical education. Auvayyar's saying:

கற்றது கைமண்ணளவு கல்லாததுல களவென்று
உற்ற கலைமடந்தை ஒதுகிறாள்.

which may be rendered in English as 'What we have learnt is but as a handful of earth what we have not learnt is as wide as the world' is as true of Technology and Science as of the Humanities, if not truer. In this connection I am reminded of the famous observation by Sir Issac Newton:

To myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore and diverting myself by now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before me.

We should not be content with old-time syllabuses. They need overhauling; they should comprise technical studies covering the entire field of industry. We need a regular army of trained personnel at various levels. The students of the present day are not in any way inferior to those of a generation or two ago. There are a good number of brilliant students among them who can profit by ample opportunities for research in universities and specialised institutions: and they should be encouraged.

This University has been very fortunate in having had a succession of distinguished Vice-Chancellors who have been giving their best to the University. They had attained eminence in more fields than one. Our present Vice-Chancellor Dr. S.P. Adinarayan, and eminent scholar, has been associated with this University for nearly two decades, and I am glad that he has been guiding the University wisely these years. I also wish to express my appreciation of the splendid work that is being done by our enthusiastic and talented members of the teaching staff.

Education has many facets and makes increasing demands as consequence of rapidly changing social values. Constant vigilance is required to maintain standards in education and at the highest level of efficiency. There should be no hustling into hastily-devised schemes. The personal touch between the teacher and the taught is of paramount importance, and every attempt should be made to foster the ideal relationship. In organising courses of studies, educational experts have emphasised the need for taking into consideration the environmental and other influence to which students are subjected. There should be no wastage of abilities and maximum facilities should be made available to students.

We are fast developing into a highly industrial society and instruction in schools and colleges and universities should be geared to it. Our Marine Biological station at Porto Novo requires special mention. It is one of the very few centres of its kind in the whole of India. It is a unique institution. We cannot also forget the very good work that is being done in the Agricultural College.

We are proud that the Annamalai University has become an important centre where research and training for research

are pursued in various departments. I am looking forward in the years to come to even more research work of a very high order in all branches of learning—the Humanities, the pure Sciences, like Engineering and Technology, Agriculture and Marine Biology.

This University has been receiving every kind of support from the State Government from the time of its inception. The all-round expansion of this University, the starting of the faculties of Agriculture, Marine Biology, Linguistics and other courses — and the construction of imposing buildings therefore and the increased laboratory and library equipment — have been made possible by the generous grant which the University has been receiving from the State and Central Governments and from the University Grants Commission. It is the care and interest of the people which matters, and the people of Tamil Nadu have been showing their affection for the University by considering it as a prized possession of theirs.

I congratulate the Graduates who have taken their degrees at today's convocation. They have earned them by their hard work. A unitary residential University, like the Annamalai University, offers many facilities for study and for formation of life-long friendships. It is specially conducive to the growth and development of the spirit of affection and reverence for their *Alma Mater*. The training that they have received here and the atmosphere in which they have lived have, I am sure, equipped them adequately to make their mark in life. In this highly competitive world, creative ability, initiative and hard work will be recognised and rewarded. The country is being rapidly industrialised, and there will be greater employment opportunities than ever before.

I wish you to remember that Time once lost can never be regained, or, for that matter opportunities neglected. Allow me therefore, to plead with you — Graduates of the year — in all sincerity and affection, to make the best of your opportunities and equip yourself in body, mind and soul, to face the stress and strain of life, and play your part manfully. May I remind you in this connection of the following couplet from the *Tirukkural*:

தொட்டனைத் தூறும் மணற்கேணி மாந்தர்க்குக்
கற்றனைத் தூறும் அறிவு.

Your ideal should be the harmonious development of body, mind and soul, and that is a lesson which our culture emphasises.

Many of the alumni of this University have made their mark at the state, national and international levels, and the University is justly proud of them. The Graduates who have taken their degrees to-day have joined this noble band. I am confident that they will prove worthy of their great *Alma Mater*. I wish all the new Graduates a bright and glorious future. The University will always be proud of them and cherish their association with it, during all these years and in the years to come, with joy and pride."

CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

Linguistics

The Annamalai University celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1955, with great enthusiasm and it brought benefits by no means negligible. The University Grants Commission gave a grant of three lakhs of rupees to help to start a Research-oriented programme for Language Studies. The Pro-Chancellor, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, suggested the constitution of a committee of experts to formulate a scheme of Language Studies. The Committee set to work and recommended the creation of a Department of Comparative Philology with special reference to Dravidian Languages. The recommendation was accepted and, in 1956, the Department of Comparative Philology came into being, Muthiah Chettiar's mounting interest in the *technique* of language studies was an unfailing inspiration. T.P. Minakshisundaram Pillai, who was the Professor of Tamil, was put in charge of the new Department. The Department prospered and expanded its activities. In 1959, a two-year M.A. Degree course was introduced and a Post-Graduate Degree and a Diploma course in Linguistics and Diploma course in Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu. When Professor Minakshisundaram Pillai left the University on another assignment, Sir Muthiah Chettiar felt that a younger man with a scholarly turn should be put in charge of the Department. Dr. S. Agesthalingom Pillai was appointed Professor and that was in 1967.

Under his management the Department flourished. The University Grants Commission did not stop with its initial donation. It helped, with money, a grant to build a fine library, well-stocked with books and journals. The Department went from strength to strength under the Colombo Plan and the Commonwealth Educational Co-operation Programme in 1967. Some of the University's teachers were sent to the United Kingdom for training for one year each. Experts in Linguistics from the United Kingdom visited the department which has

benefited thereby the staff and Research Scholars. So far, the Department has conducted Twenty-Eight Seminars and six Summer Courses in Linguistics. The Department is undeniably a regular bee-hive of purposeful activity.

The Department has the following projects in hand.

1. A Comprehensive Grammar of Modern Tamil.
2. A Grammar of Modern Tamil.
3. A Handbook of Dravidian Languages.
4. Study of Tamil Dialects and Language Development.
5. Study of Dravidian Tribal Languages in India.
6. Socio-Linguistic Survey of Tamil Nadu.
7. Index Verborum of Sangam Literature.

The Department is also concentrating on the following areas of study and research; Generative Syntax & Transformational Grammar, Language Planning & Language Development, Contrastive Analysis of various languages, Analysis of various tribal & non-tribal languages & Dialects, Phonetic & Phonological studies, Semantic & Lexical studies, Socio-Linguistic Surveys, Mathematical linguistics, Psycho-linguistics, Adult Education, Language Teaching Methods and Translation. Currently, the Department has introduced a two year Post M.A. Diploma Course in (i) Language Planning (ii) Lexicography and (iii) Translation. The subjects have a sweep which defy the uninstructed reader.

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was keenly interested in the development and progress of the Linguistics Department. He was gratified to see the significant growth of the Department and the enormous volume of research output by way of research degrees, papers and books.

The best asset of the Department may be Professor Agesthialingom Pillai, who is wholly devoted to his subject and his Department, and has spared no pains to make his Department one of the best of its kind. He and his staff make an excellent team. They owe an immense deal to Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar who was in the closest touch with the Department, as Professor Agesthialingom Pillai is not tired of emphasising.

CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

Educational Charities

Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's interest in educational problems dates from his Mayoralty of the Madras Corporation and his Ministership in charge of Education in 1936-37 — particularly Elementary Education and the well-being of the weaker sections of society. The Pachaiyappa Charities, Sri Meenakshi College and later, the Annamalai University drew largely on his instinctive faith in the cause of Secondary Education and University Education. He was an active member of the Syndicate of the Madras University in the years 1940-46, a member of the Board of Management of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras in the years 1960-65. In the years 1952-57, when he represented the Tirupathur Constituency in the Madras Legislative Assembly, he succeeded in securing the Government's approval to the opening of three High Schools in the area besides a separate High School for girls. In order to give the benefit of higher Secondary Education to the Nagarathar girls who did not have adequate opportunities for it, the Rajah Sahib organised scholarships and other financial assistance on a very substantial scale.

Muthiah Chettiar had inherited a great family tradition in Educational Charities. Upon the death of his brother, Ramaswamy Chettiar, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar had taken over the management of the Schools founded at Chidambaram by Ramaswamy Chettiar and when Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar passed away in June 1948, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar assumed charge of the management of the various schools established by his uncle Ramaswamy Chettiar.

The Gandhi Nagar Education Society had been founded in 1954 by Mr. V. Natarajan and Mr. M.P. Damodaran. Mr. Damodaran had been a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly between 1937 and 1952 and had been Parliamentary Secretary in the Congress Ministry under Mr. K. Kamaraj's

leadership. He was closely associated with the development of the Annamalai University which he served as a member of the Syndicate between 1953 and 1976 and he had acted twice as the Vice-Chancellor of the University. He was an intimate friend of Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar and his passing away in 1976 was a great personal loss to the Rajah Sahib. When the Gandhi Nagar Education Society ran into financial strains in 1956, Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was approached for help and he pulled it out of its difficulties. The Rajah Sahib became the Chief Patron of the Society and made a handsome donation of Rs. 35,000/- for its development. In later years, he made further donations, totalling upto Rs. 50,000/-. The Society has been managing the following institutions:

1. Rani Meyyammai Primary School, Gandhinagar, Madras-20 (1950-1956).
2. Rajah Annamalaipuram Primary School West, Madras-28 (1956).
3. Rajah Annamalaipuram Primary School East, Madras-20 (1956).
4. Rani Meyyammai Elementary School, Puliur, (Near Karur) (June 1972).
5. Rani Meyyammai Nursery School, Quarry (Near Puliur).
6. Rani Meyyammai Kindergarten School, Annamalainagar (1973).
7. Veda Patasala at Chidambaram.
8. Veda Patasala at Karur.
9. Rani Meyyammai Hostel, Madras (1976).

The newly built auditorium in Madras named Rani Seethai Hall (after his mother) and the Tamil, Sanskrit and other Indian Languages Research Institute, Madras which was started in 1976 bear ample testimony to Rajah Muthiah Chettiar's abiding interest in the growth of our ancient culture and development of research in the languages. This Institute has a valuable Research Library with nearly Rs. 20,000/- worth rare books and he has provided for it an endowment which would fetch it a steady income of Rs. 20,000/- per year.

The following schools were run by Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar:

1. Ramaswami Chettiar Elementary School, Chidambaram.
2. Sri Meenakshi Elementary School, Annamalainagar.
3. Ramaswami Chettiar Higher Secondary School, Chidambaram (1916).
4. Rani Seethai Achi Higher Secondary School, Annamalai Nagar (1945).
5. Rajah Muthiah Higher Secondary School, Rajah Annamalaipuram, Madras-28 (1957).
6. Rani Meyyammai Girls' Higher Secondary School, Rajah Annamalaipuram, Madras-28 (1961).
7. Kumara Rajah Muthiah High School, Adyar, Madras-20 (1950).
8. Rani Meyyammai High School, Gandhi Nagar, Madras (1971).
9. Rani Meyyammai High School, Puliur (1981).
10. Rani Meyyammai Matriculation School, Puliur.

There are twelve Charitable Trusts which have functioned under Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar's fostering care in order to help poor students through a college course:

Rajah Annamalai Chettiar Memorial Trust
Rajah Annamalai Chettiar Trust
Rajah Muthiah Charitable and Education Trust
Nattukkottai Nagarathar Trust
The Karur Dharmam Trust
V.S.Trust
Nagarathar Federation
Rani Meyyammai Charitable Trust
Chettinad Charitable Trust
Willingdon Charitable Trust
The Tamil Nadu Education Trust
Indian Culture and Research Trust.

The Tamil Nadu Education Trust offers scholarships to students in B.Sc., M.Sc., M.B.B.S. classes. Nearly one hundred students are benefitted by these Trusts.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar was very much in request, whenever celebrations of educational institutions were held. He could

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

The Faculty of Medicine

Much of Sir Muthiah Chettiar's spare time — and he had not much of it — was spent on University musings. The University, as was well-known, was always in his thoughts and, even while otherwise engaged, if an idea occurred to him relevant to the University, he would make a mental note of it and tackle it the moment he was free.

Latterly he had been feeling that the University neighbourhood was lacking in adequate medical relief. The University had its own hospital — well-staffed and well equipped, but that was confined to the University. Chidambaram Town and the nearby villages and the South Arcot District were lacking in adequate medical facilities. There were able doctors at Chidambaram, they hardly sufficed, a great deal more was needed. Sir Muthiah Chettiar discussed the position with his friends, with the Vice-Chancellor and other University authorities and they agreed with him.

Sir Muthiah's mind swung into activity. How and when to bring the idea within the range of practical politics was the question. An idea occurred to him. The University's Golden Jubilee was near at hand. That would provide the necessary opportunity. There were bound to be celebrations, memorials, new foundations and endowments, just what was needed.

The best memorial would be to extend and enlarge the University activities by making it the centre of advanced teaching of medicine in all its departments or as many of them as was practicable, the idea was welcomed on all hands. The first thing to do was to find wherewithal for the project. And funds were rarely in short supply, especially when the University needed them.

Sir Muthiah Chettiar got down to brass-tacks. The Vice-Chancellor and his staff set to work. The relevant data were collected and a scheme was drafted. Dr. R. Nanjunda Rao, a

physician of experience and a member of the Syndicate was highly co-operative and fertile in ideas. And thus, sooner than anticipated, a scheme of work was agreed upon and work commenced.

Dental relief was the most pressing problem. Aching teeth were quite common. A visitor appeared and that was Dr. Ramaswami who had a world of experience in the Pudukkottai hospital — with a long tradition of first-rate medical assistance. Muthiah Chettiar's discussion with Dr. Ramaswami confirmed him in the practicability of relief. A Dental College was established in 1979. It was called the 'Rajah Muthiah Dental College' — as part of the Faculty of Medicine. A four-year course was decided on for the Bachelor of Dental Surgery course. It set to work, it prospered. Commissions of inspection came, saw things for themselves, which was granted. The Government was very helpful.

The next step was the foundation of a department of Pharmacy. One was instituted in 1982. It was followed by the institution, in 1984, of a Department of Nursing, a four-year course and also a diploma course in Pharmacy. The department was a great attraction and men and women students flocked for admission. About a third of the students are women.

Then came the second phase. A college of medicine including a four-and-a-half year course in Surgery was set up at a formal function on 5th August 1985. That was named, "The Rajah Muthiah Medical College" after Sir Muthiah Chettiar "to whose inspiration the Rajah Muthiah Institute of Health Sciences owes its genesis," as gratefully acknowledged by the University in the attractive Brochure issued by it. The Brochure records with great appreciation the practical interest evinced by the present Pro-Chancellor, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy and Professor S.V. Chittibabu, the Vice-Chancellor. A huge building has been planned and it is proposed to be constructed in an extensive area to the north of the present campus of the Annamalai University and one can confidently forecast a splendid future for it. One can mentally visualise it as a scene of unrelenting activity on the part of competent Professors disseminating medical learning and of students and more students all avid for knowledge.

The Department has started well and, if a good launch is half the voyage, one may be sure that the Department will reach port, sail and sail again. A competent and adequate staff is bound to be appointed. The infant Department has been placed under the charge of one whose selection is unexceptionable. Dr. R. Nanjunda Rao has everything in his favour. An untarnished medical ancestry, a world of experience and the healing touch. His grandfather was a well-known and popular physician in Mylapore, in the late nineties and the early years of the present century. His father was the efficient and popular Chief Medical Officer of the Pudukkottai State. Dr. Nanjunda Rao himself has held responsible posts under the Government of Madras and is respected as a distinguished physician and surgeon. He may be depended upon to nurse the infant Department till it reaches the top rung of the ladder. A compact advisory Board consisting of experienced physicians and surgeons has been set up by the University to develop the hospitals projects and facilities for Medical Education.

It is a thousand pities that the far-seeing man who conceived the idea, gave it life and shape, is not alive to see its growth. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, who, though within sight of his eightieth year, seemed in his accustomed health, suddenly fell ill and, in spite of the best treatment, breathed his last on 12th May 1984. He was an unusally gifted patron of learning which it was his unflagging interest to maintain at the highest level. However, that was not to be. But his memory will be cherished by the present generation and generations to come. One hopes, however, that his spirit, like Plato's Shades, will be hovering over the college he had set his heart upon and take it forward in the endless march of medical science.

CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

Envoi

And so, we come to the end of the story. The well-graced actor has left the stage. The tumult and cheering are over. What we are left with are only memories, unforgettable memories. Muthiah Chettiar lived a good and full life and wrought unceasingly, not only for his day but for all time to come, unceasingly, not only for his day but for all time to come, providing for the dissemination of knowledge from more to more. University will go on for ever, perennially young, carrying on the torch of knowledge, glowing brighter and brighter. Muthiah Chettiar is entitled to our gratitude and praise. He laboured unremittingly, assisted by a loyal band of fellow-workers — teachers and staff of the Annamalai University, devoted men and women who served in the same cause. As the poet has sung, let us

“Bless and praise famous men
For their work continueth
And their work continueth
Broad and deep continueth
Great beyond their knowing.”

Not the least among the world's famous men was Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad. Worthy men will inherit the valuable legacy he has left. His son, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, who has succeeded him as the Pro-Chancellor of the Annamalai University has already given proof of his resolve to build on the past and to spare no pains to carry the University forward in the pursuit of learning. Newer and newer discoveries are made every day and every hour of the day and it is up to the University to keep pace with it and to make the world better and better. As the famous German poet, Schiller has sung in his poem, *Hoffnung* (Hope)

Die Welt ist alt and wird wieder jung
Doch der Mensch hofft immer Verbesserung.

(The world is old and will again be young. Nevertheless man
always hopes for things to be better and better.)

On that note of hope this work of grateful remembrance may
end.



APPENDICES

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF

Rajah Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar of Chettinad

Born	... 5-8-1905
High School, Tiruchirappalli	.. 1915 to 1920
Married on	... 2-2-1917
Graduated, Presidency College	... 1924
Visit to Burma	... 1925
Visit to Ceylon	... 1928
Trustee, Pachaiyappa's Trust Board	1928 to 1963
Director, Indian Bank	... 1928 to 1932
Member, Banking Enquiry Commission	... 1929
Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah born	... 5-9-1929
Member, Corporation of Madras	... 1929 to 1935
M.L.C.	... 1929-36
Second Son M.A.M. Ramaswamy born	30-9-1931
Chief Whip, Justice Party	... 1931
Member, Franchise Commission	... 1931
M.L.A., Madras	... 1937 to 1962
President, Corporation of Madras	... 1932
First Mayor of Madras	... 1933-34
Director, Imperial Bank of India	... 1932-1956
Mayor, Corporation of Madras	... 1935-1936
(Second Term)	
Minister for Education (Justice Party)	... 1936-1937
Pro-Chancellor, Madras University	... 1936-1937
Minister — L.S.G. and H.R.E. (Interim Ministry)	1937
Leader of the Opposition, Madras Legislative Assembly	1937-1939
President, South India Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Madras	1940
Member, Syndicate of Madras University	1940-1946
Knighted	... 1941
Member, National Defence Council	... 1941-1946

President, Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry.	1943-1944
Member, Constituent Assembly of India	1946-1950
Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar passes away	1948
Pro-Chancellor, Annamalai University	1948-1984
Director, HARVEYS	1948 onwards
President, Nattukottai Nagarathar Association.	1948 onwards
Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah's Wedding	9-2-1949
M.A.M. Ramaswamy's Wedding	6-9-1951
Rajah Annamalai Manram, Madras	1952-53
Tirupattur Constituency M.L.A. Election	1952
Trustee, City Improvement Trust	1955-63
Doctorate conferred by Annamalai University	9-2-1955
Patron, Gandhinagar Education Society	1955
Founded Rani Meyyammai High School	1955
Founded Rajah Muthiah High School	1956
Founded Annamalai Polytechnic	1956
Director and Chairman, Indian Bank Ltd	1956-69
Dr Arnold Toynbee visits Annalamai University	1957
M.L.A. Karaikudi Constituency	1957
Dr. C.D. Deshmukh opens the Marine Biology Station at Porto Novo	1957
Linguistics Department	1957
Engineering and Technology Dept.	1957
Vice President, Tamil Isai Sangam	1958
Muthiah Polytechnic at Annamalai University	1958
Member, Technical Education Committee, New Delhi	1960
Founded Girls High School, Rajah Annamalaipuram.	1960
Chairman, Madura Mills	1960
Hony. Member, Rotary, Madras	1960
Visit to Western countries	1961-62

Audience with the Pope at Vatican	May 1962
Chairman, Chettinad Cement Corporation Ltd.	1962
Visit to Japan	1962
Governor, Indian Institute of Technology	1963
Director, Binnys	1963
M.L.C.	1963
61st Birthday Celebrations	2-8-1965
Kumara Rajah M.A.M. Muthiah passes away	21-1-1970
Rani Meyyammai Achi passes away	11-3-1970
M.A.M. Ramaswamy Sheriff of Madras	1970
Padma Bhushan conferred by Government of India	1973
Rajah Muthiah Manram, Madurai inaugurated	1974
Business Administration and Faculty of Law	1978
'Tamil Isai Kavalari' title conferred by Hon. Dr. M.G. Ramachandran, Chief Minister of Tamilnadu.	29-4-1979
Faculty of Medicine & Dental Wing	1979
M.L.C.	... 1980-1983
Hon. Doctorate by New York World University	12-5-1982
Hon. D.Litt. conferred by Madras University	20th Sept.1983
Sir M.A. Muthiah Chettiar passes away	12th May 1984

81st BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF
SECOND FOUNDER PRO-CHANCELLOR

**Rajah Muthiah Medical College
Launched**

The starting of the Rajah Muthiah Medical College as part of the Rajah Muthiah Institute of Health Sciences marked the 81st Birthday Celebrations of the Second Founder-Pro-Chancellor Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar on 5th August 1985. The Celebrations were inaugurated at the Kalaivanar Arangam, Madras, by the Hon'ble Minister for Finance Dr. V.R. Nedunchezian with the blessings of the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G. Ramachandran.

A Dream Fulfilled

Welcoming a large gathering present on the occasion, Dr. M.A.M. Ramaswamy, Pro-Chancellor, said that he was happy that his father's ambition of creating a full-fledged Medical Faculty in Annamalai University had been fulfilled with the inauguration of the Rajah Muthiah Medical College. The entire project would cost around Rs.20 crores. A 750-bed hospital would be constructed in about five years' time. Other requirements such as hostels, stadium, staff-quarters etc., too would be given the utmost priority by the University. The Pro-Chancellor was quite confident that the college would get the Indian Medical Council's recognition soon.

A Fitting Monument

The elder statesman and octogenerian Dr. M.P. Sivagnanam, Chairman of the Legislative Council, presiding over the celebrations said that the launching of an Institute of Health Sciences on the 81st birth anniversary of Dr. Rajah Sir

Muthiah Chettiar was a fitting tribute to the Rajah's great services to the cause of higher education in the State of Tamil Nadu. He also referred to the services rendered by the Rajah Saheb for the promotion of Tamil Isai, which would ever be remembered with gratitude by the people of Tamil Nadu.

Rajah's Services Praised

Releasing the Commemoration Volume brought out on the occasion the Hon'ble Finance Minister, Dr. V.R. Nedunchezian said that Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar was a multi-faceted personality interested in Banking, Industry, Music and Education. His 36 year tenure as a member of the State Legislative Assembly and Council had been invaluable for the progress of the State. He congratulated the Vice-Chancellor and Editorial Committee on bringing out an excellent volume giving an account of the Rajah's achievements in many fields.

No Dilution of Standards

The Minister also stated that the starting of self-financing medical colleges in the state would not dilute educational standards. As students who had scored a minimum of 70% marks in the subjects concerned alone were to be admitted in all such institutions there would not be any fall in the standards. These institutions would afford opportunities to a larger number of students to get medical education. A fixed percentage of seats would also be reserved in them for meritorious but poor students.

Proper Planning at Every Stage

Presenting a report on the occasion, Prof. S.V. Chittibabu, Vice-Chancellor, stated that the foundation for a full-fledged Medical Faculty had already been laid in the University with the starting of a Dental Science College, an Institute of Pharmaceutical Technology and a Department of Nursing. He added: "While the Medical College is being accommodated in a spacious building equipped with all facilities, a 750-bed hospital has been planned with an outlay of Rs. 15 crores. Excellent

residential facilities are proposed to be provided for the staff and students, a project costing another Rs. 25 crores. The University has taken pains to see that things are done strictly according to the conditions laid down by the Medical Council of India. Well-qualified and properly trained staff have been selected to man the various departments under a highly competent Principal. Students from all over India and from abroad are being taken and the campus will exude an air of cosmopolitanism which will help build a broad outlook among the student community.

Portrait Unveiled

Thiru C. Aranganayakam, the Hon'ble Minister for Education, who unveiled a portrait of Dr. Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar, said that, if private medical colleges were useful to society, there was nothing wrong in starting them. He added that the starting of privately managed colleges were permitted by the Government only with a view to catering to the needs of all sections of the society. It would be meaningless to raise the question as to who would provide employment to those passing out of these newly-started institutions. If things were viewed in that perspective, they might have to close down all educational institutions slowly and in a phased manner.

Rural Dental Services Inaugurated

The Health Minister Dr. H.V. Hande who inaugurated the Mobile Rural Dental services said it was a laudable effort on the part of the young Dental College of the University. Referring to the controversy about the starting of medical colleges in the private sector, he said that when a number of self-financing medical colleges were allowed to function in other States, it would be discriminatory and unreasonable not to allow them to function in Tamil Nadu. From the efficient way in which the Annamalai University's Dental College was being run, he had no doubt that the new medical college too, started by it, would do well.

Benefits of a 750-Bed Hospital

Speaking on the occasion, the Hon'ble Minister for Industries Thiru K. Rajaram, appealed to the people not to philosophise on the propriety of starting such private medical colleges. The Rajah Muthiah Medical College would make available a 750-bed hospital to the backward district of South Arcot. He added that during his visits abroad the Tamil population settled there for centuries had expressed their desire to send their wards to Tamilnadu for higher studies since they wanted their children to inherit the rich Tamil culture. Institutions of this kind would provide them an opportunity to get proper education in an environment desired by their parents. The Minister asked the managements of all colleges not to consider the marks alone as the criteria for admission but to take into account the candidates' interest in and aptitude for learning the subjects concerned.

Expert Committee Offers Technical Advice

It may be recalled that an expert committee with senior Professors like Dr. M. Natarajan, Dr. A. Venugopal, Dr. B. Ramamurthy, Dr. (Mrs) Lalitha Kameswaran, Director of Medical Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, as members, and Dr. S. Gnanadesigan, formerly the Director of Medical Education, Tamil Nadu, as Advisor, has been giving technical advice to the University at every stage on matters pertaining to the starting of the Rajah Muthiah Institute of Health Sciences.

Principal Appointed

Dr. R. Nanjunda Rao who worked as a honorary Professor of Surgery for more than three decades has been appointed principal of the Rajah Muthiah Medical College. An active member of several academic and professional bodies and associations he was the Head of a Surgical Unit from 1961 to 1983. He has won several awards and certificates for his meritorious rural medical services. He will be assisted by a team of well-trained personnel appointed recently to man various departments like physiology, bio-chemistry, anatomy etc.

(From AU Newsletter)

ராஜா முத்தையா மருத்துவக் கல்லூரித் தொடக்க விழா

துணைவேந்தரின் அறிக்கை

விழாத்தலைவர் சிலம்புச் செல்வர் மாண்புமிகு ம.பொ.சி. அவர்களே, தமிழக நிதி அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு டாக்டர் நாவலர் அவர்களே, தமிழகச் செய்தித் துறை, அறநிலையத் துறை அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு திரு. இராம. வீரப்பன் அவர்களே, தமிழகக் கல்வி அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு அரங்க நாயகம் அவர்களே, தொழில் துறை அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு ராஜாராம் அவர்களே, தொழில் அதிபர் திரு. சித்திரா நாராயணசாமி அவர்களே, எங்களுடைய இதயக் கனியாம் இணைவேந்தர் டாக்டர் எம். ஏ. எம். அவர்களே, பெரியவர் வைத்திய சுப்பிரமணியம் அவர்களே, பேராசிரியர் ஆர். திருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி அவர்களே, முத்தமிழ்க் காவலர் கி.ஆ.பெ. அவர்களே, அறப்பணிச் செல்வர் திரு. நா. மகாலிங்கம் அவர்களே, மக்கள் நல்வாழ்வுத்துறை அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு ஹண்டே அவர்களே, திரு சமத் அவர்களே, பெரியவர் வழக்கறிஞர் நாகராஜ ஐயர் அவர்களே, திரு. இராகவானந்தம் அவர்களே, மரியாதைக் குரிய குமார ராணி அவர்களே, திருமதி சிகப்பி ராமசாமி அவர்களே, மற்றும் செட்டி நாட்டுக் குடும்பத்தைச் சார்ந்த அனைத்துப் பெரியோர்களே, மேடையில் அமர்ந்துள்ள அன்பர்களே, இவண் குழுமியுள்ள பெரியோர்களே, தாய்மார்களே,

எனக்கு இடப்பட்டிருக்கின்ற பணி இன்று தொடங்கப் பெற்றுள்ள, ராஜா முத்தையா மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியைப் பற்றிய ஓர் அறிக்கையாகும். அதற்கு முன்பு ஒரு சில வார்த்தைகள், நம் முடைய, மரியாதைக்குரிய டாக்டர் முத்தைய வேள் அவர்களைப் பற்றி நான் சொல்லக் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கின்றேன். ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகம் குன்றுபோலவே பெருமை கொண்டு, பல்லாயிரம் பேர்கள் பற்பல துறைகளில் வல்லவராகக் கல்வி வளம் பெறத் தொடங்க வேண்டும் என்பது நியதி. அந்த வகையிலே நம்முடைய அண்ணா மலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் வரலாறு படைத்திருக்கிறது; படைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது; இனி படைக்கவும் இருக்கிறது. ஒன்பது புலங்களையும் நாற்பதுக்கு மேற்பட்ட துறைகளையும் கொண்டு இயங்கி

வருகிறது. தொழிற் கல்விக்கான பொறியியல், தொழில் நுட்ப வியல், வேளாணியல், மருத்துவவியல், சட்டவியல் என ஐந்து இயல்கள் மிகச் செம்மையாக இயங்கி வருகின்றன. இவைகளில் கல்வி பயின்று பட்டம் பெற்று வெளியேறிய ஆயிரக்கணக்கானவர்கள் தற்போது வெளிநாடுகளில் வெற்றிக்கொடி நாட்டி வாழ்ந்து வருகிறார்கள்.

டாக்டர் முத்தையவேள், கல்வியைப் பொறுத்தவரை தரத்தைக் காப்பதில் கண்ணும் கருத்துமாக இருந்தவர். முதல் வகுப்பிலே மாணவர்கள் எல்லோரும் தேர வேண்டும் என்று அவர்கள் ஆசிரியர் பெருமக்களுக்குப் பணித்த அந்த பாங்கு, அதற்காகக் கடுமையான பயிற்சியைத் தர வேண்டும் என்று அவர்கள் வலியுறுத்திய அந்த அம்சம் இப்போதும் கடைப்பிடிக்கப்பட்டு வருகிறது என்பதை நான் பெருமையுடன் சொல்லிக் கொள்ள ஆசைப்படுகிறேன். கல்வி ஒளி பரப்பக் காலத்தால் அழியாத கலைக்கோவிலை நம்முடைய அண்ணாமலை அரசர் அவர்கள் நிறுவினார்கள். நிறுவிய பிறகு அதை நாளொரு மேனியும் பொழுதொரு வண்ணமுமாக வளர்க்க வேண்டிய ஒரு மாபெரும் பணியினை ஏற்றுக்கொண்ட நம்முடைய முத்தைய வள்ளல் அவர்கள், முப்பத்தாறு ஆண்டுகள் இணையற்ற சேவைகளை இந்தப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்திற்கு ஆற்றியது மட்டுமல்லாமல், தன்னுடைய குழந்தையெனவே அதைப் பராமரித்து ஆற்றிய தொண்டு வரலாற்றுச் சிறப்புப் படைத்தது என்பதை நான் இங்குச் சொல்லத் தேவையில்லை.

முத்தைய வள்ளலை ஒரு 'Man of Mission at the same time, A Man of Vision' என்று சொல்ல வேண்டும். அவர் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட அந்த அறப்பணி, அன்புப்பணி. அதோடு அவர் விவேகத் தோடு, நுண்மாண் நுழைபுலத்தோடு எதிர் நோக்கி ஆற்றிய அந்தப் பணியின் பாங்கு, அவருடைய செயல்திறனைப் பிரதிபலித்திருக்கிறது. அவர் உணர்வதிலே மனிதத்தன்மை இருந்தது. உணர்ந்ததன் அடிப்படையிலே அவர் சிந்திக்கும் ஆற்றல் பெற்றிருந்தார். சிந்தித்ததைச் செயல்படக்கூடிய அளவுக்கு அவரிடம் துணிவு இருந்தது. அதுமட்டுமல்லாமல் மக்களுக்காகக் கல்வி, ஆன்ற கல்வி, ஊன்றிய கல்வி, மிகப்பரவலான கல்வி, அதே வேளையில் மகத்தான கல்வியாகத் திகழ வேண்டும் என்பதற்காக அவர் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட முயற்சி ஏராளம், ஏராளம். அவர் பண்டைப் பாரம்பரியத்திலே இருந்தாலும், அதிலே நம்பிக்கை வைத்து இருந்தாலும் அவர்தம் அறிவியல் நோக்கு உண்மையிலேயே நம் எல்லோரையும் மலைக்க வைத்தது. ஆதலால் அவரிடம் 'Scientific temper and Scientific attitude' இருந்த காரணத்

தினால்தான் அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்திலே 'Modern Knowledge' அல்லது நவீன கல்விக்காக அவர் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட பல திட்டங்களை எல்லாம் அவரே நேரடியாகக் கண்காணித்துச் செயற்படுத்தியிருக்கின்றார். ஆதலால் அவர்களின் அறிவையும், செயல்திறனையும் கண்டு வியக்காதவர் யாரும் இருக்க முடியாது. தாம் ஈட்டிய செல்வத்தையெல்லாம் நிலையான புகழுக்காக அவர்கள் அர்ப்பணித்திருக்கின்றார்கள். ஒல்லும் வகையான் அறவினை ஓவாதே செல்லும் வாய் எல்லாம் செயல் என்ற பாங்கிலே அவர் ஆற்றிய அந்தச் சமூகப் பணி, நாட்டுப் பணி, கலைப் பணி இதையெல்லாம் நாம் பார்க்கும்போது அவரே ஒரு சகாப்தமாக, அந்த எழுபத்தி ஒன்பது ஆண்டிலே, அவர் வரலாற்றிலே இணைந்து இருக்கின்றார் என்று நான் சொல்லத் தேவையில்லை. நம்முடைய நேரு அவர்கள் ஒருமுறை நம்முடைய அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்துக்கு வந்திருந்தபோது, எப்படி ஒரு பல்கலைக் கழகம் உருவாக வேண்டும், அது எப்படி மிளிர் வேண்டும், திகழ வேண்டும், விளங்க வேண்டும் என்று மிக அழகாக எடுத்துக் கூறியதை இந்த வேளையிலே நான் நினைவுபடுத்தக் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கின்றேன்.

To quote Nehru, "to the University he paid his ample tribute; but ultimately, he desired the University should shape itself into a dream of music for the inward eye and a dream of delight for a contemplative ear." நம்முடைய முத்தையவேள் அவர்கள் தங்களுடைய விருப்பங்களையெல்லாம் தீட்டி, அவற்றைச் செயல்படுத்துவதிலே வல்லுநர். இது எல்லோருக்கும் தெரிந்தவொன்றுதான். இருப்பினும் நம்முடைய பல்கலைக் கழகத்தில் அவருடைய காலத்திலே, முப்பத்தி ஆறு ஆண்டுகளிலே எத்தனை, எத்தனை புதியபுதிய துறைகள் தொடங்கப்பெற்றன! இறுதியில் அவர்கள் எடுத்துக் கொண்டது 'The Faculty of Medicine'. அதுவும் அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் பொன்விழா கொண்டாடிய போது நம்முடைய முதல்வர் புரட்சித்தலைவர், பொன்மனச் செம்மல் மாண்புமிகு டாக்டர் எம். ஜி. ராமச்சந்திரன் அவர்கள் மருத்துவப் புலனைத் தொடங்கி வைக்கும் வகையிலே அடிக்கல் நாட்டினார்கள். நமது இணை வேந்தர் செட்டிநாட்டரசர் டாக்டர் முத்தையவேள் அவர்கள் இப்புலத்தில் பல்வேறு துறைகள் தொடங்குவதில் மிக்க கவனம் செலுத்தி வந்தார்கள். 1980இல் இந்தியப் பல் மருத்துவக் குழுவினுடைய ஒப்புதலின் பேரில் பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி ஒன்று நிறுவப்பட்டது. செட்டிநாட்டரசர் அவர்கள் பெயர் தாங்கிய இந்தப் பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி முதலில் 40 மாணவர்களுடன் 1980-ஆம் ஆண்டு நவம்பர் திங்கள் தொடங்கப்பெற்றது. இக்கல்லூரியைத் தமிழக மக்கள் நல்

வாழ்வுத்துறை அமைச்சர் டாக்டர் மாண்புமிகு ஹண்டே அவர்கள் நேரடியாக வந்து தொடங்கி வைத்தார்கள் என்று கூறிக்கொள்வதில் நாங்கள் பெருமைப்படுகின்றோம். இக்கல்லூரியினுடைய வளர்ச்சி, மருந்தகத்துறை அதாவது 'Pharmacy Department' தொடங்க ஊக்கம் அளித்தது. 1982-ஆம் ஆண்டு பி.பார்ம்., டி.பார்ம். வகுப்புகள் தொடங்கப்பட்டன. 1983-ஆம் ஆண்டு செவிலியர் பட்டப்படிப்பு, (பி. எஸ்ஸி நர்சிங்) 30 மாணவிகளுடன் தொடங்கப் பட்டது. இதற்கிடையில் பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிக்காகவும், அடிப்படை மருத்துவ அறிவியல் துறைகளுக்காகவும், அனாடமி, பயோகெமிஸ்டிரி, மைக்ரோ பயாலஜி போன்றவற்றிற்கு நவீன வசதிகளுடன் கூடிய கட்டடம் கட்டும் பணி ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளப்பட்டுத் திட்டமும் தீட்டப்பெற்றது. இத்துறைகள் அனைத்தும் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி தொடங்குவதற்கு அடிப்படையாக அமைந்தன என்பதை நான் இந்த வேளையில் சுட்டிக்காட்ட விழைகிறேன். இதற்கு ஏற்பக் கட்டடம் புளு பிரிண்ட் தயாராகி விட்டது. மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி, 750 படுக்கைகளைக் கொண்ட மருத்துவமனை, மாணவ மாணவிகளுக்குக் கல்லூரி விடுதிகள், ஆசிரியர்களுக்கும் ஆசிரியரல்லாத ஊழியர்களுக்கும் வீடுகள் கட்டும் திட்டம் ஒன்று தீட்டப்பட்டு முதலில் 70 அல்லது 80 லட்ச ரூபாயில் கட்டுவதாக இருந்தது. ஆனால் தற்போது கட்டடத்தைக் கட்டி முடிக்கக் குறைந்தது 25-ல் இருந்து 30 கோடி ரூபாய் ஆகும் என்று மதிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி தொடங்குவதற்கு ஏற்ற வகையில் பல்மருத்துவக் கட்டட அமைப்பில் சிறிது மாற்றங்களை எல்லாம் நாங்கள் செய்ய வேண்டிய கட்டாயம் ஏற்பட்டது. முத்தைய வள்ளல் அவர்கள், மருத்துவப்புலத்திலேயே பல் மருத்துவம், செவிலியர் கல்லூரி யையும் தொடங்க வேண்டும் என்று எண்ணினார்கள். அவர்களது நோக்கத்தை நிறைவேற்ற 1984ஆம் ஆண்டு கீழ்க்கண்ட மருத்துவ நிபுணர் குழு ஒன்று அமைக்கப் பெற்றது. அக்குழுவிற்கு டாக்டர் எம். நடராஜன் அவர்கள் தலைவராக நியமிக்கப்பட, டாக்டர் எஸ். ஞானதேசிகன், டாக்டர் திருமதி. லலிதா காமேஸ்வரன், டாக்டர் டி.எ. வேணுகோபால், டாக்டர் பி. ராமமூர்த்தி, டாக்டர் மதனகோபால், மற்றும் டாக்டர் ஸ்ரீநிவாசன் போன்றோர்கள் இக்குழுவிலே மிகச்சிறப்பான பணியினை ஆற்றி இருக்கின்றார்கள். இக்குழுவினர் முக்கியமாகப் புளு பிரிண்ட் தயாரிப்பதில் மிகவும் கவனம் செலுத்தி எங்களுக்கு அப்போதைக்கப்போது அறிவுரைகள் வழங்கி வந்திருக்கின்றார்கள். மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி தொடங்குவதற்காக, ஏற்ற முறைகளில் பல திட்டங்கள் தீட்டப்பெற்றன. செட்டிநாட்டரசர் ஆலோசனைப்படி பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியின் கட்டடத் திட்டங்கள் வரையப் பெற்றன. ஆனால் எதிர்பாராத விதமாக நம்முடைய இதய தெய்வம், நமது செட்டிநாட்டரசர்

முத்தையவேள் அவர்கள் 1984-ஆம் ஆண்டு மே திங்கள் இயற்கையெய்திவிட்டார்கள். இப்படிப் பட்ட இக்கட்டான ஒரு நிலையில் தான் நம்முடைய செட்டிநாட்டரசரின் திருமகனார் டாக்டர் எம். ஏ. எம். அவர்கள் இணை வேந்தர் பதவியை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதற்கான ஒரு நிலையினை நமக்கு நம்முடைய அரசு ஏற்படுத்தித் தந்தது. இதற்காக நாங்கள் டாக்டர் எம். ஜி. ஆர். அவர்களுக்கு மிகவும் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கின்றோம். டாக்டர் இராமசாமி அவர்கள் மருத்துவப் புல வளர்ச்சியில் மிக்க கவனம் செலுத்தி ஆவன செய்து வருகின்றார்கள். இதை நான் குறிப்பிட்டுக் காட்ட ஆசைப்படுகின்றேன். டாக்டர் எம். ஏ. எம். அவர்கள் குதிரைப் பந்தயத்தில் எத்தனை நாட்டம் கொண்டு இருக்கின்றார்கள் என்பது அனைவருக்கும் நன்றாகத் தெரியும். குதிரைப்பந்தயம் என்றாலே அதனுடைய வேகம், நம்முடைய கற்பனையை மிஞ்சக்கூடிய அளவில் சில சமயம் இருக்கும் என்பது உங்கள் எல்லோருக்கும் தெரியும். ஆகையால் அவர்கள் வேகத்தோடு தங்களுடைய விவேகத்தையும் இணைத்து அப்போதைக்கப்போது எங்களையெல்லாம் சுறுசுறுப்பாகப் பணியாற்றிட, அதே வேளையில் எங்களுக்கு உந்தும் நிலையையும் தரக்கூடிய நிலையிலே இந்த மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி எப்படியும் இந்த ஆண்டு 1985இல் தொடங்கப்பெற வேண்டும் என்று பணித்தார்கள். அடிக்கடி நம்முடைய பல்கலைக்கழக வளாகத்திற்கு வந்திருந்து 3 அல்லது 4 நாட்கள் தங்கியிருந்து, மிகுந்த சிரமங்கள் இருந்தாலுங்கூட அவர்களே எல்லாவிதமான நுணுக்கங்களையும் நேருக்குநேராகப் பார்வையிட்டுத் தக்க அறிவுரைகளைத் தந்த காரணத்தினால் இன்று இந்த வளாகத்திலே மிக மகத்தான ஒரு நிலையிலே மாபெரும் கட்டடம் எழும்பிக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறது. மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியும், பல்மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியும் அதே இடத்திலே இயங்குவதற்குச் சற்றேறக்குறைய 3 கோடி ரூபாய் மதிப்பீட்டில் கட்டடம் கட்டிக் கொண்டு வருகின்றோம். ஆதலால் நாங்கள் நினைத்துப் பார்க்கும் போது தம்பி உடையான் படைக்கு அஞ்சான் என்று இராமாயணத்தில் வருவது போல எங்கள் தம்பி இருக்கும்போது எங்களுக்கு எந்தவிதக் கவலையும் இல்லை. குறிப்பாக நமது தமிழக அரசு அதுவும் பொன்மனச் செம்மல் டாக்டர் எம். ஜி. ஆர். அவர்கள் தம்முடைய ஆதரவையும், வாழ்த்துக்களையும், எல்லாக் கட்டங்களிலும் அளித்துவந்த காரணத்தினால் தான் இன்று இந்த மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி ஒரு நிதர்சனமாகத்திகழ்கிறது என்று சொல்ல ஆசைப்படுகிறேன். மருத்துவ நிபுணர் குழு பல முறை கூடிப் பல்கலைக்கழக நிர்வாகத்திற்கு ஆலோசனை கூறி வந்திருக்கின்றது. அக்குழுவின் பரிந்துரையின்படி 'டாக்டர் ராஜா முத்தையா மருத்துக் கல்லூரி' என்று பெயரிடுவது எனத் தீர்மானிக்கப்பெற்றது. மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி,

பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி, செவிலியர் மருத்துவத்துறை அனைத் தையும் இணைத்து ராஜா முத்தையா நல்வாழ்வு அறிவியல் துறை நிறுவனம் என்ற அமைப்பின் கீழ் கொண்டுவரப்பட்டுள்ளது.

அந்த அடிப்படையிலே இவ்வாண்டு எம்.பி.பி.எஸ். பட்டப் படிப்புச் சொந்த நிதி வசதிகள் அடிப்படையில், சுயநிதி என்று சொல்லுகின்ற வகையிலே, இப்போது தொடங்கப்பெற்று இருக்கிறது. நம்முடைய டாக்டர் நாவலர் பெருமான் அவர்களால் மருத்துவ நிபுணர் குழு உதவியால் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி தொடங்க, அதுவும் சீரோடும், சிறப்போடும் விளங்குவதற்கு எல்லாவிதமான முயற்சிகளிலும் நாங்கள் ஈடுபட்டிருக்கின்றோம். அதை மிக்க நல்ல முறையில் நடத்தி வரவும், மற்றும் எங்களுக்கு மிக அருமையான உதவிகள் செய்வதற்காகவும் டாக்டர் நஞ்சுண்டராவ் அவர்கள் முதல்வராகப் பொறுப்பேற்றுள்ளார்கள். அவர்கள் மிகச்சிறந்த மருத்துவச் சிகிச்சையளிப்பதில் வல்லவர் என்பது உங்கள் எல்லோருக்கும் தெரியும். அதனுடன் டாக்டர் ஞானதேசிகன் அவர்களும் எங்களுடைய மருத்துவ ஆலோசகராக இருக்கின்றார். தற்போது இந்திய மருத்துவக் குழுவால் அங்கீகரிக்கப்பட்ட கடலூர் மருத்துவமனை, நெய்வேலி மருத்துவமனை, சிதம்பரம் மருத்துவ மனை முதலியவைகளைப் பயன்படுத்திக்கொள்வதுடன் அடிப்படை மருத்துவ அறிவியல் படிப்பைப் பல்கலைக்கழக கட்டடத்தில் நடத்துவது என்றும் தீர்மானித்து அதற்கு ஏற்ற முறையில் சிறிது மாற்றம் செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளது. தொடர்ந்து 750 படுக்கைகளைக் கொண்ட மருத்துவமனை கட்டப்பட இருக்கிறது. மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிக் கட்டடம் விரைவில் முடிக்கப்பெற்றுப் பல் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியும், மருத்துவக்கல்லூரியும் விரைவில் புதுக்கட்டடத்தில் செயல்படத் தொடங்கும் என்று மகிழ்ச்சியுடன் தெரியப்படுத்திக் கொள்கிறேன். மேலும் மருந்தகம் போன்ற துறைகளுக்கு வேறு ஒரு கட்டடம் உருவாக்கிக் கொண்டு இருக்கிறது. மக்கள் நல்வாழ்வுக்குப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் தனது பணியினைச் செய்ய இருக்கிறது என்று குறிப்பிட விரும்புகிறேன். கி.பி. 2000இல் அனைவருக்கும் நல்வாழ்வு அமையுமாறு ஒரு திட்டத்தை நம்முடைய அரசு ஏற்றுக் கொண்டு இருக்கிறது. இதற்கு உறுதுணையாகப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் தன்னுடைய மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி மூலமாக எல்லா விதமான பணிகளையும் ஆற்றும் என்று இந்தவேளையில் உறுதியாகக் கூற விழைகிறேன். பல்மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி இதுகாறும் கடந்த நான்கு ஆண்டுகளாக மக்களுக்காக, அதுவும் குறிப்பாகக் கிராமத்தைச் சார்ந்த மக்களுக்கெல்லாம் பல் மருத்துவ சிகிச்சை அளிப்பதற்காக அடிக்கடி ஆசிரியப்பெருமக்களும், மாணவர்களும் சென்று வருகிறார்கள். அவர்கள் அவ்வப்போது கிராமங்களுக்குச் சென்று பொதுமக்களைக் கவனித்துத் தக்க சிகிச்சை அளித்து வருகிறார்கள்.

அந்த ஒரு நிலையின் அடிப்படையிலே இந்த ஆண்டு நாங்கள் பல்மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிக்கென தனியாக ஓர் ஊர்தியை வாங்கியிருக்கின்றோம். அந்த ஊர்தியிலே எல்லாவிதமான தளவாடங்களும் இருக்கும். அதுமட்டுமல்ல 'டெண்டல் சேர்' என்பதனை மிகச் சிறப்பான ஒருவகையில் அமைத்திருக்கின்றோம். நம்முடைய குழந்தைகள், வயதானவர்கள் யாராயினும் சரி அவர்களை யெல்லாம் அணுகி அந்த அந்த இடத்திலேயே சிகிச்சை தரக்கூடிய ஒரு பெருநிலையை ஏற்படுத்தி இருக்கிறோம். அந்த ஊர்தியைத் தான் இன்று நம்முடைய 'நல்வாழ்வுத்துறை' அமைச்சர் டாக்டர் மாண்புமிகு ஹண்டே அவர்கள் இயக்கி வைக்க வந்திருக்கிறார்கள். இப்படியாக அன்பர்களே இன்று இந்த மருத்துவக் கல்லூரி இந்த ஆண்டு செப்டம்பர் 1இல் இருந்து அவசியம் தொடங்கிவிடும்; அதாவது வகுப்புக்கள் நடத்தப்பெறும். ஏற்கனவே நாங்கள் எல்லா ஆசிரியப் பெருமக்களையும் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து இருக்கின்றோம். அவர்கள் இப்போது வேலையில் சேர்ந்திருக்கிறார்கள். மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிக்காக நாங்கள் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கும் மாணவர்கள் தரமான மாணவர்களாக இருப்பார்கள் என்று இந்தவேளையில் நான் உங்களுக்குச் சொல்லிக்கொள்ள ஆசைப்படுகிறேன். அரசு என்னென்ன விதிமுறைகளையெல்லாம் வகுத்திருக்கிறதோ, அரசினால் நடத்தப்பெறும் மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிகளிலே அனுமதிக்கப்படும் மாணவர்களுக்கு எந்தெந்தத் தகுதிகள் இருக்க வேண்டுமோ, அதாவது குறிப்பாக எல்லோருக்கும் குறைந்தது 70% மதிப்பெண்கள் வாங்கியிருக்க வேண்டும் என்று பணித்திருக்கிறார்கள். அதையே நாங்கள் ஏற்றுக்கொண்டிருக்கிறோம். அடுத்து இந்திய மருத்துவக் குழுவின் ஒப்புதலையும் பெற்றிருக்கின்றோம். எந்த வகையிலும் சோடையில்லாமல் குறைவற்ற ஒரு நிலையிலே எல்லாவிதமான சலுகைகளையும், எல்லாவிதமான வசதிகளையும் இந்த மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியிலேயே நாங்கள் செய்து, நம்முடைய மாணவர்கள் அதிலே படித்துத் தரமான கல்வியினைப் பெறுவதற்கு நாங்கள் உற்ற சூழ்நிலையை ஏற்படுத்தி வருகின்றோம் என்று இந்த வேளையில் சொல்ல ஆசைப்படுகின்றேன். தகுதி அடிப்படையில் பல மாணவர்களை அனுமதிக்க இங்கு ஒரு வாய்ப்பு இருக்கிறது. அரசாங்க மருத்துவக்கல்லூரிகளில் 1100 இடங்களே இருப்பதால் கொடைவளம் படைத்தவர்கள் தங்களுடைய பிள்ளைகள் குறைந்தது 70 சதவிகிதம் மதிப்பெண் பெற்றிருந்தாலும்கூட விண்ணப்பித்து இடம் பெறும் வாய்ப்பில்லை. ஆகவே விரக்தி அடைகிற அப்பேர்ப்பட்ட சில மாணவர்கள் எங்களுடைய மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியிலேயே நன்கொடை வழங்கி, அனுமதி பெறும் நிலையைப் பெறுகிறார்கள். சிலர் மாறாக நினைக்கலாம். ஆனால் எங்களுடைய அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் தொடங்கப்பட்ட நாளிலிருந்து இன்று

வரையிலே எந்தவிதமான கோளாறுக்கோ, குறைபாட்டிற்கோ இடம் கொடுக்காமல், செலவு செய்யப்படும் ஒவ்வொரு ரூபாய்க்கும் தக்க காரண காரியம் இருக்கிறது என்று எடுத்துரைக்கப்பெற்றுள்ளது. அதுவும் அக்கடமிக் கவுன்சில், செனட், சிண்டிகேட் இப்படியாகப் பல அமைப்புகள் இருக்கின்ற காரணத்தால் நாங்கள் பெறுகின்ற நன்கொடைகள் அனைத்திற்கும் சரியான கணக்குகளே வழங்கப்படும். இதில் குறைபாடுகள் நேர்ந்துவிடுமோ என்று சில பேர் நினைக்கலாம். தேவையில்லை. நம்முடைய முத்தையவேள் அவர்கள் இறந்த நேரத்தில் இப்போது எங்களுடைய இணைவேந்தர் டாக்டர் எம். ஏ. எம். எந்த அளவிற்குக் கண்ணும் கருத்துமாக மிக மிக நுணுக்கமாக எல்லா விஷயங்களிலும் கவனம் செலுத்துகின்ற காரணத்தினாலே, நாங்கள் இந்த நன்கொடையை வசூலித்தாலுங் கூட சற்றே 30 கோடி ரூபாய் மதிப்பீடு செய்யப்படும் இந்த திட்டத்தை செயல் நடத்த அது தேவைப்படுகிறது. ஆகையால் அதை நாங்கள் பெற்றுக்கொள்ள வேண்டிய நிலை இருக்கிறது. மேடையிலே நீங்கள் எல்லோரும் இருக்கின்ற காரணத்தினால், நீங்களும் எங்களுக்கு உற்ற ஒரு துணையாக இருக்க வேண்டும். அதைத்தான் நாங்களும் எதிர்பார்க்கிறோம்.

நம்முடைய தேசப்பிதா மஹாத்மா காந்தியடிகள் ஒருசமயம் சொன்னதை மட்டும் இங்கு நான் உங்களுக்கு நினைவுபடுத்த ஆசைப்படுகிறேன். 1943இல் அவர்கள் சொல்லியிருக்கிறார்கள்.

“I am opposed to all higher education being paid for from the general revenue. Universities must be made self supporting; the State should simply educate whose services it would need for all other branches of learning; it should encourage private effort.”

அதாவது மக்கள் வரிப்பணத்திலிருந்து உயர் கல்வி அனைத்துக்கும் செலவிடப்படுவதை நான் எதிர்க்கின்றேன். பல்கலைக் கழகங்கள் சுய நிதியின் வசதியினைப் பெற்றதாக இருக்க வேண்டும். பொதுமக்களுக்கு, அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கைக்குத் தேவையான அடிப்படைக்கல்வியினை வழங்குவது அரசாங்கத்தின் கடமையாகும். ஏனைய எல்லாத் துறைகளிலும் அறிவு வளர்வதற்கு ஓரளவு வாய்ப்புத்தந்து தனியாரின் முயற்சிகளை ஊக்குவிக்க வேண்டும் என்று நம்முடைய தேசப்பிதா அவர்களே கோட்டு, அறுதியிட்டுச் சொல்லியிருக்கிறார். என்றாலும் அரசுக்கு எத்தனையோ பல திட்டங்கள் எல்லாம் இருக்கிறது. எல்லாவற்றிற்கும் அவர்களுக்கு நிதி வசதி இருக்குமா என்பதுதான் சந்தேகம். இது எல்லோருக்கும் தெரியும். ஆகையால் முதலிலே தொடக்கக் கல்வி, அதற்குமேலே உயர்நிலைக் கல்வி இவைகளையெல்லாம் பார்க்கவேண்டும்.

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எனவே முதலிலே அடித்தளத்திலிருந்து தொடங்க வேண்டும். மக்களுக்காகத் தரப்பட வேண்டிய அந்தக் கல்வி கொடுக்கப்பட மேல்நிலைக்கும், மேல்நிலைக்கு வரும்போது உயர்நிலைக் கல்விக்குத் தனியார் துறையிலிருந்து (Public Sector) அவர் களுடைய உதவியைப்பெறுவதில் எந்தவிதமான தவறும் இல்லை யென்று உணர்ந்துதான். நம்முடைய அரசு கூட அண்மைக் காலத்திலே சுயநிதிக் கல்லூரி என்ற திட்டத்தின் கீழ் எத்தனையோ, ஆசிகளையும், வாழ்த்துக்களையும் தந்து எத்தனையோ பொறியியல் கல்லூரிகள் வந்திருக்கின்றன. இந்த ஆண்டு தனியார் துறையிலே மூன்று மருத்துவக் கல்லூரிகள் தொடங்கப்பெறுகின்றன. இதனையே நான் உங்களுக்குச்சொல்ல ஆசைப்படுகிறேன்.

அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் தனியான ஒரு Private Organisation அல்ல. அது ஒரு Statutory Body, Unitary Residential University. ஆகையினாலே எந்தவிதமான தவறுக்கும் இடம் கொடுக்காமல் எங்களுடைய அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் இன்று போல் என்றும் மிக மிக அருமையாகத் தன்னுடைய பணிகளையெல்லாம் செவ்வனே முடித்துத்தர இருக்கிறது. எங்களுடைய இணைவேந்தர் டாக்டர் எம். ஏ. எம். இருக்கும்போது நம்முடைய அரசு முழு ஆதரவு தருகின்ற காரணத்தால் எங்களுடைய ஆசிரியப் பெருந்தகைகளின் ஒத்துழைப்பும், ஆசிரியரல்லாதார் உறுதுணையும், இவைகளையெல்லாம் சேர்த்துப் பார்க்கும்போது நம்முடைய அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் எதிர்காலம் பொன் ஒளிர் எதிர்காலமாக அமைய இருக்கிறது. அது இந்த வேளையிலே நம்முடைய முத்தையவேளின் 81-ஆம் பிறந்த நாளைக் கொண்டாடும்போது, அவருடைய கனவை நனவாக்கக் கூடிய ஒரு நிலையிலே, இன்று நாம் இந்த மருத்துவக் கல்லூரியைத் தொடங்கி அந்தச் சிறப்பு நிகழ்ச்சியிலே நாம் எல்லோரும் கலந்துகொள்ளக்கூடிய வாய்ப்பினைப் பெற்றதை நினைக்கும்போது நம்முடைய உள்ளம் பூரிக்கிறது என்று இந்த வேளையிலே கூறி, உங்கள் எல்லோருக்கும் எனது நன்றியை மீண்டும் கூறி விடை பெறுகிறேன். வணக்கம்.



K. Nagarajan, a lawyer by profession, is a well-known Indo-Anglian writer. He attracted critical attention with his first book *Athawar House*, a novel depicting the fortunes of a Maharashtrian Brahmin family. About this work, Hilton Brown wrote: "This story of the Athawar family is a sheer joy to read ... Mr. Nagarajan is a master of an exceedingly easy and pleasant style." His second book *The Chronicles of Kedaram*, considered to be his best work, has been compared with *Main Street* and *Cranford* and the *Forsyte Saga*. It deals with the fortunes of two families; and the political, social and racial background of the Gandhian era has been vividly portrayed. Prof. J.R. Mac Phail wrote in *The Mail*: "Nowhere can there have been painted a finer or more sympathetic picture of Indian life." *The Cauvery*, Nagarajan's another book, gives a picturesque account of the origin of the river, the districts through which it runs and the people who are benefited by the river till it discharges itself in the Bay of Bengal. His *Annamalai University (1929-79) — A Short History* is a warm-hearted portrayal of the achievements of the University. It contains many anecdotes and personal recollections. *Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar — A Biography* is a companion volume to the short history of the University. The author's close association with the Chettinad family for three generations enabled him to present sincerely the splendid life a remarkable man.