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SILVER JUBILEE SOUVENIR

1937

SOUTH INDIAN MAHARASHTRIANS

(CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES)

ISSUED BY

THE MAHRATTA EDUCATION FUND, MADRAS

AS ITS

SILVER JUBILEE SOUVENIR



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FOREWORD

We have great pleasure in presenting to our readers, this small volume as a Souvenir on the happy occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Mahratta Education Fund, Madras.

The Souvenir consists practically of four parts. The first gives us a brief History of the M. E. F. with a statement of the progress it has been making all these years, the successive List of Office Bearers and a list of Scholarship-holders whom it has benefited by its activities.

The second part is devoted to a brief account of the Eminent Maharashtrians that have adorned South India for the last one hundred years and more. It is difficult for anybody to choose a standard of eminence which would be acceptable to all; but we have spared no pains to make the list as representative as possible in the circumstances.

The third part consists of a few historical and cultural studies contributed by our good friends, who have laboured long and earnestly in their respective subjects. Some of these articles are devoted to Literature, Art and Music; others are of Economic interest—especially those relating to the Population Problem and the Enquiry into the Economic condition of the people. We hope that the articles will be of use to research workers and therefore the volume will be found on the shelves of every Library—public and private.

Last follows the list of Maharashtrian residents in the City of Madras, (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and others), giving over a thousand names, which we trust will be of great value.

One may notice a few omissions of portraits, which we wish we could have given, if it had been possible to secure them in time.

In commemoration of the Silver Jubilee, a Meeting Hall is to be built on the site belonging to the Fund in Mowbray's Road,

Mylapore—known as *Maharashtra Nivas*—the plans and estimates of which have been approved by the Managing Committee. The Ground Plan and Front Elevation of the Hall are printed to face pages 72 and 73 of this volume. It is hoped that the Hall will be completed in a few months.

We are happy to announce that a Marathi edition of the Souvenir is being issued separately.

Many ladies and gentlemen have sacrificed their time and energy to help us in this work; and to them all we tender our heartiest thanks.

N R. KEDARI RAO,
Editor, Silver Jubilee Souvenir.

MADRAS,
11-12-1937.

T. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Convener, Silver Jubilee Committee.

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GREETINGS

1. This is the hour when we rejoice,
The close of five and twenty years
Of service rendered to the poor,
In a bright and worthy manner.
2. A hundred youths and maidens young,
Whom chance had thrown the hapless among,
Rescued from a life of want and gloom,
Now claim a cheerful home.
3. Hail to those who won the glory,
Heroes and heroines of our story,
Pillars of a strong and mighty structure,
With a bright and rosy future.
4. With hopeful hearts and youthful store,
Of Energy and Faith as before,
The Fund shall do its duty blest,
The Lord will do the rest.

—:0:—



Dewan Bahadur K. KRISHNASWAMI BAO,
Dewan of Travancore, First President, M. E. F.



E. VINAYAKA RAO, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Madras
Honorary Secretary, M. E. F., 1912-1937

The History
OF
The Mahratta Education Fund, Madras
FOR
ITS FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

By
Mr. E. VINAYAKA ROW, B. A., B. L.

Honorary Secretary, Mahratta Education Fund, from 1912 to 1937
Advocate, Madras.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao for this long and illuminating article dealing with the History of the Mahratta Education Fund and allied Institutions. No one is better qualified for the task than Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao who has been the Hon. Secretary of the Fund, unanimously elected for the last twenty-five years continuously from 1912 to 1937.—Ed.

I
INTRODUCTORY.

With a prayerful heart, I rejoice that I am vouchsafed the pleasure of writing the history of the Mahratta Education Fund for the first quarter of a century of its useful existence. In presenting this history, I shall only be partially redeeming my debt of gratitude to the members of the Fund for the uniform kindness, unflinching co-operation, and cordial affection which they have always shown me.

TANJORE

The reader may be interested to know something about the main currents of thought that ushered the Fund into existence. Born in 1891 almost within a stone's throw of the Palace walls at Tanjore and brought up in what may be well regarded as an ideal atmosphere typical of the best culture and traditions of Tanjore, early in life I became intimately familiar with the conditions of life of the Mahratta community of Tanjore.

Some of the Maharanees, wives of the late H. H. Sivaji Maharaja, the last ruler of Tanjore, were living in seclusion in the palace enjoying their modest pensions and decent incomes from their private properties. Several other members of the Royal Family were also living in the Palace. The good old forms were kept up, though they were only the tattered remnants of the old magnificence and splendour. A few elephants were still swaying in the outer courtyard. Morning and evening the play of Nawbat and Nagara went on as usual in the front gate of the Palace. The armed sentinels stood at the main entrance leading to the inner quadrangles from day to day, looking with philosophic indifference on the covered vehicles conveying gosha

ladies related to the members of the Royal family, and moving in and out drawn by pairs of horses or pairs of bullocks. A few half-sleepy sepoy were furbishing up now and then the pieces of fire-arms and military accoutrements that were left in the armoury. A few learned pandits were working in the Saraswathi Mahal Library, deciphering and copying the famous old manuscripts in palm leaves and crumbling old country paper. In another suite of rooms, dusty old record bundles were arranged and rearranged and a few clerks were leisurely examining the musty old papers and cadjans to unearth the palace copy of some ancient grant, or pedigree, or order of precedence or point of ceremonial. The Royal traditions were kept up, though on a very reduced scale. The astrologer, the doctor, the musician and the scholar each had his share of Palace patronage in such measure as the depleted finances could permit. The Palace was not then open to the mere tourist and sight-seer. The big hall containing full-size paintings of the Maharajahs of Tanjore from 1676 to 1855 was eloquent in its very silence and the pictures seemed to tell the sad story of the rise and fall of the Tanjore Raj. Day in and day out, the old watchman at the main entrance rang the hour bell with melancholy precision, announcing as it were the hourly receding into the dim past of the palmy days that were. One after another the old Ranees passed away. So did many other members of the Royal family. The end of one establishment meant the destitution of a large number of families of clerks, dependents and poor relatives and a diminution of patronage to a number of pandits, priests, doctors, musicians, painters and the followers of fine arts. This side of Tanjore history made a deep impression on me as I had frequent opportunities of going into the Palace and spending hours at a time within its walls.

I vividly remember with gratitude the long historical accounts which I had about Tanjore affairs from several old family friends. One of them, happily alive now, is closely related to the Royal family and gave me very faithful accounts of the last days of Sivaji and the cultural history of Tanjore after the annexation in 1855. With the decline of the fortunes of the Royal House began also the decline of the fortunes of the nobility, Brahman, Kshatriya, and others. Outside the Palace walls the story of Tanjore was not less melancholy. By temperament and equipment, the noble houses of Tanjore were not ready to change over to the new order of things which the Annexation meant. One after another, the noble houses went down, their mansions were mortgaged, their lands were alienated, and their sons and daughters were driven to a life of chill penury. It was most painful to see this slow but sure grinding of good, noble and generous men and women, whose only fault was that the new times sprang upon them with lightning speed and they were not alert enough to save themselves.

The condition of the commoners was not so bad. But it was bad enough. A few families had already gone out of Tanjore and had obtained good situations in British service and in Indian States. Many of them won laurels as administrators and educationists. On account of their ability and high

character, the Mahratta Community retained the universal esteem and respect in which it had been held. They still regarded Tanjore as their headquarters and hoped to spend their last days after retirement in their dear old city. Many middle class families at Tanjore continued the cultural traditions. In most middle class homes there was music of one kind or another. In their leisure hours men loved to sing to the accompaniment of the melodious Thambur. Some practised on the Mridanga, some on the Veena, and some others on the Gote Vadhya. The Ganapathi festival, annually celebrated in West Main Street, attracted huge crowds of music lovers, when men rivalled with one another to show their skill. The love of the fine arts among the common folk gave ample opportunities to professional musicians, pipers, bandsmen, the exponents of the famous art of Bharata Natya, pith workers, florists, etc., to distinguish themselves. The great Maharashtrian scholars pursued their studies in Sanskrit and Marathi, largely depending upon their modest private incomes. Every year, Maharashtrians from all over India halted at Tanjore on their way to Rameswar. At Tanjore they always had a warm welcome. Such of them as were musicians gave their performances and listened to Tanjore music with rapt attention and all had enormous cultural gains. Such of them as were Sanskrit or Marathi scholars gave and listened to many discourses, to mutual advantage. After the famous Vishnu Bava Morgaumkar made his famous Kirtans at Tanjore, year after year, a regular stream of Kirtankars from all over India visited Tanjore and blessed the people with their kirtans, and they in turn received the homage of the people and their patronage, which in terms of money continued to diminish with the decrease in the material resources of the people. Men like Rajwade came and collected Marathi manuscripts of historical value. I have myself listened to many Marathi kirtans of the famous Ramachandra Bava of Benares and attended some of the musical performances and Bharata Natyams of some of the celebrities in their respective arts. I saw before my eyes all this sweetness and all this grandeur passing away, with nothing worth mentioning to take its place.

In my own house where I spent most of my vacations, the morning programme included a group study of some great Marathi classic like Dasa bodh, Gnaneswari, Ekanathswami's Ramayana, etc. Verse by verse these great books were read and explained in Marathi to a large group of listeners young and old. Every Saturday and every Ekadasi there was Marathi Bhajan. The sound of the cymbal and chipri used to fill my soul with inexpressible joy. My own grand-aunt, who by the way did not know to read or write, knew by heart literally hundreds of Abhangs, Padas, Ovis, Bhupalis, etc., which she used to sing every morning in most delightful tunes. The cult of Pandharpur was verily a living reality. In the bhajana hall, over the pictures of Rama and Krishna there hung the portrait with only the loin cloth of Sri Samarth Ramdas Swami. The story was often repeated to me, and every time I loved to listen to it with the same joy, as to how Ramdas Swami came all the way to Tanjore, when there were no railways to found the Big Mutt at Tanjore. I loved to see the copy of the great Dasabodh written or used by

Ramdas himself still happily preserved by the family in-charge of the Mutt. I knew that this great saint was the spiritual guru of the great Sivaji himself. I remember the occasion when the Sivaji jannothsav was celebrated at Tanjore. The picture is unforgettable. The portrait of the great national hero was put in a howdah on a Palace elephant. There were camels, horses and uniformed retainers in front. The Palace nobles including the two grandsons of the last ruler walked in procession, along with a large crowd of Maharashtrian and non-Maharashtrian citizens. To my young mind Maharashtra history and Maharashtra traditions acquired a new meaning and a new fascination. The rapidly growing impoverishment of the community and the intellectual stagnation and decay that appeared to have set in had also a pathetic significance to me. A good many old families had lost all, and were leaving Tanjore for good in search of employment elsewhere. With the meagre knowledge of Maharashtra history that a boy of sixteen could have had in 1907, I had a special sense of pride in being a Maharashtrian. At the same time, I had a passionate desire to understand more the history and the problems of my community and to do my bit of service to stem the advancing tides of economic distress and intellectual decay and to arrest the process of regression from true Maharashtrian culture and traditions which had already set in.

II

EARLIER INSTITUTIONS

Before beginning the history of the Maharashtra Education Fund it will be appropriate to give here brief accounts of the history and activities of the previous institutions that strove for the improvement of the Marathi language and for the preservation of Maharashtrian culture and traditions in South India.

THE MARATHI VACHAN MANDIR, TANJORE

Naturally the earliest attempt in this direction was the one made at Tanjore in the Eighties of the last century. I am informed that the attempt then made was to have a central organisation at Tanjore for the benefit of the community and it functioned for some time without leaving any permanent results. The details are not available. After that failure, some enthusiastic ladies and gentlemen again organised an institution called the 'Marathi Vachan Mandir' at Tanjore. This institution was running reading classes for adult men and women, where Marathi classics were read and explained. It was also running a free Marathi Girls School where instruction was given in Marathi by a paid teacher assisted by a few voluntary teachers. Under the inspiring guidance of Rao Bahadur C. Nagojee Row, who was then Inspector of Schools at Tanjore, the Mandir was conducting Marathi classes for the benefit of boys and girls reading in the recognised schools at Tanjore, the classes being held every Saturday and Sunday for two hours in the morning in one central place. By 1910 these classes had ceased to be held and the

reading classes for adults had been practically discontinued. The girls' school alone was being conducted on a small scale owing to the indomitable energy and enthusiasm of Rao Saheb T. Sambamurthi Rao, (the author of the Marathi inscriptions of the Tanjore temple) and his talented wife.

THE MADRAS MAHRATTA ASSOCIATION, 1888

Perhaps about the same time, a big attempt was made on the same lines at Madras. The Madras Mahratta Association which appeared to have been founded in 1883 had ceased to work, but it was revived in 1888. I obtained full particulars of this institution some time after the founding of the Mahratta Education Fund. In 1913 I had personal conversations with Mr. T. Venkasami Rao, who was the Secretary of the Madras Mahratta Association in 1888. He was good enough to put into my hands the only printed copy available of a scheme for the reorganisation on a proper basis of the Madras Mahratta Association which was put before the public by him in May 1889. The copy is preserved by the Fund and forms very interesting reading. But he was not in a position to give me a copy of the rules of the said Association. By pure accident I got a copy of the rules in July 1937 and I found it as interesting as it was instructive.

The following were the office-bearers

Patrons—

- (1) A. A. Srinivasa Rao Saheb Esq., *Jagirdar of Arni.*
- (2) Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao, K.C.S.I.

President—

- (3) Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao

Vice-Presidents—

- (4) Dewan Bahadur T. Venkaswami Rao
- (5) Mr. K. Rajah Rao
- (6) „ A. Ramachandra Rao
- (7) „ T. Ranga Rao
- (8) „ R. Balajee Rao, B.L.
- (9) „ C. Ramachandra Rao Saheb, B.L.
- (10) „ T. Ramachandra Rao

Managing Committee—

- (11) Mr. D. Rama Rao
- (12) „ C. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., B.L.
- (13) „ T. M. Annaswami Rao
- (14) „ C. Hanumantha Rao
- (15) „ Balvant Trimbuck Sahasrabudhe
- (16) „ A. Raghavendra Rao
- (17) „ A. Sarvothama Rao
- (18) „ M. Balakrishna Rao

Secretary—

(19) Mr. T. Venkaswami Rao

Treasurer—

(20) Mr. A. Raghavendra Rao

In addition to the above 20 office-bearers, there are 41 names in the list of ordinary members. I find among the ordinary members here, Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., who later on did yeoman service to the Fund as Vice-President, Mr. D. R. Balajee Rao who became one of the life members of the Fund and was a Vice-President for some time, Mr. T. Rangaswami Rao who became a Patron of the Fund and whose executors made a munificent endowment to the Fund ear-marked for the S. S. Raghavendra Rao Elementary School, and Mr. Kashirasagar Rajagopala Rao who happily is still a member of the Fund and most appropriately responded to the toast of the community on the occasion of the Foundation Day in 1937.

The object of the Association was to encourage Marathi Literature by

- (i) Holding meetings and discussions in Marathi in view to the gradual development of the language.
- (ii) Opening a Library and Reading Room.
- (iii) Delivering occasional lectures.
- (iv) Awarding prizes for Marathi Literary productions.
- (v) Establishing schools for regular instruction, for preparing students to make Marathi their Vernacular in the University Examinations.

An Association started under such influential auspices with brilliant men in charge of the management, when the community was in affluent circumstances and the mother tongue was spoken in a much purer form than now, could not but have produced some positive results. They were able to persuade the University of Madras to include Marathi as a subject for examination from the Matriculation to the M. A. Degree Examination. Be it noted that at that time such a recognition had not been accorded to Marathi even by the Bombay University. Secondly, they started a middle school in Rajah Hanumantha Lala Street, Triplicane, where there were classes from the infant standard to the third form. In this school an attempt was made to teach everything in Marathi. The library was located in the School premises and all the meetings were held there.

The Association presented an address to His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore on 26—2—1888. Both the address and the reply to it contain very touching sentiments and I think I may appropriately give the same here *in extenso* :

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS,

“We, the Members of the Madras Mahratta Association, thus wait on Your Highness, with the utmost cordiality and respect, to welcome

Your Highness to this Southern Capital of India. With unfeigned pleasure we recognise in Your Highness the representative of one of the most ancient Hindu Royal houses. Your beautiful and ever-green country is still the home of a happy, contented and loyal population. Your Highness is the worthy successor of a series of rulers renowned for learning, refinement, piety and benevolent solicitude for the welfare of their subjects. You have already variously manifested your wise resolve to maintain the high character of the Travancore administration, and to help on the progress of your subjects by every means which Providence has placed in your hands. We have every assurance that the highest object of your ambition is to obtain the love of your people. May the mild radiance of your countenance shine on your country and be a blessing to it for a long series of years. May all your wishes, as a paternal ruler, be fully crowned with success. We as members of the Marathi nationality, naturally derive satisfaction and pride from the well-known circumstances that the Marathi language has been the adopted language of successive rulers of Travancore, and that several Mahratta gentlemen have been among their most faithful and devoted Ministers—the last and not the least of whom is Your Highness's present Dewan. With sentiments of profound respect and esteem, and with reiterated best wishes, we remain,

The Members of the Mahratta Association."

His Highness replied :—

"GENTLEMEN,

I will begin my reply to your address at the point where you concluded it. As I said at Tanjore, the Southern home of the Mahrattas, the State of Travancore is much indebted to your intellectual race for some of the best Dewans who have administered its affairs and to none more than to the distinguished politician, Sir Madhava Rao, who came into Travancore a scholar and left it a statesman of renown, to carry into the service of two Sovereigns successively of his own race, the benefit of the knowledge and experience he had acquired in the land of the Perumals, which he had first stamped with the impress of his genius and sound practical wisdom so indelibly that fifteen years of other administrations have left unshaken the foundations of good government, which he had laid deep and broad. In selecting Rama Rao as my Dewan, I am free to confess that I was not moved so much by the fact of his being a Mahratta, and a relation of Sir Madhava Rao, as by the fact that he was his apt pupil and co-adjutor, who, after him, had administered large divisions so successfully that I felt he was the best fitted to assist me to build on the lines which his distinguished relative had laid down, and which his Royal pupils, my illustrious predecessors and their administrators, had been glad to work upon. You have evoked the expression of this sentiment by the allusion made in your address, and I am glad you have given me the opportunity of thus publicly acknowledging the gratitude I owe for services rendered to my predecessors—services which have rendered my own duties to my subjects comparatively easy. I wish it, however, to be distinctly

understood that I do not by any means underrate the services of those who followed him in office, one of whom, his worthy class-mate and friend, is nobly doing for Pudukotah what Sir Madhav Rao did for Travancore. Having discharged this duty, I will now proceed, Gentlemen, to thank you, and that I do most sincerely, for all the kindly sentiments you have so feelingly expressed. I am very happy indeed to have the pleasure of meeting you here. Allow me in return to wish you happiness and every prosperity. A nation with a history like yours, which can in the present day, produce such remarkable men as Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao, Dewan Bahadur Raghunatha Rao and others, whom I have lately met in Tanjore and Poona, need have no fear of being beaten in the great race for a position in the front ranks of civilisation, which is vigorously being run all over India."

In May 1889, the Secretary of that Association made an attempt to organise a Central Association which was not successful. He told me with sorrow that gradually the work of the Association dwindled, the Library fell into disuse and the school had to be closed down after a few years of lingering existence. There was not money enough and there were not pupils enough to run the institution even as a primary school. Soon the Association passed into the limbo of oblivion. I have often wondered why an Association started under such influential and wealthy auspices and in times so propitious should have failed so soon. But it is a pity that it did fail.

THE SOUTH INDIAN MAHRATTA BRAHMIN ASSOCIATION, MADRAS

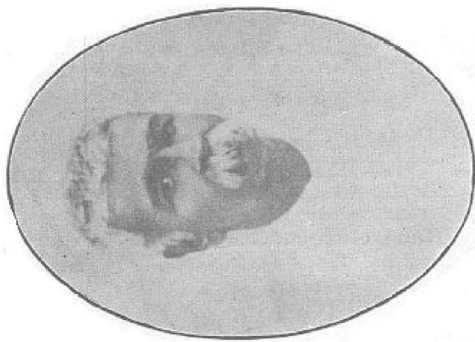
Long after the failure of the Madras Mahratta Association, another effort was made to organise the community for its general advancement, by Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao, who started the South Indian Mahratta Brahmins Association, Madras. I had the pleasure of discussing with Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao long after the Mahratta Education Fund itself was started a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the South Indian Mahratta Brahmins' Association. He told me that notwithstanding his best efforts the Association had failed though the objects were quite comprehensive as regards the development and preservation of the Marathi language and culture and its usages and traditions. The experience gained by Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao in the working of this Association was, however, of considerable use to the Mahratta Education Fund of which he was the first Vice-President, for nearly eight years.

THE MAHARASHTRA SABHA, MADRAS

Yet another Madras Association that blossomed for a brief while and thereafter ceased to live was the Maharashtra Sabha, Madras. On 18-10-1904 the Dasara day of the year, a few Maharashtrians living in and around Triplicane met together and started the Maharashtra Sabha, Madras with the object of bringing together the scattered members of the Marathi speaking



Rao Sahib P. RAMACHANDRA RAO, B.A.,
Chief Interpreter, High Court, Madras
First Vice-President, M. E. F. 1912—1920



Dewan Bahadur
R. RAMACHANDRA RAO, c.s.i.,
Madras Civil Service (Seconded)
President, M. E. F. 1923—1930



C. BHEEMA RAO,
First Asst. Secy., M. E. F. 1912—1918

community and to encourage the study of Marathi language and literature. Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao, was elected President, though he had by then permanently settled down at Kumbakonam. The membership was not large and the Sabha arranged for occasional lectures and conducted a reading room subscribing for the *Hindu* and the *Kesari* newspapers. The Sabha was located in a rented room in the Davanotsava Bungalow at Triplicane. A small Marathi Library was therein maintained for some time. Kirtans in Marathi were arranged whenever there was a suitable opportunity. Sivaji Jannotsav was celebrated for about four years. In 1908 the Indian National Congress was held at Madras and Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Rao was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Mr. G. K. Gokhale attended this Congress. The Sabha invited Mr. Gokhale to tea and there was a reception accorded to him. In April 1909 Mr. P. Ramachandra Rao presided over a function when prizes were distributed to girls who showed proficiency in Marathi. Notwithstanding the encouraging start, the enthusiasm for the aims and objects of the Sabha waned and in the course of 1909 the Sabha ceased to function and became defunct.

MARATHI MANDALI, KUMBAKONAM

In 1907 I joined the Government College at Kumbakonam. A few friends invited me to attend a meeting of the Marathi Mandali that had just been started. The veteran leader Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao, of revered memory, was the President. His grandson was a class-mate of mine and so I had frequent opportunities of meeting the Grand Old Man. He attended the meetings of the Mandali and moved with the young men as if he were one of them and without any reserve. The object of the Mandali was to encourage the study of Marathi and to arrange for meetings and debates for the benefit of the young men of the community. There was an apology of a reading room. In my opinion the best part of its work was the frequent opportunities young men had to have long and intimate talks with their President the great leader and statesman. Personally I benefited a great deal. Some of us desired him to teach us the elements of politics. He taught us several passages from Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution in his own inimitable manner, enriching the conversations with personal anecdotes. In these conversations we learnt from him a great many things in Mahratta history. His illuminating talks on many aspects of Mahratta culture had a special value as he was a practical man of action with progressive ideas and of an intensely religious disposition. His was one of the formative influences that led me to the work of the Fund and I am ever grateful to him for all that he had done for me. I left Kumbakonam in January 1909 to join Pachaiyappa's College, Madras for my B.A. Course. I heard from my friends that the work of the Marathi Mandali gradually declined and had ceased to function about the end of 1909.

III

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FUND

While I was at College I read many books on Mahratta History and the enthusiasm which I had as a member of the Marathi Mandali, Kumbakonam continued to grow though I could not then take any part in any such activities for there were none at Madras. After I graduated in April 1911, I spent a good deal of my leisure to consider the question of organising the community for meeting effectively the economic, educational and cultural problems which called for urgent solution. I had several discussions with prominent men of the community in and out of Madras and I had also talks with many men, young and old, rich and poor, who occupied different stations in life. I tried to understand from persons who were connected with the previous institutions the nature of their objects and activities and tried to discover the reasons for their failure. In matters of this kind the historical outlook is specially valuable. After nearly a year's work I came to certain tentative conclusions :—

(a) Immediate provision should be made for the educational advancement of the community so that every one, rich or poor, received enough of education, general or technical, to make a decent start in life.

(b) Economic amelioration should be striven for by the promotion of thrift, the spread of co-operative ideas, the diffusion of modern ideas among men and women, and above all the spread of a sincere desire to render unselfish social service among the men and women of the community

(c) The scattered members of the community had to be organised on a Provincial basis with Headquarters at Madras and Branches in different mofussil centres, and periodical meetings and gatherings should be arranged for to celebrate all festive occasions and to give opportunities for social intercourse to have Kirtans and Bhajans in Marathi.

(d) The study of Marathi should be encouraged by maintaining libraries and reading rooms and providing in some measure for Marathi instruction in recognised aided schools.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUND

15th September 1912

I invited a few leading Mahratta gentlemen of Madras to meet together at 4 p.m., on the 15th September 1912 at the residence of Rao Sahab P. Ramachandra Rao at Egmore, to hear my suggestions on the lines mentioned above and to see what could be done for the betterment of the community. The following gentlemen were present :—

- (1) Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao, C.I.E., *Retired Dewan of Travancore.*
- (2) Rao Sahab P. Ramachandra Rao, *Chief Interpreter, High Court.*
- (3) Mr. T. V. Thuljaram Rao, *Proprietor, Scottish Press, Madras.*

- (4) Mr. A. Krishnaswami Rao, *Dy. Examiner of Accounts*, Accountant-General's Office, Madras.
- (5) Mr. S. Sankara Rao, *Accountant*, P.W.D., Madras Division.
- (6) Mr. P. Raghava Rao, *Retired Tahsildar*, Madras.
- (7) Mr. T. T. Bhavaniswami Rao, B.A., L.T. *First Assistant*, Madrasa-i-Azam, Madras.
- (8) Mr. P. Subba Rao, Madras Records Office.
- (9) Mr. R. Lakshmana Rao, *Head Clerk*, Revenue Board, Madras.
- (10) Mr. C. Bheema Rao, *Jeweller*, Sowcarpet, Madras.
- (11) Mr. S. M. Punathambekar, *Asst. Superintendent*, C. N. Technical Institute, Vepery.
- (12) Mr. R. Krishna Rao, "Jumna House," Mylapore.
- (13) Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao, *Lecturer in Mathematics*, Pachaiappa's College, Madras.

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao was voted to the Chair. The Chairman called upon me to place before the meeting my suggestions and scheme of work. I stated in broad outline the main aspects of the problem, my tentative conclusions aforesaid and the lines on which solutions should be attempted. After a full discussion in which every one participated, it was unanimously resolved to start immediately an institution for the purposes aforesaid. The rate of subscription was fixed at one pie in the Rupee of a member's income. A committee was appointed to enrol members, to collect funds, to invite suggestions from all over the Province and to convene a bigger meeting to settle finally the details as regards the name, office-bearers, etc. The first committee consisted of Mr. T. T. Bhavaniswami Rao, B.A., L.T., Mr. R. Krishna Rao, B.A., Mr. C. Bheema Rao and Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao, B.A., with Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao as the Honorary Secretary. Thus was born the Maharashtra Education Fund and I entered upon my duties as its First Honorary Secretary.

THE GENERAL MEETING ON 2-2-1913

To consider the Report of work done by the Committee and the suggestions sent by mofussil gentlemen, to frame a constitution and to elect office-bearers, a General Meeting was held at 3-30 p.m., on Sunday 2nd February 1913 with Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao in the chair. The suggestions received from mofussil members and sympathisers were read out and then an interesting discussion followed. It was said that the old Maharashtra Sabha might be revived and the new objects proposed for the Fund incorporated in the objects of the older association. Another suggestion was made that the development of Marathi language and Literature should be the chief object of the Fund and should be given the position of primary importance. It was also suggested that special importance should be given to Primary education. All these points of view were discussed at great length and the conclusion was arrived at that the objects clause of the Fund should

be drawn up in a simple and elastic form so that all the legitimate activities of the Fund on the lines mentioned above could be covered. As finally drawn up the object of the Fund was stated as follows :—

“The object of the Fund shall be to afford facilities for the education of Mahratta youths in the Madras Presidency and the province of Mysore by meeting their College and School fees, and if funds permit by arranging for their boarding and lodging, and also to encourage the study of Marathi.”

A set of simple and elastic rules was also framed.

Out of several competing names suggested, the name “The Mahratta Education Fund” was accepted as the most suitable and expressive of the objects and methods of work adopted by the Fund. A Board of Directors of 19 members, of whom 12 were permanently residing out of Madras, was constituted. The Fund was organised on a province-wide basis. From the start, great stress was laid on the most meticulous accounting and audit, and no one can deny that this is one of the bed rocks on which the Fund's progress and prosperity are founded. Thus was the new vessel christened, declared sea-worthy and put out on the high seas, manned by a crew of seasoned seamen.

IV

AFTER THE INAUGURATION OF THE FUND

The Marathi Sangh, Madras

Those who wished to give primary importance to the development of Marathi among the objects of the Fund began to press forward their proposal insistently. My request that they should wait for sometime before anything tangible can be achieved in that direction did not meet with a favourable reception at their hands. A few gentlemen belonging to the old Maharashtra Sabha and a few others who were for immediate language work on a large scale joined forces. Their point of view was pressed with much vigour and clarity by a Committee member ; but the Managing Committee, decided that the Fund should not start on new schemes of work when success was not reasonably assured with the resources then at their disposal. I suggested that a separate association may, if necessary, be formed with the sole object of encouraging the study of Marathi. If it succeeded, the community would undoubtedly gain, and if it did not, the other objects of the Fund which were equally important would not be adversely affected. My suggestion was accepted and a separate institution was started under the name “Marathi Sangh” at Triplicane. I was asked to be the Secretary of that institution also, but I was unable to accede to the request, as the responsibility of being the Honorary Secretary of two institutions, both in their infant stages and requiring a great deal of attention, would have been too heavy for me. I was, however, a member of the Managing Committee of the Sangh and continued to serve in that capacity as long as the Sangh was alive. During its short existence of

about a couple of years, it did useful work in arranging for periodical meetings and debates where the proceedings were mostly in Marathi. It also made some efforts, though unsuccessfully, to get back the small library which the Sabha had and the balance of the moneys in the hands of the Treasurer of the Sabha. But for want of the requisite enthusiasm the Sangh ceased to exist.

THE FIRST MAHARASHTRA ASSOCIATION, MADRAS.

Before resuming the narrative of the progress of the Fund, I must re-very briefly, the history of another Maharashtrian institution which was started in 1918 and worked for five years.

After the Marathi Sangh ceased to function, the idea of doing something exclusively for the promotion of Marathi was revived in 1917 and an attempt was made to establish a Marathi Library in Triplicane. After one or two meetings, an association called the "Marathi Library Association" was formed. Those connected with it thought of running a free Marathi Girls School at Triplicane, teaching only English and Marathi. The name of the association was therefore changed to "The Marathi Girls School Association". After some months even that name was dropped and the name "Maharashtra Association," Triplicane, was adopted. Though originally started with a view to concentrate on the work of encouraging the study of Marathi, running a library, and running a free Girls School, the Maharashtra Association developed some other activities and formed the following sections: the Mahila Sangh, the Young Men's Branch and the Arts Section. Several members of the Fund were also members of the Association and gave considerable financial support to it. I was unable to join the Association as a member, though I attended most of the dramas staged by them and their functions to which I was invited. Several of my friends also did so.

In 1919, the Marathi-English Free Girls School had a strength of 84 pupils with one Teacher. Rent, establishment and other charges came to Rs. 581-10-9 that year, but it was practically impossible for one teacher to handle all the classes. The expenditure had to be met from members' subscriptions which for various reasons were tending to decline. The essential weakness of the situation began to show itself. The ultimate closure of the school was thus a question of time. I was one of those who were sceptic about the wisdom of undertaking the large financial obligations of running a complete and efficient primary school without an adequate funded capital.

Secondly, in the circumstances of the community and the permanent interests of the children, I felt that a complete divorce of the local vernacular languages from the curriculum was not desirable. Needless to say that on this point there was a marked difference of opinion.

Their Second Annual Report contained the following passage: "A worker for society needs must give an honoured place to differing minds in his scheme of social service. The Committee expects every member of the Mahatta community of South India who earnestly thinks about problems of

communal welfare to co-operate with it, and guide its deliberations, and make the Association representative of the future of our communal life and an effective central organization for the realisation of our progressive life."

The Fund had already successfully organised itself for seven years on a provincial basis. The claim of the Association to become "an effective central organisation for the realisation of the progressive life of the community" naturally caused much embarrassment to members and to workers. Those assembled at the Seventh Annual meeting of the Fund in 1919 voiced a desire for the unification of all desirable communal activities and for better financial support. With the approval of the Managing Committee of the Mahratta Education Fund, I convened a meeting as Honorary Secretary of the Fund, at 4 p.m., on 28—9—1919 at the Sarada Hall, Triplicane, (the premises of the Maharashtra Association, Triplicane) of six members of the Managing Committee of the Fund, six representative members of the Maharashtra Association and three other gentlemen of the community interested in communal activities, with Rao Bahadur C. Krishnaaswami Rao in the Chair. The object of the meeting was to explore all avenues of unifying all desirable communal activities and arrive at agreed conclusions in a spirit of give and take. But the Maharashtra Association had just an hour before held a special meeting and had given specific instructions to the representatives chosen by them. After considerable discussion it was found that the proposals put forward by the Association were such as could not be accepted by the Fund. The meeting terminated without anything tangible to its credit except that both sides understood each other's view-point and agreed to differ. For nearly three years thereafter the supporters of the Association worked hard. But the School was soon closed down, the rented premises were given up, the library was shifted, and the Association itself ceased to work in 1923.

To the credit of the Association must be said that the dramas enacted by them were well-attended and brought the community into living-touch with the modern dramatic literature of Maharashtra. The actors who took part in the dramas had necessarily to read several dramatic works to choose the play and afterwards to get by heart the pieces for their respective parts. The library contained many good books and some members at least took a genuine interest in reading Marathi.

I do not say anything about the Second Maharashtra Association started in 1928, as it is not within the scope of this article to mention anything about existing institutions serving the community in some direction or other.

THE MAHARASHTRA NIDHI LTD.

The supporters of the Maharashtra Association promoted a banking concern known as the Maharashtra Nidhi Ltd., to carry on banking business and to make a suitable grant-in-aid annually to the Association after paying a reasonable dividend to shareholders who were mostly members of the

community. After the Association became defunct in 1923, the rules of the Nidhi were amended so as to give to the Fund the grant-in-aid originally intended for the Association. After a few years there was mismanagement, and serious defalcations occurred. The Secretary and Treasurer absconded, and the Company went into voluntary liquidation. Far from the Association receiving any benefit from the Nidhi, this experiment cost the community a great deal. The defalcation was to the extent of several thousands of rupees. The shareholders lost all the capital they had put in. The creditors and the depositors got back only a dividend of 9 annas in the rupee. Above all, the good Maharashtrian friends who agreed to serve as Directors were obliged to pay in all about Rs. 30,000 to settle with the creditors.

The failure of this institution brought to the forefront one of the most essential elements of the situation—the paucity of workers in a field where capacity and efficiency count and the need to provide full safeguards in all financial administration.

V

AIMS AND OBJECTS

Let me now resume the narrative of the Fund's work and progress from 1912 to 1937 without any more digression. Reference has already been made to the simple and elastic set of rules framed in 1913, with the 'Objects clause' stated in equally simple and elastic language. The rules were slightly altered in 1918. After the Sarada Hall meeting on 28—9—1919 proved abortive, the question of a further revision of rules was taken up, in connection with the registration of the Fund under the Societies Registration Act (Act XXI of 1860). I framed a set of rules which was accepted by the Managing Committee, with some modifications, and placed at an extra-ordinary general meeting held on 31—7—1920. With a few further modifications, the rules were adopted. The occasion was also used to place the memorandum of Association on a comprehensive footing; the fundamental ideas alone were incorporated in the Memorandum; while matters of lesser importance and those relating to mere procedure were relegated to the Section of Rules and Regulations. In framing the Memorandum, the Fund was guided not only by its own experience of about eight years but also by the experience of previous institutions which had worked with similar aims. The result was that though there was an occasion to revise "the rules and regulations" of the Fund in 1935 to suit the needs of the time and its own expanded activities, there was no necessity to touch the Memorandum of Association, which was quite comprehensive and complete for all practical purposes.

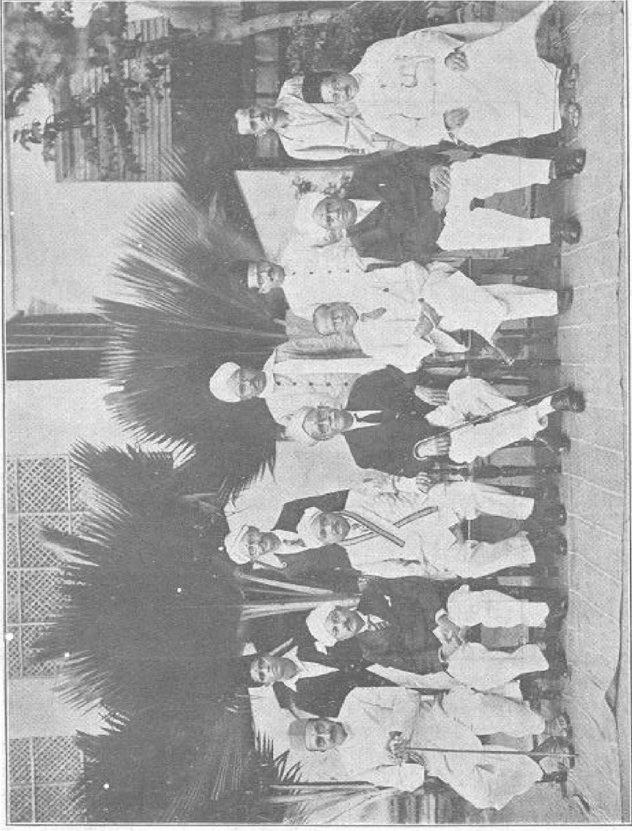
The registration of the Fund in 1920 added greatly to the stability of the Fund and big donations began to flow in quite steadily

Naturally the work of promoting educational advancement claimed the first attention. The clauses relating to this line of work are as follow :—

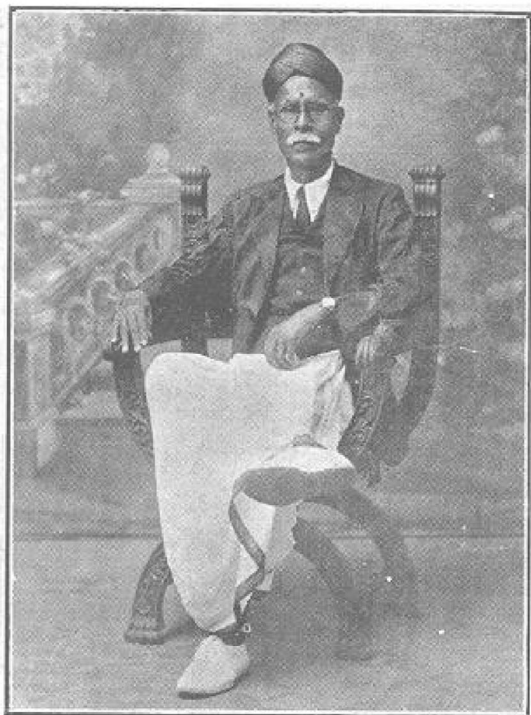
- (1) To promote the higher education of Marathi speaking boys and girls in colleges affiliated to the Universities of Madras and Mysore and in such other institutions as may be decided upon by the Board of Directors from time to time, by granting scholarships to poor and deserving students.
- (2) To afford all possible facilities to Marathi-speaking youths for the acquisition of commercial and technical knowledge by adopting such means as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors from time to time.
- (3) To afford all possible facilities to young men and women of the Mahratta Community for undergoing training, leading to professional careers such as Medicine, Engineering, Commerce, Agriculture and Law in institutions that may be decided upon by the Board of Directors from time to time.
- (4) To assist in all possible ways students belonging to the South Indian Mahratta community studying abroad.

The first clause relates to the grant of scholarships to poor and deserving students to promote their higher education in Colleges affiliated to the Universities of Madras and Mysore. Under the provision that the Board of Directors can recognise other institutions also, scholarships are now made available to students reading in Colleges affiliated to the Andhra, Annamalai, and Benares Universities. Of course, the recently started University of Travancore will also be added to the list at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

The second clause does not refer merely to the award of scholarships. We desire to afford all possible facilities to Marathi-speaking young men and women to acquire commercial and technical knowledge. We have so far awarded scholarships tenable in commercial institutions like the Government School of Commerce, Madras, and Technical Institutions like the Chengalvaraya Naicken's Technical Institute and the Engineering College at Madras. If suitable applicants are forthcoming, it is the intention of the Managing Committee to provide facilities for our young men to get proficiency in such subjects as Printing, Photography, Painting and Sculpture, Textile Industry, the Leather Industry, Tailoring and other subjects. We feel that very soon the community will recognise the necessity and the great practical value of giving such education and training to our young men. The facilities contemplated by this clause will include boarding and lodging, securing places as apprentices paid or unpaid, and securing seats in such institutions whether in the Madras Presidency or outside. Of course, more honorary workers and more money will be required to make this part of the work as big a success as it deserves to be.



M. E. F. MANAGING COMMITTEE, 1937



Dewan Bahadur T. VENKOBA RAO,
Retired Superintendent of Police, Madras,
President, M. E. F. 1930-32; 1936-

Equally important is the work of giving similar facilities to our young men and women for undergoing training leading to professional careers as indicated in clause (3) above. Already there is a specific endowment for promotion of medical studies and a number of our young men have received scholarships for medical courses. From our general funds engineering and commerce have both required and obtained adequate support. So far there has been no application for aid in the Agricultural College.

The fourth clause is even more ambitious. The idea is to assist in all possible ways students belonging to the South Indian Mahratta community studying abroad. This is not restricted to poor students only, even as the Object clauses (2) and (3) are not restricted to poor students alone. I wish to lay emphasis on this aspect of the work as sometimes an erroneous impression is found among the members of the community that the Fund is only an eleemosynary institution giving money aid to needy and deserving college boys and girls. This impression has to be corrected whenever and wherever found. As an instance may be cited the recent award of a scholarship to a girl who is specialising in Indian Music by undergoing a course of training in the Music Diploma class conducted by the University. As another instance may be cited the case of a young qualified L.M.P. who was given a scholarship to undergo special Post Graduate Training in the School of Tropical Medicine at Calcutta. Recently a member from Trivandrum who belongs to an aristocratic and well-known family desires that the Fund should take upon itself the responsibility of looking after the higher education of his son at Madras, acting as it were the local guardian of the boy. This work will undoubtedly come within the scope of the Fund's activities. The Fund has carried on much propaganda work among the members of the community, rich and poor, urging upon them the claims of higher education and technical education. This incessant propaganda for the last 25 years has borne rich fruit and it must be admitted on all hands that there has been a most encouraging response from the community to all these appeals and activities of the Fund.

The Fund has so far awarded scholarships to about 101 students to meet their College and School fees to the extent of about Rs. 20,000. It is one remarkable feature of this institution that scholarships awarded are returnable in very small monthly instalments by the recipients after they begin to earn. Out of the 101 persons who have received aid, 26 past scholarship-holders have refunded in full and 24 of them have returned in part, the amounts received by them together with interest at a small rate. The total amounts so far refunded exceed Rs. 7,000. This ensures a regular source of income to the Fund, besides giving to the past scholarship-holders an opportunity to demonstrate in a tangible form their loyalty and gratitude to the Fund whose timely assistance enabled them to have decent starts in life. Further details of the scholarship-holders and their present position in life will be found in the succeeding pages.

ECONOMIC AMELIORATION

The second main object of the Fund relates to economic advancement. The clauses relating to this topic are :—

- (5) To ameliorate the condition of the Mahratta community settled in South India by the diffusion of useful knowledge among them.
- (6) To concert such measures, as may from time to time be necessary for the advancement of the Mahratta community in South India, and to do all such acts as may be necessary and conducive for effectually carrying out the objects of the Fund.

Under the revised rules, the Managing Committee are required to set apart 10% of the net receipts for building up an Economic Amelioration Fund as provided for in Object (v) of the Memorandum of Association, provided that the total amount to the credit of the Economic Amelioration Fund does not exceed Rs. 1,000. The Fund has recently conducted an economic census of the Mahratta community, Brahmin, Kshatriya and others, resident within the City of Madras. The results of the census are given in the form of special articles in this volume. A number of volunteers have assisted the Fund in carrying out this difficult work to a successful conclusion. It is proposed to take a similar census in the mofussil also and to consolidate the results so obtained, in order that we may have a comprehensive picture of the economic position of the community all over the Presidency.

Lectures and debates on subjects like Unemployment, Co-operative Housing, Chit Funds, and the promotion of thrift, Banking as a career, Agriculture as a career, etc., have also been held from time to time. The Fund has also promoted the Maharashtra Building Society Ltd., which is a Co-operative Building Society registered under the Madras Co-operative Societies Act of 1932. The community has not as yet realised the scope and importance of this aspect of our work. The pre-occupations of the workers of the Fund in connection with the activities of the Silver Jubilee, the S. S. Raghavendra Rao's Elementary School and the revision of the rules in 1935 have prevented them from concentrating upon this part of the Fund's work. It is proposed to do in the near future intensive work in that direction. Members of the Building Society can build houses anywhere within the limits of the City of Madras on sites owned by them and the Society will advance loans to them for such building purposes out of finances lent entirely by the Government of Madras through the Co-operative Department. Recently the Madras Government have reduced the rate of interest charged for loans advanced to Co-operative Building Societies to 4 per cent per annum. This is a very attractive rate indeed and the Fund trusts that with the spread of further information on the subject, good results will be produced in this direction also.

Another imperceptible manner in which much good has come may be stated here. The frequent meetings and opportunities for social intercourse

afforded by the Mahratta Education Fund have created a spirit of healthy social service and mutual support.

THE LANGUAGE SECTION

The next important object of the Fund is to promote the study of Marathi and to preserve the language in South India by :

- (a) providing grants of money to educational institutions for meeting in whole or in part the salary of qualified Marathi teachers for giving instruction in Marathi as an Optional Vernacular and in Marathi Composition ; provided no grant shall be made to any institution in which the number of Marathi-speaking pupils who benefit by such instruction is for two consecutive years less than twenty each year ;
- (b) running elementary schools for girls in suitable Mahratta centres, Marathi being the Vernacular in the curriculum of studies ; provided no such school shall be run without at least twenty pupils on its rolls, unless special exemption is granted by the Board of Directors ;
- (c) forming libraries and reading classes for ladies and gentlemen in different centres for the purpose of studying Marathi Classics and otherwise improving their mother-tongue ;
- (d) maintaining a central library of Marathi books at Madras, and running free reading rooms at different centres for the benefit of the members of the Fund, to give them access to standard Marathi books and current Marathi newspapers, periodicals, etc. ;
- (e) encouraging candidates who sit for public examinations offering Marathi as one of the subjects by granting them special scholarships and by supplying them with text-books in Marathi gratis ;
- (f) arranging for periodical meetings and gatherings of Marathi-speaking people in different centres for the purpose of lectures, harikathas, etc., provided all the proceedings be in Marathi ;
- (g) doing such other acts as the Managing Committee may deem proper in this behalf.

The detailed methods of work indicated in the above clauses speak for themselves and require no further elucidation. Clause (g) has been frequently availed of by the Managing Committee to bring within the scope of the Fund's work forms of activities not specifically covered by the remaining clauses. The same purpose has also been achieved by resorting to clause (7) of the Objects which authorises the Fund to concert such measures, as may from time to time be necessary, for the advancement of the Mahratta community in South India, and to do all such acts as may be necessary and conducive for effectually carrying out the objects of the Fund. All the works

relating to the promotion of Marathi and the social, recreational and literary activities of the Fund are placed in the hands of a member of the Managing Committee who is to devote his special attention to this work. In this work he is assisted by a Committee called the 'Language Committee' which is nominated by the Managing Committee of the Fund and works under its general control. The Language Section of the Fund has been for several years arranging periodical meetings, Marathi kirtans, debates and other functions whenever possible. These have been generally well attended and members have evinced much enthusiasm. In work of this kind there are many limitations of a practical character which must be remembered. Some years ago the Managing Committee of the Fund opened correspondence with the Headmaster of the Hindu High School, Triplicane, with a view to get a Marathi teacher appointed to impart instruction in Marathi as an Optional Vernacular in place of Tamil or Telugu in the IV, V, & VI Forms of the School. The arrangement suggested was that the Fund should initially pay the salary of a qualified Marathi teacher and after some time the educational department should be persuaded to make a special teaching grant to meet the whole or some part of the salary of the Marathi teacher. The Headmaster obtained the requisite statistical information. It was ascertained that Marathi-speaking pupils in the three higher forms were too few and even they were not prepared to give up Tamil as a Vernacular and study Marathi in its place. In the circumstances the Headmaster felt that there was no use in making an experiment and the idea was dropped.

The Fund has been maintaining a Marathi library in Triplicane and has been running a free reading room, where a few Marathi papers and journals are made available to the readers.

POLITICS, ETC

Another important provision in the Memorandum of Association is that the Fund shall not undertake any activity of a political character nor shall any part of its funds be utilised for such activities. This specific provision has made it easy for several Government servants to be members of the Fund and to take a prominent part in its activities.

THE SCHOOL IDEA

Successive Managing Committees of the Fund have had before them the idea of running an elementary school where Marathi instruction can be imparted to boys and girls as part of the school curriculum. At the 9th Annual meeting held in 1921 the Fund agreed to take over under its own management the Marathi School at Tanjore then managed by Messrs. T. Sambamurthi Rao, V. Malhari Rao and others on the distinct stipulation that the local gentlemen should form themselves into a Branch of the Mahratta Education Fund and be in management of the School on behalf of the Fund, and that the financial responsibility of the Fund should not in any event exceed 25 per cent of its net annual collections. At that stage our Tanjore members were unable to

shoulder the responsibility of managing the school; and it was naturally impossible for the Managing Committee of the Fund working at Madras to manage an institution at Tanjore without any recognised local branch to bear the responsibility and so the scheme had to be given up.

The Fund attempted the next best. In 1923 the Fund started the Mylapore Marathi Girls School. Pupils were taught only reading, writing and arithmetic in Marathi and the classes were held every Saturday and Sunday for two hours in the morning. The teaching was entirely in the hands of four ladies who were good enough to render voluntary service with great enthusiasm. The classes were held for the first few months at the residence of Mr. R. Vasudeva Rao, Kuteheri Road, Mylapore, and thereafter by the kind permission of the management at the premises of the National Girls High School in Mylapore. There were about 50 pupils attending the school and the children were greatly benefited. After 18 months of useful work the school had to be closed down as two of the lady teachers left Mylapore, and the remaining two found it difficult to continue their work on account of personal inconveniences.

The brief success of the school and the closing thereof in the above circumstances, made the Managing Committee think of acquiring a running school at Triplicane and providing therein instruction in Marathi for one hour a day and depending wholly on paid teachers. With this end in view negotiations were carried on with Mr. Sundararaja Rao, the Headmaster and Proprietor of the Sama Rao's Elementary School, Triplicane in the year 1930. Before the negotiations reached a definite stage, Mr. Sundararaja Rao died and the conversations were continued with his representatives. Arrangements were practically completed for the acquisition by the Fund of that school for the sum of Rs. 1,500 as a running institution; but unfortunately when the deed of conveyance was presented to the vendors for their signature they went back on the arrangement and wanted a much larger amount. On account of the uncertainty in the matter of teaching grants and the award of compensation for aided schools, the Fund was not in a position to take undue risks in the matter and they waited for a more propitious opportunity before they could take up that or any other school. In 1932, the Madras Elementary Education Act was suitably amended and schools were permitted to levy fees from pupils and rules regarding teaching grants were framed and published. The Fund began to consider the question of acquiring an existing school in Triplicane, as the Sama Rao's Elementary School had already passed into the hands of others.

While this was under contemplation, a new proposal came upon the scene. The following notice was issued by the signatories in a personal capacity without reference to any existing institution:—

“DEAR FRIEND,

We are calling a meeting of a few interested members of our community on Tuesday 16th instant at 5-30 p.m., at Sarada Hall, Triplicane, to discuss over a friendly cup of tea a scheme for

- (1) starting at first an Elementary Marathi School with the help of the Corporation of Madras,
- (2) conducting later on an Anglo-Marathi Middle School through private enterprise,
- (3) providing later still a local High School with the services of a qualified Marathi teacher.

We shall feel very grateful for your esteemed attendance and advice.

Yours in service,

T. A. RAMA RAO,
T. APPAJI RAO,
RAJARAM PINGLE,
KRISHNA BAI NIMBKAR."

Madras,
12—8—1932.

This notice was put in my hands at 4 p.m., on the very day of the meeting and I attended it. I explained to those assembled the facts relating to the repeated attempts of the Mahratta Education Fund to secure and to run a school at Triplicane with the object of imparting instruction in Marathi for one hour every day as part of the school time-table. Strong opinions were expressed on the part of some persons who were present, that any school that should be started, should be an exclusively Marathi School, imparting instruction in all subjects in the Marathi language without making any provision for teaching Tamil or Telugu. A very interesting debate then followed. I formulated the following objections to the proposal of a purely Marathi Elementary School :—

- (i) Government recognition will be difficult to obtain as there is no suitable inspecting staff with sufficient knowledge of Marathi.
- (ii) After the V Standard, pupils who pass out of the School will find it impossible to continue their Marathi studies for want of instructional facilities in the High Schools and it will not be possible or practicable for High Schools to make special arrangements to provide instruction in Marathi in all subjects in which instruction has to be imparted through the medium of the vernacular.
- (iii) In the keen struggle for existence, a good knowledge of the local vernacular is indispensable for young men and women domiciled in this province and exclusive instruction in Marathi will be found in the long run to be detrimental to their interests and will not give them the necessary equipment to survive in the struggle for existence.
- (iv) Parents living in and about Triplicane and willing to send their children to such a school will not be found in sufficiently large

numbers, to warrant the starting or the conducting of a school where the medium of instruction will be Marathi.

- v) The financial responsibility for the starting and the running of a school of the above character will be too heavy to be undertaken by the Mahratta Education Fund or by any other organisation working for the general advancement of the community.

It was therefore agreed that the requisite statistics should be collected and a proper budget framed before the subject could be further considered. So a committee was appointed to collect the necessary statistics and to frame a budget, showing the probable income and expenditure for the School. But unfortunately, the Committee did not function and therefore no report could be expected from them. Nearly two years elapsed and yet no report was placed before the community. In 1934 the Managing Committee of the Fund decided to acquire the S. S. Raghavendra Rao's Elementary School, at Triplicane, and the transfer of management was completed on 12-5-1934.

At the meeting of the Managing Committee held on 20-5-1934 the following resolutions were passed :—

“Resolved that the following School Committee be constituted to be in charge of the administration of the School under the general control of the Mahratta Education Fund :—

- (1) M.R.Ry. Rao Saheb T. K. Hanumantha Rao Avl., M.A., L.T., M.E.S., (*Chairman*).
- (2) Mr. E. Vinayaka Rao, (*Correspondent*).
- (3) Srimati N. Ammani Ammal M.A., L.T., *Asst. Professor of Physics*, Queen Mary's College, Madras, (*Hon. Secretary*).
- (4) Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao, B.A.
- (5) Mr. P. Subramanya Rao,
- (6) Sow. Rama Bai (Mrs. R. Krishna Rao), and
- (7) Srimathi Indira Bai, B.A., L.T.

Resolved that the affairs of the school be placed in the hands of the School Committee with effect from to-day, subject to such resolutions as may be passed by the Managing Committee of the Mahratta Education Fund, from time to time.”

The School receives a teaching grant of about Rs. 1,000 per annum from the Educational Department. There are now eight teachers in the School and five standards. One Marathi teacher is on the staff giving instruction in Marathi for about one period a day to every class. The School is located at No. 17, Parthasarathiswami Street, Triplicane, centrally situated with a large Marathi-speaking population around the school. The experience of the Fund

for the last 3½ years in the management of the school has been quite satisfactory and encouraging. The Fund is contemplating to make the school premises a suitable educational centre for the development of Marathi studies among adults also. Already, several of the periodical meetings and gatherings of the Fund are held in the premises of the School and the reading room of the Fund is located in the school building. The School requires a building of its own and there is every reason to hope that the community will give to this school all the material and moral support which it deserves.

AFFILIATION OF OTHER INSTITUTIONS

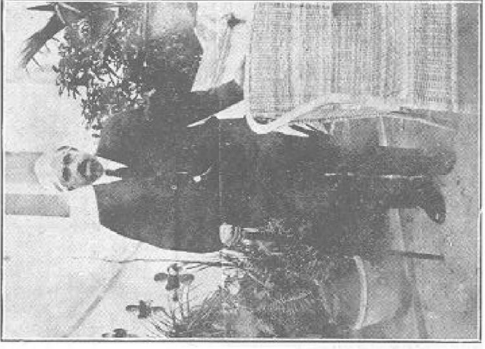
Being a Central Association organised on a Province wide basis, the Fund naturally desires to be linked to itself by bonds of mutual good-will and co-operation sister institutions concentrating on one or other objects of the Fund, whether working in the Metropolitan city or in the mofussil. For example, there may be a small boarding house for Marathi speaking children at a place like Proddatur. By that institution becoming affiliated to the Mahratta Education Fund it will have the advantage of its activities becoming better known to the members of the Fund and to the community at large through the annual reports regularly printed and circulated every year and through meetings and other means of publicity adopted by the Fund from time to time. The Fund will have the advantage of having a group of organised workers sympathising with the Mahratta Education Fund in its work and acting in consonance with its ideals and methods of work. The Fund recognises that every local institution which does any part of the work which is included among the objects of the Fund is to that extent promoting the work of the Fund for the benefit of the community. With this end in view, the rules provide that institutions whose objects are the same, as one or more of the objects of the Fund, may apply for affiliation to the Fund and that affiliated institutions may be given such grants-in-aid as may be deemed proper and under such conditions as may be fixed by the Managing Committee. This provision while strengthening the one central organisation of the community will give moral, and, to some extent, even material support to individual institutions working in different centres in co-operation with the Mahratta Education Fund.

BRANCHES OF THE FUND

The rules also provide for the constitution of Branches of the Mahratta Education Fund in different centres both within the City of Madras and outside. The rules provide for the constitution of a Local Committee and a Branch secretary to discharge such functions as may be allotted to the Branch by the Managing Committee from time to time. It is also provided that every Branch Secretary shall have notice of all meetings of the Managing Committee and the Board of Directors and he shall be entitled to attend any such meetings and to take part in the discussion without a right to vote. This will keep the Branches in intimate touch with the Managing Committee.



ANANDARAMA SRINIVASAN
B.A., B.L., M.A., LL. B.
B.A. Secy., L. & J. Sect., Madras.
President, M. E. F. 1932-36



DEWAR BAHADUR T. BHUJANGA RAO, M.A., B.L.
B.A. Secy., L. & J. Sect., Bangalore
Vice-President, M. E. F. 1936-



Arni SUBBA RAO, B.A.,
Retd. Supt. of Police, Madras,
Vice-President, M. E. F. 1920-23



T. JIVAJI RAO, B.A., B.L.,
Ag. Dist. & Sessions Judge,
Vice-President, M. E. F. 1920-27

Such branches are now functioning at Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Coimbatore, Cuddappah and Bombay. It is hoped that in other centres also branches will soon begin to function.

VI

A FEW DEPARTED FRIENDS

It is appropriate to refer to the valuable work done by a few of the important office-bearers of the Fund who are not with us now to enjoy the Silver Jubilee Celebrations.

Rao Saheb P. Ramachandra Rao, B.A., was the first Vice-President of the Fund and he held office from 1912 to 1920. In his death in 1920, the Fund sustained a serious loss. I must acknowledge with gratitude the great affection and kindness which he always showed me personally and to the Fund. He was a man of great moral earnestness, probity of thought, unsullied character and integrity. He never spared himself or others in the proper discharge of duties undertaken. A man of cool and calm judgment, he had the courage of his convictions sublimated with a passionate idealism and he always did what he conceived to be right without being deflected by any fear of the consequences. His association with the Fund in the first eight years was an asset of inestimable value. It is a source of joy and strength to us to find that the members of his family continue to give to the Fund the same enthusiastic support.

Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswamy Rao, C.I.E., the first President of the Fund, remained in office for eleven years from 1912 to 1923, when he died. I must here record my deep debt of affection and gratitude to him. I still remember the way in which he listened to me in 1912 when I had more than one interview with him at his residence in connection with my proposals for the preliminary meeting held on 15th September 1912. I remember equally vividly with gratitude the very kind terms in which he proposed me as the first Honorary Secretary of the Fund on 15-9-1912. I was then only 21 and I felt somewhat diffident to accept the very heavy responsibility. He and Rao Saheb P. Ramachandra Rao pressed me to accept the office without any hesitation and said that I began with the blessings of two old men and promised to give me all their support and advice. To-day after 25 years, I realise that the blessings of those pious and great souls have been potent indeed. I learnt a great deal sitting at their feet. If Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunatha Rao influenced me in certain directions, Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao influenced me in certain other directions with equal and lasting effect. The Fund owes much to its first President. Of a conservative and God-fearing temperament, his very presence at any meeting created a spiritual atmosphere. His transparent sincerity and ever kind and affectionate speech touched the hearts of every one present. In his presence there was no question of any angry discussion or exhibition of any personal vanity or ill-temper. At no meeting have I seen him frown or say an angry word. He was an ideal President for any social service organisation. He gave a

real spiritual touch to all our proceedings and placed the Fund's work on a high level of moral elevation and purposefulness. The poor scholarship-holder was not a needy boy requiring a few rupees but was a soul struggling for expansion under grave handicaps, to assist whom was to please yourself and to please God. I am painfully aware that sometimes our workers have fallen short of this high standard. I may be permitted to say that whenever I become personally aware of such a deviation in me or in my co-workers, I have made every effort in my power to set the correct level again. The next contribution of his to the Fund as a renowned administrator is naturally the high level of efficiency which he has taught the Fund to maintain since its inception. While he forgot nothing, he was ready to forgive all. Only a man of his culture and spiritual ripeness could practise that rare virtue. Lesser men can only admire from a distance and strive to rise to that level in the fulness of time.

Dewan Bahadur R. Ramachandra Rao succeeded Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao on the latter's demise in 1923. The second President of the Fund was a radical and a democrat by temperament and very different from the first President. For some time he had kept away from the movement holding that his national outlook was not consistent with his associating himself with any sectional or communal movement. I had several interviews with him before I could convince him and enrol him as a life-member of the Fund. He had some hesitation before he could accept the Presidentship of the Fund in 1923. When he was convinced, he rightly agreed to be the President of the Fund. He insisted upon the Committee meetings being held at the office of the Fund, which was the humble residence of its Secretary. His long administrative career continued to influence the work of the Fund in the direction of further efficiency.

Mr. C. Bheema Rao was one of those that attended the first meeting on 15th September 1912. He had been once, one of the active members of the Maharashtra Sabha, Triplicane. He was a cousin of mine, several years older than myself. He had much personal affection for me and immense faith in the schemes formulated for the establishment of the Fund. He agreed to be the Treasurer of the Fund. As Treasurer he set up a very high standard of efficiency which happily has been maintained by his successors in office. Though he was only a Treasurer, he placed his services unreservedly at our disposal and did a great many things involving very heavy work for popularising the ideals of the Fund and establishing it on firm foundations.

When I look back over 25 years, I recall to my mind the names of many good and kind friends who co-operated with the Fund and made its work so successful and who unfortunately are not with us to-day to participate in the joys of the Silver Jubilee Celebration. To recount in detail their names and their work will make this article too long. In the name of the community and on its behalf I shall only say here that the Fund will be for ever grateful to those good and active men and women for all that they have done to the Fund.



Dharmaseela Rao Bahadur
KHAJANA YENKOBA RAO, Land-holder, Madura,
Vice-President, M. E. F. 1927—28



Rao Sahel T. SAMBAMURTI RAO, B.A., B.L.,
Advocate, Tanjore, Vice-President
M. E. F. 1928-33



Rao Sahel C. PURUSHOTHAMA RAO,
B.Ed., Excise Inspector, Rajahmundry,
Vice-President, M. E. F. 1933-36

I have received the greatest kindness and support from my friends and supporters of the Fund who are happily with us to-day. It will be invidious to mention any names. Let me only say that the very valuable work done by these tried and steadfast friends of the Fund has taken the Fund to the stage of its Silver Jubilee ; and God willing, with their continued support, the Fund will reach the Golden Jubilee and the Diamond Jubilee as well in course of time and many of our friends who are to-day rejoicing on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee will live to see and rejoice over the later jubilees as well.

CONCLUSION

The work of the Fund has not been altogether a bed of roses. Controversies there have been and some times they have been quite heated, the protagonists of different viewpoints taking very strong views and giving expression to them in equally strong words. As the Honorary Secretary and therefore the chief executive worker of the Fund I have been obliged to protect with the utmost vigilance and enthusiasm the interests of the Fund ; and in doing so, I have always made every effort to be as impersonal as possible and to deal only with the differences in principle and in the methods of work or methods of controversy. I have given as Appendix A to this article the Twenty-fifth Annual Balance Sheet of the Fund which presents to the public the result of the Fund's work for the last 25 years. Appendix B is the comparative statement of the progress of the Fund for the first twenty-five years, giving every material information under important heads. As a central organisation incorporated under the Societies Registration Act, supported and backed up by the illustrious men and women who have worked as office-bearers, and with the loyal and grateful support of a body of nearly 100 past scholarship-holders who are keenly alive to what the Fund has done for them and what they should in return do for the Fund, the future of the Fund is assured indeed. In writing this history of the Fund, I have made every effort to record truly and faithfully all the material and relevant facts in a dispassionate manner. If any critic should feel that I have fallen short of the ideal set to myself, I would implore him to attribute the deficiency only to my pen and not to my heart. To me the work of the Fund has brought spiritual solace and I cannot adequately describe how much I owe to the Fund for the continued joy and spiritual comfort I have received in the discharge of my duties as the Fund's Secretary. It is a source of even greater joy that many other co-workers have been also sharing with me the same feelings. With the continued services of tried and trusted workers, I pray that the Fund should grow in usefulness and the Mahratta community in South India should continue to give the Fund their utmost material and moral support and rally round it in a spirit of faith and hope for the lasting benefit of the whole community.

Our programme might seem ambitious, our work so far might not have come up to our expectations ; but we continue our work in a spirit of hope and faith. May God bless this humble attempt to better our community !

APPENDIX A

The Mahratta Education Fund, Madras

Balance Sheet as at 30th June, 1937.

		RS. A. P.		RS. A. P.	
LIABILITIES:				ASSETS:	
ENDOWMENTS:				SCHOLARSHIPS:	
Kanchi Laxmi Bai	1,060 0 0			Balance as per last Balance Sheet	15,844 8 7
Add Interest	63 8 0			Amount paid during the year	779 0 0
	1,123 8 0			Interest Charged	736 2 11
					17,359 11 6
Less CONTRIBUTIONS:				Less amount re-	
Scholarship	60 0 0			funded during	
Subscription	2 8 0			the year	333 5 4
	62 8 0			Amount written	
		1,060 0 0		off as irrec-	
				vable	60 0 0
					393 5 4
					17,066 6 2
BANGANATHA RAO MEMORIAL FUND:				INVESTMENTS:	
Add Interest	1,040 0 0			3 per cent 1896-97 G. P. Notes	1,400 0 0
	43 0 0			5 per cent 1935-44 G. P. Notes of the face value of Rs. 4,600	4,439 0 0
	1,083 0 0			6½ per cent 1940 Mysore Bonds	1,000 0 0
				4 per cent 1960-70 G. P. Notes	5,500 0 0
Less CONTRIBUTIONS:				P. O. Cash Certificates at Cost	2,561 3 0
Scholarship	nil				
Subscription	3 0 0				
	3 0 0				
ANANDA RAO FUND:					
Balance as per last Balance Sheet	5,068 3 2				
Add Interest	244 0 0				
	5,312 3 2				
Less Scholarship awarded	295 0 0				
	5,017 3 2				

SOUTH INDIAN MAHARASHTRIANS

14,900 3 0

SCHOOL DONATIONS:				
T. Rangasami Rao (Executor under his will)	1,000 0 0			250 0 0
R. Krishna Rao	250 0 0	1,350 0 0		6,172 4 1
SCHOOL ENDOWMENTS:				
See the list of Messrs. R. H. Rangas Rao and R. H. Ramachandra Rao	1,000 0 0			9,317 0 0
BUILDING FUND as per last B/S	500 0 0	1,500 0 0		2 14 9
INTEREST SUSPENSE				231 3 6
P. E. FUND as per last B/S	32,666 5 6			253 11 6
Add amount transferred	554 9 6			32 8 0
Excess of Income over Expenditure	500 0 2			
Less Irrecoverable	33,730 15 2			
SILVER JUBILEE FUND	60 0 0	33,650 15 2		
Less amount expended during the year	646 8 0			554 2 2
	149 11 11	496 13 1		2,951 13 9
Total Rs.	45,557 6 6			111 7 1
				9,617 6 0

(EXAMINED AND FOUND CORRECT)

No. 6, Erralala Chettu St., Madras,
9th September, 1937.

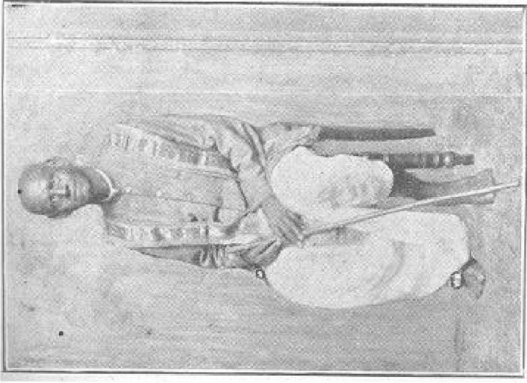
(Sd. K. GOPALAKRISHNA RAO,
Registered Accountant and Auditor.

Total Rs. 45,557 5 6

APPENDIX B
Comparative Statement of the Progress of the Fund

Year.	No. of members on 31st July.		Subscription.		Scholarships refunded.		Scholarships awarded.		No. of Scholar-shippers on 31st July.
	Local	Mofussal.	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.	
1912-13	60	60	499	1 8			69	0 0	3
1913-14	70	63	662	6 8			300	3 0	5
1914-15	64	58	581	1 10			510	0 0	6
1915-16	66	72	630	5 9			310	4 0	9
1916-17	86	84	619	14 3			583	4 0	10
1917-18	90	99	648	14 4			702	12 0	8
1918-19	82	121	521	2 9	2	0 0	447	6 0	6
1919-20	93	129	583	14 10	53	12 0	370	4 0	6
1920-21	94	157	783	0 2	33	8 0	603	8 0	6
1921-22	106	171	624	13 3	39	12 0	506	12 0	6
1922-23	104	177	446	6 6	187	0 0	524	8 0	8
1923-24	112	199	673	15 0	392	12 0	680	0 0	10
1924-25	119	263	868	15 6	1,234	9 0	1,234	9 0	14
1925-26	157	305	913	3 0	306	4 0	1,398	0 0	14
1926-27	163	327	783	1 3	270	9 0	1,426	0 0	14
1927-28	164	337	635	13 6	725	3 0	1,335	0 0	14
1928-29	176	377	631	4 9	931	9 0	1,375	8 0	15
1929-30	173	384	490	2 0	490	0 0	1,204	0 0	13
1930-31	159	386	486	5 0	547	1 5	1,162	8 0	11
1931-32	144	339	380	2 0	463	2 8	1,345	0 0	13
1932-33	143	334	354	5 0	363	10 1	1,070	0 0	9
1933-34	153	332	261	4 6	491	9 0	992	0 0	11
1934-35	158	337	368	1 0	389	4 0	601	0 0	6
1935-36	*45	*9	233	9 0	236	8 0	410	0 0	6
1936-37	+81	+106	268	7 6	233	5 4	779	0 0	8

(c) There are also 8 Patrons and 58 Life-members; and 25 members have made past payments for Life-membership.



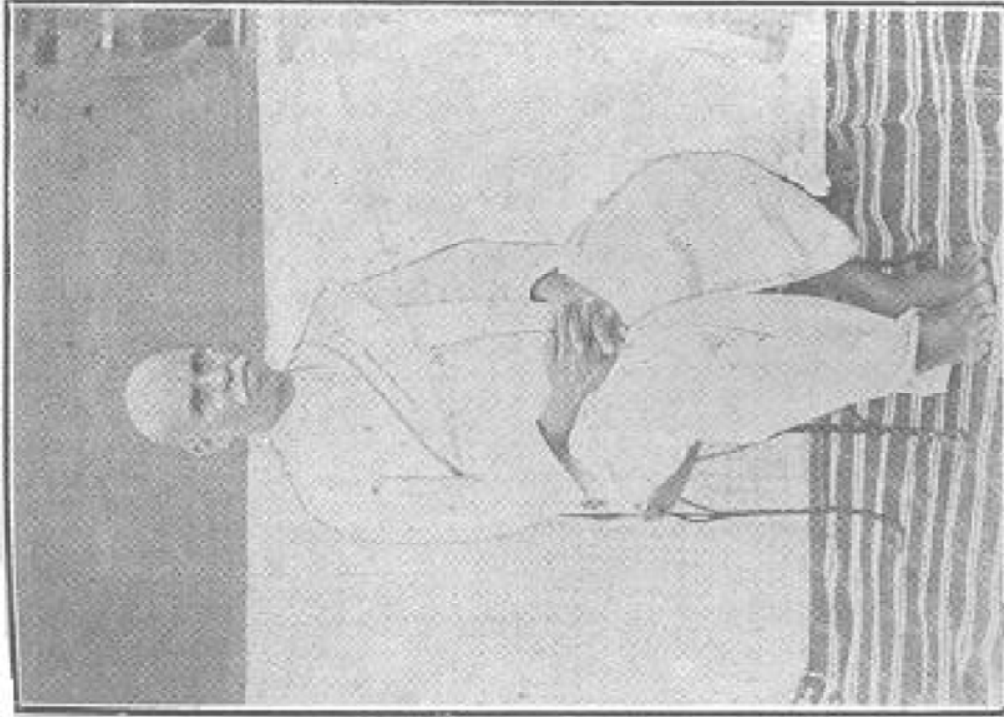
T. T. BHAVANISWAMI RAO, B.A., L.T.,
Member, First Managing Committee,
1913-15



R. KRISHNA RAO, B.A., B.L.,
Advocate, Madras
First Treasurer, M. E. F. 1912-18



T. RANGASWAMI RAO,
Cashier, Volkart Bros., Madras
Patron, M. E. F.



T. S. LAKSHMANA RAO,
Park Overseer, Mysore
Patron, M. E. F.