



Mr. JOSEPH VELLAPALLY

(Dr. P. J. Thomas M. A., Ph. D., D. Lit)

(1879 — 1943)

I had the privilege of knowing Mr. Vellapally fairly intimately. Although there was a wide gulf between him and me in age, his uncommon affability and genuine interest in younger persons made it possible for me to enjoy an abiding friendship with him; it was sustained by many common interests, social, religious, economic and literary. I have had the good fortune of mixing with men of many races and diverse walks of life, but few that I could place on the level of the late Mr. Vellapally. His versatile gifts, his generous social enthusiasms, his delicate literary appreciations and a hospitality overflowing with mirth and humour, marked him off from his contemporaries. Professional interests engross the lives of most men and they have no time left to enquire into the welfare of others, muchless to lend them a helping hand. The founder of the premier legal firm, Messers. V. J. Joseph and Markos, must have been busier than most of us in professional life; yet he found time to take a keen interest in his fellowmen. This manifested itself most in his meritorious activities for the improvement of his own village of Perur. Before his time, Perur was a sequestered hamlet like any other in those parts; he modernised it by developing its communications, by starting schools and by giving people new interests and raising their living standards. He had a marvellous knowledge of civil engineering; he personally planned the construction of houses and bridges, the opening of roads, &c. His

remarkable artistic sense could be seen in the planning and location of his houses, their furnishing, &c. His hill bungalow at Mannamala (now owned by his son James) is exquisite in its design and execution. He was a great enthusiast for sanitation; he took an apostolic interest in the use of bore-hole latrines. The welfare of Perur was always in his mind and there is every justification for raising a fitting monument for him there.

സജാതോയേന ജാതേന

യതിവംശഃ സമുന്നതിഃ.

പരിവർത്തിനി സംസാരേ

മൃതഃ കോവാ നജായതേ.

His interest in fellow beings was not confined to mere words or easy deeds as in the case of most others; it was an abiding interest and was all-comprehensive. India is often called a land of hospitality and neighbourliness; the recipients of hospitality, however, are almost invariably near relations (mostly 'in law') and castemen. Mr. Vellapally was a notable exception to this; he cultivated friendships far outside his community; in fact religious or communal cleavages, even social differences, mattered to him little. Nor was this for securing political popularity or economic ends, as is common in these time-serving days; his was a deep human interest, reinforced no doubt by the divine example and precepts of his Master. His religion too was not of the demonstrative kind. All ceremonial left him cold, but the sonorous words

of the Sermon on the Mount always stuck to his mind and inspired his daily dealings with fellowmen. And, let us note, this is the highest religion.

He had a deep and sincere interest in Malayalam poetry. He used to spend hours in reciting and explaining Malayalam poems. I had the privilege of joining this conversation occasionally. It was Mr. Vellapally who directed my attention to the high literary merits of Kumaran Asan's poems, to the overflowing humanitarianism of Asan's ideas, to the interesting historical allusions in early Malayalam works like *ഉണ്ണികുമാരൻ*, and not least to the beautiful ballads and plays sung and enacted at Syrian Christian (especially Knanayas) weddings in former days. He was greatly responsible for the revival of the Margom Kali play which is much allied to the wellknown Kathakali. It was largely under Mr. Vellapally's influence that I gave a prominent place to these folk songs in my book on the "Christian literature of Kerala".

His was a complete life. Home was the centre of it, with all its cares, joys, worries. Deeply devoted to his family, he strived hard to create at his home an environment of culture, benevolence and neighbourliness. In his closing years, he stuck to his Perur house, on the banks of the Meenachil River hard by the ancient Bhagavathy temple, whose legends he was never tired of narrating. The surroundings are almost arcadian - shady gardens studded with spreading cocoanut trees and strewn with cool plantain foliage, a beautiful river with a bathing ghat reminding one of the famous Alwaye spa. I had the good fortune of being in his delightful company on the day before he died. I had met him after a long absence away in North India. We recounted many things on that occasion. He appeared to be in the best of health. We planned many trips together as usual, but they were not destined to be carried out. *Fiat Voluntas Tua.*

New Delhi,
15th March 1945

WITH THE BEST COMPLIMENTS
FROM

ALEMBIC CHEMICAL WORKS CO., LTD.,
BARODA - 3.

Leading Manufacturers of Ethical Pharmaceuticals,
Antibiotics, Home Products and Chemicals.

DIVISION OFFICE
XXVII / 587 Thevara Road,
Ernakulam, Cochin 16.

Gram : Alembic

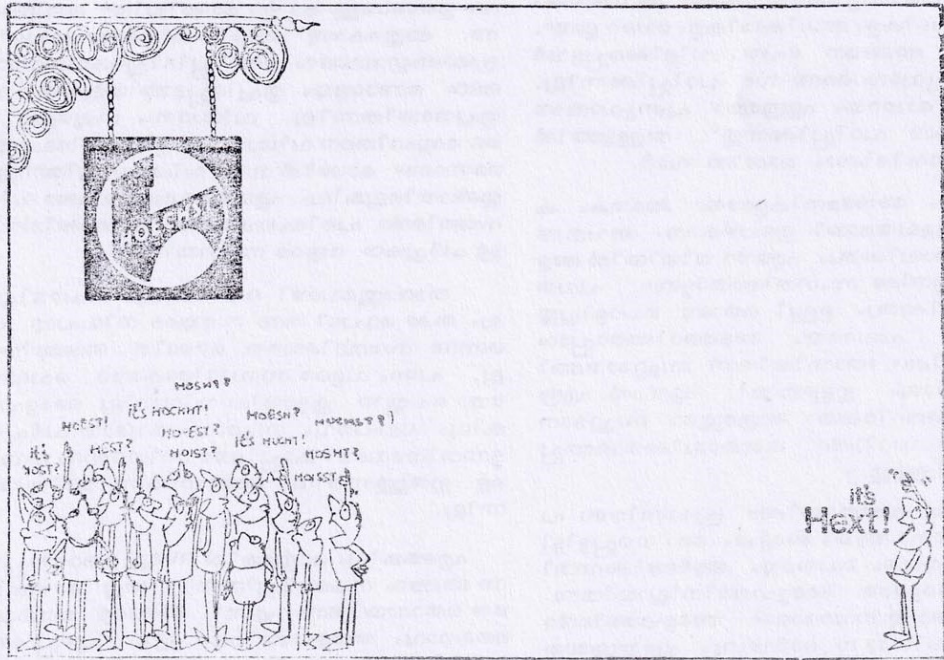
Phone : 31822

വൈദികർ പലരുണ്ടു്. പക്ഷേ അൽമേനികൾ വളരെക്കുറവു് തോന്നുന്നില്ല.

തത്വങ്ങൾ അറിഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്നതിനേക്കാൾ എത്രയോ പ്രയാസമാണു പ്രവൃത്തികൊണ്ടു് അവയിലുള്ള വിശ്വാസം തെളിയിക്കുന്നതു്. മാക്കീലിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ഇക്കാര്യത്തിലും വിട്ടുവീഴ്ചയില്ലായിരുന്നു. തന്റെ വിശ്വാസമനുസരിച്ച ജീവിക്കുവാൻ അദ്ദേഹം സർവാത്മനാ സദാനേരവും ശ്രമിച്ചിരുന്നു. തത്വപ്രഭാഷകർ എന്തൊക്കെ പറഞ്ഞാലും ഒറിജിനൽ കോർട്ടിലെ അഭിഭാഷവൃത്തിയും മന:സാക്ഷിശുദ്ധതയും ഒരുമിച്ചു കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നതു് ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുള്ള കാര്യമാണെന്നു് അന്ദവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളവർക്കൊക്കെ അറിയാം. ക്രൈസ്റ്റിന്റെ വിജയത്തിനും കക്ഷിയുടെ കാര്യലാഭത്തിനും വേണ്ടി പല കള്ളത്തരങ്ങൾക്കും അഭിഭാഷകൻ കൂട്ടനിൽക്കുകയോ മനാനുവാദം നൽകുകയോ ചെയ്യാണ്ടിവരും. അറിഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടു് മാക്കീൽസാർ ഇതൊന്നും സമ്മതിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല. കത്തോലിക്കാ സമുദായത്തിലെ കഴിവുറ്റ ആദ്യകാല അഭിഭാഷകന്മാരിൽ ഒരാളായിരുന്നെങ്കിലും മാറ്റ ചിലരേപ്പോലെ പ

ണമോ പ്രാമാണ്യമോ നേടാൻ മാക്കീലിനു കഴിയാതെ വന്നതിന്റെ രഹസ്യം ഇതാണു്. അതു് എങ്ങനെ ആയാലും ഒരു കാര്യം തീർച്ചപറയാൽ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. മാക്കീൽസാറിനേപ്പോലെ ഹൃദയശുദ്ധതയുള്ളവനും, കത്തോലിക്കാസഭയേയും സമുദായത്തേയും അറിഞ്ഞു സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നവനും, രണ്ടിനുംവേണ്ടി നിസ്വാർത്ഥമായി നിലകൊള്ളുന്നവനുമായ മറ്റൊരാൾ അൽമേനീ പ്രമുഖനെ എനിക്കു കണ്ടുമുട്ടുവാൻ ഇടയായിട്ടില്ല. ചിലർക്കു കത്തോലിക്കാ പ്രാമാണികത്വമുണ്ടു്. പക്ഷേ അറിവും വിശ്വാസവും നിസ്വാർത്ഥതയും ആ പ്രാമാണികത്വത്തിനു് അനുസൃതമായി കാണുകയില്ല. വേറെ ചിലരാവട്ടെ, കേവലം കപട ഭക്തന്മാരും കള്ളപ്രമാണികളുമാണു്. സ്വന്തം കാര്യലാഭത്തിനുവേണ്ടി സഭയേയും സമുദായത്തേയും ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നതു മാത്രമാണു് അവരുടെ ലക്ഷ്യം. ഇത്തരക്കാരെ നാം എത്ര അടുത്തറിയുന്നോ അത്രയ്ക്കു വെറുപ്പാണു നമുക്കുണ്ടാവുക. എന്നാൽ മാക്കീൽ സാറിനെ എത്ര അടുത്തറിയുന്നോ അത്രയ്ക്കു ബഹുമാനമാണു നമുക്കു തോന്നുക.

WITH THE BEST COMPLIMENTS OF



HOECHST PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED

AHMEDABAD • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA • DELHI • MADRAS • KATHMANDU