

11 OCT 1949

373, Rastaspeth,
Poona City,
Poona.
4th October 1949.

Sir,

Your very kind letter dated 2nd September 1949 to hand. Need I say I am filled with extreme delight at the thought of your impending visit to Poona, and the joyous prospect of meeting you here? I shall be very thankful, if you so care for me as to send me an advance intimation of the date of your likely visit to Bombay and Poona so that I may be able to meet you and pay my humble respects to you.

I have since shifted to Rastaspeth, in view of its proximity to the Saraswathi Vidyalaya where my children are studying.

I am interested in Divya Prabandham and have translated also some portions therefrom. I am sending herewith some translations which had appeared previously in "Triveni" for your kind perusal. Probably you may be reading the Introduction to "Thiruppavai" which is appearing in "Sri Ramanujan". Although I am in no way qualified for the task, I have ~~written~~ undertaken the work of translation purely in a spirit of love.

I am also sending you copies of "Bhakthan", another Tamil journal published at Madras, and hope you may find it interesting.

With my best regards, *and humble salutations,*

P. S.

The delay in reply is regretted, and is due to the time taken to get the matter typed.

Yours obediently,

S. Rangaswami

(S. RANGASWAMI)

HYMNS TO THE CONCH OF THE SEA.

(Rendered from Sri Andal's "Nachiyar Tirumozhi".)

(The following are translations from the hymns of a great Tamil Poetess - called Alvars. She was herself the daughter of a poet, Vishnuchittan by name, popularly known as Peri-Alvar. Born of a poetic race whose inheritance was divine wisdom, pure and undefiled, every trite object in Nature called forth a burst of song from her wondering, worshipful heart. And the critics have truly said of her immortal songs that they who sing them not, are a burden to the earth. The conch which Vishnu wields in His left hand is an endearing theme of loving praise and ~~sweet~~ sweet jealousy on the part of Andal whose one aspiration was to wed none but Lord Vishnu. The Conch, white and pure, is symbolical of spiritual bliss compared with which all earthly and even heavenly riches pale into utter insignificance.)

i

Camphor - like do they smell?...or like lotus-blossom?
His beloved coral lips---are they so very sweet to kiss?
I long to hear thee sing His praise.
Bright Conch of the sea! tell me true.

ii

Beauteous Conch! Resting like the full orb
Of the moon in His hand, what secrets
Dost thou whisper in His listening ears?
What is Indra's wealth, matched with thine?.....

iii

Drinking nectar like a swan from
A roseate lotus, just then blown, thou dost
Rest sweetly in the fair hand of my beloved.
Kingly Conch! Full of beauty is thy wealth divine.

(1)
C O M P A S S I O N.

(Published in "Triveni" February 1938)

By Thirumangai Alwar.

(Prince Ramachandra's fraternal compassion towards Guha, the low-born boatswain, stirs Poet Thirumangai Alwar's emotions. He sings that Rama's classic words proclaiming equality of price with peasant as narrated in the Ramayana still ring in his ears and form the keynote of his devotion to God whose companionship with the peer and the low is illustrated typically in His avatar as Sri Ramachandra.)

You never said (to Guha) "Peer art thou, stranger and low - born." -- you pitied him, your mercy welling forth free.

Joyously did you speak, "This gazelle - eyed fair young one is dear sister to thee; this, my brother, is thy brother. Friend art thou to me; here abide"

These words lingering sweet in my musing heart, O Thou Ocean - Hued!, thy feet, twain have I adored, dear my Lord of Srirangam's graceful grove.

THE FORSAKEN MOTHER.

By Thirumangai Alwar.

(Published in "Triveni" for 4/38)

(God is verily a stealer of souls. The heart attuned to Him in silent meditation through bhakti finds Him sooner than the mind with all its wealth of knowledge. But the cultured mind alone is the heart's true mother, and therefore rejoices when, out of loves abundance, the heart surrenders itself to God. The moment is tense and tearful. Thirumangai Alwar depicts the forsaken mother's anxiety, when swayed alike by fear and love, she witnesses her daughter eloping with God, and deserting her-- the mother who had fondly brought her up. The symbolism is rich and beautiful.)

(1)

Was He a thief? - I know not., Black of form,
Like a bull, He came.

He beckoned to my young dear (of a girl)
- frail as a creeper, - slender-waisted, -
touching her wrist silver-bangled.

And lo! she deserted me, her own mother.
Dear! Have they fled to fair 'Ali' where flowers
in wet fields blossom sweet?

(2)

Dear girl! To be sure, a thieving shepher^ed
He was of yore.

Entering my house unbidden, He pressed a
kiss upon my daughter's fair red lips.

And loving, she followed Him, prattling
sweet like a parrot, - her wistful fish-like
eyes sparkling bright.

Dear! Have they fled to wet Ali's
sea-girt groves where the bees abide?

(3)

Pity me her mother she did not.

Deeming the wondrous Madhava to be
her spouse, this broad-shouldered girl had
forsaken me.

Her arms, waving like the bamboo
astir in the breeze, - she has followed Him
with the gait of a female swan.

Dear! Has my flowering creeper
entered into 'Ali' where streamlets abound ?
