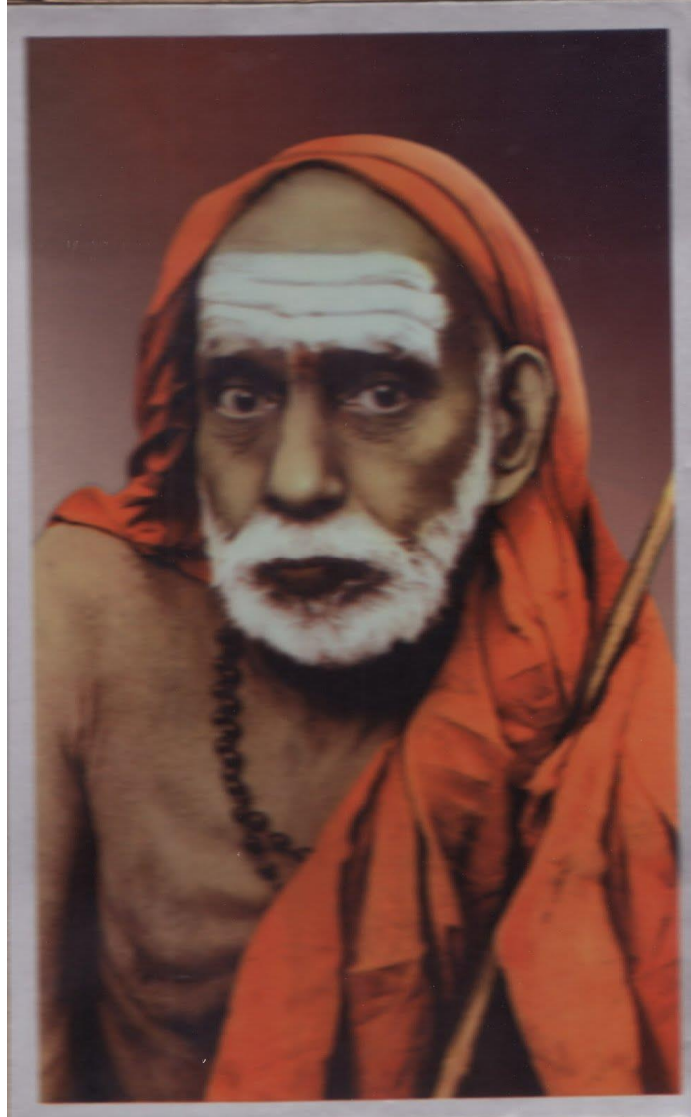


Kanchi Paramacaharya



Telugu original: **R. Sreeramulu**

Translation : **V. V. B. Rama Rao**

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Felicitation

In explaining the glory and the grandeur of the ancient Vedic dharma and elucidating clearly that modern culture is not disparate or different from the ancient faith the Swami, Kanchi Paramayacharya is the one who won people's hearts all over.

The Paramacharya was extraordinarily skilled in the use of seventeen languages. The sage, saint and divine are without pride, ego, or any lapse. He is totally devoted to the deity. He is ever joyful never wavering or changeful. The numerous books written about his speeches and his personality stand testimony to the Paramachary's divine knowledge and wisdom.

There is no aspect which the sage, saint and divine left untouched. The happiness of the millions of his devotees, reveals his wide influence over people. People believed that they were granted their prayers and found fulfillment of their desires.

How can I ever compare that divine with anyone else? He is comparable only to himself. For the likes of me everything is present in this sage, saint and divine known simply as *the Paramacharya*.

This slender volume is valuable reading to all who desire to know something about this divine known as the walking god.

Revered Sri Sreeramulu Garu deserves acclaim for his work.

With salutations

Shyam Charan
Sri Samardha Baba Dhyana Nilayam
Plot No 48, H.No.28/ 773C
NGO Colony,
Nandyal - 518 502 (Kurnool Dt).

RUSHI PEETHAM

Samavedam Shanmukha Sarma
Founder Editor and Chairman
15th November, 2010

Among the Acharya incarnations of Parama Shiva the sage, saint and divine Sri Sri Sri Chandra Sekharendra Saraswati Swami's divine form is the most sublime and delectable.

Many are the devotees of this form of Sri Dakshinamurty

My dear one, Sri Ravinutala Sreeramulu garu expressed his total devotion to the divine through this book.

To the writer Sri Sreeramulu garu who unveiled this as an essence, explaining in a slender volume, I offer my salutations with gratitude.

Samavedam Shanmukha Sarma

KANCHIPURAM

Among the seven cities for (of) salvation, Kanchipuram is the only one in the south. This city is called Kanjeevaram too. This ancient city is praised as the best of the cities as Kanchi, the city.

This city is famous for pure silk saris called Kanchipuram saris since several centuries.

This city has importance for both the Shaivites and Vaishnavates. The region where Sri Varadaraja Swami is worshipped is known as Vishnu Kanchi and the area where Ekaamranadha is worshipped is known as Siva Kanchi

The presiding deity of Kanchi is Kamakshidevi. Kanchi Kamakshi, Mathura Meenakshi and Kasi Visalakshi are gold carried in the item of clothes, very valuable and ever within reach.

It is worth noting that the Shiva pilgrimage centers which are habitats for the five elements are in the southern part of our country.

As *Jyothirlingam* in Arunachalam, *Vayulingam* in Kalahasti, *Akasalingam* in Chindabaram, *Jalalingam* in Jambukeswaram, *Pruthvilingam* is there in Kanchi. For this reason being a *Pruthvi lingam*, water is not offered to the *linga* here and there is no *lingabhishekam*.

Legend has that this *Pruthvilingam* was worshipped and personally set by Parvathidevi herself. The Mango tree in the compound of this temple offers fruits with four different tastes. This has been the belief down the ages. Kanchipuram, renowned as a *puranic* place of pilgrimage even before the Christian era has become world renowned with Adi Sankara starting the Sarvajana Peetham here.

Beginning with Adi Sankara the lineage came under Sri Chandra Sekharendra Saraswati as the 68th *peethadhipathi* in the first half of the 20th century.

This pontiff's dedication and commitment to tapas and performances of divine duty made people remember Adi Sankara himself. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the one who founded Banaras Hindu University, while felicitating and honoring this pontiff said: "With your *darshan*, the feeling of dissatisfaction I had of not having seen Adi Sankara is removed."

EARLY LIFE BEFORE ASCETICISM

In Villipuram in Tamilnadu the little baby born on 21st May 1894 to the couple Subrahmanya sastri and Mahalakshmi was named The Swaminatha Sastri who was earlier an *adhyapak* (Teacher) at Kumbakonam was promoted as a school supervisor. He worked for thirty years in Villipuram, Chindambaram, Tindivanam and other places. For Swaminathan his father Subrahmanya Sastri was his teacher. He was also the very first preceptor or Guru for his son.

Sastri had a lawyer as a good friend. Once he came to Sastri's house. Sastri gave him the little boy Swaminathan's horoscope asking him to take a look at it. The lawyer carefully examined it and asked his friend to get him a tumbler of water. He washed the boy's feet with the water and the parents of the boy were struck with surprise. "This boy would be a world preceptor, *Jagadaguru*. By then I would not be alive. So, I have offered my salutations and obeisance now itself."

At Tindivanam, Swaminathan was admitted in the second form. In the year 1905 the boy's *upanayanam* (thread ceremony) was performed. The boy came first in all examinations. While in Form IV he played the role of Prince Arthur in Shakespeare's play and got the appreciation of the audience.

The 66th pontiff (*Peethaadhhipathi*) of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam used to go for his *sanchara* in south Arcot district. Sastri used to take his son for a *darshan* of the *Peethadhipathi*. The boy's brilliant face used to attract the divine. He must have decided in his heart that the boy must be the pontiff.

The 67th pontiff (who was related to Swaminathan) passed away a few years after his ascending the throne. It necessitated Swaminathan's selection urgently.

Once while Sastri was in camp at Tiruchi he got a telegram from Kanchi from the Swami asking him to come to Kanchi along with his son.

The boy's mother came from Kanchipuram along with her son to go to Kalavai. As soon as the two came there the boy Swaminathan was taken to the office of the *peetham* in a horse drawn carriage. At the ashram a mason told the boy "You cannot go back home any more. You have to spend all your life here." The boy Swaminathan fell in a thought as to which job would be assigned to him and spent his time praying to Ram.

When the mother reached Kalavai she found that her son's head was tonsured (shaved) and he was made to wear saffron clothing. She felt grieved.

On 13th February 1907, according to the fixed programme, Swaminathan emerged as the 68th pontiff Chandra Sekharendra Saraswati.

The boy parents were consoled and sent back home. For some time the Swami got trained in the activities of the mutt. In the mutt at Kumbakonam, the Swami got training in Vedas and Sastras.

In April 1907, the Swami embarked in proper *laanchchanas*, forms of dignity, to Kumbakonam. For three days beginning on 9, May 1907, the Swami was greatly honoured. Vedic scholars, great and renowned musicians, ruling government officers, the representatives of the queen of Tanjore, citizens and devotees participated in making obeisance to the Swami.

At the same time in Tiruvainakkal (Jambukeswaram) extensive repairs were made to Jambukeswara temple. For the first time Adi Sankara decorated the Goddess with *tatankas*, ear studs, when they have to be changed the honor came to the pontiffs down the centuries.

The Swami reached Jambukesharam a few days earlier. Going to the temple for *darshan* he observed carefully all the *homas*, fire rituals, performed there.

On the 6th of February 1908 in the temple of Akhilandeshwari in Jambukeswaram *kumbhahishekam* was performed in the Swami's presence.

This is the very first important programme in which the Swami took part. During 1909-10 the Swami learnt the Vedas and *shastras* under Mahamahopadhyaya Subaiah Sastri, Painganadu Panchapakesha Sastri, Sai Sasty of Vishnupuram and Mahamahopadhyaya Karamgulam Krishna Sastri.

During that time thousands of disciples had the *darshan* of the Swami and they were blessed.

For more extensive study the Swami reached Mahendra Mangalam in Tiruchirapalli district and spent time there between 1911 and 1915. Besides Vedas and *shastras*, the Swami learnt music, history and astronomy there.

Reaching Kumbakonam, after completing twenty one years of age, on Sankara Jayanthi the Swami took over all the responsibilities of running the mutt.

THE SWAMI IN CHIDAMBARAM

On May 18, 1933 the Acharya Swami visited Chidambaram the place of *Akasha kshetra*.

The *archakas* and even the *peetadhipatis* in the temple there used to press the demand that all should have *Bhasmagrahan*- receiving the *Vibhuti* from their hands only. Many used to express the doubt as to how the *archakas* would behave before the Swami.

At dawn along with a servant the Swami went to the temple and completed his worship (*Anusthanam*). When the temple doors opened the Swami was found immersed in *Dhyana* (contemplation) before the Deity of Chidambaram, - Chindambareswara.

Seeing the Acharya Swami all the *archaks* gave him grand welcome.

During the time of procession, as Nataraja the Swami himself, the Swami was decorated with all ornaments. In Vegalla mantapam the Swami worshipped and made obeisance to Tripura Sundaridevi and Chandramouleeswarathe Swami. The Swami got a diamond crescent made for the crown of Nataraja.

THE SWAMI IN SRISAILAM

Adi Sankara worshipped Srisailam deity Mallikarjuna saying that serving *Srigiri mahalingam* is worshipping Shiva in *Shivanadalahari*. The Swami Visited Srisailam on 28th January 1931. Srisailam is one of the eighteen *Shakthi Peethas* and one of the twelve *Jyothirlingas*.

The Swami along with a few followers went to Peda Cheruvu in a boat and then travelled eleven miles on foot. He recited many times Adi Sankara's *Shivananda Lahari* and *Saundarya Lahari*.

After some years when the Swami visited Srisailam for the Deity's *darshan*, he discovered the place where Adi Sankara did *tapas*- intense contemplation. It is said that at that very place Adi Sankara composed *Shivananda Lahari* and *Saundaryalahari*.

IN THE CONFLUENCE OF THREE RIVERS- TRIVENI SANGAM

The Swami who visited Srisailam went to Nizam's capital Hyderabad in March 1934. He sojourned there for forty days. The Nizam showed great reverence and made special arrangements for the Swami. Raja Kishan Pershad invited the Swami for *pada pooja*. The Nizam government bore a day's expense for the Mutt.

Via Nagpur and Jabalpur the Swami reached the *Triveni Sangam* in 1934. Along with the citizens of Allahabad, the Vice - Chancellor there Dr. Ganganath Jha, the Municipal Chairman and others accorded them great welcome. The Swami immersed the sand he brought from Dhanushukoti in the *sangam*, confluence. The Swami had his Chaturmasyam (stay for four months) in Prayag.

IN VARANASI

On 25th September 1934, the Swami reached the country's spiritual capital Kashi. The king of Kashi, ascetics and great scholars along with the citizens welcomed the Swami at the entrance of the city. About 2500 citizens were there in the assemblage. Many organizations honoured the Swami fittingly in the town hall.

Under the auspices of Swarajya Sangha, Pandit Mandan Mohan Malaviya had the *darshan* (audience) of the Swami. That night the Swami had the *darshan* of Kasivishweswara and Annapurna. He conducted the Navarathi *poojas* there. He spent about six months in Kashi. Every day there was a special occasion. According to Malaviya's invitation the Swami visited the Banaras Hindu University and blessed the students there.

From Kashi he went to Patna in Bihar and participated in the festivals related to Sankara Jayanthi

IN MIDNAPORE

Among Acharya Swami's travels in the North the visit to Midnapur, the extremist centre is unique. In those days patriotic youth were imprisoned in large numbers there. At the beginning Midnapur was not in the Acharya Swami's itinerary, but some important people in Culcutta requested him to visit Midnapur. They felt that the Swami's visit to that place would bring some calm and peace to that place.

Though the welcome to this Swami was simple and unostentatious it was a wonder. For two years there was no such procession. The streets were cleaned and on the way before every house they kept paddy. They blew conches all the way. Thousands went uttering the names of Gods Rama and Krishna. The reception committee was headed by the local Zamindar Prafulla Kumar Mallik.

They made elaborate conveniences available to the ascetics who accompanied the Swami. The extremists were released from the jail to enable them to have the *darshan* of the Swami.

The Swami after worshipping the various deities in all the cities reached Rameswaram in June 1939. He performed *abhisheka* to Ramanathaswami with the water of holy Ganges brought from Prayag in 1934. Earlier in 1931 while the Swami was at Chittoor two hundred Congress volunteers were allowed into the Mutt. The Swami gave all of them *prasad* and *vibhuti* specially. This way the *peetham's* independent status was shown by the Swami.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE TRAVEL TO TATANAGAR

The Swami had to stay in Khargpur, an important Railway centre. He had to stop there, since some of the employees of the Mutt fell ill. After their recovery the journey was continued. They were supposed to reach Tatanagar, the steel city by 4th December 1945. The Swami passing in a palanquin in the evening times, with some servants, horses carrying goods, along with a cow and a calf. They missed the way because of a Sikh who was to guide them went ahead 5 miles. The party had consultations among themselves and stopped the palanquin. They reached a Railway crossing at 10 pm. The howls of cruel animals were heard when the cow and its young one reached the crossing the Swami asked his followers to keep them in a safe place behind the palanquin.

This is an example for the Swami's compassion. They halted there till morning and reached Tatanagar at 9:30 in the morning.

The Swami stayed in Tatanagar for six weeks. One day he visited the steel factory too.

THE SWAMI IN PURI

After Tatanagar, the Swami visited the princely kingdoms in Bihar and Orissa. Later on 4th May 1936 he worshipped Puri Jagannath. The Raja, the *advaita peethadhipati* and pandits welcomed the Swami waiting at the outskirts. They offered a citation of felicitations to the Swami in the Mukty Mandapa of the temple.

In 1936 after offering worship to Vyasa (Vyasa Pooja) at Berhampur the Swami travelled in the northern districts of Srikakulam and Vishakapatnam. During this period he visited Simhachalam and offered worship to deity Simhachala Appanna.

After spending two months at Nellore resting on the way at Venkatagiri, Kalahasti, Tiruttani town, the Swami reached Kanchipuram on 2nd May 1939. From there travelling for a fortnight he reached Rameswaram on 9th June. Thousands of devotees had the *darshan* of the Swami who was in travel for some years.

On the next day 10th June the holy waters bought from Prayag were used to worship in Ramanath Swami temple. In March 1919 the Swami Vijaya yatra came to an end.

KUMBHABHISHEKAM TO KAMAKSHI AMMAVARU

The presiding deity goddess Kamakshi's Kumbabhishekam was decided to be performed on 7th February 1944. Earlier it was performed 104 years before. Earlier to this for several years the repairs of the temple had been going on.

The Swami decided that he should reach Kanchi before 27th January 1944 without staying in any village longer than a day.

It was also decided not to print any invitations. To a thousand nearest devotees, Rajas and Zamimdars letters were sent about the Kumbabhishekam.

Exactly at 10 AM ON 7th February 1944 Kumkabhishekam for the deity was performed Innumerable devotees right from Rajas and Zamindars to the common people attended the holy event.

At night there was a procession of the *utsava moorty* of the mother Kamakshi. After the worship of the *moolavirat* the Swami started the journey to Ambi near Kanchi

TRAVELS IN THE TAMIL REGION

On 22nd March 1954 the Swami selected and named Jayendra as his heir. In the previous status his name was Subramanyan. He belonged to Mannarugudi Taluk of Tanjore District.

He came from a traditional orthodox family and studied Rigveda. In the Mukthi Mandapam near *sarvateertham* tank as per the procedures laid down in the shastras, the Acharya Swami performed the traditional function and gave the *upadesa*. Thousands of devotees attended to witness the sacred ceremony. Under the supervision of the Acharya Swami renowned pandits gave the necessary training to the younger The Swami.

When the two The Swamis went to Chennai on 23rd September 1957, citizens extended to them a fitting welcome. On 15th March 1959 the Acharya Swami was offered an address of felicitations in fourteen languages in the Sanskrit College in Mylapore. This is unique and something that never happened any where for any one else.

From 1966 for a full year the Swami along with his disciples travelled widely in Tiruchanapally and Tanjore districts.

In July 1962, at Kaladi, the birth place of Adi Sankara, the first Shilpa Agama Sadas (seminar) was conducted for a whole week under the supervision of the Acharya Swami. Representatives from both inland and foreign countries attended it.

Full length statues of Adi Sankara and his disciples were erected at Ramaswaram on the banks of the sea as designed by the Swami.

EXTEVSIVE TRAVEL IN ANDHRA REGION

On 20th October 1966 both the Swamijies worshipped Lord Venkateswaraswami in Tirumala. They participated in a seminar (*sadas*) organized by the Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams. Later for two and half a years the Swamiji travelled in Andhradesa. During these travels the important places they stayed at were Proddatur, Pushpagiri, Srikakulam, Vijayawada, Machilipatnam and Rajahmundry.

In Bhadrachalam, the *samprokhana*, the sacred washing, of Sri Ramachandra temple was done in the presence of Acharya Swami.

At Vijayawada during the celebrations and the observance of Krishna Pushkara they conducted a *sammelan*, a meeting of scholars of all Vedas and *shastras*.

In the travel at Tirumala the Swami's stayed for twelve days and had the *darshan* of Lord Venkateswara every day.

After the travels outside for four years, the Acharya Swami reached Kanchi in May 1969. Later after many years Swami Jayendra Sarswathi went out on travels but the Paramacharya did not stir out from Kanchi.

PILGRIMAGES ON FOOT FOR SIX YEARS

On the Tamil New Year day 1987, surprising all devotees the Acharya Swami aged 84 started from Shivastan and went to Tiruttani travelling through Andhra Pradesh, Karnakata and Maharasta, resting for long periods in Hampi, Belgaum, Satara, Pandaripuram, Mahagao. At Satara Jayendra Saraswathi met the Paramacharya Jayendra Saraswati chose and named Vijayendra Saraswati as his heir. On 23nd May 1983 he accepted the ashram. Vijayendra Saraswathi's earlier name was Shankaram. He belonged to a Telugu Brahmin family in Tandalam near Ponneri. Noticing young Shankaram's merit during worship Jayendra chose Shankaram for the pontiff's position.

After completing the travels, the Paramacharya came to Kallur on the outskirts of Kurnool city on 20th April 1983. Jayendra Saraswati came there some weeks earlier. All the three Acharyas performed Vyasapooja in Kallur.

Kurnool suffering from drought for some years had plenty of rain after the visit of the three Acharyas. This made the people there extremely delighted and happy.

RETURN TO KANCHI

The eighty-six years old the Paramacharya during his six years of travel walked over 3860KMS and travelled over Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnakata and Maharastra. This resembled Adi Sankara's perambulation of Bharat. In *sankara charitra* written by Govindnath it was expressed that Adi Sankara after the perambulation of Bharat reached the abode of Kamakshi, the goddess of learning and speech, on 25th October 1983, the three Acharyas started from Kallur on the way they saw the biggest caves of Ramapuram Belum. The natural stones that formed shapes appeared there as Sivalingas. The local people call them *kotilinga guhalu*, caves of a crore of Sivalingas.

The Paramacharya once took his stay on the banks of river Penna near Tadipathri in Anantapur district. The other two Acharyas stayed in a large guest house in the town.

A renowned businessman in Tadipathri one Sunku Subbalakshmaiah was an ardent devotee of the Swami. After informing the Swami he bought a big building for rupees 5 lakhs. A little afterwards a sum of rupees five lakhs, due from the income tax department, was surprisingly returned to him. This, the devotee thought, was the blessing of the Paramacharya. When a foreigner, who came to Tadipathri following the Acharya fell ill, the Paramacharya asked Subbalakshmaiah to get him treated for his illness.

The Swami reached Naraharipet, via Kadapa, Vempalli and Renigunta on 5th February 1984. In the grand welcome arranged by Tamilnadu Government, thousands of devotees took part. Congress leader Mooppanar and R. Sunder Raju, Minister of Tamilnadu welcomed the Swamis.

A day before Tamil New year day on 13th April 1984, the Acharya reached Kanchi. The citizens of Kanchi gave a devout welcome at Gangai Konda Mantapam. Their joy knew no bounds for having had a *darshan* of the Paramacharya after six years.

At the age of 84 with a weak body the Paramacharya walking thousand days made the devotees believe that the Swami was a walking deity.

THE FINAL DECADE IN THE PARAMACHARYA'S LIFE

From May 1984 till January, the day of his Samadhi, shedding the body, the Swami stayed firmly in Kanchi giving blessings and boons of all kinds to the sick. With the Paramacharya there, Kanchi got renowned as a popular place of pilgrimage.

On 8th May 1984 there was a cultural seminar in Kanchi. Giving a direction for that, the Paramacharya welcomed all the representatives and in his concluding speech spoke in Sanskrit.

Even by 1980 the Paramacharya had the idea of publishing the history of our religion, culture and spirituality revealed in *dana shasanas* (edicts about great charity) which recorded acts of memorable and great charity. As part of this, it began with the collection of the stone inscriptions and copper plates of the times of Vidyanarayana the Swami.

The Paramacharya had deep acquaintance and knowledge of archeology. In 1983 he discovered a *shasana* (edict) on stone in the Mutt. This is one about the charity of a devotee who arranged money for *deepa* and *dhoopa* (parts of worship) in the Ganesh temple.

That was recognized by the archeologists as belonging to Chola times of the eleventh century.

For Adi Sankara's temple, at the entry of Ganesh Temple, for the service of lightning lamps, Kanchi Kama Koti Veda Kainkaryam Trust was founded by the Paramacharya on 10th February 1988.

While at Satara on a sojourn the Swami called historians, Indologists and higher officials and had discussions with them. The famous philosopher Dr. D. C. Circar was requested to be the president and the Uttankita Vidyaranya Trust was founded on May 15th 1981 and registered under the Trust Act at Mysore.

Uttankita usually means a mint printing coins. The name *Uttankita* was added in the name of the trust remembering the Swami's many victories. The members of the Trust offered the *shasanas*, edicts and inscriptions they collected after the Swami reached Kanchi.

Sri. N. Ramesan, IAS, a great devotee, researched on Kamakoti Peetham and published a book.

Till the end of 1990 the Paramacharya followed strictly his usual daily routine. An hour before sunrise he used to have the daily *poojas*, *anusthaanas* and *tapas* with great devotion. Afterwards he would give *darshan* and blessing to devotees. He used to go to Kamakshi Temple every Friday without fail. Sri Neelamraju Venkata Seshaiyah wrote: "The total dedication with all his concentrations for the smallest detail is totally committed. His delicacy in offering extreme devotion while offering worship to Chandra Mouleeswaraswami, while offering *arati* and waving Vinjamara and even while perambulating totally impressed me and fascinated me. He used to read at least two daily newspapers. Now and then he used to read interesting books also."

Even after 1990 when he had really no strength to walk, he never disappointed the devotees who came from long distances. He never stopped listening to the devotees narrations and never gave up the habit of blessing them. Right up to the last minute of his life his memory was strong and unwavering.

THANJAVOOR BRUHADEESWARA TEMPLE

Rajaraja Chola ruled the south (985-1016) with Thanjavoor as his capital. He built the huge historical temple there. People in Thanjavoor celebrated the 1000 the years of his coronation with great pomp and grandeur. On this occasion it was the Paramacharya's wish to send a golden crown to the statue of the illustrious king. He also expressed a wish to the devotees to have a fund raised for the daily worship to Bruhadeeswara.

An ardent devotee Sri Chavali Subramanya Sastri sent Rupees Ten lakh for the golden *gopura* of the Temple in the name of the Pamacharya.

In 1986 some of the devotees of Acharya went to Haridwar and brought sacred Ganga water in huge *gangalas* (huge metal containers). They thought that the Paramacharya should use the water for his bathing and worship. Several hundreds of years ago the king who built the temple here performed *abhisheka* with the water of Ganga. The Acharya asked some water to be taken to Bruhadeeswara Temple also. After sometime the Swami asked to perform Annabhisheka (worship with cooked rice). This led to plentiful rains making the land prosperous.

EQUALITY OF ALL (SARVA SAMAAANATVAM)

Though pontiff of *Advaita peetha* the Paramacharya had the feeling of equality of all and so is appreciated by the whole world.

There is a mosque right opposite the Kanchi Peetham. Some devotees felt that it would be fine if it were to be removed or shifted. Even the organizers of the mosque agreed for the removal. When asked for his consent, the Swami disagreed. He asked if the *masjid*, the place of worship of the Muslims, is not a place of prayer and worship.

In 1926 when the Acharya Swami was going in a palanquin from Karamokkudi to Pudukkatalai, some Muslims walked in devotion behind the palanquin. One man actually carried the palanquin along with three others who were Hindus. When that man wrote poems on the Paramacharya and presented them to him, people were surprised while he was bidding good-bye. He said that he found Allah in the Swami before his eyes.

When the construction of Gopuram in Sri Vaishnava Kshetra in Srirangam was stopped for some reason, the Paramacharya wrote a letter to the pontiff of Ahobila, to help the construction. He also ordered Jayendra Saraswati to give a lakh of rupees from the Mutt's funds. Beyond that he asked the contractor who was his devotee to go and see the Gopuram work there secretly. That devotee credited a lakh of rupees in the name of the Kamakoti Peetham for the repairs.

On 25th March 1987 Sri Ranga Gopuram was given a *samprokshana*, holy wash. After a couple of weeks Jayendra, the Swami of Srirangam visited the Paramacharya and spent one hour in conversation with him.

Sri Sitaramachandra devasthanam is a famous temple in Bhadrachalam. Some repairs for it were proposed. Sri Kalluri Chandramouli was the endowments Minister in Madras State. Smarta and Vaishnavites expressed different opinions about the repairs and for the final decision the facts were presented to the Paramacharya.

The Swami declared that the measurements of the sanctum sanctorum built 300 years ago by Ramadas need not be changed. The sanctum should have the same measurements. Some went to a court of law, but the court confirmed the Swami's decision.

Varadacharyulu of Chitti Guduru questioned as to how, as an *advaita*, the Swami can decide about Bhadrachalam where Pancharatra agama scriptures about a faith were followed. After some days his speech failed. The doctors said that it was a hopeless case. That night the Swami appeared in a dream and declared that he had longevity still. The next morning he got well. Varadachari became a devout disciple of the Paramacharya who had the nobility to respect and forgive even those who questioned him.

AFFECTION TOWARDS ANDHRA PRADESH

The famous journalist, News paper editor Neelamraju Venkata Seshaiah Garu was a devout devotee of the Paramacharya. While writing about his visit to the Paramacharya he wrote:

“Swami spoke in lovely Telugu, not in our lecturers’ style but in the style of our ancients in ordinary everyday language for four and a half hours. But at times a little Tamil style variation was heard. There was no exuberance of vocabulary. There was no waiting for search of words. The whole speech went like a boat on the calm sea. It sounded like poetry extempore. It is not possible for everyone to speak like that problems that worry all the Country. He spoke with impeccable logic without emotion. My friend and I listened to the speech with rapt attention. I had the feeling that Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swami is a Telugu person. It is only later that I knew that he is a Kannadiga.”

In 1964 another Editor Sri A.S. Raman interviewed the Swami in Telugu for four hours. At the end of the interview the Swami asked “Did you get answers for all questions? Is my Telugu right?”

In 1985 in Lakkireddipalle he spoke in Telugu to Neelamraju Venkata Seshaiah.

“I lost the habit of speaking Telugu and so I am forgetting Telugu,” the Swami said.

In 1930 the Swami going away from Tiruvannamalai, on the way, went to Adayapalem. That was the place where Appayya Dikshitulu lived 300 years before. Deekshitulu is a great *advaitin* and a great devotee of Siva. The Swami ordered the people of the place that they should not forget the Jayanthi (Birthday) of Dikshitulu.

Appayya Dikshitulu expressed in Sanskrit that it was his misfortune that he was not born as a Telugu person and as one belonging to Yajurveda Shakha.

The Acharya Swami in his preaching said that Telugu *lipi* (letters of the script) was left-bending (vamavarta). Andhradesa was in the middle of Trilingas. Hence education beginning with Panchakshari “Om Nama Sivaya” Panchakshari was in the middle of Yajurveda. For that reason Appaya Deekshitulu said that to be born in Yajus shakha was a fortune. (They were of Samaveda Shakha) For that reason the Swami had a special liking for Telugu language and Telugu land.

Singing of Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai

Another example to show the co-ordination of Shaivism and Vaishnavism in the Swami was brought out in his asking the singing of both Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai. Tiruvembavai was the singing of devotional songs in praise of Shiva by Manikyavachakar. The collection of such songs was Tiruvachakam. It was the crown of devotional songs. What else would be better than Tiruvachakam, says the saying in Tamil. Among the twelve *alvars* Godadevi was one. The sweet songs of devotion she composed were Tiruppavai. Both were encouraged to be sung by the Swami.

In December 1950 at Tiruvada Marudoor the Swami ordered that both these songs should be sung. In a festival organized in a whole week, prominent Vaishnava scholars participated. This movement continued in Tamilnadu for many years. Hundreds of girls sang the songs of Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai in Dhanurmasam.

The First Western visitor Paul Brunton

In January 1930 the Swami was in camp at Kumbakonam. The correspondent of *London Forum*, Paul Brunton visited the Swami. Brunton came to Madras to have a *darshan* of saints and famous gurus of India. He had the acquaintance of a writer called Subramaniam. He tried at several places and finding no success he (Brunton) was about to return home. He explained his problem to Subramaniam. This man made Brunton believe that he would take him to Kanchi Peetathadhipati who was then at Kumbakonam.

Brunton agreed and went to the Acharya Swami going along with Subramanian. Brunton was the first foreigner to visit the Swami. Extremely impressed by the Swami's cheerful and extensive knowledge and wisdom Brunton wrote his book 'A Search in Secret India'.

"Sankaracharya is not a Pope. In Hinduism there is no such thing. He is a great preceptor. For the entire south India his word is gospel. While the Swami was in silence I saw him: a short person, he laid his weight on the stick, *danda*. I know that he was in his forties. But the white hair on his head surprised me. His face had a great glow. His black eyes radiated brilliance. He appeared to me like the great Christian sages of the middle ages. Westerners seeing his eyes may take him to be a dreamer. But I saw something in his eyes nobler and higher than dreaming or dream condition." The Swami asked Brunton to take a vow not to go back without seeing Bhagavan Ramana and that he was the only one who could show the right path to him. Brunton did as he was told. Enamoured and fascinated by Ramana Maharshi he recorded his experiences of Arunachalam.

BHAGAVAN RAMANA AND THE PARAMACHARYA

Arunachalam (Sri Ramana) Kanchipuram (The Paramacharya) Pondicherry (Aurobindo) centres in Tamilnadu sanctified the South in casting light that spread to the entire world. The great *Jnani*, the knowing one, Bhagavan Ramana cited himself as *Atyasrami* (the one who is above all Ashramas). Kanchi Paramacharya is a *Karmayogi*, the absolutely true representative of Adi Sankara. No rules limit or control Bhagvan. But the Paramacharya is restricted by harsh rules.

Those in Kanchi Peetham sojourning in Arunachalam, used to go Sri Ramanasramam to have a *darshan* of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. Such people were not allowed into the *Peetham* without having a 'headbath'.

This fact was made known to Bhagavan. People thought that Bhagavan would be angry with the Swami for this. But Bhagwan said the Swami's decision was hundred percent right.

At another time Bhagavan asked his devotees who felt sorry that the two (The Paramacharya and Bhagavan) never met, "When did we two separate?" The affection of the Swami towards the devotees of Ramana Maharshi was illustrated in Kanakamma's episode.

Ponaka Kanakamma was a resident of Nellore. In 1958 when she visited the Swami in Madras he posed three questions.

Is it lonely stay at Tiruvannamalai ?

Is it self-cooking?

Is the routine listening to the Vedas?

When the answers were yes the Swami felt happy and blessed her.

Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni was the most ardent devotee of Ramana Maharshi and the most revered. He was a strong reformist too. But the Paramacharya is a pure adherent to total commitment, *nistha*. In 1935 when they met at Kharagapur, the two had a discussion for one hour in Sanskrit. After wards the Swami felicitated and honored Ganapathi Muni. Though their ways were different the goal of both was the welfare of the world.

THE VISITS IN DREAMS

There lived in Chandavole in Guntur District a great man called Tadepalli Raghava Narayana Sastri. His Father Venkatappaiah Sastri was a great devotee. Theirs was a family strongly rooted in Vedic tradition, belief and practice. They can never tolerate any violation of the practice of the traditional behaviour, *aachara*. Raghava Narayana Sastri thought of committing suicide by jumping into the river Krishna or Godavari.

The Acharya gave *darshan* to Sastri in a dream and asked him not to commit suicide. After some time Sastri went to The Paramacharya who asked him as to what happened to his desire (to commit suicide) in a lighter vein. Sastri replied to him in obedience that he was asked not to do that. Then The Paramacharya put a shawl on Sastri's shoulder and said there after no *anaachara* (violation of *aachara*) would ever touch him.

In Hyderabad, Sastri offered to the Swami five verses in Sanskrit. At that time, the Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao wrote five slokas on the Swami and read them out. The Swami asked him to correct mistakes in the slokas. P.V. asked him whether there were no errors in Sastri's verses. The Swami said that there would be no mistakes in Sastri's verses and quoted a verse from "Ramakatha", a book written by Sastri's father. Sastri told the Swami that his father used to recite it exactly in that way. When Sastri breathed his last, in the flames of the pyre, the supreme Mother's shape appeared. The same was published in news papers also.

For the Sanskrit Pandit in Chittigudur Varadachary too, when he was on his death bed, the Swami appeared in a dream and gave him an assurance that he had longevity still and as a consequence he lived long thereafter.

Jammalamadaka Madhavarama Sarma of Guntur is a great *upasaka* of Sri Vidya and a great devotee of the Paramacharya. Being very near to the Swami, he gave a vivid description of The Swami's way of worship. When Sarma was about to breathe his last, the Swami asked him in a dream to give the Sri Chakra worshipped by him every day to Viswayogi Viswamji. The Swami appeared to Viswamji in the dream and told him that Sarma would give Sri Chakra to him on the next day. After obeying the Swami's order, Sarma breathed his last in peace.

EXPERIENCES OF SRI NEELAMRAJU

The famous editor of *Andhra Prabha* Neelamraju Venkata Seshaiah was an intense devotee of Sri Rama. With his very first visit to the Paramacharya he became an ardent devotee. When the constitution makers forgot to include religion as a fundamental right, the Paramacharya interfered and directed too the sentences that should be included in the draft constitution. In this great effort Seshaiah became the representative of the Swami.

ON 15TH OCTOBER 1927 IN VELCHERI VILLAGE

Mahatma Gandhi and the Paramacharya had a confidential talk. Rajaji who went behind the Mahatma too stepped outside. When Rajaji went to remind the Mahatma that it was meal

time, the Mahatma said that the conversation with the Paramacharya itself was the evening meal.

The details of the conversation in 1927 between Bapu and the Swami had been asked to be revealed several times by Sri Sessaiah. But while camping in Lakkireddypalli (Kadapa District) in 1983 The Swami revealed them to Sri Sessaiah.

They talked about the murder of an Arya Samaj leader committed some years ago. The name of the leader was Shraddananda. At the end Mahatma Gandhi told the Swami that if he were to be murdered, the murderer should be forgiven. If that was possible, the Swami said that it would be good. Surprisingly on 30th January 1948 Gandhiji was assassinated. As the Mahatma told the Swami, the murderer was forgiven. These are historical facts.

Once when Sri Sessaiah had a *darshan* of the Swami, he was sent by the Swami to collect donations from Madras and was sent in a car provided by a devotee. Sri Sessaiah said that his being sent to collect on behalf of Andhra Pradesh in 1959 for the construction of Ramadasa Dhyana Mandir a sum of Rs. 87 lakhs was collected. All was due to the Swami's power. As per the directions of the Swami, Sri Sessaiah lived near Bhadradi in an agricultural field for some time. The *bilwa* leaves from the farmer were accepted at the Mutt by the Swami with joy.

In 1964 Sri Sessaiah's second son Muralidhar had a problem in the lungs. Arrangements were made for surgery in the Christian Hospital, Vellore. For obtaining the Swami's blessings first, the boy was taken to Kanchi. In the light of a lantern the Swami saw the boy's chest and said: "It is a dangerous disease, but do not go in for Surgery. Take Prasad and go home." The Swami's order was obeyed. With the Swami's grace, Muralidhar lived to be eighty and died only recently.

In 1965 December, the Paramacharya camped in Tiruvottiyur. Neelam Raju had his Shastipoorthi ceremony gladly there in the presence of the Swami and obtained his blessings. The famous Sanskrit scholar Sri Jammalamadaka Madhavaraya Sarma too participated in the function.

In 1967 the Government of West Germany invited Sri Sessaiah. It was a tour which had many advantages. But obeying the order of the Swami Sri Sessaiah did not accept the invitation. For the wedding of Sri Sessaiah's daughter in the same year the Swami was the one responsible. The newlyweds had the *darshan* of the Paramacharya at Mukteswaram and got blessings. The son-in-law who came from England began *sandhyavandanam* under the influence of the Swami.

Sri Sessaiah recorded his experiences along with those of several others in his book *Nadiche daivam*, the walking God and was greatly blessed.

EXPERIENCE OF CHAVALI SASTRI

Chavali Subrahmanya Sastri is the one of the Prominent Andhras in Madras and a close devotee of the Swami. Whenever anybody came to him for ceremonies like wedding etc. the Swami used to send them to Sastri. Sastri used to be very charitable without any show.

In 1978 Sastri fell ill. He was admitted in hospital with severe illness. The Swami was in Hampi then. Sri Ram, Sastri's son, went to Hampi and informed him of father's ill health. Immediately on hearing that, the Swami rubbed some *vibhuti* on his own person and drew it into a large leaf plate. The young man was asked to take the *vibuthi*, mix it in water and make his father drink it. Having been done as directed by the Swami, the man who was ill then lying unconscious, woke and sat up. The doctors were surprised.

In 1982 as per the Swami's instructions Sastri's centenary was celebrated. The day after the function Sastri's wife went into coma.

The Swami while travelling in Maharashtra was in the village called Ugar. Sastri's son travelling by air reached the Swami at 2 O' Clock in the night and explained his mother's state of health. The Swami went into *dhyana* (contemplation) and later gave him a little sugar asking him to put that in his mother's mouth.

The moment the condition of the patient was explained to the Swami, her condition in Madras improved and she got well soon. In 1983 she breathed her last. When her sons informed this to the Swami, he said that she should have died a year earlier but Goddess Kamakshi saved her then.

In 1987 at Madras, Sastri set apart a piece of his land measuring 30 grounds for a good purpose. In the month of May foundation was laid for a temple of Sri Lakshmi Kamakshi. At the end of 1987, the construction was completed. On April 8th, 1988 Sastri breathed his last but his sons fulfilled their father's desire.

HOUSEHOLD DEITY OF THE KAUTAS

The Kauta family working for Vedic learning in Andhra had a good relationship and intimacy with the Paramacharya. In Padmaraonagar, Secunderabad there is a large compound which is associated with the Paramacharya.

Kauta Lalitha Manohar is the most fortunate one who was closely associated with the Swami. In 1968 the Swami happened to stay in Kautas' compound for Chaturmasya and Sankara Jayanthi.

On one Sunday the Swami sent for Lalita Manohar and asked him to buy six Kashmiri Shawls and send them by air to the Ceremony *Nakshatresti* going on in Delhi.

Lalita Manohar made a phone call to a businessman and he opened the shop for Lalita Manohar even on a holiday. When the almirah of shawls was opened, there were just six Kashmiri shawls in it. Lalitha Manohar says that this is a testimony for the Swami's *siddha samkalpa* (successful fulfillment of an intention).

In July 1968 Lalita Manohar was blessed with a baby girl. The Swami named her Tripura Sundari. In 1981 Manohar had a *darshan* of the Swami and explained difficulties in his business. The Swami asked him not to stray from the path of dharma.

In the year 1985 the Swami asked him how his business affairs were. In reply Manohar read out a sloka from the Ramayana. The Swami asked how he knew it and was replied that it was because of his thinking of the Swami's feet.

Enchanted, the Swami explained the meaning in Tamil to a Tamil Pandit. Manohar's Father breathed his last in January 1988. In March Manohar had a *darshan* of the Swami in Kanchi. The Swami sent for a shawl, wore it first for a while and then spread it over Manohar and blessed him thus: "Yours is a family that always kept to *dharma*, and an ideal one in Andhra. Your grandfather (Suryanarayana Rao) passed away. Now your father, an ideal person (Rama Mohana Sastri), also passed away. Now the responsibility rests on you. It is my desire that dharma should lead you without let up." Lalita Manohar considered the Swami as Adi Sankara himself.

Many stalwart scholars of Andhra were fortunate to have been the Paramacharya's devotees. Some of them were Kuppa Lakshmanavadhani, Maddulapalli Manikya sastri, Hari Sambasiva Sastri, Puttaparti Narayanacharyulu, Varanasi Ramana Moorthy, Jatavallabhula Purushotham, Veluri Sivarama Sastri, Katuri Venkateswara Rao and the one who translated *jagadguru bodhalu*, Visakha, and others.

The famous Dr. Roddam Prabhakar Rao of the famous Roddam family of Anantapur District is one who was shown great affection by the Swami. In 1966 when the Swami visited Andhra Sri Prabhakara Rao helped extending all facilities and a glorious welcome to the Swami. He helped

the organizers in the arrangement of the *silpa sadassu* at Kalahasti. Sri Prabhakara Rao told that the *darshan* of the Swami turned him to spirituality.

THE METHOD OF PREACHING AND TEACHING

The Swami used to give *deeksha* (commitment to a devotional way) as per one's deserts and levels. Bulusu Suryaprakasa Sastri, the main stay of Sadhana Grandha Mandali of Tenali, published many of the Swami's books. The ten volumes of *Jagadguru Bodhalu* translated by "Visakha" and three volumes of the *stotras* of Ad Sankara on the occasion of the 60th year of his becoming the pontiff were also his publications. When Suryaprakasa Sastri wrote a letter to Kuppa Lakshmanavadhani about his wish and desire to have a *darshan* of the Swami. Avadhani wrote back to say that he needed no introduction for the Swami knew about him.

One morning at six when the Swami was offering worship to the cow, Suryaprakash Sastri fell prostrate. The Swami saw him saying 'Who is it, Bulusu Suryaprakasha Sastri ? Did you come from Tenali?' and blessed him. This only reveals that the Swami would recognize a person on the very first visit.

The Swami who detailed many things about Sastri's ancestors made the *upadesa* of Anjaneya at 12'O Clock in the night of a Monday, when the star was *Moola*.

Arulananda Swami, the pontiff of Lalitanadashrama, Vadarevu, near Chirala detailed his experiences thus: "When I went to the Paramacharya to obtain *deeksha*, what he asked me first was: 'In your *manas*, heart mind and intellect, which God do you pray to?' Then I told him that it was Subrahmanyaswami. When I go before the deity, with total numbness in my whole body, I could see Subrahmanyaswami. Then the Swami gave me *sanyasa deeksha* saying "For you both the *Atma* and *Paramatma* is Subrahmanyaswami only. You contemplate that Subrahmanyaswami is in everyone. Only he should come to your mind when you see any living one. You should do your best to everyone. If ever some difficulty comes to you because of a living thing, you have to be calm and sedate without any anger. To achieve this live in a lonely place where there is no movement of people. Silently do *Pranayama*," so saying he gave me the main *manthra* of Subrahmanyaswami. That was the last of my *sanyasa* episodes.

MOTHER'S PLACE

A highly placed official H.V.R. Iyengar wrote about his mother in the Deepavali issue of the Tamil journal "*Ananda Vikatan*" "My mother has absolute faith in the power of God, who had the courage to face any trouble, strength of *atma*, compassion for all living things, following *dharma* with the courage of feeling. Though born of a rich family poverty in the in-laws place my mother had faith in the soul".

The Paramacharya read this article and sent word to him (Iyengar) thrice. Iyengar did not respond till the third. He had no habit of visiting Swamis or going to temples. But after his *darshan* of the Swami this was his feeling: "After seeing the Swami totally reduced to skin and bone there was a commotion within me. The reason was neither his word nor his personality, not even his surroundings. The moment I saw him, I felt that he was the embodiment of divine kindness. I felt like sitting in his presence in total absolute silence."

PRAYER FOR UNIVERSAL PEACE

Once Bharat Ratna Jawaharlal Nehru sat on the floor, when M.S.Subbalakshmi was singing. When requested by the singer to take his seat, he politely said, "You are the queen of music and I am after all a Prime Minister". M.S. Subbalakshmi and her husband were intense devotees of the Paramacharya. Once, in the Swami's sacred presence, Subbalakshmi singing Totakashtakam prostrated before the Swami once after every sloka.

She got an invitation to sing in the general Assembly of the U.N.O. on Vijayadashami in 1966. She sang the song written by Rajaji in English. She sang before the assembly a song written by The Paramacharya in Sanskrit. The essence of the song is "Develop the feeling of friendship which would attract the hearts of all. Treat everyone as you treat yourself: give up war. Shed hatred. Do not have illegal conquests and occupations. Our mother earth is a holy wish-fulfilling cow. Our father Eswar is the one who has compassion for everyone. Comfort yourself, give charity widely. Be kind and compassionate to all. *Damyata, dutta, dayadhvam*. May all be well May all have welfare."

THE PRANKS OF THE MAHATMAS

There is no limit for the affection of *mahatmas*, great souls. Many would be benefited by them. Many wonders would be taking place in their presence. But they would not claim credit for anything. During the seven decades of his management of the *peetham*, there was no limit to the good and kind deeds he had done. They were innumerable. We can never count The Paramacharya's good deeds and wonderful acts.

Once while the Swami was offering worship, a mother along with her kid came and sat with the devotees. There was a silk *pavada* on the deity which was very attractive. The girl kept looking at it. She wanted it and the mother was telling her that it was impossible to have it. The Swami while giving away *prasad* gave the little girl the *pavada* too. The joy of the little girl was limitless.

There was an incident when the Swami was camping at Aanandataandavapuram, near Chidambaram. He asked the little children who assembled there to write *Rama naamam*, the name of Rama, a hundred times. For those who wrote that he gave a gold coin with the figure of mother Kamakshi printed on it. One of the boys among them was dumb. The Swami called him near asking him to read what he had written. The people nearby told him that he was dumb. Not paying attention to that, he asked the boy again and again, "Say, say." Surprisingly the word Sri Rama came out of the boy's mouth.

In 1963 during the Swamis' camp in Tiruchinapalli a blind old woman came to the Swami. "Why did you come here so far with great effort?" he asked her with affection. "If you stand before me, I fall at your feet once and leave," she said. "No I would go round you in perambulation. Tell me what you see," he said. The Swami perambulated eight times round her and every time was asking her, "What did you see?" She said saffron clothing once and later a *dandam* a sacred stick. At the end she said "I could see what I saw twenty years ago when I was able to see!" The Swami blessed the woman like that.

When the Swami was staying in a village near Kanchi, a poor Brahmin came to him and asked for 13 gold sovereigns for his daughter's wedding.

The Swami asked him to go to Kamakshi Temple, offer prayers and come back. Mean while a rich man from the North came to the Swami telling him that he came to offer some gold for him, put it in a plate and left.

Afterwards the Brahmin came. The Swami asked him to take the little packet from the plate. When the Brahmin opened the packet there were just 13 coins in it. The Swami told him that it was all the deity's grace and he was in no way responsible.

In a village the Swami was giving *theertham*, holy water after worship to the devotees. There was a house-wife who came there along with her daughter. A necklace from her was stolen. The Swami gave her *theertham* and asked her to stand aside. The queue was progressing. An old day extended her hand but the Swami did not give her *theertham*. "You return the necklace

you have hidden,” he said. The women first tried to argue. Some women shook her sari and the necklace dropped from the folds. “Don’t do things like this hereafter,” the Swami rebuked her and sent her away.

Once, the Swami was in Srisailam. There was a Tamil Scholar in Tiruchi called Radhakrishna. The father was working in the mutt for quite some time. *Kumbabhishekham* was to be performed soon. The Swami called for Radhakrishna’s father and blessed him. He asked the manager of the Mutt to give him the money he wanted. Then he asked him to go to Trichy immediately. The man was disappointed. But he started immediately and went to his daughter in Madras. On that very day he reached his daughter’s place in Madras, he breathed his last. Had he been in the mutt he would have died there. *Kumbabhishekam* would have been delayed. This is another example to show that the Swami was a *sarvajnaa* – one who is all-knowing.

THE DARSHAN OF THE FOREIGNERS

Those who wish to know about *Sanatana Dharma* and those who wish to clear their doubts about spiritual matters and those foreigners who visited our country had a *darshan* of the Swami and found it fruitful.

In December 1966 queen mother of Spain, Fredrika and Princess Vereza had *darshan* of the Swami and spent two days in his Mutt.

Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan, famous professor of Philosophy, was the interpreter. Vereza who was a *sadhaka*, a spiritual aspirant and she got her doubts cleared by the Swami. She revealed her experiences thus: "Some surprising fate took us to the Swami's presence. We can never forget the visit. Now we don't have any questions or doubts. We had a belief that we would have *Atmanishta* – concentration of spirituality of the soul. All in its good time fate would give us what we want. This is a great fortune we got. The acquaintance with the wholly-formed, the Swami, is like a link between blessings, physical features and the spiritual / philosophical things."

Right worshipful Namadeva muni the royal spiritual guru of Thailand came to India along with his followers. While the Swami was in Vijayawada on 14th October 1960 they had the Swami's *darshan*. He said that when he had the *darshan*, he felt as if all his ancestors appeared before him. The Thailand group talked to the Swami, had taken *prasad* from his hand. Later they toured our country for a month.

After completing the tour the *raja guru* said "We felt that the Swami was behind us all the time helping us and seeing that we had no inconvenience or discomfort. We held in our hearts the Swami's name, form, his *dandam* and *padukas*."

A young woman from Argentina, Yugina Borgin had the Swami's *darshan* when he was in the temple at Elayattam. She wrote:

"I saw many countries in the world; saw many wonderful buildings and skyscrapers. But the natural beauty, calmness and peace of this village has not seen by me anywhere. It is my great good fortune to have had a *darshan* of the Paramacharya. He is Lord Jesus Christ that came down to earth. He is the very embodiment of love. I understood from the Swami some soul revealing secrets and lessons of *Jnana*, wisdom and knowledge.

Arthur Koestler wrote in his book "*The Lotus and the Robot*" about the Acharya Swami. I saw in his face a radiance that is beyond comparison. His face is resplendent with the activity of *tapas*, contemplation. His eyes appeared like balls of light. His calmness and absolute peace – his smile attracted me immediately. I never saw such an innocent smile. There is enchantment in that. Some divinity appears in and around his face. Unlimited compassion and love seen in the pictures of Jesus, I saw in him. But I keep wondering where I saw this power of enchantment."

Once, among a group of Soviet people who visited the Swami, there was an Indologist. The Swami said to him in Russian. "In your country in the northern part, in Russian language there are many Sanskrit words. In our ancient geography, Russia was mentioned as Rishivarsha. Our ancient *rishis* like Yaagnavalkya and others had meetings there. Among the women there the name of Lopamudra is heard. Lopamudra is the wife of sage Agastya. Our geography tells us that in Jambu Island Asia and Europe are also included. If I am wrong please correct me."

That Russian professor told his friends. "This great ascetic scholar is a symbol of the powerful culture in this country."

THE CENTURY'S GRANDEUR

The Paramacharya's 100th Birthday Celebrations were decided to be celebrated all over the country with the blessings of Jayendra Saraswati and Sri Vijayendra Saraswati. In 1993 January the centenary committee and official state committees were formed.

Veda parayana, Ati Rudrayagam, Chandiyagam etc started on 4th April 1993 and went on till May 6th 1993. The President of India Dr. Sankar Dayal Sharma arrived on 27th April and had a *darshan* of the Paramacharya. With an estimated amount of Rs. 5 cores, the family of the Birlas took over the rebuilding of the *peetham*.

As a part of the programme on 25th April the three Acharyas performed the *grihapravesa* in the building.

After the Vedic programmes were completed on 7th May 1993, Jayendra Saraswathi made the Paramacharya wear the golden crown on his head. In the area near Kanchi called Ghatikastan, Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, the Prime Minister, participated in the meeting there.

The Former President Sri R. Venkatraman and other dignitaries participating praised the unique personality of the Swami. On the 10th of May the King of Nepal Birendra along with the Queen came and made obeisance to the Swami.

Till the evening of 26th May, the *Kanakabhishekam* was done with splendour. The pontiff of Dwaraka Sri Swaroopananda Acharya, Central Minister Arjun Singh witnessed the ceremony. On 4th August 1993 *Kumbabhishekham* was performed again to the Paramacharya. Later *vedaparayana homam* and *yagas* were performed.

Of very high standard are the sentences written by A.S. Raman describing the uniqueness of the Swami Chandrasekharendra Saraswati.

The formal regal honours like the crown, throne and the like elephant and horse have already been for the Swami as the pontiff. But for the Acharya they are not necessary. The Tulasi garlands brought by the devotees are crown for the Acharya, human heart is the throne he occupied the soles of his feet are the means of transport for him. The only *mahima*, power and glory, he showed was creating the feeling in the devotees are in the presence of the divine.

RELIEF FROM THE BODY

From the middle of October 1993 the Paramacharya's health began to get weak and weaker; cold, cough difficulty in breathing caused him suffer. The Swami had to stop giving *darshan* in the afternoons. The famous local doctors Dr. Ramamoorthy and Dr. Sambamurthy used to come daily to examine the Swami. Sometimes doctors from Chennai also used to come. Except for weakness and loss of immunity there was nothing they could find. The Swami is the top spiritual *guru* of the century and for millions of devotees he was the walking divinity. He is scholar among scholars, the chief occupying the highest state among Vedic scholars. For the suffering he was the one who gave fearlessness. The Paramacharya Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati had deliverance from the earthly body at 2.50 a.m. on the 8th January 1994.

The Swami's body was seated on a chair on the dais where he used to give audience. The two Acharyas along with thousands of people shed tears of grief. The city is filled with people in the evening at 5-30 p.m. The huge crowd extended up to the main gate. The streets resounded with devotional songs. "*Hara hara sankara Jaya Jaya sankara*" On one side there were vedic chants and on the other Tevaraganam. For the earthly body of the Paramacharya nine poojas were offered and in the new block the loud chanting of the Vedas was arranged. Several distinguished pontiffs and religious dignitaries sent messages offering the Swami their great and deep homage. Among them were the pontiffs of Sringeri, Ahobila, Parkala, Vanamamala and Srirangam, Vaishanava pontiffs, the pontiff of Kurtalam and Madura and the Kings of Nepal and Kasi. The atheist Karunanadhi of Madras said "He is an ideal ascetic who gives unstinted effect to the ideas he believed in and laid on himself."

THE AUTHORS PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

When the Paramacharya was spending time in chaaturmasa deeksha in Kurnool in 1983, I had a darshan and offered my obeisance to him. I had another darshan while the Swami was sojourning at Tadipathri in Varahalu Thota on the banks of river Pinakini.

In 1984 along with my family and my friend Dr. Kripanandam we had The Paramacharya darshan. On behalf of Sri Ramana Satsang we presented to the Swami Ganapati Muni's "Indrani Saptashati" the Swami touched the pictures of Ramana and Ganapati on the title page.

Towards the end of 1984 when I went to the Swami to take his blessings in connection with my daughter's wedding I stood in the place where he gave audience.

"The Swami went in just now. If you are fortunate he may come out. But keep your palms folded. I would go and tell him about your prayer," said the Swami's paricharak to me.

I stood folding my palms together. As my good fortune, the Swami came out and walked a little before me. When the attendant was shouting "Where is Sreeramulu, where is Sreeramulu" the Swami himself said 'there' pointing to me. In a trice the attendant placing my prayer before the Swami and his giving me abhaya happened. I felt blessed.

In 1995 while returning from a wedding ceremony, along with my assistant Krishtappa, I stopped at Kanchi and had the good fortune of having the Swami's darshan. I presented to him my book. "The Devotees of the South". He got the title read by an attendant. After hearing the devotees of the south, he asked me if I had written about the devotees of the north. I said I did not. Then he got the contents readout. When he heard the names of Gorakumbhar and Jnanadev he asked how they became devotees of the South.

In a loud voice I said aloud, "Swami, are Maharshtrians not among the Pancha dravids?" I noticed the Swami nodding his head in acceptance. I felt blessed and elevated. That was the last darshan I could have of the Swami, the Paramacharya.

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