The Life of Ramanujacharya

The Exponent of the Visishtadvaita Philosophy

By

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Madras:
S. Murthy & Co.,
305, Thumby Chetty Street.

1906.

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MADRAS:
PRINTED AT THE KAPALEE PRESS,
305, THUMBU CHETTY STREET.

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TO

\[\text{His Highness, Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar Bahadur}\]

MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

BEING

A DEVOUT DISCIPLE

OF

\[\text{SRI RAMANUJACHARYA}\]
THE

LIFE OF RÂMÂNUJA

AND OTHERS.

INTRODUCTORY.

After the Āzhvārs come the Āchāryās. The former we have called “Saints,” and the latter we shall designate as the “Sages.” Both Saints and Sages possess the two-fold characteristics of “Knowledge” and “Love” i.e., Knowledge of God and Love to God. Whereas the Saints are pre-eminently of the order of Lovers of God, the Sages are of the order of Knowers of God. Both Saints and Sages are Servants of God.

We have written the Holy Lives of the Saints already. And now by God’s grace, we write the Holy Lives of the Sages. These are headed by the Blessed Nāthamuni(ga), (ranking as the Eighteenth in the Hierarchic Table attached to our Lives of the Āzhvārs). The substance of the present work is the Life of Rāmānuja.
CHAPTER I.

NÂTHAMUNI.

A long time elapsed between the Āzhvârs (Saints) and the Āchâryâs (Sages). At the date 916 A.D. or when the Sage Yâmunâchârya was born, Nâthamuni, his grandfather, was alive. We have in record, that Īsvara-bhatt-Āzhvâr was the father of Nâtha-muni; and Īsvara-muni was his (Nâtha-muni's) son. All the three together lived in Viranârayanapuram¹ where exists the Holy Shrine of Mannâr Kôil; the Resident Deity, there manifest, being Mannanâr (=Lord Krishnâ or Râja-Gopâla).

God so manifest was their household Deity. One day, the father, son (Nâthamuni) and grandson went to the Shrine, and submissively petitioned of Mannanâr to permit them to undertake a pilgrimage to the North of India, where they were anxious to visit all those Holy Shrines to Himself, or at which He had incarnated² in various forms, in order to accomplish the threesfold object of saving the good, punishing the wicked,

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¹ This place is about 15 miles from Chiddambaram (Chitrakûta) and where the famous tank Virânuam (abbr: for Vira-nârayanapuram) is situate. Śri-rânga-Nâthamuni is the full name of the Sage.

² Much has been written on the subject of Divine Incarnations in the works (1) Tattva-traya and Rational of Image Worship by Pârthasarathi, Yogi (2) Our Bhagavadgîtâ, (3) Lives of Āshvâr, and (4) Divine Wisdom of Drâvida Saints. We again call the attention of our readers to verses II, Loc. IX of our Gîtâ; and Vishnu-Pûrâna verse नानासंसारं सर्वकालशास्त्रं &c. [v. 1. 51, and v. 9. 23 to 25] and state further that by "Incarnation" we do not mean that God who is everywhere and eternal, changes His place, nor at one moment He is in Heaven, and at another on Earth; nor does He undergo any change in His essence or substance. Râmânuja has explained this in his preface to Gîtâ thus:—"He, being the vast Ocean of infinite Mercy and Condescension, Love and Bounty, willd to assume (material) forms similar to those of His creatures, without abandoning His own essential divine (immaterial) nature [Pp. 8-9.] The same that we say of our Lords Mâtsya, Krishnâ, &c., the Christians say of Lord Jesus Christ. "We can no more" say they, "gaze upon His ineffable brightness than we can look upon the noon-day sun. Then God in His boundless Mercy shed his brightness in the clouds of human nature—veiled His face, so that through the veil of human flesh, human deeds and human words, we might look upon God and live." [Epiphany. P. 6, Jan : 10th 1903].
and establishing virtue in the land (vide Bhagavad-Gîtâ. IV-8), —such Shrines as Mathura, Gôkula, Brîndâvana, the Holy banks of Yamuna (Jumna), Gôvardhana, Dwâraka, Ayôdhya, Sâlagrâma, Badarikâşrama, Naimiśârañya, Nrisimha-giri and others.

Lord Mannanâr deigned to give them permission to do so. They started forthwith with their families, and in the course of their holy peregrinations, they came upon a place called Gôvardhana-pura, situate on the banks of Holy Yamuna, and there paid their homage to Lord Kṛishṇa, known to the Dravidians as Yamunai-t-turaivan [vide Tiruppâvai by St. Ândâl v. 5]. The Lord and all the surroundings were so fascinating as to induce them to decide to spend the rest of their days here. Time agreeably sped thus. But on a certain night, Sage Nâthamuni had a dream in which Lord Mannanâr appeared and commanded his devotee to return to Vira-Nârâyânam.

The Sage was vividly impressed by this experience, and resolved to return to his Native Land. He accordingly submitted his desire to Yamunai-t-turaivan, who gladly accorded his sanction and honored the sage with the Holy tîrtha and prasâda.

Bidding adieu to the place, they bent their steps to the Purushôttama-Kshêtra, where Lord Jagannâtha is resident. After paying reverence to the Lord here, they next went on to Simh-âdri or Ahôbilam where Lord Nrisimha sheddeth his saving radiance around, and thence they pursued their journey, till they arrived at the Sacred Hill of Tirupati, celebrated as the abode of Lord Śrînivâsa,—the abode on this earth which He is said to have particularly chosen as His centre for the salvation of mankind, after having alighted thereon from His celestial abode Śrî Vaikuntha, or what is called Paramapada, Param-âkâśa, &c. This locality again was so prepossessing that it bid Nâthamuni to dwell there permanently; but Mannanâr's commands imperiously required his return home. The Sage could not resist this; and so left the Holy Tirupati,
and en route visited, among others, the holy spots known as Ghaṭikāchāla (of Lord Nṛisimha), Hastigiri (or Kanchi of Lord Varada-Rāja), Tiruvahinda-pura (—near modern Cuddalore—of Lord Dēva-Nāyaka), Tirukkōvalūr (of Lord Trivikrama), Śri-Rangam (of Lord Ranganātha), Tirukkudandai (—or Kumbhakōnam—of Lord Ārā-v-amudu or Sārungapāṇi); and finally returned to his native place Vira-Nārāyaṇapuram. Here the sage received an ovation from the holy inhabitants, and was conducted in procession to Mananār. The Lord was highly pleased and made His wishes known to the assembled community that thenceforward, they must look upon the Sage as His specially blessed devotee, provide him with suitable lodgings, and all other necessaries of life; and take such other care of him as his favourite deserved. All this they gladly did. And Nāṭhamuni(gal) made a flower-garden for the Lord, and employed himself in its care, serving the Lord with the offerings of garlands, scents, lights; and in suchwise usefully spent his time in the company of wise and holy men, in the cultivation of Divine Knowledge and its propagation.

One day, there came a party of Śri-vaishnavas from the uplands (or the table-lands to the north of Trichinopoly), to visit Mananār, and they were heard to sing the sacred Hymn, “Ārā-v-amudu” or the Decad : V-8 of St. Nammāzhvār’s Tiruvāy-Mozhi, and ending with the 11th verse of the same, in which it is said: “This Ten out of the Thousand, sung by Kurugur Satagopar.” Nāṭhamuni, hearing this, begged of the visitor to repeat the “One Thousand.” But they said they only knew this fragment of Ten and no more. On being again asked whether any one else knew the same, or whether there were written records preserved of the same, they confessed that they knew nothing whatever of it. The sage dismissed them with the usual holy Tīrtha and Prasāda from Mananār.

Nāṭha was anxious to trace out the rest of the Prabandha (the Drāvida Hymns of the Saints are so called); and surmised that they might in all likelihood prove recoverable in the Kurugn Land (=Āzhvār Tirunagari near Tinnevelly). He
travelled south to this place, and paid due honors to St. Nammâzhvâr, and Lord Polindu-ninra-Pirân (or Âdinâtha) and set about inquiring for the missing Prabandha. He met Parânkuşa Dâsar, a disciple of Madhurakavi(gal); and asked him for information. He said:—‘Sire! Not only the Tiruvây-Mozhi of St. Nammâzhvâr but the Prabandhas as well of the other Âzhvârs have almost been forgotten, as a very long time has elapsed since the days of their composition. My Âchârya, St. Madhurakavi(gal), has left this message that whosoever will concentrate his mind, fixing himself in a Yoga-posture before St. Nammâzhvâr’s (Holy Image) and repeat the ten-versed Hymn, the Kaṇninun-Širuttâmbu, twelve thousand times, all the time devoutly dwelling on the Holy feet of the Saint, will place himself en rapport with the Saint, who will then bless the devotee with the vision of himself.

Nâthamuni was rejoiced to hear this. He fell at the feet of Parânkuşa-Dâsar and implored him to teach the (Mantrâ-like) Kaṇninun-Širuttâmbu. Dâsar finding Nâthamuni a fit soul for the communication, taught him this Decad; and Nâthamuni with due preparation and in all austerity, sat down in meditation for the term required, and duly invoked Nammâzhvâr by the twelve thousand-times-repeated Mantra, as enjoined.

Entitled as he was to an extraordinary revelation, by the qualifications he possessed of a true disciple, viz.: “Faith, virtue, devotion to God, serenity, wisdom and courage”*, Śrî, the Universal Lady of Mercy, commanded St. Nammâzhâr to appear to Nâthamuni. As if a voice came from Heaven, the holy Image of the Saint opened its mouth and asked Nâthamuni the object of his invocation. Nâthamuni submitted to him his prayer: to recover the lost knowledge of the Prabandha. Thereon the Saint was pleased to dictate to him—i.e., present to his spiritually opened sight, like the sight Lord

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1 See his life in our Holy Lives of the Âzhvârs.

2 आतिकृत्रता धर्मसौलय शैलवाक्सृशिवायपुर्विचिं] मम्मीषावतुरू धीरशिष्ठय इत्यमिनिपुर्विचि ||

[Pañcharâtra]
Krishna gave to Arjuna—the Holy Tiruvvai-Mozhi of 1000 verses, as well as the 3000 verses of Hymns sung by the other saints who appeared before and after St. Nammazhvar; and in addition taught him the holy Doctrine of the Three Rahasyas [Vide P. xxi-xxii of Intro: to Lives of Azhvars], as well as the secrets of Yoga (or the physio-physiological way of approaching God.)

Nathamuni(gal) felt himself blessed; and remained in Tirunagari absorbed in the services of Azhvar and Adinatha. But lord Mannanar again appeared to him in a dream, which was to the effect that what Nathamuni(gal) learnt should be rehearsed before him. He communicated the dream to Lord Adinatha and Azhvar, whereupon he was permitted to return to his native place and was further enjoined to spread the instruction he had received, among such Srivaishnavas as were fitted by their spiritual character, viz., virtues such as sama and dama (or conquest of the senses and the mind).

Nathamuni(gal) bent his steps homewards and on the way visited many Holy Shrines and learnt much of the traditional lore connected with them, and finally reached Viraanarayapuram. Here he went to Lord Mannanar and as commanded in the dream duly recited all the Prabandhas, he had now received, before Him.

The Lord after thus giving audience to Natha thought to Himself thus:—“That the souls may have life, We provided them with bodies and senses; We gave them Sastras to guide them in the right direction; We ourselves often took upon Us flesh (incarnations); and yet Our work (of wholesale salvation) remains incomplete. The Prabandhas of the Azhvars are a valuable means by which to effect this regeneration. They

1 [Bh: Gitâ. XI] दिव्यविद्या ते च चार्यः परमेश्वरसम् Divine knowledge is thus often lost and often recovered.

2 See note on Yoga further on.
therefore ought never again to be allowed to fall out of use. So thinking, He commanded Nāthamuni(gaḻ) to set them to music and in this manner disseminate Holy Knowledge.

In obedience to this command, Nāthamuni(gaḻ) set the Holy Prabandhās to music—celestial music, it is written—with the help of his nephews Kitzhai-akatt-Āzhvān and Méla-akatt-Āzhvān; and the Prabandhās being now like the Vēdās, associated with the three-fold intonation of Udātta, Aṇudātta and Svarita, spread from that time onwards far and wide in the land.

King Chōla is said to have ruled in those days in a place called Gangai-konda-chōzha-puram, when two courtesans came to him. One could sing according to the mode called déva-gāṇa (celestial mode); the other according to the mode called manushya-gāṇa (human mode). Each thought she excelled the other; and the object of their approaching the king was to have the dispute settled between them as to who actually was the better. The king ordered a council to meet, before which the singers were made to perform their parts. The dispute was decided in favour of the manushya-gāṇa; and rich presents were bestowed on that performer, while the other was considered to have failed.

The lady of the déva-gāṇa thought thus:—“My method of singing, these manlings cannot appreciate; and I shall consecrate the same therefore to the dévās (celestial beings).” So she went from one Holy Shrine to another, everywhere displaying her art to the Deity therein manifest. She in due course reached Vīra-nārāyaṇapuram and as was customary with her she went to the Shrine of Mannanār and there sang her song in the audience of our sage Nāthamuni(gaḻ). He heard and understood her mode; and mightily pleased, vouchedsafed to her as a mark of his appreciation, the tīrtha and prasāda of Lord Mannanār. She now purposely retraced her steps to king Chōla and spoke thus:—“There is one soul, at least, O King, who can understand the beauties of my déva-gāṇa. He
is by name Nāṭhamuni(gal), the blessed votary of Lord Man-
nanār at Vīra-nārāyanaṇapuram."

The king’s curiosity was roused. He sent messengers to
Nāṭhamuni(gal), begging him to deign to visit his court. He
on his side, on receiving the invitation, thought thus:—"We
have set the Blest Prabhāṇas to exquisit music. Let us visit
the king’s court, and take this opportunity of making these
known to the world." Thus he directed his steps to the king’s
court. On his arrival, the king rose and welcoming the Sage
with every mark of honor, offered him a suitable seat. Whereon
the Sage blessed the king, and inquired as to his object in
inviting him. The king said:—"Holy Sage! canst thou
distinguish between the dēva-gāna and the manushyā-gāna
of these minstrels?" The Sage then requested that the perform-
ance be given before him. When this was done, he addressed
the king thus:—"Ye men have ears for the manushyā-gāna
only. Only the Dēvas can understand the other." "But," the
king respectfully asked, "how, Sire, can we be made to
hear it?" Thereon the Sage directed that the 400 kinds of tāla
(rhythm) be marked, and explained to the king the rate of
each. The king understood from this explanation the regular
harmonical progression and symphony which this method lent
to the dēva-gāna music, which produced in him a bliss never
before experienced. It is also related that a pair of cymbals was
placed near a consecrated post, and the dēva-gāna was sung,
when it was found that the post began to melt. They stopped
the music, and when they attempted to lift the cymbals, they
stuck to the post; and when they began the music and lifted
them, they came off. The king went into raptures over this, and
falling at the feet of the Sage proposed to reward him abun-
dantly. But the Sage, to whom even the offer of Lordship over
Worlds was no temptation, politely declined the presents
offered; and blessing the king, returned to Vīra-nārāyanaṇa-
puram.

Eight disciples had our Sage:—(1) Uyyokkondār,
(2) Kurukai-kāval-appan, (3) Nambi Karupākara Dāsar,
(4)Éru-tiru-vudaiyār, (5)Tiru-kapam-mangai-āndān,(6)Vāna-
māmalai Dēvi-y-āndān, (7) Urup-pattār-Aochāi-pillai, and
(8) Sokattûr-Āzhvān. They were disciples of the description given in Jaya-Samhita (of Pâñcharâtra):—

"He indeed is a true disciple
Who owns, sole for the Guru's sake,
All riches—all wisdom—
All works—his body itself!"

Such deserving disciples then, Nâthâmuni(gal) initiated into all the Holy Mysteries of Religion, taught them the Divya-Prabandhās, and left a legacy of works, like the Purusha-nirṇaya, and Nyāya-tatva treating of Sublime Truths of Religion, beginning with God, the Lord of the Kosmos; and also a work on Yôga (or the art of communing with God), called the Yôga-rahasya. He himself retired from active habits of life and became immersed in the contemplation of the Blessed Deity fixing His resplendent Form ever before his mental gaze.

This samâdhi state of the Sage came to be known to the outside world and finally reached the ears of king Chôla. To see the wonderful Sage and pay homage to Lord Mannanâr as well, he left his capital and, accompanied by his consorts, reached Vîra-Nârâyâna-puram. There he saw Nâthâmuni(gal) absorbed in Yôga (meditation) and, lost in respect and wonder at this unusual sight, was quietly retracing his steps. But the sage took them for Lord Krishṇa and His Holy Consorts; that they had been pleased to visit him. Thus fancying in his delirium of Yôga, he ran after them. Uyyakkondâr and others, his disciples, observing this divine hallucination, pursued the Sage and meeting him at Gangai-konḍa-Chôzhapuram besought an explanation from him as to the apparently insane nature of his conduct. He told them that in his eyes, they appeared as Lord Krishṇa and His Consorts and this vision threw him into a frenzy of love. The disciples reminded him that service to God and the Godly were the highest aim, and that when this demanded waking life on his part, he was not to allow himself to be ecstaticized in this manner to the prejudice of such service. He came to himself and returned to his Divine Service at Lord Mannanâr’s.
Matters went on thus for a certain length of time, and the Sage became more and more absorbed in his illumination. On a certain day he called in his disciple Kurugai-k-kāval Appan, and commanded him to learn the Eight-limbed Yoga\(^1\), and taught him the same.

The Sage now called his other intimate disciple Uyyak-kondār and asked him also to practice the Yōga method. But he humbly answered the Sage:—"Holy Sire, while I still carry the corpse with me, how is marriage possible?\(^2\) It will be time for me to consider the matter when I am about to give up my body." "Thee", said the Sage, "employ thyself in the dissemination of the Śastras and the Prabandhās."

\(^1\)This Yōga is not on the lines of the Yōga as taught by Patañjali, iasamuch as the latter is repudiated as un-Vedic in the Brahma Sūtra:—"Etena Yogah prayuktah" [I.1. 3], and iasamuch as it postulates God as but the instrumental cause of the Universe, thus detracting from the omnipotence of the God-head; and at the same time looking upon God as but the Means of procuring Kāivalya, or realization of one's own soul, not as the End itself to be aspired after. The True Eight-limbed Yōga of the God-aspirant (bhakta) is described in Pṛ: 119-120 of the 1st Volume of the Bhagavad Vīshāya, Telugu Edition, 1871, Madras; but we can subjoin here only an abstract of the same: The Eight are (1) Yamā, (2) niyama, (3) āsana, (4) prānāyāma, (5) pratyāhāra, (6) dhāvana, (7) dhyāna, (8) samādhi. The lower four are external processes, the upper three are internal; (1) and (2) are as described in the Vīshnupurāṇa VI, 7= Celibacy or continence; Harmlessness; Truthfulness; Non-covetousness; Non-acceptance of gifts; Scripture-reading; Purity (outer and inner); Contentment; Austerities (such as fasting); Inclining the mind to God. (3) is Postures (asana) described as Padmāsana &c., which help to produce comfort, attention and steadiness of mind, [as described by Vasiṣṭhas and others]. (4) is the regulation of breath (Prānāyāma) divided into Rechaka, Pāraṇa and Kumbhaka [as described in the Vāyu-purāṇa]. These processes help to steady the wandering mind. (5) is Sense-conquest (Pratyāhāra), or making the senses obey the mind, not the mind the senses, as described by Parāśara [Vishnu-Pu. VI, 7]. (6) is fixing (Dhāvana) the mind on the Pure Person of God [as described by Saunaka]. (7) is concentration, (Dhyāna) or the continued fixation of the mind on one subject, [as described in Vishnu-Pu. VI, 7, 91]. And this is of five kinds. (8) is absorption or immersion (Samādhi), or realization of God [as described in Vishnu-Pu. VI, 7, 92].

\(^2\)Marriage means Union (i.e. Yōga) with God. This is not possible so long as the body hangs on the soul like a corpse. The God-ward always look on the body as a detestable corpse to be cast away as soon as possible. Read, "Mey kumāmākā virumavare, &c.," [4th Tiru-vandādi, verse 75].
The Sage now called his son Íṣvara-Muni and said:—
"Son, thou shalt have a son. The name 'Yamunai-t-turaivar',
thou shalt give him." And he commanded his disciples
Uyyakkondar and K. Appan to communicate in due course to
this would-be son, all the knowledge of the Sāstras and the
Yoga he had imparted to them. Leaving his instructions thus,
he resumed his Yoga.

Time passed. King Chola had gone out into the country
with his followers on a hunting excursion, and he happened to
pass by Viranārāyaṇapuram on his journey back. Our Sage's
young daughter watched the grand cortege, with bows arrows,
female attendants monkeys and what not. But to her it all
seemed like a vision, which, running up to her father, she
described as if two men with bows, a woman and a monkey
called at his place and inquired for Nāthamuni(gal) and went
their way. And our Sage at once construed this (in his Divine-
filled imagination) as if Lord Rāma himself, with His brother
Lakshmāna following Him with bows and arrows (as His body-
guard), with Queen Sitā between them, condescended to visit
him,—as described in Rāmāyaṇa [III. II.]:—

"Rāma went foremost of the three,
Next Sitā followed, fair to see,
And Lakshmāna with his bow in hand
Walked hindmost of the little band."

Forthwith he started from his Yoga-seat and went in
search of this Holy Band, and asking those whom he met on the
way, for traces of their journey. They said: "Go this way, go
this way," evidently fancying that he was in search of the
king and his retinue. He increased his speed and arrived
in the vicinity of Gangaikonda-S-puram; and asking the
residents there to direct him further on the way where the
Holy Band went, they said they had not seen any. He looked
farward and far out and sideways, and seeing nothing of what
his heart yearned for, heaved a deep sigh, wept and swooning away, fell on the ground and departed from this world.

The disciples and the son, of our Heaven-departed Sage, received the tidings of this extraordinary translation and could not bear the pain of separation; but fate must be submitted to by all. So they travelled to where the Sage was lying in state, and after prostrating themselves before the dead body, duly cremated him according to the Brahma-medha ritual prescribed in the Vedas. Returning home, all the rest of the ceremonies were duly performed by Issvaramuni(gal), the son. And Kurungaval-Appan selected a place near where his Master was accustomed to sit in Yoga, and steadily practised Yoga. The Sage is said to have lived 540 years.1

The memorial verse to him runs thus:—

न्यूनशस्त्रात्सिद्धं समेत्य लक्ष्म्या नियोगातु कुरुकार्रिराजः।
समेत्यप्रदयास्मि नायायतस्मिन युध्येन मद्यार्थस्तु॥

1 Adam lived 930 years and so on. Read the Chronological index to the Old Testament. See Genesis V. 5.
CHAPTER II.

UYYAKKONDÂR AND MAṆAKKÂL-NAMBI.

Uyyakkondâr is the same as Pundarikâksha(r)\(^1\). Uyyakkondâr is a name which has an interesting story connected with it. Once on an occasion, Vangi-puratt-Âcchi, the father-in-law of Nâthamuni(gal), sent a request to his son-in-law to send his wife (i.e., Âcchi’s daughter), Aravinda-Pâvai on a visit. Nâthamuni(gal) sent her, escorted by Pundarikâksha(r), his trusted disciple. Some of the dependents of Âcchi looked down upon him as of an inferior caste, he being a pûrva-śikhi (that is, of that class among Brâhmans, whose custom is to wear a tuft of hair right on the crown of the head); and therefore they fed him on stale food. But he never resented this treatment. He, on the other hand, considered it as the greatest blessing that was conferred upon him. He returned home, and pressed by Nâthamuni(gal) to narrate all that took place at Âcchi’s residence, related with joy the happiness he derived from eating stale food; when asked how it could be so, he answered that it was certainly so on the principle explained by St. Tondâradippodi-Âzhvâr:

“If but their broken bread the saints will grant
Indeed it shall my nature purify.”

[Tirumâlai, verse 41.]

On hearing this, Nâthamuni(gal) embraced his disciple and exclaimed: “Thou art my saviour.” Thus Uyyakkondâr means: he who practised the highest precepts of religion taught by his Master.

Such was Uyyakkondâr or Pundarik-âksha. He had many disciples under him with whom he was happily engaged in the delightful study and exposition of the Utterances of the

\(^1\) Born at Tiruvallarai, A.C. 826, Vide No. 19. Hierarchic Table, in our "Lives of Âzhvârs."
Holy Āzhvärs. The chief of these disciples were five, viz., (1) Maṇakkāl Nambi, (2) Tiruvallikkēni Pāṇperumāl Arayar, (3) Sottaip-pūśi-Sendalankārār, (4) Sri Pundarikā-daśan, and (5) Ulagu-perumāl Nangai. Of these disciples, Maṇakkāl-Nambi or Sri Rāma-miśra(r) was the greatest, inasmuch as he bore to his Guru (Uyyakkondār) the relation of Lakṣmāna to his Master and Brother Sri Rāmāchandra¹. This was so much the case that when the Guru’s wife Andalamma died, Rāma-miśra did all the menial services that thus necessarily devolved on him in the household of the Guru. In illustration of this implicit servitude to his master, it is recorded that on a certain occasion, he accompanied the two daughters of his Guru on pilgrimage to a bathing place. They were returning and the damsels shrank at a small stream in their path, because it was sloughy. Rāma-miśra saw the situation and immediately coming to their rescue, stretched himself at length across the channel, and let them walk over on his back! The Guru heard this incident, and drawing the disciple to him with exclamations of joy, touched his head with his feet—a favour not bestowed on all indiscriminately. “Is there any thing more that I can do to thee?” further asked the Guru. “What more can I ask,” said the disciple, “than that, having already attained my highest ambition, viz., that of serving at your Holy Feet, this service should be continued to me for ever”? Uyyakkondār was overcome with this exemplary attitude and in his irrepressible wish to do to his disciple the highest good, commended to him once more for meditation the Dvaya-Mantra², the efficacy of which has been described thus in the Pāńcharātra:—

¹ ब्रह्मवीर्यवामी जापमहतपत्रवते | [Rāmayana.]
² Vide page xxii. Introd.: to The Holy Lives of the Āzhvärs.
Uyyakkondâr's sojourn in this earth was now approaching its end and Râma-miśra(r), reverently broached to him the subject of who after him was to bear the apostleship for their Blessed Dispensation. "Well, my son," said he, "I had hoped to carry out myself the behests of my Holy Master Nâthamuni(gal), communicated to me when he was passing away, viz., to expect the arrival of a grandson for him, (i.e., son to Īśvara-muni(gal)), to whom to impart all the Mysteries of our Faith, naming him Yamunai-t-turaivar, as my Guru willed; but Providence has willed it otherwise. This duty therefore devolves on thee, the next and my most trusted disciple, and thou therefore wilt bequeath our mysteries to posterity in the Holy Šottai line of descent." So delivering the message, Uyyakkondâr left his body, seating himself in the Padm-ūsana posture, and uniting his heart with the Holy feet of his Āchârya, Sri Nâthamuni(gal).

Neither Râma-miśra(r), nor his brethren, could bear this pang of separation, but gradually they recovered and girded themselves to carry out the last services and sacraments for the departed; which they did with all due ceremony and solemnity. The memorial verse dedicated to him on the occasion is thus recorded:—

नमःपद्मांसत्वम् नायवास्थाय मुक्तनायांगमि।

Râma-miśra was now, with his disciples, engaged in the work of furthering his holy mission, all the time in eager expectation of the hoped-for holy son to be born to Īśvara-muni(gal). This happy event came about in the month of Âdi under the asterisk Uttarâdâ. Joy overspread their countenances, and they forthwith went about administering to the child all the sacraments fit for the occasion, through the medium of the father, ending by naming the child Yamunai-t-turaivar (according to the wishes of Nâthamuni) and observing all the

1 Vide No. 20, Hierarchic Table to our Lives of Âzhvârs.
needful preliminaries prescribed for the Vaishnavas according to the Pancharatra text:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{वैष्णवमूर्तिं \ सुनिक्षु \ कुर्मसारंसारंसिद्धि:} & \| \\
\text{तत्त्वज्ञानेन \ जगत्तं \ स्वरूपसमस्याः} & \| \\
\text{मुनिन्द्रसंविविचित्रम ज्ञेयविद्यानुमुः} & \| \\
\text{नामार्ज्जुलत्तपङ्क्षस्य ध्याश्चरामुः} & \|
\end{align*}
\]

Who was this holy child, but Yāmunāchārya\(^1\) (the Samskrit synonym); Ālavandār (the Tamil name),—the famous forerunner of Sri Rāmānuja, who was to come\(^2\)

\(\text{1}\) We were much amused to read in Svāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati's Satyārtha-Prakāsa, Yāmunāchārya transmuted into Yavanāchārya who—it is farther naively added—is "born of a Greek or Moslem family"!!! [\text{Vide p. 62, English translation by Durga Prasād of Lahore, 1906}]. And again in page 73, it is written:—"The first teacher of this faith (Vaishnavism) was Sathakopā, who according to the Bhaktamālā written by Nabha, was of the Doom (low caste) tribe. For, it says that the Yogi Sathakopā used to make and sell winnowing fans (विक्रमिकृत विचारपत्री), that is to say he was born of the tribe of Kanjar. When he had wanted to read with the Brahmans or to hear their Scriptures, they must have treated him with contempt. He then might have coined new things against the Brahmans and their Scriptures such as the forehead mark, cantering the forearms with the discus, &c. His disciple was Munibahān, born of a Chandal or low caste family. He had a disciple, named Yavanāchārya, born of a Moslem or Greek family. But his name was changed to Yāmunāchārya." Our readers have only to read the Lives of Azhvārs written by us and this life of Yāmuna, and then he may more than smile at the ridiculous account given by Dayānand.

\(\text{2}\) This is very much parallel to John the Baptist preceding Jesus. Vide No. 21 Hierarchic Table in our Lives of Azhvārs, Born 916 A.C. at Kuppanāl, one mile from Kāṭtumānār-koil.
CHAPTER III.

ĀLAVANDĀR.

Such was the advent of Ālavandār, which had been foreseen by his predecessors;—an advent destined to inaugurate a system of thought which was thenceforward to grow, amplify and vivify the nascent religious sense in man. Ālavandār signified literally: “He who has come to reign” i.e., to reign in a system of religious thought, which was to glow in man’s heart uplifting him to God in love.

Duly were performed, as he grew, the sacred rites of anu-month, chaula and upanayana; and the life of the student began in earnest. Ālavandār would attend the school for a day and stay away at home. Questioned by his fellow-students as to the cause of his absence, he would tell them:—“Ye are learning the same things again and again.” Questioned by his parents, he would say:—“They are reading the same thing over and over; but I have learnt it all already.” A precociously clever boy thus, Ālavandār was; and he was excused regular attendance at school. He finished his student’s career rapidly; and the next stage of life, wedlock, was duly entered into. By this time the end of Īśvaramuni(gal) drew near, and he bid farewell to all with the consoling reflection of having left a model son for the service of the world. The noble son had all the sacramental routine for his departed parent strictly gone through; and now set out to fulfil his own vocation.

Grammar, logic, philosophy and allied subjects were taken up. And he studied them assiduously under Mahā-bhāshya-bhāṭṭa. There was at this time an Ākki-y-āzhvān, residing in the court of the monarch of the country as Pandit and royal chaplain. He was thus, in his own opinion, the head of all the literary men in the country, from whom he assessed tributes as a recognition of his suzerainty. The tribute was daśabandham or one-tenth of the income of each learned man. A demand for this was sent out to M-bhāṭṭa, who thereon was troubled in mind. On Ālavandār inquiring and being told all the circumstances of Bhāṭṭa’s discomfiture, he received the demand-notice and
tore it into pieces in the presence of the royal messengers who had conveyed it. They returned and narrated the occurrence to Ákki, who again sent men to Bhatta to know whether it was a new poet or a man of letters, who had dared so to affront him. Álavandár again interfered between his teacher and the men and sent them back with the answer:—

"नर्यत्वक्वरसरकस्रसरकुषञ्जयारणा्॥
अपितुषितििािरातसरकस्रसरकुषञ्जयारणा्॥"

Ákki had felt his pride already piqued and now the second message set him afame with rage. "Is there a scholar to oppose me?" cried he frantically, and appealed to his king for protection and redress against the insult he had received. It was not Mahabháshya Bhatta, but an insolent boy of his party, who had thus insulted him,—was of course the report of the men. The king now despatched some messengers with a written command to the boy to come to his presence; but the proud boy as unceremoniously destroyed the royal mandate, and let the messengers depart. The king was duly told of the indignity so offered. He reflected a moment and thought to himself that it must be no ordinary person who could command courage to slight even royalty; he would therefore send envoys with escort and letters—a formal invitation—to the extraordinary boy to come and grace the royal court with his august presence. This was appropriate to him, and so the boy accepted the invitation and arriving, alighted in the royal hall of audience with all honors paid. All assembled to receive the curious visitor. Ákki of course was present to witness the prodigy, of a boy come in this style, and feverishly fearing what the next event would prove to be. His fears were well-founded however, for it was like a bomb bursting before him, when a scrap of paper was thrown by the distinguished visitor before the royal pandit. It was at once a gauntlet and challenge. The scrap contained this famous verse:

आशूलालाबश्चाचरशास्कलवन्यास धन्योपकरणम्
दर्शनीनास भीतात्मकमह उपहासस्तेष्यक्षेत्।
आच भाष्यमातीच्य चिन्तितपर्यालापयुक्तमतवतिगता
भीमससाधारस्युम्नमुमनविरिमलवना पृथ्यतो वाससूतम्॥
'Find, if you will, than me a second soul,
Who wots entire all Vedic dogmatics,
In all the stretch from Um(â)-tread Himâlay,
To Râma's bridge—the joy of Sitâ's soul—
Or East to West, which mountain ranges bound,
With sun and moon in turn, their crests adorning.'

On reading this, Ākki's wrath grew: turning to the king:—
"My royal patron!", implored he, "permit me to argue this boy out of his intolerable vanity, and crush him before ye all."
The king gently asked the boy if he was capable of standing a combat such as his pandit would give. "Most certainly, your Majesty! give me leave," answered he, "but you will not be capable of judging between us and deciding as between the winner and the loser; nor can we own to you our mutual victory or defeat. Appoint, pray, judges versed in the matters of our contention." "Well said," agreed the king and selected fit umpires to adjudge the issues of the intellectual contest pending. It was an unparalleled and exciting scene. And so the king and his consort both took their seats to watch the interesting proceedings.

The queen saw the boy and with her keen insight and penetration decided to herself that he was going to be the victor. "My lord! she said, addressing the king, "if this boy wins not, throw me to the dogs." "If he wins," exclaimed the king in his turn, "I will part with half my kingdom for him."

Anon, Ākki spoke:—"Vain stripling! No drawn contest between us is needed. A mere trick suffices to put thee down before this august assembly, "witness ye all!" he said to the assembly, and turning to Ālavandâr said: "if thou, proud boy, shouldst say 'yes' in any matter, I will prove the 'no' of it; and vice versa, 'yes' to thy 'no'; and the winner in the end shall touch the head of the loser with his foot."
"Agreed," promptly retorted Ālavandâr; and without further ado, made three short statements and challenged Ākki to
negative them if he could. Listen, proud pedant, to these and
disprove if thou canst:—

(1) लक्ष्माया न कृष्णया = = Thy mother is not a barren woman.
(2) राजा सर्वभौमः = = This king is paramount.
(3) राजपत्मी पतिब्रता = = This queen is a good wife.

Åkki was simply stupefied, as he could not dare to dis-
prove these facts; and therefore kept helplessly silent.

They now entered the arena of literary debates; and here
also Åkki was beaten. Álavandár addressing his opponent
said:—"As for the victor touching the head of his victim, O
Pandit!—for that was our agreement—I shall desist from so
base an act, though agreed to by thyself and in consideration of
thy grey hairs and thy eminent status as Guru in the Royal
household." On hearing this declaration, the learned assembly
applauded Álavandár’s attainments and noble demeanour and
worshipped him with the honors of a Brahma-ratha (=a
triumphal procession, &c.)

The Queen was overjoyed to find that her insight had not
belied her as to the results of the combat and drawing the con-
querror-hero to her breast exclaimed:—‘Yennai Álavandíro i.e.
‘Didst thou come to fulfil me’? Álavandár thus means: “He
who came to fulfil” i.e., (1) fulfil his spiritual mission on earth,
and (2) fulfil the queen’s prevision of his success. With the
king, the queen,—Álavandár with her—entered the inner
apartments, her joy knowing no bounds.

The monarch, true to his promise, invested Álavandár
with half his kingdom. In royal bliss thus did Álavandár and
his holy wife, who by this time joined him, remain.
CHAPTER IV.

ÂLAVANDÂR’S SPIRITUALIZATION.

Râma-Mîsra was watching silently the eminence which Âlavandâr had reached so rapidly; and when he heard of Âkki’s ignominious defeat, and Âlavandâr becoming a king, his joy knew no bounds and he danced with flags in hand. He now thought of carrying into effect the commission he had received, of making Âlavandâr the future Apostle of the Faith. So, he went to the palace, but the guards obstructed his entrance. He found his way however into the kitchen where contracting friendship with the cooks,¹ he ascertained from them the potherbs that pleased Âlavandâr most. Tûduvalai, तुदुवलाई or तुदुवलाई, he daily took to the kitchen for a period of six months; and yet no notice was taken of it. Wearied, he stopped away for a few days. Âlavandâr finding his favourite dish missing from his dinner so suddenly, enquired of the cooks the reason. They informed him of an old Brâhmana having, for six months uninterruptedly, brought the green herb and having stopped the supply for a few days. "If he should return again," commanded the king, after chiding them, "inform me at once." Râma-mîsra thought he would try again, and so put in his appearance with the favorite vegetable, after some interval. The king was immediately informed; and he ordered the venerable man being conducted into his presence. When he duly arrived, the king rose, and making obeisance, seated him with every mark of respect; and asked how he may reward him for his services,—by money or by lands. Miśra said:—"Good king, these riches I do not need from thee; for I have precious riches, amassed by your ancestors, to give thee; and I shall show thee where they lie treasured up. Till I put thee in possession of these, let me be admitted to thy presence without hindrance by the guards at thy gates." Âlavandâr was taken out of himself by

¹ In Hindu households in India, the cooks must be of the same caste as the employer, or above their hold.

² A thorny shrub bearing edible fruit.
this unexpected revelation, and placed his men under instructions to admit the worthy visitant freely without caring for ceremony.

Mîra now began to teach Álavandâr the Bhagavadgîtâ,—the essence of all the Upanishads. As Álavandâr listened attentively through the eighteen books of this Sublime Poem, his spiritual sense was awakened, and a craving caused in his heart to realize God, as is spoken therein. "How shall I realize Him?" asked he of his Áchârya. "That is taught in the Great Charama Ślôka\(^1\)", promptly responded the teacher and taught its significant mysteries. The more Álavandâr meditated on these, the more they entered deep into his heart. The saving Grace taught therein made him more and more inclined to surrender himself to God, and more and more cultivate the sense of resignation to His will. His soul bent more and more to Him with the nourishment the teachings gave, just as the ripening grain-stalks bend as they receive more milk. As days passed, his love for the Merciful grew warmer and warmer; and as this love increased, his attachment to other things became weaker and weaker. The Teacher watched the spiritual progress of his disciple, and thought the time was ripe for leading him to where his promised patrimonial wealth lay hidden. He led him therefore to the Holy Shrine of Srîrangam, where, pointing to God reposing therein in the serene glory of His presence, to all worshippers accessible, he said:——"नवगङ्गास्यसत्त्वाच नववेधवीय तत्सारूढः मद्यपुष्पं कौन्तेयत्वृक्षादिविंद्रां".\(^2\) i.e., "Who will not worship Rangam, the most Holy,—if he be wise ? for doth not wisdom blossom here and keep Yama (death) out of sight ?" This is your trove, your heritage, and my trust, which I here discharge on this auspicious day."

Álavandâr, with the spiritual vision with which he was by God's Grace endowed, saw in the Holy Image of Ranga

\(^1\) The 66th verse Bk. XVIII, Bh: Gl. Vide p. xxii, Introd: Lives of Áshvârs.

\(^2\) Srîranga-Māhâtmya, I, 80.
the Treasure of the Universe enshrined; and exclaimed, with (a) feelings of remorse in his heart for past days, which had been spent without this Blessed Vision, and (b) feelings of bliss overflowing in streams of loving tears, at the fascinating sight he enjoyed:—‘O Blissful God’ exclaimed he, ‘many days have I lost in the vain pursuits of the world. I mourn for this. Now I have seen Thee reclining on Thy Sêsha.’ I serve Thee for evermore. I find myself reclaimed from the death of worldly enjoyments, and initiated into the life of Thy service.

Lord! lands and friends and riches,
Sons and wives, cattle and houses,—
To him who has thy service tasted,
Hateful objects become they.

After this, a determination came to him to renounce the world, and don the robes of the Sanyâsin, inasmuch as the love of the world and of God were incompatible with each other. Thenceforward he devoted himself to divine contemplation and service.

Âlavandar’s spiritual fame attracted to him many disciples, of whom the following were notable:—Periya-Nambi, Tirukkottiyur-Nambi, Periya-tirumalai Nambi, Mâranéri-Nambi, Tiruk-kaachchi-Nambi, Âlavandâr-Âzhvâr, Tirumâlai-ândân, Vânamâlai-ândân, Taiva-vâri-ândân, Isân-ândân, Jiyâr-ândân, Tiruk-kurugur-Appan, Tirumohur-Appan, Tirumohur-misrân, Taiva-p-perumâl, Vakul-abbara-na Somayâjiyâr, Tiruk-kurugur-dâsâr, Tirumâl-iruñjolai-dâsâr, Vaça-madurai-piran-dâr, Âlkoândi-ammangi, twenty in all. They were all learned and became evangalists as well of the Faith.

1 For a lucid description of the symbolism conveyed by this name and representation of the Godhead, the readers are referred to p. 31 ff. Esoteric Hinduism, Part I. Wilson says in his Vishnu Purâna:—We have in the text a representation of one mode of dhyâna or contemplation, in which the thoughts are more readily concentrated by being addressed to a sensible emblem, instead of an abstract truth.”

2 Brahma Purâna, 8, 32.
Maṇakkāl-Nambi (Rāma-miśra), who had five disciples, viz., Álavandār himself, Taivattuk-k-araśu-Nambi, Gomathattuttiruviṇṇagār-appan, Sirup-pullūr-udaiya-Pillai, and Vaṅgi-puratt-icchā, was now to deliver his last message to Álavandār. 

"To Kurugai-k-kāval-appan has been entrusted another Mystery, viz., the Yoga (i.e., the process by which to know God,—not merely to conjecture or believe—by deep introspective meditation), which thou shalt learn from him," said he to Álavandār, and explained, when the latter asked why he could not himself impart the Mystery:—"My Guru Uyyakkonḍār to whom your grand sire Nāṭhamuni(gal) wished to impart this science, expressed himself as unworthy to receive the same in the words:—“When the corpse lieth, where is wedlock.”? I did not therefore receive the science. Nāṭhamuni entrusted it to his other intimate disciple K. Appan. Learn it from him. And I am now going to depart; to my disciples, give all learning and instruction, and make Srirangam your capital, and pass on to posterity the Faith bequeathed to us by Nāṭhamuni, your spiritual as well as bodily grandsire.” So delivering himself, he passed away, with his heart fixed upon the holy feet of his Guru. His memorial verse runs thus:

लतादपश्चल्यामुक्ते भविते सर्वे पतिकृतलया:
अबनलो मानुन मात्मदसमलक्षणशिष्याप्रकाशिया।
य: कौतिलभारतुपृवर्तराज्य नमामि तं राम मन्येयसन्तः॥

Time passed with Álavandār happily in the work of propagating the faith and writing works, of which those that are extant are the Stōtra-ratna, Siddhi-traya and Āgama-prāmāṇya,—the bulwarks of the Viśishtadvaita-Vedānta. At this stage he bethought of visiting Kurugai-k-kāval-appan. Accompanied by his disciples, he proceeded thither and finding Appan was absorbed in Yoga, approached the sanctuary with the utmost caution and reverence, and planted himself by the wall on the other side of which Appan was seated. Withal, Appan exclaimed:—"Is there one of the Soṭṭai-race (i.e., descendant of Nāṭhamuni) standing there?" Surprised and with fear,

1 Corpse means body, Wedlock means the union of soul with God or Yoga.
Álavandár ventured to speak thus:—“Holy Sire, yes, I am a
most humble scion of that race; my name is Yamunai-t-turaivar
(Yāmunāchārīya). I am come here to do thee obeisance.”
So saying, he went forward and fell at Appan’s holy feet.
Rising, after being blessed, he asked of Appan, how despite
cautions on his part, he had been discovered by him. To which,
Appan said:—“Son, when God is with me, He so loves me
as to be listless to all else; even Sri, His Spouse, is unable to
withdraw His attention while He is so engaged; but now He
looked away from me three or four times. I concluded thence
that none other than a child of Sōttai race was close by.”
At which account, Álavandár was delighted; and entreated
Appan that the Yoga-Mystery might be revealed to him, as
directed by his Guru Maṇakkāl-Nambi; for he had come in
quest of it. “Certainly it is intended for thee, son,” said Appan,
“But I can only impart it at the moment of my death. That
moment comes the next Pushya-month, Guru-pushya-yoga,
Abhijin-muhūrta. Take this scrap on which the time is noted so
as to put thee in mind of it. Come precisely at that moment.”
Prostrating to Appan, Yāmunāchārīya returned to Srīrangam.

Adhyayan-ōtsava, or one of the great annual festal celebra-
tions, in connection with the Holy Temple here, came round.
It is the festival when all the 4000 Prabandhas of the Āzhvārs
are sung antiphonally. In the course of this recital, the
Araiyar, 1 or the chief chorister of the Temple sang the verse
of Tiruvāymozhi, viz. Kāṭucinai (X. 2. 8), in which occurs the
passage:—Naḍamino namangal ulla ir etc., meaning:—

"Speed, good souls, to Ananta-Ṣayana,
Remind We this—speed, oh speed." 2

1 Tiru-v-aranga-p-perumāl Arai-
yar, son of Yāmuna. It may be
noted here that while Yāmuna was
a Grīhī, he had four sons: Teyvattn-
k-āraṇu-Nambi, Pillai-araṇu-
Nambi; Sōttai-Nambi and Tiruvā-
raga-p-perumāl. The son of the
first of these sons is Srī-saival-
pūrṇa or Periya-tirumalai-Nambi,
the maternal uncle of Rāmānuja
(vide Rāmānuja’s life).
2 See our Āzhvār’s Lives, pp. xxii,
205 and 223, and our Divine Wisdom
of Dravidā Saints.
3 The Holy Shrine of Ananta-
padma-Nābha (Travandrum, Tra-
vancore.)
This passage reiterated by Aṟaiyar was taken by Yāmunāchārya as a sign that a shrine so dear to Saint Nammāzhvār¹ viz., Anantaśayana, was one, which to visit became imperative on him. He immediately rose and, placing his disciple Teyvavāri-y-āndān in charge of his maṭham (monastery), went on a pilgrimage to Anantaśayana, where he visited the Lord Sesaśayana by way of the three-doored sanctum. Some time passed thus. He suddenly remembered the scrap given him by Appan, and calling for it found to his surprise that it was the very moment he ought to have been with Appan for receiving the Yoga-Mysteries. With sorrow indescribable, he chid himself for his forgetfulness and wished, in his agony, for a *Pushpaka-vimāna*² to waft him instantly to Appan! Helpless and in sheer anguish he left Anantaśayana and started back for Śrīrangam.

In Śrīrangam, meanwhile, Teyvavāri-y-āndān was unable to bear the separation of his Guru, Yāmunāchārya, and consequently became ill and wore away daily. Physicians were brought by his friends to examine the patient. They all declared that some deep mental affliction was at the root of his illness. But asked the friends: "Is it wordly affliction of any kind,—may be woman—gnawing at your heart?" "No affliction," said he, "troubles me, but affection which I have for my Guru; hence, if I am conducted to him promptly, I may hope to live." Despairing of his life, the friends laid him on a stretcher and carried him towards Anantaśayana. As they proceeded on their journey, Āndān daily picked up strength and revived sufficiently to be able to go on foot. At Karaimanai river-side, the Guru and the disciple met. The latter fell flat on sighting his Guru,—overcome by joy. The Guru, finding him thus lying motionless, addressed him thus: "Śrī Rāma was a Master, hence He had the power to make his brother Bharata carry out his behest, (viz., to stay at Ayodhya till he returned from his exile in the forest); but I

¹ See his life in *Lives of Āśhvārs*.
² A aerial vehicle such as that noved by Lanka to Ayodhya used by Rāmachandra for his jour
seem no such master to thee, as I am powerless like Råma to exact obedience from thee." This sarcastic remark penetrated deep into the heart of Åndän, and he felt that by transgressing the commands of his Guru to remain in Srirangam, he had disobeyed him. Speechless therefore he lay.

The Guru taking compassion—his anger at the disobedience of Åndän abating by this time—said:—"I believe, son, thou desirest to re-establish with me the relationship of master and disciple. If so I bid thee rise." On hearing this, Åndän rose, trembling with fear and stood dumb. The good men standing near remarked that Åndän's temperament was like that of Lakshmana, who said that his separation from Råma would be like taking the fish out of the water [Râmâyana II. 53. 31]. Yāmunāchārya hearing this said:—"Åndän! disciples constituted like thee are rare. I am proud of thee. But oh, much distress I find in thee. Take courage." So saying, he softly stroked him and bid him go and visit Anantaśayana. "Thou art my Anantaśayana. I know no other", burst out Åndän, opening his mouth for the first time. Yāmunāchārya was struck with the extraordinary character of his disciple and taking him to be for one who answers the description:

"स्मै श्रृवणा यत्र न्यातिविधि प्रतीये । तस्म वैकुण्ठमन्दिरस्थितम् सर्वं एवस्।"

"That Teacher is all who Faith bestows on his disciple
He is Vaikuntha itself, the Milk-sea and the Dvāraka 1;" led him back to Srirangam, which they all reached in due course.

In the company of his faithful followers, Yāmunāchārya was here engaged in the prosecution of his spiritual mission; but a thought now began to harrass him that to carry on the good work he had begun, no competent soul was yet found among his disciples.

1 Vaikuntha is Parama-pada or the Spiritual Universe; Milk-sea is the centre which in the Material Universe, God has made for Himself, and which is the source of all Incarnations (like the Milky Way or the Nebula, said to be the source of all Systems). Dvāraka is the place where Krishna, one of the Incarnations, established Himself on earth and in India.
CHAPTER V.
RÂMÂNUJA.

His birth and studies.

Yâmunâchârya was thus troubled in his mind as to a competent successor to whom to hand on the Torch of Faith for posterity. His disciple Nambi or Mahâpârśa¹ had proceeded to The Holy Mount of Tirupati to live there for a time in the service of the Lord seated therein (Venkatâchala-pati). He had two sisters, Bhûmip-pirâṭti and Periya-pirâṭti, or Bhû-dêvi and Sri-dêvi. The elder Bhû-dêvi was married to Åsûri Keśavap-perumâl, the performer of many Yâgas,—residing at Sri-perumbûdûr.² Sri-dêvi³ was married to Kamalanayana-bhattâ of the Vâttâ-maṇi clan, residing at Mazhalai-mangalam.

Of Bhû-devi⁴ was born Râmânuja, the Great Reformer and Religionist of the 12th century,⁵ just as Råma was born of Kausalya and Krishna of Devaki. Of him it is written:—

"It is the First Ananta that became Lakshmana next,
And Balabhadra next, again the One next in Kali."

And this One was the Great Râmânuja born in the Kali Age, as the Spiritual Sun to dispel the darkness of sin and ignorance, reigning rampant as said in the verse:—

¹ See No. 23, Hierarchic Table, Lives of Áśehrâr.
² Near Madras.
³ Also called Dyutimati.
⁴ Also called Kântimati.
⁵ See No. 27, Hierarchic Table to our Lives of Áśehrâr, (A. C. 1017).
⁶ Yâdavagiri-nâhâtmya, I, 32.
⁷ Bhavishyat-purâna.
"The Scriptures are lost, and so the Traditional Laws,  
The twice-born have become degenerate,  
The allied sciences as well are wrecked,  
Oh, how Kali (Iron age) grows in power!"

To Harita Rishi was also, by God, foretold the coming of  
the Great Luminary, Râmânuja, as follows:—

In thy line, Harita! will be born Šesha himself—  
My Own—for worlds' Salvation.

Thus then was ushered into the world a Great Saviour, in  
the fulness of his own age.

Tirumalai-Nambi (the disciple of Yâmunâchârya) got  
tidings of this birth, and forthwith proceeded to Sri-perumbû-  
dûr (10 miles from the station of Tiruvallûr, Madras Railway),  
to visit the child. Seeing his friend Āsûri Késava, he con-  
gratulated him on the auspicious event and said:—"Friend, I  
see the blessed child. He is above his kind. The light in his  
face indicates this. He possesses, in embryo, all the qualities  
which shall make him a sage, learned and wise. Name him  
therefore Lakshmaṇa as he will be to God as Lakshmana was to  
Râma. Lakshmaṇa (Ilaiya-perumâl) is incarnated as Râmâ-  
uuja, (Ilai-Āzhivâr). As the illustrious child grew, the several  
sacraments binding on the Brâhmaṇas were duly administered  
till he came to be full sixteen years of age; and by that time,  
he had passed through the student's course, viz. the learning of  
the Vedas and all that appertains to that study. He was now  
mature; or as the Vaidikas say, he duly entered into the  
Order of the Householder after Brahmacharya. He left his  
home in search of a competent teacher who would teach him  
the Vedânta and found one in Yâdava-prakâsa, living at  
Tiru-puṭkuzhi in the neighbourhood of Perumâl-kôil, or  
Kâñchîpûrâm (Conjivaram); and here he joined other students  
learning under that teacher.

1 Bhûtapuri-mâhâtmya, III, (104-5).
2 Called Sri-saila-pûrṇa, the maternal uncle of Râmânuja.
Meanwhile, Kamala-nayana-bhatta at Mazhalai-mangalam,¹ became the father of a boy, the mother being his wife Sri-devi as noted. Tirumalai-Nambi receiving the news, hastened to the place and congratulating Bhatta on the happy event, foretold that the child was one of great promise; he would grow to be very wise and good and unworldly, and an ardent Champion of Religion. He was to be named Góvinda.² All the Samskáras (sacraments) were regularly administered in his case. He came of age and also entered the order of the householder. Hearing of his cousin-brother studying under Yàdava-prakáṣa, he gladly joined him to prosecute studies in his good company.

In the course of their readings, Yàdava came across the passage:—सत्यं त्यन्त मन्तवं बुध् [Taitt : Up : II, 1. 1] and he explained it in a way most repugnant to the spirit of the passage itself. For the passage means:—

"Brahman (God) is Truth (sátyam), Knowledge (jñānam), and Infinity (anántam)."

But Yàdava said that the attributes of Truth, Knowledge and Infinity could not co-exist in Brahman, inasmuch as broken-horn-ness, horn-less-ness, and full-horn-ness, could not co-exist in a cow, for example; i. e a cow cannot have broken horns, no horns and be fully horned at one and the same time; and therefore Brahman cannot simultaneously possess various attributes. Brahman with attributes was therefore a logical impossibility. Rāmānuja protested with his teacher that this Upanishad passage could not be thus misinterpreted and so tortured as to suit his own imaginary Brahman. Challenged by the teacher to furnish his own explanation, Rāmānuja argued thus:—"To begin with, a sentence cannot mean otherwise than what it is intended to mean. "That Brahman is Truth etc." is what is evident in this passage. It does not run thus:—"Brahman is not Truth," so as to make Brahman

¹ Now known as Madhura-mangalam (near Conjivaram.)
² Or Embár, No. 31 of Hierarchic Table in our Its Lives of Azhrûs.
devoid of any attribute, thus reducing It to a non-entity. And then, if there is Brahman, It must have attributes; for an attributeless Brahman can have no existence (truth). A thing must be some-thing, not no-thing. And thirdly the attributes Truth &c. are not inconsistent with each other so as to preclude their co-existence in Brahman, such as the inconsistency of light and darkness co-existing in space for example. The attribute Truth is meant to show that Brahman exists not at one moment merely, and ceasing to exist beyond that moment. Brahman is Truth is therefore intended to establish Brahman’s existence in eternity, or Its eternity in time. Brahman is Knowledge is next intended to establish that Brahman is Spirit, for Knowledge means Thought. Thought means Intelligence, Sensateness and so on. And thus Knowledge is an inseparable adjunct of Brahman, for otherwise Brahman would be no Spirit, but simple non-intelligent or non-sensate or non-thinking stuff like lifeless matter. Brahman is Knowledge therefore establishes that Brahman is Spirit or Life. Brahman is Infinity is next intended to establish that Brahman is without limits or conditions, or Its infinity in space and mode. Truth therefore is the term which characterizes Brahman as Eternal, distinguishing It from what is non-eternal; Knowledge is the term which characterizes Brahman as Spirit or Life, distinguishing It from what is non-spirit or non-life; and Infinity is the term which characterizes Brahman as Infinite, distinguishing It from what is non-infinite (or conditioned by space-limits or mode-limits). And these attributes and infinite others can co-exist in Brahman without mutual contradiction, as redness, softness, perfume &c., can harmoniously co-exist in the flower. The analogy of the cow is not appropriate in this case; the analogy of the flower as quoted, or the sun having light and heat co-existing, are appropriate. And therefore to try to postulate an attributless Brahman, or a Brahman in whom different attributes cannot co-exist, is neither logical nor consistent with the affirmatory character of the Vedic passage in question.” Yâdava after hearing this; simply said in disdain: “Thou, to argue with me? and kept silent.
On another day, Râmânuja,—disciple as he was—was anointing his Guru Yâdava with oil; when Yâdava took into his head to descant on the Vedic verse:

तत्स्य यथा कण्यार्स पुप्पदर्क भेंव मविष्कृ [Chhând, Up. I, 6, 7]

‘Brahman,’ he said, ‘(or He who is the Golden-hued in the Sun), has his eyes red like the posteriors of the monkey.’ When Râmânuja heard this, he felt a pang shooting across his heart to find that he should hear noble Vedic passages thus abused and ill-treated by Yâdava. His grief was so keen that a hot tear stole in to his eye, and dropped on the lap of Yâdava, as Râmânuja was bending over him to rub his head with oil. The drop scorched Yâdava. He started and looked up. Seeing Râmânuja troubled, ‘What ails thee?’ asked he. ‘I am grieved,’ he said, ‘that beautiful Vedic lines are so awkwardly construed.’ ‘What is thy interpretation, then?’ angrily vociferated Yâdava. ‘Sir,’ cried Râmânuja, ‘can you not see that kā means water, and pibati means to drink. Water-drinker is thus kāpi, the sun, or the lotus-stalk. Åsa is to open (vikaśane) or to rest (uparasane). Pundârika is the lotus. And therefore God in the Sun is He whose eyes are like the lotus which blooms under the balmy beams of the sun, or lotus which rests on its stalk below? It is to repudiate God to deny Him Person; and when Vedas postulate such a Personality, it is doubly to repudiate Him by reading blasphemous similes into the Vedas, where reverential gravity and grandeur are intended. Such constructions betoken nothing short of heresy.’ Yâdava heard this irresistible oration of Râmânuja, and flared up saying:—‘Haughty youth! if thou canst not abide by my instruction, thou must leave me.’ Râmânuja spoke not a syllable in reply, but took his departure.

The surprising intelligence of Râmânuja, his original ways, and divinely disposed heart, all combined to set Yâdava

1 Unfortunately, even Sankara, who preceded Yâdava, persists in this offensive interpretation though as a Vedic scholar he could, if he had liked, seen through the blinds. He however adds a clause in his commentary that this illustration is not meant in derision.
thinking; and his cogitations landed him in vice inasmuch as he believed that Râmânuja was a rival, who would any day be his superior in learning, subversive of his philosophy of advaita (monism); in short an oddity who may injure his reputation as the teacher in the land, and a possible revolutionist whom it was expedient to put an end to.

Thus thinking, he called together those disciples who were after his ways and said: "Look, all of you do quietly subscribe to my views, but this Râmânuja alone is adverse and perverse, and entertains opinions opposed to mine. He is likely to become our declared enemy. Can you devise some means by which to do away with him?" They suggested many ways of disposal, but none of them recommended itself to Yâdava, as it meant sinning, for which Sàstras declared that one must expiate and suffer; and secondly in whatever way Râmânuja was to be done away with, that must be above suspicion. After much consultation and deliberation, they pitched upon a plot, viz., to invite Râmânuja back into their fold, treat him as their best friend—as one without whom they could not live—and then they would start on a holy pilgrimage to Vârânasî (Benares) and there drown Râmânuja in the Ganga (Ganges) river, near Mânîkârni-gâhät—the ostensible object being pilgrimage, the real one being Râmânuja’s death—death which, taking place in the Holy Ganga, would be counted as an affair of merit, which they thought would not involve the actors in sin! What travesty of spiritual ethics, by Yâdava!! A veritable whitened sepulchre he must have been.¹

Into a hellish conspiracy such as this then, Yâdava and his accomplices entered, even as Duryodhana did as regards Dharmaputra and his brothers, whom he had contrived to kill in a wax-house. They therefore invited Râmânuja to join them as without him they said they felt uncongenial, and begged of him to prosecute his studies as he willed, undisturbed. Some time passed thus.

¹ Probably Yâdava’s moral (immoral) sense took refuge in his pantheistic theory of Mâyâ, or illusion of the world, which thus seems to provide no strong motive for strenuous effort after holiness.
Yādava now announced his intention of going on a pilgrimage to Kāsi (Benares); and making due preparations, started on the journey with Rāmānuja of course, Govinda-bhāṭṭa, Rāmānuja’s maternal cousin, following. Govinda somehow got scent of the evil designs of Yādava on Rāmānuja. The other disciples too had their suspicion that Govinda might divulge and defeat their machinations. They took care therefore to keep him and Rāmānuja apart as far as possible. They had now arrived at the Vindhya-range of hills, and while crossing a valley, Rāmānuja stopped a little behind for purposes of nature. And Govinda contrived to tarry with him. The others were a little in advance. Govinda took advantage of this seclusion to disclose to Rāmānuja the designs of Yādava in as few words as possible and advised him to escape. So saying he left Rāmānuja.

Rāmānuja taking the hint, left the main path and turned aside, soon hiding himself in the wilderness of the Vindhya. He roamed about in the jungle aimlessly, the fierce sun beating upon his head, and stones and thorns hurting his feet, drawing forth blood. Wandering away thus into unknown regions for some time, he was fagged out; and hungry, thirsty and footsore, was unable to advance further. “Only greatest sinners,” he cried, “deserve this fate. Hence it is written:—किच्च कृष्णी० यात्रा शुकर० स्वत्वाय विधानसिं ह। कृष्णस्तर० हि जायते वेदरं वेदान्तस्य यात्रा।। ॥ e.g. “Those who steal others' land are born in the waterless wilds of the Vindhyas, as dark snakes lodging in dry anthills.” He was bewildered, not knowing where to go and what to do. He looked round for help, mind-troubled and heart-sick. While he was in this state, all on a sudden burst upon his sight a Fowler and His Wife.

God has defined himself as One who can have no joy without His faithful ones: (नामस्वस्व सारस्तो महासत्रीस्त सादृष्टिना); and One who incarnates with bow, arrow, sword and even a wife, to defriend His faithful in times of peril: (सदार सरस्वते सूक्ष्मवियत्रा व वायुयास्तारर भलुनस जनाईन।॥ ॥ ॥ Seeving them, Rāmānuja heaved a sigh and was

1 Rishnu-Dharma, 62, 31.  
2 Brahmānda-Purāṇa.
comforted at the thought that some one had come or been deputed by God to succour him in his distress. Rāmānuja accosting them asked who they were and whither they were going. "We are Fowlers coming from Siddhāśrama in the North and are wending our way to Satyavrata-kshētra\(^1\) in the South," said they. "May I accompany you to that Holy shrine?" asked Rāmānuja. "Most willingly," said they, "follow us." They leading, Rāmānuja trudged on, till Vindhyā was now out of sight, and the sun was setting. Rāmānuja performed his evening prayers. And as it was getting dark, all the three sat down under the shelter of a big tree, and were sinking into the soft embraces of sleep. The Fowler's wife addressing her husband said:—"Dear, can you get me a drink of water to allay my thirst?" "Wait a little," answered the husband, "directly it dawns, I promise to find you close by a beautiful pond, full of cool and fragrant water." Rāmānuja overheard this conversation and thought: "Oh, if only it were in my power to do this kind Pair a service now, at least as a requital for their kindness to me! But I am in unknown regions." And he dozed away in such reflections.

The night had now nearly worn away, a flush suffused the East, and a morning breeze gently began to blow. Rāmānuja rose with thoughts of God in his breast, and offered up his morning prayers. After this he looked round for his Guides, in order to pursue the journey, but to his amazement he did not find them. He called for them aloud and searched in every direction, but all to no purpose. He proceeded a few steps in alarm, not knowing whether he was going. But by this time the sun had appeared above the Eastern horizon. Rāmānuja could see his surroundings better; and he heard peoples' voices. He took heart and, a few steps more, discovered a pleasant garden, a pond\(^2\) and a few men standing by. "What a contrast this day is with yesterday," gladly

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1 The *purānic* or legendary name of Conjeevaram.

2 This is called *Sālai-k-Kinar*, still existing and from which water is daily brought to Lord Varadārājasvāmi for ablation.
cried he, astonished. "What country could this be? Is there any town close by?" he asked himself.

The people gazed at him wonderingly, saying: "Art thou mad, Brâhmaṇa? Dost thou not see before thee the bright Puṇya-
kōti-vimānām?" At this Râmânuja looked up and saw the high Gopuram (or cupola) of the Temple of Lord Varadarâja, the worshipful Deity of Kânchipuram. He was struck dumb with delight and astonishment. It now dawned upon him that He who had directed his steps in the Vindhyan wilds was no other than God himself, who not only guided him but miraculously transported him over a distance of nearly 1,000 miles in a night!! Like the joy that thrilled Sîtâ when she heard of Râvana’s fall, like the joy that ravished Râma when he heard Hanumān say: "I have found Sîtâ", like the joy of Hanumān when he entered the Madhuvana on his return from Lanka, was Râmânuja’s joy after the wonderful adventures he had recently passed through. He simply fainted away with delight, especially when he reflected how God descends to the weak and helpless, even as Saint Parânkusa fainted when he reflected how Krishna, though God, submitted to be bound by a rope by Yaśoda! Charmed into ecstasy, he cried:—"To Arjuna, O God! Thou revealedst Thy Beatific Form,¹ but to me Thou hidst Thyself under the guise of a Fowler. I took Thee for a mere Fowler and I beseech Thy pardon for taking Thee for an ordinary creature. Even as Arjuna besought Thee, so do I:— "Krishna! Yâdava! Achyuta! Overlook it, if taking Thee for friend, I called Thee by names such as these, unmindful of Thy Greatness as God; remit, O God! any slight I may have, unwarily shown Thee, while we moved together, sat together and ate together and joked together, as equals."² Râmânuja was thus drowned in rapturous delight after the wonderful experiences he had. Out of sheer joy he fell prostrate, rose, fell again, shed tears of joy, was bathed in perspiration—in short, felt his whole being divinely transported beyond himself. From that day on, he carried water daily from the holy well (ṣālai-k-kînar) to the Lord Varadarâja.

¹ Bhagavadgîtâ, XIth Book. ² Bhagavadgîtâ, XI. 41, 42.
CHAPTER VI.

YĀDAVA, GOVINDA AND RĀMĀNUJA.

Yādava-prakāśa and his disciples, finding that Rāmānuja did not follow, stopped and waited for him for some time. Govinda came up however and joined them. “You have come, but where is Rāmānuja?” asked Yādava. “I never stopped with him,” said Govinda in reply, “I walked my own way, and so I am not aware of what has become of him. Yādava sent his disciples in search, but they returned unsuccessful. “What could have happened to the poor youth, Oh!” thus did they all feign grief. Baulked thus in their intentions, they continued their journey sullenly to on Kāśi.

They duly arrived there. It was the month Māgha, and they went to bathe in the Holy Ganga. While bathing, Govinda found a Śivalingam (phallic stone) floating up into his hand. He showed this to Yādava, who said:—“You are a most fortunate man. Gangādhara (Śiva) himself has appeared to you. From this day you are most dear and venerable to us. Your name from this day shall be:—“Ullangai-koparanda-Nāyanār (he who brought in his palm).” They all now started homeward for Kāñchipuram, visiting on their way Jagannātha, Ahobilam and other shrines. Before reaching Kāñchi, U. Nāyanār took leave of Yādava, saying he would instal the Śivalingam in a suitable place and then join them. Yādava permitting, Nāyanār went to his birth-place Mazhalai-Mangalam, and there with the help of the learned men of the place installed the Śivalingam, and remained in its staunch service. Kālahasti is a place sacred to Śiva. It is written that this Śiva appeared to Nāyanār in his dream commanding him to join his Temple-service at Kālahasti. A dream was dreamt by the Temple-authorities of the place also, commanding them to proceed and bring Nāyanār with honors. They did so, and bringing Nāyanār in festive fashion, made him the dignitary of their temple, investing him with the signet-ring and other insignia of that office.
Yādava-prakāśa, as already said, had arrived at Kānchi. Here to his astonishment he found Rāmānuja, who he had believed had been lost in the jungles. He feigned joy however at seeing him and said:—“Our grief at your loss in the Vindhyān wilds, was very great; at seeing you now, it has given place to boundless joy.” Rāmānuja narrated to him how he lost sight of them as they were much in advance, how he lost his way; and how while wandering sick and sore in the mazes of the forest, a Fowler broke upon his sight suddenly; and how He guided his steps so that to his wonderment, he found he had traversed a great distance while he thought he slept under a tree, but waking up to find he had been brought to Kānchi. This account made Yādava to stare at Rāmānuja in combined fear and wonder; whom he now looked upon as a being not of the ordinary run of mankind; not to be despised but looked upon as one deserving reverential regards; and feeling remorse in his heart for his evil intents towards him. He could not therefore but turn his hate into love for him; and therefore invited Rāmānuja to grace his school with his presence and to complete his studies if he so willed.

While these events were passing at Kānchi, two Śrī Vaishnavas\(^1\) of Kānchi travelled to Srirangam, to pay their devotions to Ranganātha, which they did and then went to Ālavandār (Yāmunāchārya), the great apostle of the Faith who was there teaching at the time\(^2\). After due exchange of courtesies, Yāmunāchārya asked them for any news of an interesting nature at Kānchi. They related to him how a youth Rāmānuja by name, born at Bhūtapuri (Śrī Perumbūdur) came to Kānchi to read Vedānta under a uni-staffed\(^3\) Sanyāsi, Yādava-prakāśa; how in the course of their readings, differences rose between them as regards interpretations of Veda-texts,—Yādava contending for a quality-less God, and Rāmānuja for a quality-full One, and so on,—, and how, on a certain

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\(^1\) Devout followers of Vishnu.  
\(^2\) F[ide] his life.  
\(^3\) Uni-staffed Sanyāsins belong to the Advaita School, and the Tri-staffed to the Viśihtadvaita school. The staff is made of bamboo sticks.
day, a certain blasphemous exegetic by Yādava of a Veda-
passage excited and pained Rāmānuja and drew forth burning
tears from his eyes, which accidentally falling on Yādava's
thigh scorched him like fire; how on his challenging, Rāmānuja
gave his beautiful interpretation that the passage meant that
God's eyes resembled the lotus opening under the sun's rays,
and how this and other disputations of the sort led to their
separation; Yādava's plot on his life and the rest of events,
adventurous and miraculous, which followed thereafter in
succession.

Yāmūnāchārya heard this account with rapt attention and
exclaimed:—

असर्व एवार्थि सम्बन्धि हसतिकायायित हर्षवाहः।
वैविकर्त्तानं परिसंभवति तैवलाम स्तसीवहायाम्॥

"The bud are legion like fire-sparks in a furnace.
But the good, if found in the fire, are like lotuses therein."

So saying he felt a great longing to immediately go and
see Rāmānuja. He repaired to the Lord Ranganātha and taking
leave of Him, left Srirangam with his followers. On his way,
paying honors to God Nāyanār and the Three First Āzhvārs at
Tirukkōilūl¹, reached Kāñchi in due time.

Tirukkacchi-nambi,² on hearing his Āchārya coming,
gathered together the holy people of Kāñchi, and with Śrī
Suthagōpa, Tirtha and Prasāda of the Holy Temple of Varada-
rāja, went forward to meet and welcome him. Yāmūnāchārya
received the Holy gifts of God, and seeing Tirukkacchi-Nambi,
his disciple, lying prostrate at his feet for joy and veneration
for the Guru, lifted him up with affection and inquired:—
"Gajēndradāsa!" art thou steady at thy fanning service to
Lord Varada? "By your grace, Sire, The Lord is accept-
ing my humble services," said he. And then they proceeded

¹ See Lives of Āzhvārs.
² No. 36, Ibid, Hierarchic Table. Here read pp. 3499, Vol. VII,
Bhagavadvishaya:—Āmudalvan.
³ A Sanskrit name for Tirukkacchi-Nambi.
together to the Temple, where Yāmunāchārya paid due honors to the Lord Varada.

While he was thus employed, Yādava-prakāśa came on a visit to the temple, with his followers. Yāmunāchārya saw them, and asked who among his followers was Rāmānuja. They pointed him out. "That bright and glorious central figure," said they, "possessing those fine shoulders, broad and long, like Rāma Himself,—that is Rāmānuja." Yāmunāchārya drank him in with his eyes, and sent his prayers after him, as the host was moving away.

Yāmunāchārya now mounted up to the Central Shrine of Lord Varada (called Hastigiri) and standing before the Deity sent up a prayer to Him thus:—"O Great Lord! grant me a boon. Thou art Vara-da (Boon-Granter), for Sarvapākāravala बिठि शृणुषोति पदुः प्राधान्यति जवेन च वर्धिते मूकः। अन्धः प्रापित हूिरः लाभिते च यवना तं देव नेव बरदे शर्कर गतोस्तिम॥ i.e. 'By thy favour, the deaf hears, the lame runs, the dumb speaks, the blind sees, and the barren bears. I have sought Thee.' Grant me then, that this Rāmānuja shall become the bearer of the Torch of our Faith." An urgent call from Srirangam now obliging Yāmunāchārya to return immediately, he found no leisure to do anything more, nor time even to say something to Tirukkacak-Nambi, about his wishes and future plans. To Srirangam thus he returned.
CHAPTER VII.

RÂMÂNUJA—CONTROVERSIES AND MIRACLES.

Yâdava-prakâśa was conducting his Vedânta classes as usual. It so happened that the princess of the then Râja of the dominions, to which Kânchi had then belonged, became obsessed with an evil spirit (brahma-rakshas). The Râja was endeavouring to find an able exorcist of demons. He was told that Yâdava was well versed in such lore. The Râja sent men to invite him. They went and told him the state of affairs with the princess and that he was wanted. Yâdava said to the men:—“Go ye back and tell the spirit: “Yâdava commandeth thee to leave the princess.”” They returned and delivered the message: “Yâdava commandeth. Leave thou the princess,” they demanded of the spirit. “Go back,” bellowed the rakshas, “and tell Yâdava from me, to depart from this country.” The Râja’s men ran to Yâdava again and delivered this message from the rakshas. Yâdava now went himself with a troop of his disciples, and stationing himself before the obsessed princess, began to mutter potent magical incantations and showing his fist, bid the devil depart. But the devil (i.e., princess) stretched its legs and pointing them towards Yâdava said, in sovereign contempt of him:—“Thinkest thou Yâdava! that I do not know thy magic and magical formulae? Knowest thou not I am a brahma-rakshas? Neither thy mantra nor thy person can be efficacious as against me. Thou hast no knowledge of me, nor hast knowledge of thyself. Get thee gone.” “But,” put in Yâdava, “hast thou knowledge of me, and of thyself as thou boastest?” “Learn then from me,” retorted the rakshas, “thou wert a guana in thy past birth, living in the holes of the bank of the Madhurântaka tank. A batch of Sri-Vaishnavas were travelling to Tirumalai (Tirupati) on a holy pilgrimage. They stopped at the tank, cooked, ate and left the place. They had left the leavings of their food, and had spilt some water. Thou didst then scamper to the place and

1 Virarâjendra and his successor Parakesari Varma; as also the Western Chalukyas were about this time in possession of Conjeevaram [South Indian Inscription Vol. II, p. 117 ff.]
ate of that food and drank of that water. This fortuitous merit brought thee to this present jauma (birth) of thine as a Brähmana with learning. As for myself, I was a Brähmana in my past birth. I began to perform a Yāga (a Brähmanic sacred ritual), but there were omissions in the regular chanting of the mantras, and the acts connected therewith. And hence the rākṣasa-jauma has devolved on me. Seest thou now I have knowledge, and thou hast not”? “Very good,” said Yādava, “tell me then who will make thee dislodge from the princess?” “There,” said the devil, pointing with its hands folded in fear and worship, “in thy ranks there is that angel from Heaven incarnate among men, whom thou hast the glory of counting as thy student, and whose name is Rāmānuja. At his bidding I must flee”. Yādava turned to Rāmānuja and begged of him to command the evil spirit to leave. Rāmānuja did so. “But I will not”, it said, “unless, O Holy soul, thou place thy Holy Feet upon my head.” Rāmānuja did so. “I now salute thee Holy Rāmānuja,” said the spirit in a loud tone, “I am leaving the princess.” “But stay,” said Rāmānuja “how shall we know that thou hast left?” By this sign replied the spirit, “into that asvatth tree yonder, I shall enter, the evidence thereof shall be the breaking of a branch.” And so it happened. The Rāja was overjoyed, and loaded them with presents and honors. Yādava-prakāṣa showered plaudits on Rāmānuja and glad at least that his prestige was somewhat saved by his noble disciple, returned to his retreat.

In Srīrangam, Yāmunāchārya was in the meanwhile conducting his expositions of The Faith, of which the Four-Thousand Prabandhas² constituted the chief documents. When he came across St. Nammāzhvār’s verse (Tiru-vil-mozhi IV. 10. 5) which proclaims that there is but One God, “On whom, all ye, O Laingas, Samanās and Sākyas⁵, shall believe”, he felt

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Also Luke X. 33 ff.
² See our Āzhvār’s Lives.
³ Laingas = Saivas, Samanās = Jainas, Sākyas = Buddhas.
more anxious than ever to find a capable successor; and still more fervently prayed to Lord Varadarāja to wean Rāmānuja from the heretical associations of Yādava, and appoint him for The Faith. In answer as it were to his ardent petition, a crisis was preparing.

For, Yādava was one day explaining the Vedānta-texts संव खल्विद्र ब्रह्म,¹ and नेन्द्र न नासित किचनू,² as if they meant that soul (man) and God were identical³. The first passage means:—All this indeed is Brahman, and the second means:—There is not the least diversity here. According to Yādava, the first passage, meant that all this Cosmos is God; the second passage meant that all the diversities that are seen in the Cosmos are illusory. Rāmānuja took objection to these interpretations and said that the cosmos can never be identical with Brahman (God) nor can it be proved unreal. For the first passage: all this indeed is Brahman meant that the cosmos is permeated with His Spirit, i.e. full of God; in other words the cosmos has no existence independent of God; it exists by His will. He is its Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. He is its Ruler and rules by His immanence. And the second passage meant that the diversity is of the cosmos and real inasmuch as it is sustained by the Unity of God; that therefore whoso sees the diverse cosmos as severed from God sees not aright. There is but One God, neither two nor many. In Him is all. That is the meaning of the text. Cosmos is not denied inasmuch as its existence is eternal substantially, though it exteriorly undergoes adjectival change. It is an axiom that nothing can come out of nothing: ab nihil nihil fit. The cosmos is real. It is in God, who is thus one only, not many. This passage is thus an assertion, not a negation, of the cosmos.

¹ Chhāndogya Upanishad, III. 14-1.
² Brihadāranyaka. Up. VI. 4-19.
³ A Christian writer says:—“To say that man, with all his passionate tempers, his deceitful ways, his foul imaginations, his hard uncharitable thoughts, is God, is the fatal and destructive error which for so many centuries has been leading India ever further along the path of decadence.” [Epigraph, p. 146 Vol. XXII. 1904.] We Visihtādvaitins say exactly the same thing, but which the Christian knows not yet.
As obstinately as Yādava preached his pautheism, so obstinately did Rāmānuja rebut him. Yādava got enraged at last. “No more can you read with me, Sir” he cried, “you must henceforth find your own congenial teacher.”

Rāmānuja was glad to leave this teacher of impossible and absurd pilosophy. Straight home went he, and informed his mother Śrī-Dēvi of all that happened. “Enough of thy studies, son!” said she; there is Tirukkacchi-Nambi who is in great favour with Lord Varada-Rāja. Seek his advice and service, and abide by his will. That will do thee all the good.” Rāmānuja at once sought T. Nambi and besought him to employ him in divine services in the Temple, even as Lakṣmaṇa besought of Rāma:—

क्रियताभिरितमानव [Rāmāyaṇa III. 18. 7.]
“Rāma! say: ‘do,’ and I am thy servant.”

S. Nambi said:—“Lord Varadarāja much likes the water from the Śalai-well you were once bringing him. Fetch the same daily and serve Him.” Thus therefore did Rāmānuja employ himself.
CHAPTER VIII.

ÂLÂVANDÂR’S LAST DAYS AND LAST WORDS.

We shall for a moment turn to Srirangam. Yâmuna was aging now. He became ill. Tiruvâranângapperumâl Araiyaar\(^1\) approached him, followed by Yâmuna’s disciples Tirukkôtti-yûr-Nambi\(^2\) and Periya-Nambi\(^3\). The latter prayed to him to give them the best salvatory advice. Yâmuna spoke thus:—

“Good souls, look upon the shrine of Ranganâtha as your very life; the Great God enshrined in that shrine as your Saviour; make Tiruppâñâzhvâr,—the Panchama Saint\(^4\)—who is the beloved of this Great God, your ideal for loving contemplation. This holy Saint is to God Ranga (of Srirangam) as Kurumba-rutta-Nambi\(^5\)—the potter—is to God Venkatêsa (of the Tirupati Hill); as Tirukkacakhi-Nambi—the Vaiśya— is to God Varada-Râja (of Kânchipuram). This Saint, to you, sire,” addressing Araiyaar, “is your very soul.” And continued:—

What is dear to you, Holy Sire, is dear to me; the means of your salvation, are my means as well. Araiyaar, prostrating to Yâmuna said: “Sire, you now seem to talk as if you are envisaging truths as exist in Nitya-vibhûti (=Eternal or Unvarying Cosmos=Heaven). It makes me almost envious to study you thus.” “Sire”, Yâmuna said, “how can you be envious of me, if I go to Nitya-vibhûti before you do? Can great and good men like you be envious of others’ fortune? So, if I leave you all in advance, reconcile yourselves thus.”

Now to all his disciples, he administered general instructions thus:—“Hear me, sons! A prapanna is he who has absolutely resigned himself to God. If after professing so, he should still entertain doubts as to whether his soul is at all in the safe

\(^1\) Vide No. 22 Hierarchic Table, Lîres of Āzhvârs.
\(^2\) Vide No. 24. Ibid.
\(^3\) Vide No. 23. Ibid.
\(^4\) See his Life and foot note to page 137 Ibid., and our recent Lecture on the Panchamans.
\(^5\) See Venkatâchala Mâhâtmya. He is called Bhimâ, the potter
\(^6\) The third lower caste from the Brâhmana.
keeping of God, that very doubt is proof of his want of trust in God. A true believer in God is only he who feels quite sure of his soul’s safety in His arms, and that his body is a temporary form begot by Karma, ceasing when Karma ceases. A prapanna is thus one who has intellectually divested himself thus of all concern, either as regards his soul or his body, both being in the keeping of two divergent determining agents. This resigned attitude of the mind constitutes the true prapanna (believer). Dwell on the sense contained in the Holy Name Nārāyaṇa, as it contains the sum of all divine wisdom. It is

1 Karma means act. This is the inherent will in the soul. This will is subjective. This shapes out an objective, for which matter is associated with. Like God, Soul is eternal, like the eternality of God’s attributes,—because of God’s eternality. Karma, or will which is innate in the soul, is eternal with it. A Christian might say: ‘that this dogma puts a limit to God’s power, inasmuch as Karma or soul is something which He did not make, and therefore circumscribing the sovereignty of God. Karma becomes therefore another “Unknown God”, containing in itself possibilities for the soul’s future, and therefore the soul can strive for itself without or independent of God. In short, by the dogma of Karma, God is made dependent, if not altogether rendered nugatory. Karma therefore is incompatible with an independent sovereign God.” To this we say, that Karma, by itself as a fact inherent in the soul, eternal with it, and as operative on the destinies of the soul, is all that, by virtue of an eternal God eternally so willing. If God is capable of willing something in time, his capability is all the more greater, when He can will things from all eternity. This is called the nitya-sankalpa power of God. With this basis then of God’s eternal will, there is nothing contradictory or interfering with God’s paramountcy. If the Christian in order to invest God with all-power, demurs to Karma being owned by the soul, is he then prepared to transfer all Karma to God, and in order to maintain that God must create soul, Karma and all in time? Then the soul is exonerated of all personal responsibility. It has neither merit nor demerit; rewards and punishments are not for it. A non-eternal will, as creation supposes, therefore derogates from God’s power rather than enhance and glorify it, as when He is endowed with eternal will. Time-limitations on God is thus as bad atheism, as that of identifying man with God, postulated by monism. Karma in soul, not originating in time, and its being so by God’s eternal will, reconciles at once, soul’s responsibility for his acts (Karma), and God’s supreme power to rule over this state of things as long as He may please, and reserving to Himself the power which may be called grace, by which to annul Karma in toto, and gather His flock to Himself. Eternal Karma therefore is compatible with sovereign God’s Oneness, His unrestricted Power and His unconditional Grace. To call in question therefore the power of God to eternally order things is to limit Him. To endow Him with eternal will is to truly conceive of His Infinite nature. If it still be contended that Karma, even when eter-
the Name signifying:—"We are in Him, and He is in us." 1
"He is in us proves the bond between Him and souls, the bond by which He is bound by His Grace to save us. We are in Him proves that we can freely and wholly trust Him for all our welfare. Anything less than this trust savours of diffidence, or which otherwise constitutes the rebellious attitude of the soul. On the other hand, to compel God to save us by our importunities, also savours of disobedience and to think that God must be one at our beck and call, is equally impious and disloyal. Absolute trust is when we think of ourselves as destined by Him to serve some mighty purpose of His, and as mere instruments, required in willingness to do His bidding so that what His purpose may be, may be fulfilled. There is no purpose of our own as apart from His. God is the Proprietor and we are His property, of which He alone has the full power of disposal; in other words, He is the Master and we are His vassals." The disciples asked again; "Sire, what are our Means and our Goal?" The Master said:—"Your Saviours are the mean, but do not think I am one. In this matter, it is not for me to dictate, you must use your own judgment. Again Your Saviours are the goal as well. To serve them eternally is the goal. And these Saviours are one with God as their minds are en rapport with Him, so that to serve

1 Equivalently, partially to, 'We live and move and have our being in Him.'

God shows grace, we cannot say He is dependent upon His grace to save us. Again this eternal Karma is quite compatible with a most independent God. Karma, we said, was act. We must be understood to mean by this term the inherent capacity or potency in the soul to act. This is free will (will actualized into act) in other words; and this is bestowed on the soul by God from eternity. If it is pertinent to say that Karma cannot be eternal, it is as well pertinent to say that God must have been created by somebody. See Srinivasa-Stava II, 43 "Sadhgune."
them is to serve Him, and what pleases them pleases Him. Find your temple of bliss (bhoga) in the Tirumantra, your temple of flowers (pushpa) in the Charamasloku and your temple of bounty (tyūga) in the Devayā. I echo but what our Saints have said before.” On hearing these, T. Araiyar said:—“Oh, Sire, after your departure to Parama-pada (= Heaven), what matters it, if worms, like us, die?” Yamuna, hearing this, made no reply to such a token of affection; and fearing lest such praise inflame his pride and destroy humility.

T. Araiyar, Periya-nambi and others went to the Temple and there in the presence of Lord Ranganātha stood revolving in their minds as to what had transpired. Periya-nambi and others said they had decided to give up their lives, if Yamuna passed away, for they could hardly bear such separation. Ranganātha read their thoughts and a voice came:—“I conjure you all not to think in this wise. You must abide by My will as to how long it may please Me to keep men on earth and when I may choose to dismiss them from there. Take Araiyar for your guide after Yamuna’s departure.” They all heard this divine mandate, and speeding to Yamuna related to him the extraordinary occurrence. He said:—“I echo the mandate. Grudge me not that celestial bliss into which I am about to enter, nor grudge the service which Ranganātha will demand of you for some time to come after me. But if overcome by grief at having to leave me, you persist in your intentions to give up your lives on my account, it will be most hostile to the will of our Masters, Uyyakkondar and others, that a continuous succession of spiritual teachers of your faith shall be maintained. Do not then lose heart. Resigned to His will, live on.” They were still unpacified. To put heart into them, the Master continued:—“Know these truths again. Endeavour to see no difference between God and God’s saints. In God’s saints, God Himself is present. On the other hand, know that when you do a service to your disciples, you shall take no credit to yourselves for doing it. The credit belongs

1 Consult our Lives of Āśhāvāc and Divine Wisdom of Drāvida Saints for explanation of these mysteries.
to the Masters of whom know you are the accredited agents. And when you serve God, think your services are transmitted to Him by the Saints and Sages, whom you succeed. Further, when you dispense to your disciples, let the motive for such dispensing (i.e., imparting instruction or bestowing gifts &c.) be not one of selfishness (i.e., for a return from them of money, or satisfaction of a worldly end). If a spiritual preceptor has such motives, and if he ever consider himself superior in the midst of an assembly of holy men, he deserves to be discarded.” The disciples were still dejected, and the Master again continued his discourse thus:—“Fix your hearts on Lord Ranganātha. He is your sole End and Aim. Enough, if the first thing you do every morn is to lay a flower at His feet. Here are three objects for your worship:—God, the Guru, and His Faithful. In the middle of these three terms centres the ideas of the first and the last terms. This centering in a Guru who is sensibly present, will be your means to cross the sea of this world. I consign you then, dear disciples, into the hands of T. Arāiyar.” T. Arāiyar now addressed the disciples:—“Hearken to the parting words of our Master. Take courage. I also lay it upon you not to think of dying, because the Master leaves us. If you break these commands, you shall forfeit both the Land of Bliss and the Union with the Blessed. After hearing these assuring words of Arāiyar, Yāmunāchārya found peace in his soul.

Yāmunāchārya recovered somewhat; and took his bath of health. For joy, they made great feast and in a body proceeded to the Temple to pay honors to Lord Ranga,¹ accompanied by Yāmuna. The curtain across the sanctum was drawn aside. The congregation was full. Yāmuna stood silent for a while before the Deity with folded hands, and then spoke thus:—“Strange, is this Heaven? Am I among the Celestials, the Angels?” As he uttered this, the garland of flowers from Lord Ranganātha’s neck slipped and dropped on the ground. T. Arāiyar promptly picked it up and put it on Ālavandār’s neck, saying:—“I suppose, sire, your wishes are now fulfilled.” Dismissed by Ranganātha with tīrtham and prasūdam, they all

¹ Ranga is abbreviation for Ranganātha.
returned to Álavandár’s monastery. Here, after seeing every one partake of holy food, Álavandár prostrated before them all and asked forgiveness of them all for any wrongs. “How can you do wrong, Sire, and what is there for us to forgive?” So saying, T. Aráiyar raised him up in reverence. The master now took his food, and went on saying many precious things, knowing that his end was fast approaching.

Something more was yet in store, before God was pleased to take to himself this Pioneer of the Viśishtádvaita Faith. News reached Kânci of the critical state of Yámunáchárya’s health. Two Srí Vaishnavas hastened to Srírangam to visit the sage, perhaps for the last time. Yámana received the visitors with great earnestness and asked them to tell him how things were going with Rámánuja. They informed him that owing to an altercation between Yádava and Rámánuja, the latter had severed his connection with him and was employed solely in the services of Lord Varadarája. “God has granted my fervent prayers then, and be He praised”, cried Yámana, elated with joy. He called Periyanambi (=Mahápúrna) to his presence and said:—“Here are glad tidings for us. Rámánuja is happily disconnected from Yádava. Go forth at once to Kânci and bring him to me.” Mahápúrna immediately left.

But Yámana in the meanwhile got worse, despite his will to live till Rámánuja’s arrival. And all the disciples were made uneasy, and hoped against hope that the Master might live. It was the month Vaiyási, and the usual temple-jubilations of the season were proceeding. The arabhrita 1 (closing) day came; and Yámana went to the Temple, and paid his last worship and homage to Ranganátha, whom, as well as Saint Tiruppáñzhvár, stationed at His feet, he devoured with his eyes from toe to top, and top to toe. Receiving tirtha 2 and prasáda, 3 he returned to his monastery; and

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1 Ablution after a sacrificial ceremony.
2 Water consecrated to the Diety during the worship and distributed to the devotees.
3 Flowers, food &c., offered to God and distributed to the Faithful.
gathered together all his disciples and temple-authorities round him. He fell prostrate before the assembly, and once more craved their pardon for all his faults. In one voice they cried:—"Holy Sire, why speakest thou of faults?" He now addressed them thus:—"I beseech ye all to take care of the venerable Araiyar. O ye officers of Ranga’s Shrine! I pray to you to conduct all the several items of worship, such as mantrapushpa to Lord Ranga, punctually; and distribute holy food to all your gurus and holy souls of the place, and to all pilgrims coming from all quarters to visit the Shrine." "These must be his Last words," thought all, sorrowing much in their hearts. Turning to Yâmuna, they said:—"All shall be done Sire, as you wish." Sri Yâmuna now assumed the padmâsana posture, held his breath, and fixing all his mind and heart on the Holy feet of his Åchârya Maânakkâl-Nambi, commanded the disciples to repeat loudly the Brahmanvalli, Bhriguvalli Purusha-suktam, Archirâdi, Sthâraviśumbu &c. And as the moment Abhijit (midday), coupled with Srâvana constellation arrived on the sixth day of Vaïyâsi, and as trumpets began to blow, the Holy Sage was elevated to Nitya-vibhûti (Eternal Realms).

How Álavandár was interred.

Tiruvâranga-p-perumâl Araiyar and others fell to the ground senseless with grief at this bereavement which was so hard to bear. But they had to perform all the services for the departed; and rallying therefore to the task, they bade the

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1 See any work on Yoga.
2 Spiritual preceptor and guide; called also Guru.
3 See Taittirîya Upanishat.
4 See Chândogya Up. and one of the 18 Babasayas of Lokâchârya.
5 Tiruvâi-moshti, X, 9-1.
6 We had thought of omitting the details of this last sacrament administered on Sanyâsins (monastics). But thinking that an account may be of much interest to Oriental Scholars, we have translated the same as best as we can. Also it is a study in Indian “Magnetism” which may be interesting to thaumaturgists.
son of the Sage (i.e., son before he took the robe of Sanyásin) to do what was necessary.

They sprinkled water over the place (sthala-suddhi) after sweeping; constructed a fore-poled mantapam (booth or bower)\(^1\), and adorned it with festoons of darbha (sacred grass), and śṛṅgashu-nīr flowers; silk hangings were hung and chānaras (chowries or streamers) were arranged in tassels. To the four posts were tied young plantain trees with bunches of green areca-nut at the capitals. Fruits of different kinds were hung from the canopy; and a flag hoisted at one corner. To the four faces, East, South, West and North, were hung respectively festoons of tender foliage, of pañβa, asβattha, khaβīra, and udβumβara. Paddy grain was spread on the floor (of the bier), and pārṇa-kumbha (water-filled vessel) was planted in its midst, and four others at the corners. Twelve more vessels were placed outside the bower, at different corners, repeating the Twelve Holy Names, Kēṣava &c. Their necks were wound with kuβa, dārvī, darβha, viβhun-krāntha, and various flowers; these were worshipped after repeating the Dvaya-mantra along with the names of the guru-paramparā (the apostolic series), and with the Twelve Holy Names, Kēṣava &c., they were consecrated. Leaving the vessel in the Īśana-quarter (North-East) called the Saṅkarṣan-vas, the four others were taken up, and with them they laved the body of the Sage after the panch-āmṛita (the five articles of milk, butter, honey, curds and coconut-water) ablation was over, repeating the Purusha-sūktā all the time. The gentry of the place (nudalīs) now took up the remaining twelve vessels outside the bier, and ablutions were performed with these after presenting the assembled magnates with rolled betel and nut (pān-supāri) and obtaining their permission, after dextro-ambulating them. The place at the outer-door was next cleaned with cow-dung, and over the space so consecrated, rice grain was spread. A mortar and pestle were brought and sacrificially washed with water, and new pieces of cloth were tied to them. Turmeric

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\(^1\) The bier of the Āryans.
was placed in the mortar. Dāsis (or maid-servants) stamped with the holy Čhakra and Śaukha—thus consecrated to Viṣṇu—draped themselves in washed garments and decked themselves according to the occasion, and going round the Holy Trivikraman Street, approached the door; and prostrating before the holy assembly, with their leave, the Māru-god-representing pestle was taken up, and repeating the Twelve Holy Names, the turmeric in the mortar was pounded, called Śri-Ohūrṇa. Now came Aṇaiyar and others. They drew on the paddy a figure of earth with its nine divisions (bharata-khuṇḍa &c.). At the eight corners of this space were placed eight vessels filled respectively, with holy powders, holy unguents, holy scents, holy flowers, holy lāja (fried rice), holy milk, holy curds, and holy water; and decked with the buds of dārbha, aśvattha &c., repeating Deva-mantra all the while. To the East, they placed a winnow-basket filled with huskless lāja; to the West a vessel filled with Śri-Vaishṇava-foot-washed water; to the North, money and other presents to be distributed to the Śri-Vaishṇavas; to the South, a golden platter filled with the garland, raiment, &c., worn by Lord Ranganātha. Then prostrating to the sanctified image of the Sage, they went round it, and rehearsed Tiru-p-pallandu, Kaṇininun-siruttāmbu, Sūzh-viṣumbanī mukil. Aṇaiyar then went round the holy streets of Śrīrangam with music, chanting the Tiru-viruttam and coming back to the monastrey, sang the finishing hymns. Then the eight vessels of holy milk &c., were emptied over the Sage’s body, which was then adorned with Lord Ranga’s gifts of garland, raiment and other things. They all then distributed among themselves as prasāda, the remnants of all that was offered to the sage, and earnestly gazed at his figure so as to distinctly retain it in their hearts for ever afterwards. They then threw themselves at the Sage’s feet which they devoutly pressed against their eyes, hearts and heads; and now completely overcome, gave vent to their grief which they could not control, by torrents of tears trick-

1 See our Lives of Āzhvārs.
ling down their cheeks, and sent forth loud lamentations. The worthies of the place pressed round the mourners, and by kind words assuaged their grief. They then lifted the bier, the Sage seated in it, on to a stretcher (or litter), which they bore reverently on their shoulders, and carried in splendid procession in the streets, conches blowing, music discoursing, and men and women setting up a sacred dance. The Prabandhas were recited in the front, Veda-pārāyaṇa bringing up the rear. White cloths were laid in the streets in front of the procession, the members of which bore sugar-cane sticks in their hands, and carried bright vessels filled with water on their heads. As the procession wended its way, Liya flowers and scented powders were broadly showered over all, the vestal virgins of the sanctuary bearing torches aloft and leading. Chāmaras (chowries) waved on either side, and white cloths were brandished in the air. And to crown all, bugles and trumpets proclaimed as it were:—“The Great Sage Ālavandār, the Defender of our Faith, has gone forth to Heaven.” After thus peregrinating the Holy Streets, the Sage was carried to Tirukkaramban-tarai, a spot close by the South bank of Coleroon (Kolladam) river in the North, and there purifying the spot with the unused water of the Sankarshaṇa vessel (kept in reserve), all the sacramental ritual enjoined for Sanyāsins (monastic order) was gone through punctiliously. The Sage was now duly installed in a cavern made in the ground. We shall leave the elders and dignitaries of the temple thus busy, and turn for a moment to events which were in the meantime transpiring in Kānci.

1 Cloth is folded at one end and held in the hand, the other end flourished in the air, producing a circle or the figure of an umbrella.
2 Consult Vaiṣṇav-dharma-Samuccaya by Yaḍava.
CHAPTER IX.

ÂLAVANDÂR AND RÂMÂNUJA.

We saw Mahâpûrṇa sent to invite Râmânuja to Srirangam to join the holy fold of the Faithful. He duly reached Kâncchi, and delivered the message of his Âchârya to Kâncchi-pûrṇa, in whose holy company, he duly paid his devotions to Lord Varadârâja; and taking the path leading to Śâlai well,—from which Râmânuja was bringing his customary water for the service of Lord Varada—he went on reciting his Âchârya Yâmuna’s hymn:

स्वामविकाञ्चकातिरतिैशीतिषितुष्टं नारायणस्वतिदिनमूल्यातिैःशः
अवशाशिवसातमश्च परमस्वतिदिनन्तिैः यस्य महामार्कविपुलीः ॥ १ ॥

"Nârâyana!, who, in Vedas versed, will dispute Thy Natural Greatness and Sovereignty vast: for know they not that Brahmâ, Śiva, Indra and celestials all, are but as drops of foam upon the Ocean of Thy Glory?"

Râmânuja was coming from the well and he heard this recitation. Not only was his attention arrested by it but was so struck with its beauty, sense, pathos and literacy,¹ that he anxiously inquired of the reciter (whom he did not know yet, of course) who was its worthy author. “Whose could such words be save my Âchârya Yâmuna-muni’s?” readily responded Mahâpûrṇa. “I must then visit this great soul,” said Râmânuja. “I shall certainly take you to him,” replied Pûrṇa, jubilant at the success of his mission.

The tiru-manjanam (holy ablation) water, Râmânuja duly delivered at the Shrine; and he submitted to Lord Varada his great wish to visit Yâmuna; and taking His leave as also Kâncchi-pûrṇa’s, he immediately proceeded in Mahâ-pûrṇa’s company and by forced marches, reached the Kâveri river. They saw from that distance great crowds gathered, and employed evidently in very serious work. “What is all the bustle about?” asked Râmânuja anxiously of some way-

¹ The beauty of this can only be realized by those who can understand the original. It suffers in the translation.
farers They said that Yāmuna was no more. This news made Mahā-pūrṇa and Rāmānuja distraught, and the shock prostrated them and struck them senseless. Recovering somewhat, they wept inconsolable tears, as all their plans were foiled, and hopes blasted. An irreparable loss, it was. Mahā-pūrṇa found Rāmānuja discounsel, and fearing worse consequences, forgot his own grief for the moment in order to pacify Rāmānuja, in the manner, it is said, that 'in the sword-cut, the scaring is forgotten.' Resuming breath somewhat, he exhorted him thus: "Take heart, Rāmānuja! knowest thou not the saying:—"..." i.e. "Obstacles to virtue attack even great men; but when vice sets in, obstacles flee somewhere!" and raising Rāmānuja in his arms, led him by the hand to where the Sage Yāmuna was lying in state. "I have at least been able to see this," said Rāmānuja, and drank as it were, with his eyes, the Holy Figure; but as he scanned it up and down, he discovered to his surprise that three of the five fingers of the right palm of the Sage were closed. He turned round to the assembly and questioned them about this strange sight. "We never marked this before, Sire," they said. Rāmānuja reflected for an instant, and imagining that the Sage might have some ardent wish in his mind unsatisfied, which he probably so indicated, asked the bystanders if they were aware of any specific wishes of the Sage expressed to them at any time in the course of his religious talks with them. "We are not particularly aware of any such directly," they said; "but indirectly we know that he often used to say that he wished very much to see three things perpetuated. Firstly, gratitude must be shown to the memory of Krishna-Vyāsa and Parāśara. Secondly, a tribute of love should be paid to St. Nammāzhvār. And thirdly, Vyāsa-Sūtras or Brahma-Sūtras must be commented on to bring out the real Viṣishtādvaita sense contained in them." ¹

¹ Viṣishtādvaita means, organic monism; in other words,—if it may be so called,—a Trinity in Unity. Read our Bhagavadgītā with Rāmānuja's commentaries, Pro. M. Rangāchārya's Sṛi-Bhāshya, and Dr. Thibaut's Introduction to Viśīṣṭādvaita-Sūtras, Sankara-bhāshya.
Rāmānuja heard this and said:—"O Holy Sage," address-
ing his Figure, "if this is thy mind, I promise I shall
carry it out, provided I have the health, provided thy grace is
on me, and provided God grants my prayers." No sooner this
was said than the three bent fingers of the Sage opened out,
as if to say 'aye'! The whole assembly was witness to this
miracle, and in one voice they all declared:—"Sire, doubt not
that the Sage's grace is fully on you; the very power and glory
of his spirit will enter into you; you are the next fit successor
to him for the evangelical work of our Faith. We all anoint
you here for the task." Rāmānuja lovingly and steadily
gazed at the Holy Figure of the Sage, and contemplating Him
to his fill, pressed His feet to his heart and eyes, and bathing
in the river—as the last service rendered to the departed—took
leave of Māhā-Pūrṇa and started immediately back for Kānchī,
not caring to visit Lord Rāngā, on account of the sore dis-
appointment which had been caused. It is chronicled of
Rāmānuja that he often used to express to his holy assembly
that if he had but been permitted for one single day to be in
the living company of Śrī Yāmuna, he would have construct-
ed a staircase to Heaven and procured free admission to all
thereto.

The magnates of the place then did the remaining part of
the interment, conducted with due obsequial liturgy and in due
course raised a cenotaph (brīndāvanam)¹ and mantapa² over
the site. Memorial verses were thus sung:—

श्रीरामामिशान्यं कर्षतचार्यवैविद्यः
वादारामलोकवीरा कामनामुनोभव॥

चतुरंभोह्र्नाह्यान विधिवस्तिन्यस्वभमांप्रसः
ग्रामकथामोगाय यामनेयनमामिशास्॥

सिंहासनान्तरम मीमांसावित्यित्वशुल्कमांशि सहितनामयुपीताग्रमव।
प्रकाशिसिंहपलां दित्यातिकरं मन्वानिलं हृदय! चित्रतय यामनार्यमव॥

¹ An ornamental short pedestal with a basil plant planted on top.
² A stone pavilion over (1).
CHAPTER X.

RÂMÂNUJA AND KÂNHÎ-PÛRÑA.

Râmânuja, with a heavy heart reached Kâñchi, and recounted the events he had first witnessed, to Kâñchi-pûrña. Pûrña mourned much over the loss of his Âchârya, aggravated by the thought that all the projects they had formed in their minds were thus frustrated; but reviving, comforted Râmânuja by saying:—"Lord Varada is all-knowing and all-powerful. Let us submit to His will. He will make good our loss by appointing you in his stead, for our Faith." So saying, he conducted Śrî-chûrña-paripûlana,¹ and Tiru-v-adhyayana² for his Âchârya.

Râmânuja again employed himself as before in the Tiru-manjana³ service to Lord Varada, and as friendship and respect for Kâñchi-pûrña deepened, he found much spiritual worth in this staunch devotee of Lord Varada. One day, Râmânuja earnestly begged of him to become the sponsor for his soul. "Come, Holy Râmânuja!" said Pûrña, "You desire this of me, because you think I am worthy of such position, but know that I am an unworthy non-entity, whom Lord Varada has perhaps chosen to think of as some body. And you are evidently intent on acting on the principle:—

किमयज्ञाभिजाते योगिनस्वयमिषु।
प्रविष्टितान्यनायाना नैषविष्ट्येकुलमित्रं ॥ ४॥

¹ Yogi (or spiritual men) are born among all castes; and no caste-odium shall hold in their cases, for they have seen their souls' Lord.

This dictum holds good as regards our soul-relation, but it cannot be applied as regards our external conditions of birth and social polity as ordained by the Scriptures (Vedas).

¹ The ceremony of the turmeric-powder (vide p. 58), applied to the face.
² The funeral ceremonies of the Sri-vaisnnavas, when the Prabandhas are recited antiphonally, and a great feast is given.
³ Carrying water-pots for ablation-ceremony to the Deity.
⁴ Bhavadvâja-Samhitâ, I, 44.
You shall not therefore externally profess to me bonds which militates against the typical social system of Varna and Áśrama. Yours is Brāhmaṇa-body and mine a Vaiśya-body, and as long as these last, we must respect temporary distinctions for the sake of the safety of our social fabric, which we cannot violate without injury.

\[2\] Varna = the four typical castes of Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya, Vaiśya, and Sūdra. Áśrama = the four typical orders of life, viz., Brahmacharya (Student), Grihastha (householder), Vānaprastha (anchorite), and Saṃnyāsa (monastic). A recent speech by Mr. N. N. Ghose at the Hare Anniversary Meeting (1904) is important as bearing on the vexed question of caste in India, which the Christian will not understand. He said: — "The division into castes cannot be understood by any one who does not realise that all Hindu institutions were inspired by one principle. It was not political expediency, not social convenience, not the happiness of the greatest number, not the development of fighting capacity. Material good was a subordinate end. The ruling principle was the spiritual evolution of man, the perfection of character, realisation of the self. For the purposes of spiritual evolution, a segregation of classes and occupations was considered necessary. The Brāhmaṇas, for instance, were to be devoted to religious work and meditation and the function of teaching, and so on with other castes. It was no mere division of labour that was thus accomplished. It was an institution meant to prevent the spiritual degradation of men by the mixing up of finer and courser spiritual natures. The four leading castes were marked off from each other by characteristics that could not be mistaken. The division was not arbitrary. All experience shows that men are not equally endowed on the spiritual side. Then it has to be remembered that the law of Karma was one of the root conceptions of the caste-system. Men were born into a particular caste by their Karma of a previous life. Men of lower castes could go up to a higher in another life if they had made spiritual progress enough in this life. No mere intellectual qualifications or material conditions would raise a man to a higher caste. Each man was born into the caste for which he was destined by his own susceptibilities. There was room enough for advancement and usefulness within the limits of his own caste. But he was not to be permitted to spoil his own breed by marrying in a lower spiritual plane, or spoil the breed of a higher caste by marrying on a higher plane. Modern life may make it difficult or impossible to carry out these ideas. But in them is to be found the interpretation of an ancient system which has puzzled and provoked men whose ideals are different from those of our ancient ancestors. Not muscles and intellect, not happiness, not political ascendency, but spiritual perfection and purity were the only end." The warning voice against promiscuous intercourse and admixture of castes is found in the Bhagavad-Gītā, I, 40 to 44; which may be read by all the devotees of this Holy Bible, and laid to heart before venturing to anathematize the caste-institution of India.
Râmanuja admitted the legality and expediency of the caste system, and yet he felt it ought to be disregarded in special cases where such spiritually advanced souls as Kânchi-pûrṇa’s were concerned. He therefore resolved the next day to invite Pûrṇa to his house for a repast. “Accept, Sire, an entertainment in my hut,” prayed Râmanuja. “Most gratefully”, said Pûrṇa, not to disappoint him. Râmanuja was rejoiced at the prospect of obtaining the remnants of food eaten by a spiritual elder, albeit he belong to a low class in society. Going home, he ordered his wife to prepare a sumptuous meal for a distinguished guest. And he himself bathed, performed all the ceremonies ordained for the householder, carried the daily-service-water to Lord Varada, and performing worship to his household Lord, also Varada, left home to bring his guest to his door. He went by the South Street, and turned West towards the retreat of Pûrṇa. But Pûrṇa had already left his place, taken another direction, prayed to Lord Varada as usual, and doing his daily services there, had proceeded to the cottage of Râmanuja. Here, not finding him, he begged the wife to give him food immediately as he had to return to the Temple for urgent service. She did so, and he left. She then pushed away the leaf, from which Pûrṇa had eaten, by means of a stick, purified the place with water and cowdung and considering herself impure by this act, bathed again. Râmanuja finding Pûrṇa absent from his cloister had retraced his steps to his hut, and finding that his wife had bathed for a second time, asked her why? She said:—“Sire, your Śättâda (non-Brâhman) guest came and having eaten is gone. Being a low caste man, I have purified the place where he ate, and have myself bathed.” “Ignorant woman!” he cried in anger “what hast thou done! How thou hast frustrated my plans!”

“What shall I do next?” Râmanuja pondered, “what I had wished has failed. Perhaps it is God’s will that I should not violate caste restrictions even in special cases. Be it so.” And he again letock himself to Pûrṇa’s cloister. “Sire! pardon me for constraining you to do a thing against your will, but now do me another favour. I have a few doubts in my
mind. I beg of you to have them solved by Lord Varada, whose beloved worshipper you are.” “Willingly I shall submit them to Him,” he promised Rāmānuja. That night, when all the formal duties of the temple were over, Mahāpūrṇa stood before Lord Varada in silent contemplation, hands folded. “I think thou hast something to ask of me,” Lord Varada said. “Yes, Most High! Rāmānuja has a few doubts, which he has asked me to submit to you and obtain answers,—some doubts, he has not told me what.” “I know them,” said Varada; “he is asking me these doubts, in the manner I myself once asked Sāndipani² for knowledge. He knows the sweets of God-service by birth-right, and knows my will and acts up to it. He has learnt many things and in many quarters. Now he has six doubts in his mind. Here are the six answers thereto:

1. I am the Supreme Truth (para-tatvam),<br>2. I and souls are different (bheda),<br>3. By faith shall men reach Me, their salvation.<br>4. Thought of Me at time of death (antima-smrīti) is not compulsory (on My faithful),<br>5. Release from bondage (moksha) follows immediately on death (of body),<br>6. Choose Mahāpūrṇa for your Āchārya.²

Kānchi-pūrṇa reverently received this message and withdrew. The next morning, he hailed Rāmānuja with intense joy and communicated to him the divine message. “Were these your doubts, Sire!” he asked. “Yes, your Holiness I prostrate to you for it most heartily,” said Rāmānuja. Pūrṇa was struck by this strange coincidence, and henceforth, (suiting the action to the word) looked upon Rāmānuja as the destined Saviour.

¹ Read Krishnāvatāra in Vishnu-purāṇa.<br>² This is put in a verse thus:—

(1) ब्राह्मेकपररत्वं (2) द्वस्मेचोद्भवितं<br>(3) उपायपुष्पाचिस्मयं (4) अविनिवर्तितविज्ञानं<br>(5) देशासनेमालंचं (6) महापूर्णसमाधयं
CHAPTER XI.

RĀMĀNUJA'S CALL TO ŚRĪRANGAM.

Leaving Rāmānuja at Kānchī for a while, we shall turn back to Śrīrangam. The Faithful of the place felt now a great blank amongst themselves and in their hearts, after the passing away of Ālavandār, their Spiritual Guide. How to fill up this vacancy, was their haunting thought. They resorted to Mahāpūrṇa and prayed to him to devise proper means for a fit successor. Mahāpūrṇa looked at them and said:—“Forget ye the past signs given us? Did not Ālavandār himself, while he was in Kānchī, point out Rāmānuja to us as his successor? Do ye not remember the miracle of the closed fingers of that Sage, opening at his utterance? Rāmānuja then is our successor. Our Āchārya could not have been mistaken in his wise selection.” “Well said, well said,” cried the whole community, “we pray to you, Sire, to bestow your serious thought on this matter, kindly seek out Rāmānuja and prepare him for his high office, and conduct him hither, to Śrīrangam.” Mahāpūrṇa gladly assented, and immediately made preparations to start. His wife was to accompany him. He went to Lord Ranga, and obtaining his leave to proceed on the holy errand left Śrīrangam, and reached by rapid marches Madhurāntakam (near Kānchī), and there stopped for the day in the Shrine of Ēri-kutta-perumāl, or He who protects the tank.¹

¹ This tank is noted as under the special protection of the Local Deity, Sri-Rāma, and hence He is called the “Tank-Guard.” Even recently, a story is thus told:—“The incident to be related happened about 25 years ago, at Madhurāntakam, a small town, a few miles to the south of Madras. Those were the days of John Company, and a Collector of the name of Mr. Price ruled the district of Chingalpet, of which Madhurāntakam is a Taluk. Soon after he came to his Office, he had to superintend certain repairs in the big reservoir of the place, which was looked to by many a village around, for the watering of their green fields. Its storage capacity was immense, and every year, after the copious rainfall, the vast volume of water would wash away the Kalingal (waste-weir) on the rough, stone-built outlet of the tank, thus defying every effort to find the needful element to the required quantity. More than once during his regime, Mr. Price re-built the thing stronger than of old, as he thought, but all to no purpose; the next rains would mercilessly laugh away the nascent structure.
Rāmānuja also had in the meantime resolved to proceed to Srirangam and accept Mahāpūrṇa his Āchārya for having been

While this was the case here, the Collector happened to visit the interior of the town, accompanied by the Tahsildar and other subordinates. While approaching the small, neat-looking town-pond in the middle, he saw an old, venerable-looking temple of modest dimensions, situated to the west of it. When he came before its front, he stopped, and knowing the deep conservation of his subjects in matters religiosa, he asked his Tahsildar whether he might venture in. By this time, many Brāhmans that were inside the shrine, knowing that the great Collector Sahib was waiting outside, rushed out and seeing that he wanted to come in, told him that: “his Honor need not fear any objection to enter the outer precincts of the temple.” The Collector, glad of the concession granted, entered in with his men with an amused smile. What a place of worship! How different from the ones he was accustomed to! Instead of the long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults, the magnificently wrought pillars and ravishingly stained windows of his splendid abbeys and churches, he sees before him a humble edifice of stones, imposing only by its great age, evidenced by the hoary moss-grown parapet and the half-crumbling cupola. The structure is a pretty large parallelogram, a third of it intercepted to form the inner holy of holies, while the rest is vacat, the roof upheld by stone-pillars. Right against the entrance is the invariable Dhara-stambham or the flag-staff, a huge timber raised perpendicularly, with rough ornamentations thereon. Observing all this in a few minutes, the kind Officer turned to the left of the main building, into the open clearing about 50 feet broad that runs round the sanctuary. At the end of it there stood another small building, and in front of it many newly-hewn stones and slabs were gathered, thus showing some construction was on hand. The Officer, observing this, turned round on the priests, when they hastened to explain that they had wanted to enlarge the Devi’s Shrine, but that funds falling low, they had to stop work. Then another began to expatiate on the great merits of their Janaki-Devi (Rāmā’s Queen), how she chased away sorrow, poured plenty on all, and was ever solicitous for her devotees; gracious—“hold,” cried the Englishman smiling, “if, as you say, your Devi is all that is ascribed to her, let me propose here one thing. I am very much put out by the constant collapses of your great tank’s Kalingal. Even now it is being rebuilt. If this would stand the rush of the next showers, then I should attribute it certainly to your Devi, and I myself will build Her the needed shrine. If it happens otherwise, then you all should allow that She does not deserve the encomiums you heap on her.” Astonished beyond bounds, that even thus half in play, their Sirear Lord should condescend to notice their Dēvi, and half-doubting if all this were not a pleasant railery on the part of their ruler, “agreed,” cried they, merely to put an end to the colloquy. Mr. Price passed out ***. A few months passed. The new outlet was built and finished. The rainy season began, and it began in earnest. Great masses of clouds canopied the land, and poured intermittent showers on the terrified earth below. Tanks, ponds, rivers, all conceivable hollows were glutted, and miles around the land was inundated
so commanded by Lord Varada. Taking leave of Him and Kânchi-pûrṇa, he arrived at Madhurântakam. They met.

forming local seas, and all living beings shut themselves into their homes and shivered.

Two days before this rain, Mr. Price came and camped at Madhurântakam, anxious to test the Kâlingâ’s fate for the fourth time. He had not forgotten his speech at the temple a few months ago. Indeed long ago, occasional rumours had reached him through his menials, that the people at large believed that the oft-recurring danger to the lake was due to the disreputable lack of supervision of the temple-managers over its affairs. This was in part what induced him the other day to say the words he said, even though lightly. Well he was thinking of all this, as he was tossing on his bed on the third night of the storm. It was a tremendous downpour that day. Ever since noon there had been no intermission. News was brought to Mr. Price that evening that the big reservoir was nearly full. It was eleven at night. It must be overfull. Indeed a hearse, thunderous noise as of the great rush of vast volumes of water reached his ears. He was sure it was the breaking up of the outlet. At twelve the storm’s fury lessened. He could restrain his impatience no longer. He wanted to see how great the damage was. Year after year this work was proving futile; and a waste of money to the Government, a waste of lands of the ryots, besides danger to public security were the results. This year he had employed experts and great care had been bestowed in the work. He would go and see. Amidst all these, the small leaven of curiosity was working in him anent the promise made by the Brahmanas, of the Devil’s protec-
tion. “Bah, what a fool I am,” cried he, and started to the scene of turmoil. Many of his servants ran before him holding lamps and leading the way. All the camp clerks about him got up too and followed him out of respect. It is pitch dark. The deep noise of rolling waters smites their ears as they come nearer the bund. But it is that of the majestic roll of waters contained within bounds, and not that of giant masses dashing beyond control. Somewhat reassured, the Collector eagerly straining his eyes in the direction of the new built outlet, could discern a blue, ethereal radiance playing lambent above the Kâlingâ. He felt surprised and a little thrilled. He advanced and when near the place—what did he behold! He stopped short, his whole frame thrilled, and he was spell-bound. Large drops of sweat stood on his brow. Not master of himself then he throw down his umbrella, with one arm he swept his hat off, and in the wet, oozying ground overrun with pools of water, he suddenly fell on his knees, and prayed, prayed, fervently and long all the time not removing his eyes from the place. His servants observing the sudden action of their master were thunderstruck. They thought he was suddenly gone mad. They rushed to him, throwing off their fear, to raise him. Then he seemed to recollect them. He got up and cried out: “Don’t you see; see, see, see there, you idiots! Why do you stare at me so? Don’t you see those glorious, transcendent beings standing there, on either side of the Kâlingâ! with drawn arrows? How splendid they are? What magnificently proportioned men! How luminous their faces! They smile at—, Oh, they have vanished.”
Rāmānuja was thrilled with joy and surprise at this unexpected meeting. He exclaimed:—“O my heart! seest thou how thy desire has met thee?” and prostrated before Mahāpūrṇa. Mahāpūrṇa was equally overjoyed at finding that his mission was so soon and so readily to be fulfilled, and raised Rāmānuja, fondly holding him to his breast. “Here and now,” prayed Rāmānuja, “admit me as your disciple and teach me all that is good for my soul.” Mahāpūrṇa said: “So near are we to the Holy Hastigiri”, where Lord Varada resides, we shall go there for the initiation you so much desire.” “No, Sire, not a moment is to be lost,” said Rāmānuja, “is not the example of our Yāmunāchārya still fresh, viz., his having breathed his last just when I was about to see him? This is a warning against waste of time. Are not our lives here of lightning duration?” So saying, he dropped at his feet again. Pūrṇa raised him up.

(Note from page 64—contd.)

The truth dawned after all on the men. How could it be otherwise? They were Hindus, the time, place, the fact of the Collector’s wager with the Brāhmaṇas, all combined to flash on them the truth! The Englishman has seen the blessed vision of glorious Rāma and Lakshmana, espousing the Devi’s cause; “Jai, Jai, Sitā-Rāma!” cried they; “our Lord hath seen the vision.” And so crying, they rushed into the sleeping town. The inhabitants awoke. “What devil’s riot is this?” cry they. Then the fact becomes known. And all, crying in a body, “Jai, Jai, Sitā-Rāma,” rush to the Collector’s camp. There he is seated in the front, bright light before him. He seems composed now. Grave and dignified he looks. Some of the important people that throng to him, he receives and makes them sit. “Gentlemen,” says he, “why come in this night here, and why so much excitement? The outlet is not broken, nor will it ever be. I solemnly tell you I have received a lesson to night, that I will never forget. I always more or less believed that God was not the monopoly of the Christian Church. I am sure of it now. So do you all go to your homes. Early in the morning shall the Devil’s temple begin to rise.”

So said he and dismissed them. The temple was built, and now in its front it has engraved on it on a stone, how it was built by Mr. Thomas Price, Collector, in the year 1884(?).—And there are grey beards now, who talk of it solemnly of an evening, from one of whom the writer learnt it. [K. E. Central Hindu College Magazine, p. 173 ff. Vol. IV. 1904].

The following inscription appears on the stone beam of the Devil’s Temple in Tamil:—Inda daruṇam Kumpini jāgira Kalekta Lionel Price durai avergaladu (Collector Lionel Price) and another inscription is near the waste weir. [Read the kindly letter to me dated 13th October 1904, by Mr. P. Seshagiri Row, Tahsildar of Madhurantakam.]

1 Kānchi, (Conjeveram).
The Life of Râmânuja.

lovingly. "What zeal! indeed," he said, "it shall be as you wish." And leading him to the Holy Vakula tree near the (Tank-Guard) Temple, and placing him on his right, performed all the sacraments of initiation as laid down in the Pâncharâtra-Śãstã.¹ That process is briefly thus:—

Preparatory discipline for mantic initiation requires the mark of the discus (Chakra), or of the five weapons (of Vishnu, viz., Chakra, Šankha, Gaddi, Khadga and Chîpa) being stamped (on the several parts of the body), with appropriate mantras. This is enjoined for the sake of rendering the mantras imparted, efficacious. The wearing of these chakra and other marks, is to signify that the soul has been wedded to God, as the wearing of bangles &c by a dame, signifies that she is joined in all faith to a husband. The disciple (or the postulant) shall sit before the Guru, humble, with joined palms. The Guru shall meditate on his Guru and all the others preceding him apostolically, and impress the chakra symbol on the disciple's right shoulder; and then placing his right palm on the head and the left palm on the heart of the disciple, and looking at him with eyes beaming with grace, shall repeat the Gem of Mantras (mantra-ratna), and make the disciple repeat the same with him, along with the Chhanãs and the Rishi attached to the mantra.² In this manner, Mahâpûrña, placing Râmânuja to his right, called to mind his Guru Álavandâr's feet, and speaking in the right ear of Râmânuja, imparted to

¹ मन्त्रसंस्कारहि गर्भे मन्त्रदीक्षाविषेषतः।
चक्रवाचारणेऽपि मन्त्रेनध्वनाधिभाविता॥
चक्रसंस्कारणेपुरात परसंवत्रयोद्देशम्॥
पतिबन्धानविशिष्टिः वलयादिविकृतिः॥
विनिर्विशिष्टिः विनीतान्तः संस्कृतिः॥
पूर्वमर्यमिनितिविष्ठि दधिवश्रवणविशिष्टम्॥
समपुर्वतिविशिष्टमुपशुरुभुवीरचतुर्युः॥
स्तवाचमिद्येवता जन्त्यगुरुपरंपराम्॥
व्रतपदिकार माचार्य-कृपयासये।
अंगायिकणामुव्रहसीताधिदेशसः॥

² We had again thought of omitting these details; but Oriental Scholars may require to know what sacraments make a formal or external Śrivaishnava, like the sacrament of the Christian Baptism, &c.
him the Mantra-Gem (Dvayam) with all its adjuncts, and solemnly ordained him thus:—"I adjure thee, holy son, most solemnly, to deem thyself as the next appointed of Yâmuna. He has departed, know thou, placing his holy feet on thy head, consecrating thee to fulfil His holy Mission on earth, in the same way as Râma, placing His sandals on the head of Bharata, departed to the forest to carry on the work of His Kingdom." Next to Yâmunâchârya thus, succeeded Râmânuja, Mahâpûrṇa playing but the part of an instrument of the former in ordaining Râmânuja. This succession, Pillai Amudanâr or Tiruvavarrangatt-amudanâr 1 recorded in his Râmânuja-nîtt-andâdi. Râmânuja, reverently asked Mahâpûrṇa to explain to him the triplicity, viz. (1) Pramâna (2) Pramôya and (3) Pramôta, or literally-the (1) measure,(2) the measured, and (3) the measurer. Pûrṇa explained thus:—"Pramâna, or the measure of God-knowledge, is the authoritative Revelations, the essence of which is contained in the Dvaya-Mantra, (or the Mantra which explains the dual nature viz., the Mother-Father, of the Deity); Pramôya or that which is measured by this measure of Revelations, is God Himself, the Mother-Father; Pramôta or the measurer is the prophet or seer, who knows God and so knowing, makes others to know Him. This measurer is yourself." So saying, they both paid obeisance to Râma, the Tank-Guard, saying:—"Thou art really Râma, or He who delights the world. By Thy blessing, there shall be one undivided faith in the world, so that all men may love each other and live in peace. This is Râma." They now both left for Kâncâ to visit Lord Varada. Kâncâ-pûrṇa met them on the way in due humility and conducting them to Kâncâ and to the Hastigiri Shrine, invoked Lord Varada to manifest Himself to the worthy visitors, even as Râma-mïśra called upon Ranga to manifest Himself to Álavandâr. They were blessed with the Beatific Vision of God which they rapturously enjoyed.

1 Disciple and contemporary to Râmânuja.
2 Read Verse 21:—"Nidîyai etc." This work sets forth the glory of Râmânuja and his mission on earth.
3 Read Yâmunâchârya’s Life, ante.
Râmânuja led his Guru Mahâpûrṇa and his consort to his house, and accommodated them in the upper story, providing all other comforts necessary. For six months, Râmânuja sat at the feet of his Guru, and received from him important lessons on the Drâvida Scriptures and other Mystery-lore of the Sri-vaishnava Faith.

On a certain morning two Sri-vaishnavaśvas came to Râmânuja, and did him the service of anointing with oil. They asked for food as they were hungry. Râmânuja inquired of his wife, if she had any food remaining from over-night. “No, not so much as a grain of it,” she said; but Râmânuja suspected her sincerity, and bidding her go on other business, entered into the cook-room and examined the vessels, and lo, he found food hidden away. He called his wife and angrily spoke to her thus:—“Art thou capable of this, that when hungry souls are waiting at the door, thou liest? Is there worse meanness than, in this wise, refusing food to those who come in dire need? And a lie added to the meanness! Oh, sin!”

On another day, Râmânuja was out for his morning ablutions. His wife and the Guru’s wife met at a well for drawing water. An altercation ensued between them as to the comparative purity of the pots they held. Pûrna was observing this. As soon as his wife returned home, he thought it wise to pack up immediately and actually left Kânchî for Srîrangam, after soundly chastising his wife for the unpleasant occurrence, of which he held her to be the cause. Râmânuja returned home, and as usual went to visit his Guru, but he found him not. He asked the people about the place to account for his sudden absence. They said:—“Sire, your lady and your Guru’s lady had a quarrel near the well over a pot. The Guru took his wife to task for giving occasion for this, and thinking that if he stayed longer under your roof, her conduct might again give rise to unpleasantness, he considered it expedient to leave the place forthwith. Râmânuja was white with rage on hearing this, and recovering, addressed his wife thus:—“Thrice art thou sinner, base woman! My Guru Kânchîpûrṇa came and took his food under my roof in my
absence, and thou tookest the very leaf from which he ate as unholy and polluting. This was thy first guilt. Hungry souls came craving for food. Thou didst deny it and thou didst lie: This was thy second guilt. And now thou hast had the andacity to pick a most unseemly quarrel with my venerable teacher's consort. This is thy third and crowning crime. No more art thou fit to remain with me. Thou art a worldly woman, blind to spiritual interests. Take all this money, for that is thy meet share. That is the stuff that well suits a shrew and a scold like thee. Well do the Sāstras say:—"Woman is at the bottom of all crime." They further declare:—"When house-keeping suits not, enter the monastery"; for that is the true house where strangers and guests find a ready welcome; but thou hast defiled my roof by thy unworthy conduct offensive to my sense of propriety and decency. It is meet therefore that thou shouldst return to where thou camest from." So saying he swiftly despatched her to her parents' abode.

"This world is hateful. Indeed, I must abjure all concern with it," thus did Rāmānuja seriously reflect. It is said:—"Bathe in the holy pond called Ananta-saras, shadowed by the cupola of the Holy Temple, resolving that nothing in the world bestows real bliss. All sins shall depart. Seek Lord Varada as the Refuge; and one shall gain the blessed regions of Vishnu." And so Rāmānuja bathed in the Ananta-pond, and resolved to become a Sanyāsin. It is laid down: "One shall receive the holy order of the Sanyāsin either from a mendicant Sanyāsin or from God direct." And thus resolving

2 पपानामाकरंबिय: [Garuḍa-Purāṇa]. These incidents show how Rāmānuja was against caste-pride.
3 "Illasam-alle bura-varam."
4 अमन्तस्यासाध्याय भिद्मान्मवान्निति।
विवुक्तस्यप्रायो विध्वस्तोक्तंमाध्यं।
सम्प्रत्वभिवेत्ताय विगुणमाधकिंविश्वासीय।
निर्जलस्यासाध्याय ब्राह्मणो न नमस्ते। [Brāhma, Hāstigiri-Māhātmya, 15-23 ff]
5 ययोज्जिकारीपिण्डं भगवन्तेऽव [Yati-dharma samuccaya].
Rāmānuja betook himself to Varada, and there prostrating before Him, prayed thus: “O Granter of boons! Warden of death! Bestower of the Land of the Angels! I have seen enough of all the varieties of worldly delusions, fathers and mothers, wives and children and all worldly goods. I feel sure that these ties block one’s way to Thee, Thine and Spiritual Preceptors. I value them not; I value Thee and Thy Holy Blessed feet alone. Grant me deliverance from those and service to these. Invest me therefore with all the insignia of the Vaishāṇava ascetic: the Triple-staff, the Holy-thread, the Under-cloth, the Loin-cloth, the Upper-cloth and the begging hoop (or rope-swing for receiving alms)†” So did Rāmānuja supplicate. Lord Varada was pleased, and through His official agent (archaka), He was pleased to grant his prayers, and gave him from that day the name of Rāmānuja-muni. “My own Rāmānuja, thou shalt don the robe of the Sanyāsim and serve Me”, was the command given through Kānchi-pūrṇa. Receiving this command in due humility, Rāmānuja retired and became a Sanyāsin from that day.

† [Yatidharma-samuccaya].
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CHAPTER XII.

RÂMÂNUJA'S CHIEF DISCIPLES, &c.

So Râmânuja had now weaned himself from the world. The discipline and daily routine ordained for monastics, he went through punctiliously; and was glad within himself to find that Yâmunâchârya's eyes of grace, which had fallen on him, had wrought wonderful results in removing all obstacles in the way of serving God alone, and in causing all conveniences for leading such a life. It was time now to think how best to carry out the (post-mortal) wishes of that pioneer-sage of the Faith, Sri Yâmuna. Alone, he could not accomplish it; he wanted a competent colleague. He could think of no one better fitted than Govinda-Bhâta, who had all the threefold qualifications of fidelity (to him), abdication (of the world), and enthusiastic faith (for spiritual science). But he had turned an arrant Saiva; a zealot in Siva's service at Kâlabaśi as already related. Which saint was there to show him that the palm which touched the linga was really stinking? Who would show him that there was the One God whom Scriptures declared as: "All-scent and All-savour?" So he muscled, and his thoughts lighted on Tirumâlai-Nambi (Śrīśaila-Pûrṇa), the venerable worshipper of Venkatesa at Tirupati, learned in the Vedas, versed in the nectarous Prabandhas, and otherwise possessing spiritual qualities calculated to influence men of Govinda's stamp and redeem them from their wrong ways. He despatched a confidential Śrī Vaishnava accordingly to Nambi, (Pûrṇa); and to deliver to him a message thus:—"Holy sire! your nephew Vâtta-mâṇi Govinda-Bhâta was my school-mate. Influenced by evil associations, his mind went wrong. He is now lost in the thick tangle of the Kâlabaśi-wilderness. I pray you for my sake to extend your grace to him; and redeem him to your blessed feet."

In the meanwhile, Kûrattâzhvân, called Tirumaṟu-mârban of the Hârita-family, and Mudali-yândân of the Kandâdai-family, heard of Râmânuja having joined the monastic order.

1 सर्वगप्रस्तरस: [Chk : Up : III. 14. 2]
They were rejoiced and forthwith proceeding to Kâñchi, fell at his feet and prayed that they may be taken into the Śrī-
Vaishnava fold by the sacrament of Paucha-samskāra &c.
Rāmānuja welcomed them, and ordained them as they desired.
And as stated in: "After receiving the mantra, the Devīa shall
worship his āchārya, and in all purity ever remain implicitly in
his service," they remained devoted to Rāmānuja. (In the
sequel, we shall use the Sanskrit names of these disciples, viz.,
Kūranātha or Kūreṣa for Kūrattāzhvān, and Dāśarathī² for
Mudali-y-āṇḍān). A coterie of pupils were thus gathering
round the future Pontiff of the Vaishnava Church.

As to Yādava-prakāṣa, a new chapter in his life was
about to open. For his mother was a great woman. She was
a frequent visitor to Lord Varada; and had won the good
graces of Sage Kāñchi-pūrṇa. She had friendly conversation
often too with Rāmānuja. All these forces combined to mould
her disposition for the New Faith; and at last made her to
wish that her son Yādava had also belonged to this band.
With this wish strong in her, she was one day mounting the
steps to Lord Varada's Shrine, when she overheard some one
ejaculating: "so be it." She construed this to be good augury
for her; and on returning home informed her son of what had
happened, and exhorted him to give up his single staff of the
advaitin and wear, like Rāmānuja, the triple-staff, sacred thread,
and śīkha (tuft of hair on the head), thereby embracing the
Vaishnava faith. For a long time, Yādava had begun to doubt
the soundness of advaitism. Rāmānuja's reasonable and decent
interpretations of Vedic texts as against his own, were working
strongly in his mind; and, of the greatness of Rāmānuja himself,
the Brahma-rakshas, or the spirit which had possessed the
princess, had clearly proved. The divine succour which God, disgui-
sed as Rāma, had rendered to Rāmānuja, whom he had beguiled
on the sanctimonious pretext of a Kāśi-pilgrimage, and the

¹ अधिक्यमन्त्रमार्थ्य पूजयेद्वक्षनितोहितिः
आचार्य्यक्षिष्टस्य यात्र जीवितसदाधुः: || [Sātvata Samhitā].
² See 30, Hierarchic Table in our Lives of Āśhrācāres.
Dāśarathī is nephew (on sister's side) to Rāmānuja.
sincere exhortations of his own mother to boot, had further all contributed to dispose his heart. There he was converted, but, "Mother" he said, "as a monk of the advaita-persuasion, I had divested myself of the tuft and holy thread (Yajnopavita); to wear them again, a penance has to be performed by me; and that is laid down to be a journey round the world. I am old and unfit for such a task. Indeed I know not how to go." Yādava was harrowed by these thoughts, day after day. But one night he had a dream. The Lord Varada appeared and said:—There is no need to go round the world, Yādava! That is done by going round our Rāmānuja. Do it then and bear the insignia of the New Faith which he may present to you." Yādava woke but had yet no faith in the dream. So he betook himself to Kānchi-purpa, and begged of him to consult Lord Varada—Pūrṇa being a favourite votary of Him—as to some matters agitating his mind. That same night, Kānchi-Pūrṇa submitted to Lord Varada, Yādava's petition. "I know it all," said Lord Varada. "His mother had already persuaded him to become a three-staffed Sanyāsin, but a doubt as to how it was possible to amend the past by bhū-pradakshina, preyed upon his mind and I have by a dream quieted him by suggesting that instead, he need but go round Rāmānuja. Being a dream as it was, he lacks faith and refers it to thee again." The following morning, Pūrṇa delivered this message to Yādava, who was now satisfied. Straightway he went to Rāmānuja, and asking his forgiveness for all the past, begged to be ordained as a monk and admitted to the New Faith. "But propitiation before conversion is demanded by our Laws, and that in this case is circumambulating the world once," said Rāmānuja. "Enough to go round thee, sire, so commandeth Lord Varada," explained Yādava penitently, and putting the same in execution without waiting for a reply, stood before Rāmānuja with folded hands. Kūreṣa and Dāṣarathī, the new disciples, watched these events in infinite wonderment and exclaimed:—"If some reach God by love, others reach Him by hate as well?"

1 कामाद्योणी भण्डक्से: द्रेष्णचेतायायोणुया:।
स-अन्यद्योक्षसहेत गृहयन्नन्तवायण्यः॥ [Bhāgavata].
band." Râmânuja was mightily pleased at the valuable adherent won to his cause, made Yâdava undergo all the sacraments for the Brâhmaṇa over again, such as Chaula and Upanayana, invested him with the triple-staff, &c., and named him Govinda-jiya, stamped him with the holy symbols of Šankha and Chakra, gave him the Holy Mantra, and enjoined him to write a work on Yati-dharma (or the Institutes of monks), showing the harmony that exists among various texts. Govinda-jiya accordingly wrote a work of eleven chapters, each chapter treating of an aspect and submitted the same to Râmânuja. He read it and expressed his approval of the same. Not long however wasGovinda-jiyar spared to serve his Āchāryā; for he soon after left the earth and drew himself away to the Great Beyond.

Kûreṣa and Dâsarathí were much attached to Râmânuja, who took them through a course of the Two Mîmâmśâs (the two Exegeses on the ritualistic and the contemplative Divisions of the Veda). While such studies were being prosecuted, the tidings travelled to Srirangam of the assumption by Râmânuja of the Sanyâsin order, and other events rapidly succeeding it. Mahâprâna and other disciples of Yâmuna-chârya received the tidings with joy, and longed for Râmânuja’s coming to Srirangam, making it his permanent quarters. But they were helpless; and Râmânuja too had once before in grief and despair, returned from the place without even visiting Lord Ranga, being disappointed at the sudden death of Yâmuna. So, they went in a body to Lord Ranga and petitioned to Him to prevail upon His Type at Kânchi,—the Lord Varada—to spare Râmânuja for them. So a message from Lord Ranga, who granted their petition, was sent to Lord Varada. But a reply came to the effect:—"If it is possible for one to forego his love, I too

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1. [Râmâyana VI. 18. 38].
2. Called Yati-dharma-Samucchaya.
3. [Op: Cît. 1. 4-5.]
can part with my Rāmānuja." On hearing this, Mahāpūrṇā and other worthies were much disconcerted, but after some deliberation, determined to depute an elder in person to approach Lord Varadā and persuade Him by hymns to grant them Rāmānuja inasmuch as the Lord’s very name Varadā meant: “Granter.” They besought accordingly Tīruvaranga-pperumāl Araiyar, the Venerable Elder of the place ¹, to march to Kāñchī on their behalf, and so extol Lord Varadā as to make Him condescend to grant them Rāmānuja. Araiyar immediately left Srirangam on this holy errand, after obtaining leave to do so from Lord Ranga. On his nearing Kāñchī, his relative there by name Varantarum Perumāl Araiyar met him and escorted him to the Holy City, and tended him under his roof as befitted a distinguished visitor. The next morning, in due fashion, Araiyar proceeded to the Temple. Lord Varadā had that day taken His august seat in the pavilion called Kachikku-vāyttān, surrounded by the Holy Assembly; Kāñchī-pūrṇa stationed before the Lord reverently doing his allotted service of fanning. Rāmānuja stood by his side devoutly uttering the Devarāja-Ashtaka hymn sung by Pūrṇa. Rāmānuja saw Araiyar, went forward and received him most cordially. “May I be allowed to pay my obeisance to Lord Varadā?” enquired Araiyar. Pūrṇa led him to His august presence, in full Holy Council seated, and Araiyar fell prostrate before Him, repeating Yāmuna’s verse: “Oh, when, O Strider of the Three Spheres, will Thy Lotus-Feet, decked with all the signs such as the discus, bedeck my head?” ². Rising, he was honored with tīrtha, prasāda and Śrī Śathagopa. Araiyar then, set to celestial music (devāgdha), chanted a select number of the Lyrical Psalter of the Āzhvārs (Saints); and as he sang, danced and went into raptures.

“When His faithful sing and dance for joy, God Himself keeps time,” it is said. So, Lord Varadā was pleased with

¹ See Life of Yāmuna. He is also called Ranga-uñātha-Gāyaka, (vide No. 22, Hierarchic Table to our Lites of Saints).

² त्रिपुनशहचराधिति कस्मिना अभावमात्र नामाकृति विद्याभूतिकर्मानम्।
विविधान्तः प्रचारशुजातरः मदिरयुपर्णिनांमलकुरिष्यति॥ [Stotra-ratna.]
the devotion of Gâyaka, and vouchsafed to Him all the honors belonging to His Shrine. "Why do I want these?" said Gâyaka, "my wish is not for these. Pray grant me a boon, as Thou art, O God, famous as the "Boon-Giver." And so saying, he continued his song and dance with more fervour. Pleased, Lord Varada spoke thus: "Ask, my beloved, anything, except Me and My Consorts." "Him, pray grant," readily replied Gâyaka, pointing to Râmânuja, who was close by. "Oh lost," exclaimed the Lord "I wish I had the forethought to include Râmânuja on the side of exceptions. However, son, except Râmânuja, ask for any other boon." "But," remonstrated Gâyaka, "dost Thou retract also like mortals? Are not Thy own words these: "Râma hath no two tongues"? On hearing this, Lord Varada had no alternative but to reluctantly say:—"Well, we grant you Râmânuja; take him. And we bestow on him the title, Yatirâja." No sooner was this said, than almost convulsively Gâyaka grasped Râmânuja by the hand and said:—"Procede, Sire". Râmânuja said not a word. He fell prostrate before Lord Varada, and saying: "Thy will be done," he, immediately started, not even caring to enter his cloister. As he went, he merely ordered his pupils Kûreśa and Dâsarathî to bring up his chapel-image, Varada. Râmânuja thus followed Gâyaka to Srirangam Kûreśa after escorting Râmânuja some way, returned to Kânchi, but Dâsarathî accompanied. Dâsarathî was Râmânuja’s sister’s son, but he was the only relative whom he retained.

Looking steadily towards Srirangam, his future home—a home, the vestibule of the Eternal Home—with joy bounding in his heart, went Râmânuja. In due time the north branch (Kolladam = Coleroon) of the Kâveri, encircling the Holy Island of Srirangam, was reached. Râmânuja tarried here to take a holy bath and deck his body with the twelve marks, consecrated by the Holy Names of Kêśava and so forth. In the meanwhile, news had sped to Srirangam of the arrival of the Holy Personage. Mahâpûrṇa and other disciples of Yâmunâchârya,
the elders of the place, the monks and acolytes (ekângîs) and others were rejoiced at this good fortune, and proceeding in a body to the Temple, delivered the tidings to Lord Ranga. Thereupon His Command issued thus: "O, my faithful, march ye forth in full congregation, office-bearers and all men, laic and cleric, with all the holy paraphernalia of my Temple and every honor, to meet and receive my Râmânuja." The populace formed itself into a grand procession, which with music discoursing and flags flying, headed by Vishvaksena (=Sênaimudali),\(^1\) streamed forth towards Kolladâm even as the celestials and angels, headed by Cherubs and Seraphs\(^2\) go forth from the gates of Heaven to the shores of the Viraja\(^3\) river, to meet and welcome the faithful, who have finished their pilgrimage on earth, and are reaching the portals of the Refugent City of God. They met Râmânuja; and after mutual exchanges of religious courtesies, the procession turned towards Srîrangam. Thus led, Râmânuja crossed the river, neared the Tînkod'i rampart, and the Damodaran turret, where he laid himself at full length on the ground; then rising, he reverently threaded the Tirumalai-tanda-Perumâl Street, (beginning always from the east and turning to the west, by south =pradakshîna), and again he went round the inner Trivikraman-Street, reaching in due course the big sacrifice-altar (bali-pitha), where he prostrated himself again; then he went to the Mother's shrine, paying homage to Mother Sri-rangâ-Nâyaki, the blessed Consort of Sri-Ranga; next the Chandrapushkârini pond was reached, where he sipped the holy water; and then wheeling round, the next southern entrance was reached, guarded by Nâyânârs (gate-watchers), and all the Saints from St. Nammâzhvâr downwards—who are called the Prospering Indolents\(^4\)—were visited in order, not omitting the numerous other shrines dotted round the Temple. Next the

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\(^2\) These terms we appropriate, as our terms have no equivalents.

\(^3\) This is the ultimate river-boundary between the material and the spiritual spheres, where all sins get washed; hence vi-rajd.

\(^4\) This is the phrase used in verse 38 of St. Tondesâdî-podi's Tirumâlai. It means the "Saints who are dead to the world, but alive to God."
courtyard called the Aṇi-y-araszon-Tirumuttam was entered, where Rāmānuja prostrated again, and wheeling round the inner corridor, loving eyes fixed on the Prāṇava-like vimāna, (the gold-covered cupola over the sanctum sanctorum), the shrine of Vishvakṣena was reached, where making obeisance, he was now in the precincts of the central Father’s shrine. In this place, which goes by the name of Aṣhagiya-manavilantirumantapam, the Lord Ranga (the moveable Image called Namburumāl) came forth in advance to meet Rāmānuja, even as the Lord in Heaven leaves His Throne of Glory to go and embrace and welcome the souls who are saved and are arriving at the golden gates of Heaven. Rāmānuja was thrilled with joy. Bliss possessed him. He fell down, rose, fell again and held his hands up, fell again, and rose; thus did he reverently pace up to the Holy of Holies, where supporting himself against the maṇa-t-tān pillar, he saw the blessed figure of Ranga reclining on His Auanta-couch, and rivetting His eyes on the Holy Figure, enjoyed the Blessed vision in the manner enjoyed by St. Tiruppāṇāzhvār in his Amalān ādippirān; and recited in accents of bliss the Tiruppall-āndu of St. Peri-y-āzhvār, and the following bewitching verses of Yāmunāchārya:—

Bow to Thee, Bow to Thee, beyond reach of word and thought;
Bow to Thee, Bow to Thee, reachable by word and thought;
Bow to Thee, Bow to Thee, Infinite in Riches;
Bow to Thee, Bow to Thee, Infinite in Mercy.

Know I not virtue, aye, blind to my soul,
Nor do I love Thy Holy Blessed Feet;
Wayless and Goal-less, I, O Refuge!
Meekly seek and fall at Thy Holy Feet.

The Lord Ranga was enchanted with these outpourings of Rāmānuja’s heart, and was pleased to place on his head His

1 This means “God, the cosmic Dramatist on the stage of Eternal Time.” For symbological explanation, refer to p. 111 and 116 of our Lives of Āshvārs.
2 Read this Saint’s Life in our Lives of Āshvārs.
3 Read his Life in our Lives of Āshvārs.
4 Stotra-ratna, verse 21.
5 Ibid, verse 22.
Blessed Feet, ¹ which Rāmānuja received in humility as the greatest honor and blessing conferred on a mortal; and stood transfixed with the thought that from that day onwards he had become one whose life was to be solely dedicated to the service of God. As he was thus ruminating, Lord Ranga (= Periya Perumāl, or Lord stationary resting on Serpent Sesha) spoke thus: "All the riches of our Kingdom here and of Our Upper Regions, are given to thee, and to thy followers. The title Ucchayavar ² is conferred on thee. Take charge of Our household here, of which We appoint thee guardian and trustee, and manage all its affairs wisely." Rāmānuja received the mandate humbly and turning to Mahā-pūrṇa said:—"What blessings belong not to those who have trusted Āchāryas like you, Siro? To my spiritual connection with you, is due the extraordinary favour Lord Ranga has bestowed upon me this day." Pūrṇa said: "O noble pupil of mine, the prophecy of St. Nammāzhvār, to which we were keenly looking forward, has this day come to pass. The prophecy is that contained in his verse: "O Men, learn that Kali will soon come to an end" ³; and this is with reference to yourself. Pray then enter on your holy duties without further thought." Rāmānuja obeyed, and assumed charge of his exalted position. Taking his seat in the Hall called the Periya Tirumandapam, he instituted searching enquiries as to whether the weights and measures used in the Śrī-bhandāra (stores) were correct; whether the flower ⁴-service, sandal-paste ⁵ service, food ⁶-service, light ⁷-service, and all such services were all duly done; whether the Temple-servants were carefully selected and cared for; whether the public works ⁸ of the Shrine's noble structures were duly attended to; whether the flower gardens ⁹ attached to the Temple were properly tended and conserved; and whether the land ¹⁰ and other properties

¹ Called the Ṣaṭha-Gopa.
² Literally "He who has got," meaning "He who has been given the Kingdom of God, as his property."
³ Tiru-vaiy-Mozhi, V. 2.
⁴ Tirumālai.
⁵ Śāttu-p-padi.
⁶ Amudu-padi.
⁷ Tiru-vilakku.
⁸ Tiru-madil-tiruppani.
⁹ Tiru-v-ananda-vanam.
¹⁰ Tiru-vilaiyāṭṭu-cchimai.
pertaining to the Temple were well looked after. And thus from day to day was Rāmānuja engaged in restoring order and system in the vast concerns of the Temple. He picked out *Akalanka-Nāti-Āzhvān*, and making him his disciple, set him over the Temple as his assistant; and saw to the strict and punctual discharge of all the ceremonial duties connected with the daily, fortnightly, monthly and yearly festivals of the shrine.

CHAPTER XIII.

KÜREṢA JOINING RÂMÂNUJA.

Kûreṣa having despatched Râmânuja, returned to Kâñchi. From here he went to his village Kûra, about three miles to the west of Kâñchi. Being the lord of this village and very rich, he was called Kûranâtha or Kûreṣa. He was as bounteous as rich. From morn till late in the night, the blind, lame, poor and disabled were freely served with food and clothing. One night, when the day’s duties were over, the brass-made doors of his mansion were closed violently. This made such a ringing noise that it was heard at Kâñchi. Lord Varada’s Consort Lakshmi questioned Him as to the cause of the noise. The Lord explained to Her the greatness of Kûreṣa. “Then I wish to see him,” said She. Kâñchi-pûrna was commanded to go and fetch him. Pûrna duly came and was welcomed with every worship due to such a distinguished guest. Pûrna then disclosed the object of his mission, resulting from the deliberations which Varada and Lakshmi held on hearing the creaking of his brass doors. Kûreṣa was dismayed on hearing this. “What!” he cried, “a sinner like me, a wretch, a worm, to appear so big in the Lord’s Eye. Crawling insect that I am! My doors to create disturbance in God’s House! Pride hampers salvation; humility paves the way for it.” So reflecting, Kûreṣa formed a resolution to forsake all and join Râmânuja at Sríraṅgam. He put his resolution into execution at once by abandoning all his riches, houses and lands, ¹ which he gave away in charity to all that came, and bidding his wife Ândâlamma give up every article dear to her without regret and accompany him, left Kûra.

Pûrna returned to Kâñchi, and recounted the extraordinary deeds of sacrifice following on repentance, and the departure, of Kûreṣa. Lord Varada was astonished at such

¹Cp. “Sell all thou hast and give to the poor and follow me, and I will give you peace” [Matt. 19-21.]
²Give up all and follow Christ, &.”
swift operation of His Grace on Kūṛēṣa’s heart, and told his Consort: “Well, you have had your wish fulfilled now.”

Kūṛēṣa was now well on his way. Without fear he trudged on. They were, wife and husband, threading their way through a thick forest, and night also fell over them. The wife, unaccustomed to travel in this manner, dreaded thieves in such forsaken tracts, and turning to her husband asked him trembling, whether there was no fear in such places. He quickly answered:—“Dear, if thou hast stuff anywhere hidden in your person, there is fear. Fish feed on water-worms. Fowls feed on land-worms. Death feeds on life. And so thieves feed on riches. I suspect, dear, thou hast something with thee, though I commanded thee to relinquish all behind.” “Pardon me, lord,” said Āṇḍālamma, “I have left all behind, but thinking you might need a cup to drink from, on your long journey, I secreted but a golden cup.” So saying, she unfolded the vessel from her cloth, and shaking with fear, handed it to her husband. He took it and threw it away into the jungle, and said to his wife: “Now, lady, walk on. Thy fear has been cast out.” Thus did this matchless pair travel on and in time reach Srirangam. Rāmānuja was jubilant at his arrival; and sent out his pupils to receive him with every mark of respect, and conduct him to his Maṭh. Rāmānuja, on his approach, rose and, warmly enfolding him in his arms, welcomed him to Srirangam to himself, and to all the great work that jointly they were destined to accomplish in the near future. Kūṛēṣa thus forsook his rich home and all at Kūrā, and made Srirangam henceforth his permanent residence, subsisting here by alms. Thus did a great and most important personage for the life-work of Rāmānuja, join him. We shall leave him for a time and see how fared Govinda at Kālahasti.
CHAPTER XIV.
GOVINDA’S CONVERSION.

A Śrī-vaishnava had been despatched, it will be remembered, to Śrī-śaila-Pūrṇa (= Tirumalai Nambi), to deliberate on the mode of reclaiming Govinda, who had accidentally become a Saiva, and had been made the director of the Kālahasti-Temple. The messengers returned with a joyful countenance to Rāmānuja. Before they broke the tidings, Rāmānuja saw by his face there was success, and bade him recount what had taken place. He began thus:—“Holy Sire, with your holy leave, I reached Tirupati in due time, and making obesance to Pūrṇa, conveyed to him the intelligence you had entrusted me with. Pūrṇa was rejoiced to find that what he himself had contemplated doing with regard to Govinda, was Rāmānuja’s wish as well, and that his own intention was thereby sweetened. So saying, he immediately started with a knot of followers, including myself. We reached Kālahasti, and Pūrṇa seated himself under a tree near the Temple-pond. Uḷḷangai-Konaranda-Nāyanār ¹ (= Govinda) came there with vessels to the pond in order to carry water for the ablution-ceremony of Śiva, all the time chanting songs of His praise. Pūrṇa said:—“What fruit will you get, by cold-bathing the Konesadecked Thing ?” Govinda heard this, looked up in Pūrṇa’s face, smiled and went his way. “This will do for once. Let God work upon his heart,” Pūrṇa exclaimed to himself, and returning to Tirupati, attended to his usual studies and teachings.

Śrī-śaila-Pūrṇa now made another venture. He went to the same tree and pond as before in Kālahasti. Nāyanār (=Govinda) was coming as usual with vessels to fetch water. Pūrṇa thought he would try a plan even like the plans of God, who works without being seen, and is unknown by men as the Planner. To the world, God seems as if sleeping, but He is all wakeful. So reasoning within himself, Pūrṇa wrote his Guru Yāmuna’s verse:

¹ This was the name he bore as a Saiva. It means: “he who found the linga in his palm.” See Chapter VI.
² Meaning Śiva who is fond of kōṇri-flowers.
on a piece of palm-leaf, and allowed it to lie in the path of Nāyanār, who of course was unaware of the design. He came. The piece arrested his sight. He took it for curiosity, read it but threw it away and went on his errand. But as he was returning with his pots full, he felt an impulse to pick up the piece again, and read the contents once more deliberately. He did so and looked round. There we were seated under the tree, He came near and said:—"'The wail has turned into verse,' said Valmiki, and like him reflecting over his spontaneous utterance, I have been reflecting over the meaning of this chance-found strip. Did you, sire, throw it? Is this your property?' addressing Pārṇa. On this the following conversation ensued:

Nāyanār: Have you lost your property?  

Pārṇa: We cannot lose our property. Others only lose theirs (meaning, we cannot lose our God. You have lost our God).

N. Never mind that. How is it you are all assembled in one body (i.e., you are all belonging to one cult, and seem to pursue a peculiar path).

P. Well, we have been brought together, as various ways meet here (i.e., the Path to God we are pursuing is the One Path into which all other paths issue).

N. But is there a Path for those who stand aloof like you? (i.e., aloof-ness or isolation or Kaivalya is the state of souls which on the one hand have eschewed material fetters, but on the other hand have not recognized God. This isolation is what in modern days called the Eonic suspension of souls, equivalent to eternal damnation.).

1 शीर्षस्तलोकमागमः [Rāmāyana II. 40]. i.e., Valmiki uttered a cry of distress when he saw a fowler killing an innocent curlew but Valmiki to his surprise found he had uttered a verse.

2 The whole conversation has Tamil words having double meanings. We have tried to make it as clear as possible by parenthetical explanations.
P. We are not aloof in your sense. The aloof are those who have discarded their real property (God); but we hold our property (God) firm in our hands. We are thus God-sided (i.e., God-partisans) if you please.

N. Never mind this. Have you now come here to leave your relatives? (i.e., to leave more converts like me for Siva).

P. No. We have come here to buy kine? (i.e., to reclaim or convert those who belong to the bull (kine)-riding God (Siva)).

N. Is not the dust of kine said in the Sàstras to be sacred or sin-purifying? (hinting that Siva's bull is thus a sacred animal, whose hoof-dust is purifying to all men).

P. No dust is sacred except it be beaten up by kine of the Sacred Land (of Vishnu); but not that beaten up from the unholy burning (or cremation) ground, where Siva dwells.

N. Never mind that. What difference is there between horizontal and vertical? (i.e., is it not immaterial whether we paint our foreheads horizontally or vertically).

P. Yes, there is as much difference between as between beast (horizontal) and man (vertical).

N. I suppose, this is the language and cult of a New Style (i.e., a New Dispensation?)

P. Nothing new is ours. It is as old as time, and sanctioned by authority (Veda, &c.,) (i.e., our Vaishnavism is not born to-day. It is as old as the Vedas)

N. But if we inquire into Sacred Authorities, it is found to embody all sorts of cults.

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1 Like Brindavâna &c., the Holy Land of the Holy never-heard Krishna.

2 Beast walks horizontally, man walks erect. It is a significant fact that in all paintings and sculptures, where the Dev-âsura war, or war between Gods and Demons, is represented, marks horizontal (tîryak-pundra) are shown on the foreheads of Demons, and upright marks (Urâdhra-pundra) on the foreheads of Gods.
P. Exactly. And that is the reason why you should fully inquire, dive into the very depths of knowledge as to what is the Highest Truth in the Universe; and diving, bring up the Pearl of truth from all the mud and ooze, (i.e., find out Nārāyaṇa from all the tangled skein of the Vedas.)

N. Nāyanār thus was dumb-founded. He simply nodded his head, scanning Pūrṇa all the while from top to toe, and went his way with clear signs of serious thought in his heart visible in his countenance.¹

Pūrṇa now thought thus: "Yes, his heart has now quickened, the rest is God’s own work. I consign the troubled soul there to Him." So saying he returned to the Holy Hill (Tirumalai=Tirupati)."

Thus did the Śrīvaishnava narrate to Rāmānuja the result of his mission to reclaim Govinda to Vaishnavism. Rāmānuja on hearing this, went into a paroxysm of joy, and turning to Dāṣaraththi and other disciples, said:—"Look, how our great Guru Yāmunā's Holy voice has found its entry into Govinda's heart; and how Govinda played a burlesque and spoke to our Śrī-śaila-Pūrṇa thereon in sarcastic quibbles. And see how our Pūrṇa retorted to Govinda in the same clever sarcastic style. Being well versed in Śaśtric lore, see how Govinda acknowledged Pūrṇa's significant sarcasms, and allowed himself to be beaten into silence. What a polemical victory? And hear me now expound to you the meaning of their cypher-repartee. I simply cite a number of authorities bearing on the question."²

(1) "There are two things Kśhara and Akśhara. Kśhara is all this being; Akśhara is liberated souls. And different from these is Purushottama, Myself, the Person par excellence &c." [Bhagavad-Gītā, XV. 16 to 19].

¹ Readers are invited to the perusal of Bhagavadeśiḥayam. Vol. IV or Tīrā-vāy-mozhi. Ṭuṟum-tēcum.
² प्रसादममियन्तर्य [Sātrata-Samhitā]
³ The reader must be satisfied with reading the citations merely. This is no place for expansion thereof.
(2) "He (Vishnu) is the first of the Immortals, and
Prior to them" [Prabandha].
(3) "The Soul of those who walk virtue's path"
[Naradaya].
(4) "He is the Door to Salvation" [Prabandha].
(5) "Hardly one knows Me truly" [Gita: VII-3].
(6) "I am Thine, and Thou art mine" [T. V. Mozhi,
II-9-9].
(7) "He must be classed with beasts who has no know-
ledge (of God)." [Hitopadesa] ¹
(8) "How else will they spend their time, (if not by
thinking of Vishnu)?" [Periyavar-v-andadi, v-86].
(9) "Those who wear vertical marks on their foreheads,
&c., are Vaishnavas" [Sri-Bhagavata].
(10) "Sprinkle the Holy Dust of the feet of godly men"
[T-vay-Mozhi, IV. 6-5].
(11) "All twice-born shall wear vertical marks" ²
[Yajnya-valkya].
(12) "Vedas are the source of authority ³ [Manu. II-6].
(13) "Sat, O Saumya, was in the beginning" ⁴ [Aitareya
Up: VI-2].
(14) "Atma, Saumya, was in the beginning" ⁵ [Aitareya
Up: I-1].

¹ भावनिविर्भावमेधुरामानि तुल्यानिविलानसमस्तज्ञानि; ।
वानादिसिद्धान्तस्यपरिशोणे वानादिनिन्दायमेधमसमान्; ॥
² वेदनाथस्वल्पनिहनिशिनि महानायामा: वेदालाभनक्षे लसदूपरुपुरु: ।
वेदादिशवल्पपतिभिः महानायाम: पतिभिः विश्ववः करः ॥
³ उद्धवर्द्धु: पदितािः विनायामान्,
⁴ वेदोदवलयंगभूमिलगः
⁵ सद्वस्येतमप्रवासानि
⁶ भात्मानाहैद्यमक्षप्रासादानि,
(15) Brahman, O Saumya, was in the beginning ”’[Vājasaneya: III-4].

And if it be asked who is the Sat, the Atma, the Brahman.

(16) “Indeed, it is the one Nārāyaṇa”” [Mahopanishat: 1].

(17) (Nārāyaṇa or) Vishnū is the highest God; and Agni is the lowest. All other gods go between”” [Atitareya Brāhmaṇa, I-1-1].

(18) “The Praṇava is the bow, Ātmā is the arrow, and Brahman is the Target. The wise man shall hit the Target and become filled with It”” [Mund: Up: II-4].

(14) “From Nārāyaṇa is Brahmā born, from Nārāyaṇa is Rudra (Śiva) born”” [Narayana Up.].

And Smritis, Purāṇas, and Itihāsas support these authorities, for see Bhagavad-Gītā, X-2, XI-37, IX-10; Manu-Smṛiti I-8, XII-132; Vishnū-Purāṇa I, 1-32, I, 2-20, IV, 1-39, I, 22-64 and 78, VI, 4-10; Mahā-Bhārata, Śānti-Moksha, 168-78 and 79; 169-19, 30 and 31, Udyoga, 67, and Harivamsa, 32, 223-39, 279-47, &c., &c.

1 ब्रह्मवादमप्रााःः
2 एकोबैनारायणभासारी
3 अप्रिश्वेद्वानामामो विष्णुं परम: तद्रोववासवश्रम्यावेवतः
4 प्राणवोभुसोरोवायम ब्रह्मवादक्षमुच्यते
अथवेनान्ववशे शर्वतमयोमिति
5 नारायणवासमायति नारायणरथोजायते

Note:—From (3) to (6), it may be observed how the conception of God evolved from the term Sat up to Nārāyaṇa. If our readers are etymologists, they will at once understand the splendid discovery of Rāmānuja in the intricate windings of the Vedas. Says Max Muller — "Every new word was a discovery, and these early discoveries, if but properly understood, are more important to us than the greatest conquest of the Kings of Egypt or Babylon. Not one of our greatest explorers has unearthed with his spade or pickaxe more splendid palaces and temples, whether in Egypt or in Babylon, than the etymologist. Every word is the palace of a human thought." [P. 17, Vol. I, Trans: of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists].
When therefore Sri-saila Pūrna answered Nāyanār in his own riddles, he was convinced inasmuch as he was well-versed in Sāstras. And Pūrna feeling sure that Nāyanār was well on the way towards conversion, returned to Tirumalai. How clever of Pūrna!" So saying, Rāmānuja congratulated the Śrī-Vaishnava who had returned. "And what next?" asked he.

"Sire," continued the Vaishnava, "listen to the results of the third sally of Pūrna. He made obeisance to Lord Śrīnivāsa of Tirupati and entered the purliens of Kālahasti and camping there in a tope, spent his time in teaching his disciples the commentaries on Tiruvāy-mozihi, (i.e. Bhagavad-Vishayam). Nāyanār came that way and got up a trumpet-flower tree (pādīrī to cull flowers for Śiva's worship). Pūrna had taken up Tiṇṇan-viḍu or Cent: II, Dec. 2 of St. Nam-māzhvār’s Tiru-vāy-mozihi, for comment; and as he went on reciting and explaining, Nāyanār attentively pursued the discourse. Pūrna came to the fourth verse thereof, which ended with:—‘Except the One God (Krishṇa), which other deserves flow'r or worship?’ On hearing this, Nāyanār jumped down the tree at once, flung away his flower-reticule, tore away the rudrāksha 1 beads he was wearing, and fell at the feet of Pūrna, overcome with emotion, and exclaimed:—"No, no; no one else can deserve. Holy Sire! I am an ignoramus, and apostate and am unclean and wallowing in the mire of worldliness. Save me, save me. Alas that when God of the two Universes, (Nārāyana) has been, I professed fealty to the ‘Nude deity of the Dishevelled Hair (Śiva)’; when we have had the ‘Love-beaming Lotus-Eyed (Viṣṇu)’, I placed my affections on ‘Fire-vomitting Ugly-Eyed (Śiva)’; when we have had Krishna, the sea-and-land Swaller, I worshipped the ‘Poison-dark-necked’ (Śiva); when we have had the Kalpāka-tree which had saved the herds and herdsmen from Indra’s hail and storm (Krishna), I honored the ‘Dead-skull-handed (Śiva); when we have had the Śrī-breasted (Viṣṇu), I bowed

1The berries of Usocarpus Ganitrus, sacred to Śiva.
2 ॐक्षणचारहंिश्व मिश्नो हुँकसंगरे | निम्नत्र-कृपायोहृःः पुराभागीहोस्तोस्चहन्तुः॥
[Nārādīya.]
to the 'Beggar (Siva)'; when we have had the glorious 'Silk-mantled (Vishnu)'; I was an abject slave to the 'Tiger-skin-mantled (Siva)'; when we have had the 'Gangā-toed (Vishnu)', I circumambulated the 'Grave-yard-stalker (Siva)'; when we have had the God of the fragrant Tulasi 1, I resorted to the 'Biläkī fond (Siva) and wasted my strength by pouring pailsful of water over the vile phallus.' So went on Nāyanaṅ, now really Govinda, going through the whole gamut of the Vishnu-Siva legends; and very contrite at heart for his vagrancy, supplicated Pūrṇa to save his soul, lost in the wilds of false faiths. Govinda thus lay prostrate. Pūrṇa looked at his disciples and saying: "Repentance has washed this soul clean, and Āḷavandār will now accept the purged heart," lifted him up with loving hands, patted him on the back and discourse to him in soothing tones, "drinking Govinda, as it were, with his gracious eyes, and hugging him as it were to his heart." 3

The Sivite residents of Kāḷahasti came to know of Nāyanaṅ's remorse, recantation and redemption and hemming round Pūrṇa, remonstrated with him thus:—"How canst thou entice, Sir, our Nāyanār, by mesmerizing him with charm-dust?"? "Why do ye ask me?" retorted Pūrṇa, "there is your Nāyanār; ask him. Know, our ways are hidden to you, and we never swerve to others' ways." Then they turned to Nāyanār, and seizing his hand, "Come," said they. Govinda swiftly snatched his hand away from their clutch and said in anger:—"How dare ye pollute my hand with your touch? Here, take away the temple-keys, the signet-ring and other articles of your cult and creed. My connection with you

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3 The basil sacred to Vishnu (read p. lvii. of our Lives of the Śīwas.)
4 Egle Marmelos, leaves of—sacred to Śiva.
5 भाविष्यविवचनायोगमाधुर्यस्विकथंतम्
6 आदाषायिश्वध्यायस्विकथंतम् [Brāhma-Pur.]
7 Anumāṇ-podi in Tamil, a magic-dust supposed to possess the property of subjugating another's will to one's own.
has from this moment ceased; and I have nothing more to do with you. I am entirely rid now of old shackles." So saying, he suited action to word, by clapping his hands, and turned his face away from them. Thus beaten they said to Pūrṇa, —

"Sire, we had known all this yesterday; and yet we thought we would go to you and make a stand and try to force or persuade Nāyanār back to us, but it is hopeless, we find. Hear, however, the dream which we had. Our God of Kālāhasti (Siva) appeared to us and spake thus: — "Listen, my faithful! In the old days, the Vedas and Śāstras suffered at the hands of the Pāshandins, Bandhās and Chārvākās. They were restored by the three-staffed Sanyāsin, Dattātreya. Again now, as of old, the Vedas have suffered by heretical vandalism. To re-establish them, the celestials Vishvakṣena, Ananta and Vainātasya have become incarnate on earth, under the names of Yāmuna, Rāmānuja and Govinda. To help them, the Divine Symbols of Viṣṇu — the Conch and the Discus — have appeared as Dāsaratthi and Kūreśa, respectively. So, the Vedic Viṣṇavism which is going to revive under these Masters is a system which is after my own heart. Govinda had entertained a wish once for living in Kāśī; and this desire I fulfilled by appearing as the līnga in his palm, and giving him thus a chapter of Saivism; so that he may be in a position to show and prove to others the comparative merits of the two systems, which can best be done only after personal experience. Viṣṇavās are a free people. Interfere not. Let them alone." 'Such was our dream,' the Saivas represented, 'and so, Sirs, you are free, and we return.' Pūrṇa's plans were thus worked out. He took Govinda to his home at Tirupati, and has had, as expiatory, the tonsure, &c., performed as also the five-fold Sacraments of the Viṣṇavās — on the shores of the Holy Pond, called the Svāmi-Pushkariṇī — administered. After this the Holy Teachings contained in the Prabandhas of the Saints (Āzhvārs) were duly imparted, and the Five Fundamental

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1 This means: washing one's hands off.

2 संस्काराः-वस्त्रानिक्ततः: उपनिनिविष्टिमनाम्।

ताप-पुष्कल्यायानाम् मन्त्रोपायावत्सरम्:॥ [Kāśyapa-Samhitā.]
Truths\(^1\) of religion were explained to him, thus making Govinda an all-round Vaishnava for evangelistic work with Ramanuja. Govinda looked upon Purṇa, his Master, as God Himself. He knew of no other God except his Saviour, Purṇa, to whom he was a servitor, in thought, speech and deed, even as Lakshman was to Rāmachandra.\(^3\)

And I, Master, remained with them so long, enjoying their company as well as studies." Thus related the Vaishnava to Ramanuja.

On hearing this, Ramanuja rapturously eyed the Srivaishnava and uttered blessings. The first successful evangelistic work of Ramanuja had thus been accomplished, by the recovery of Govinda from his apostasy.

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\(^1\) The Artha-pañchaka, or the nature of (1) God, (2) Soul, (3) Goal (4) Means, (5) Sin. A separate treatise on this topic comprises one of the eighteen Mystery-Books of Sage Pillai Lokāchārya.

\(^2\) ब्राह्मवृक्षश्रीरायमी जागरतस्वप्नपतस्वते || [Rāmā : 11. 31. 27.]

Thou shalt with thy Videhan spouse,
Recline upon the mountain’s brows;
Be mine the toil, be mine to keep
Watch o’er thee, walking or asleep." [Griffith.]
CHAPTER XV.

RÂMÂNUJA AND MANTRA.

Sri Râmânuja had not yet formally seen his Guru Sri Mahâpûrṇa, at his residence, after his arrival at Srirangam from Kâñchi. And, two, through his wife, he had possibly offended him. But he had abandoned her on that account and donned the Sannyâsin robes. Was this sufficient amends to appease the Guru? Such thoughts embarrassed Râmânuja. He would however go and tender ample apologies. So he walked on to his Guru’s dwelling. In an attitude of veneration and humility, he prostrated himself, and telling him how he had made expiation for his past conduct, begged of him to pardon that for which he was not personally responsible. Pûrṇa said he never knew there was anything to pardon, but that on the other hand Râmânuja was daily growing in his estimation. "Sire," said Râmânuja, rising, "to fill the blank caused by Yamuna’s sudden departure, to supply yourself the lack caused by my having, by a hair’s breadth, missed conversing with him on matters spiritual, deign to impart to me all the mysteries of religion, that great Guru of mine has entrusted to you for the purpose." "With the greatest delight," replied Pûrṇa, "I have been eagerly looking out for an occasion like this. There shall be no more delay. The essence of our Holy Faith, know, is embedded in the Dvaya-mantra. 'O, its greatness! its power and strength! A gem, eternal, holy,—the very gist of the Vedas! Purifying, meritorious! Rich, world-winning, and healing'.

So saying, he briefly imparted to Râmânuja the essentials of religion contained in it, viz., There is but One God. He is All-merciful, and is therefore our Way. He is All-knowing and All-mighty, and is therefore Our God. The souls’ end and aim is therefore eternal living service at His Holy Feet. There are glorious amplifications of this truth yet. Learn these at the
feet of Tīru-k-kōṭṭiyūr Nambi (=Gōṣṭhī-Pūrṇa), who was an intimate disciple of Yāmuna.

Rāmānuja took leave and proceeded to Tīru-k-kōṭṭiyūr (near Pudukkōtai); and, on arriving there asked the passers-by where Gōṣṭhī-Pūrṇa was living. “There, in that poor low hut,” said they, pointing. Rāmānuja fell on his knees, and all the way from where he stood up to the hut, he went prostrate. Only those knew Nambi well, who knew how not to see defects in their Masters, but only saw perfection, and these to exaggeration. Rāmānuja approached Nambi and falling at his feet prayed: “Teach me, Holy Sire, all the recondite doctrines of our Faith. I am the humble feet of Mahā-pūrṇa.” In order to test the strength of Rāmānuja’s professions, Gōṣṭhī-Pūrṇa said in an off-hand manner: “What have I to tell, and to whom?,” and gave him no countenance. Rāmānuja never spoke another word, either of supplication or of reproach; but simply prostrated himself and returned to Kōil (=Srirangam).

G. Pūrṇa had to visit Srirangam for the season’s festivities connected with that Holy Fane. He came and paid homage to the Lord Ranga, who was pleased to dower him with all honors, and commanded, through the officiating priest, :—“Instruct our Rāmānuja in all the occult love of the Faith.” “But, O. Glorious God!” said G. Pūrṇa, “It is Thou who hast ruled: Tell not those who have not been apprenticed at least for a year. Reveal not high truths to the non-serious, non-dutyful, who love me not, &c.? So that if I have to carry out the strict letter of Thy law, I must wait and try Thy Rāmānuja.”

1 See Hierarchic Table, No. 24 in our Lives of Āśhāvāra.

2 This attitude of mind towards a Teacher constitutes a real disciple; and only then is his successful spiritual career assured. “The glad and cordial recognition of excellence,” says A. Besant, “wherever found, the checking of the critical and carping spirit that fixes on defects and ignores virtues, those things prepare the soul to recognise his Guru when he appears. Many a one misses his teacher by the mental habit of fixing the attention on blemishes rather than on beauties, by seeing only the sun-spots and not the Sun.” [Value of Devotion, p. 263 f. Theos: Review, Vol. XXVI].

3 This is the Indian idiom for a “true disciple.” Let our readers become accustomed to it.

4 नासंवत्सरवासिनेनेन्नृणात.

5 इस्तेनातप्सकाय [Bh. Gī, XVII-64.]
“Not so in his case,” answered Ranga, “as he is fully qualified according to the requirements of the text:—

*Body, wealth, mind, life itself, belong to the Guru, &c.*, ¹ and therefore he may be instructed.

“Come to my place,” said G. Pūrṇa to Rāmānuja, and left Srirangam. Rāmānuja went all the way, as directed, to T. Kōṭṭiyūr again. But when he went there; “Not this time; can you go now and come again?” told Pūrṇa. Rāmānuja never thought of a protest, and never felt irritated, but simply obeyed the command, and returned to Srirangam. Eighteen times,² thus, it is chronicled, did Rāmānuja journey to T. Kōṭṭiyūr and return, each time being told the same thing. G. Pūrṇa had at the same time no other idea except that of testing Rāmānuja’s faith and zeal, and testing him through an ordeal of novitiate probation, to see if his spirit was strong and capable of overcoming passions of the mind. Had his will been weak, he would long ago have given up his endeavor as unworthy of pursuit. Had he succumbed under the weight of disappointment and chagrin, that would have proved him an unworthy disciple, to whom it would have been useless to reveal occult truths. Such were Pūrṇa’s thoughts. And on the other hand, Rāmānuja’s tenacity of purpose was raising him every time in Pūrṇa’s estimation. When he returned to Srirangam for the eighteenth time, however, he felt somewhat, and was moved to tears at the futility of his repeated efforts, and was found deeply revolving in his mind, as to what he should do next; when a disciple of G. Pūrṇa chanced to come from T. Kōṭṭiyūr, and came on a visit to Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja, bidding him be seated, and after preliminaries were over, poured before him his bitter grievances, and consulted him as to how he should make himself worthy. And he finished the consultation by saying:—“Is not God pledged to save us from evil, and grant us bliss? Even so are God’s regents on earth. How am I to become worthy, if by the worthy, my unworthiness is not effaced; and unless the benefactor gives, how is the receiver

¹ श्रीरामचुविजान वासःकर्मणुणानहरु।
युर्विभाषियस्तु सशिष्यपोतस्स्नात्तः। II [Sātvata-Samhitā.]

² See Munuḥshuḍḍa, Intro : to Charuṇa-Śloka.
to be blessed?" The disciple returned to T. Kottiyur, and told his master how Ramanuja was pining for knowledge. "Has he such keen appetite? Then I must at once feed him. A moment's delay more on my part brings sin. Let Ramanuja come to me alone with his staff and pennant.\(^1\) So did G. Purna exclaim; and bade the same disciple go forth at once and bring Ramanuja to him. Swiftly came he, and prostrating himself before Ramanuja begged of him to proceed. He started immediately, taking his two intimate disciples with him, Kuresa and Dasaarathi; and fell at Purna's feet. "These instead of thyself alone, as I had commanded!" exclaimed Purnapurate. "Holy Sire!" explained Ramanuja, "come with staff and pennant" was thy order. So I have come." "Staff and pennant! which is thy staff, which is thy pennant?" asked Purna. "Sire, Dasaarathi is my staff; Kuresa is my pennant. I am never without them, nor they without me." Purna's irritation vanished and he was moved by Ramanuja's exemplary conduct and astuteness. "Well," spoke Purna—who by the bye had been commanded by Lord Ranga in a dream again, to nnboso hand the secrets to Ramanuja, as the latter was no other than Adisesha himself incarnated—"I make exceptions of these, thy Inseparables; I command thee that to no others shalt thou impart the sacred truths I am going to divulge to thee." So saying, he led Ramanuja to a secret corner of his hut, and there revealed to him the hidden truths of the Tirumantara, or the Mantra of the Aastakshara-Upanishad, the eight-syllabled and three-worded Mantra, the gravity of which is thus described:—"Pranava the first; Namah the middle; and Naryana the last. So runs the Eight-syllabled Mantra, to be ever used in prayer by seekers after God. It is the granter of every boon, and promoter of devotion and dispassion."\(^2\)

\(^1\) Staff is the Tridanda of the Sanyasin, and pennant is the colored piece of cloth attached to its top.

\(^2\) [Savatva-Samhita.]

Also see our Lives of Saints and Wisdom of Saints for detailed explanations.
“This,” he said, “is the Mantra which all our Saints and Sages constantly recited and pondered over. It is the bestower of eternal bliss.” Rāmānuja reverently received the teachings, and considered himself now as regenerated and saved. But he could not contain the truths within him, though imparted under pledge of secrecy. “Why are such truths so jealously guarded from all mortals? If God is not for sinners, from whom is He? And therefore is not His Holy Word a message for all? Why should mortals be denied its saving power? But I shall not make a secret of it. I shall divulge it to all regardless of consequences.” So did Rāmānuja reflect and reason. Compassion for all men burned in his heart. So he made up his mind to proclaim the Word to the public.

The next day, he entered into the big and elevated hall of Terk-kāzhvān, or the Lord Nṛsimha, Resident of Tiru-kōṭṭiyūr, invited all to assemble there; and his full heart flowed to them in the revealing of the precious truths relating to Spirit, which he had learnt from G. Pūrṇa, under vow of secrecy. This news reached and roused the indignation of G. Pūrṇa. He commanded Rāmānuja to appear before him; and asked in tones of anger:—“Culprit! did we not strictly enjoin thee not to reveal our noble truths of religion to the undeserving vulgar? How durst thou misbehave, and outrage promises made?” “Revered Sire,” submitted Rāmānuja, “I confess I am guilty of disobedience. But I taught the truths to others to glorify thee and thy lore.” “That is not it,” retorted Pūrṇa, “the disobedience on thy part is the question. That, thou hast glaringly shown. What is thy punishment for it?” “My punishment is certainly hell, Sire,” submitted Rāmānuja. That thou well knewest,” protested Pūrṇa, “and yet what made thee to violate my law?” “Sire,” said Rāmānuja, “pray listen to me calmly. Disobedience surely deserves hell. I must be sent there, no doubt. But, holy Sire, may I submit that it is but little sacrifice for one sinner to make, inasmuch

1This is called the gopuram or pinnacle, as sung by An̄gā-v-āppangār in his Rāmānuja-atimānusaha-stava:—

“किन्नोपोरितिमितिकथा मुनितान्त्रिकम्”.

13
as it brings salvation to many. Moreover all the merit of that whole-sale salvation goes to you, because of the Holy Secret having emanated from your great self? These reasons emboldened me to infringe thy holy command. It was compassion for mankind that rendered me blind to thy injunctions. I ask forgiveness. Do with me, holy Sire, what thou wilt.” G. PūRNA was struck dumb at this reasoning and his own heart moved. “Oh, that this idea never entered my crippled heart,” said he excitedly, “my heart, which would not ere this warm with love for mankind. I am hated. Strange I never felt the all-embracing love of Rāmānuja, Rāmānuja! Yatirâja! Indeed thou art He, come on earth. I see it all now.” Thus vehemently venting forth the new and strange emotions stirring in his breast PūRNA rushed forward and embracing Rāmānuja continued:—“Holy son, thou art mine, my own indeed art thou. Thy name shall henceforth be EMBERUMĀNĀR. The creed that I gave thee was hitherto known as the Creed of the High Vedānta, but henceforth it shall be known to the world as the Creed of EMBERUMĀNĀR. Not only that, which thou hast already heard from me, shalt thou proclaim from the house-tops, but more shalt thou hear from me. Secrets there are yet. Come, wilt thou be, or art thou, satisfied, as thou seemest, with what thou hast got?” So went on PūRNA, in the exuberance of his strangely awakened love for Rāmānuja. “Holy Sire,” softly said Rāmānuja,” I am not to lay down law for you. Had I in the least thought that there were yet other Secrets than those you have already so graciously divulged, and therefore stood in need, that would prove lack of trust in me; i.e., as if I harboured doubts as to your sincerity. But if I say now: ‘I need no more,’ that would prove that I had not well understood the bearings of the first set of secrets given me. So I hold my peace. It is for you therefore, Master, to decide in these circumstance and from events which have transpired, what I deserve.” My own sou, Rāmānuja, dear!” said PūRNA, “then let it be deferred. Go

1 Cp. this what Rāmānuja (i.e., Lakshmaṇa) said:—
“एकस्यपरमेश्वरम् मातृस्वविनाशे” [Uttara Rām; 105-8].
now and come again, but mind, come alone." Rāmānuja stretched himself before his Guru, rose and left for Srirangam with his staff and pennant.

Some time after, Rāmānuja journeyed, as bidden, to his Master for further instructions, and humbled himself before him. "Come now," said G. Pūrṇa, clasping Rāmānuja's hand lovingly. Taking him to a sequestered spot and adopting every precaution that no one may disturb them, "touch my feet", said he, and promise thou wilt not venture on further disclosures of our most cherished secrets." On Rāmānuja solemnly pledging his word, Pūrṇa began in the manner of Lord Krishṇa:

"Listen, Arjuna, again, to My lofty speech, the Secret of Secrets. I say it as it is good for thee, and as thou art my friend and devotee." [Bh : Gī. XVIII. 64.]

"It is the Last Word (Charsma-sloka) of the spiritual science, contained in the Lord's verse" said Pūrṇa. Thus:

"Give up entirely all other Ways,
Choose Me alone as Thy Way:
Thee, from all sins, I will absolve,
No more then shalt thou mourn." [Bh : Gī. XVIII. 66.]

"Son, reveal not these Holy Truths to the unprepared, undeserving, unserving, and haters of God (Me)." [Bh : Gī. XVIII. 67.] Rāmānuja, if you value these Truths, then let not atheists and heretics hear them. Guard them against such.

"Let it be, Sire, as thou wilt" said Rāmānuja, "but may I not make exceptions of such worthy God-loving souls as Kurēśa. How can I conceal from him?" "He may be worthy" enjoined Pūrṇa," but our Sāstras lay conditions such as:

"One year, half year, quarter year at least, shall the postulant be examined in every way; and then shall the Guru initiate him,
graciously, disinterestedly. And therefore, after putting him to test and seeing that he really craves for knowledge during this trial-period teach him.” Râmânuja received these commands and returned to Srîrangam as a victor returning home after a successful campaign. He thought to himself that even like the Eighteen Chapters of the Gîtâ preached by Sri Krishṇa, before the Last Word (Charuma-sloka) was revealed, in order to test Arjuna’s mind, were the eighteen trips imposed upon him by his Guru. “I am Crown Prince now,” he exclaimed rapturously, “and I am heir to the Kingdom of God.”

Kûrëśa was now longing to learn this Truth. He was anxiously waiting for an opportunity to declare his mind. He found one and throwing himself at the feet of Râmânuja said: “Holy Sire! how I realise the effects of Yâmuna’s petitions to Lord Varada. By them have you become the Pioneer of our Faith after discarding all worldly concerns. A holy band is gathering round you. I am happily one. See, how again Yâmuna’s disciple, G. Pûrṇa, has dowered you with his special grace. May I not be so blessed by you in turn?” “Son, beloved,” said Râmânuja, “you must bide your time one year. That is my command.” “Master,” humbly submitted Kûrëśa, “One year! Ah, it is intolerably long. Can I stand it? Shall I live so long, so long? I have heard that one month’s fasting and lying at the door of the Master, is considered a good equivalent for the year’s probation.” So saying, Kûrëśa put his word immediately into execution. Râmânuja was moved by pity, and at the end of the month, he initiated him into the final principles of the Gîtâ.  

Dâšaraththi was watching all the while. He found no rest for his mind till he learnt the saving truths. So he approached Râmânuja and fell at his feet. “Teach me, also, I pray, Master,” said he. “Son, my permission was for Kûrëśa only. You must go to Pûrṇa and obtain his permission.” Dâšaraththi ran to T. Kôtṭiyûr, and threw himself before Pûrṇa. But Pûrṇa never gave him countenance. Dâšaraththi held to his

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1 See Chapter VI, p. 40.
2 See Mumukshuppadi, Introd: to Charuma-Sloka.
resolve, and repeated his importunity; but Pūrṇa as resolutely turned away from him. This went on for six months. If Dāśarathī had any pride of birth or learning, this probation was good for him. He humbled himself again. Pūrṇa now glanced at him. "You are one of Rāmānuja’s favoured, I surmise," asked he. "Yes, Sire! I am known as Dāśarathī; I am come to learn the cream of Gitā-teachings from you." Pūrṇa said: "Let every trace in thee cease, of the threefold egotism which troubles mankind, that of talent, wealth, and ancestry. Rāmānuja will be the best judge of thee in these matters. Go to him and wait on his will and pleasure. He will bless thee." "Be it as you will, Sire," said Dāśarathī and humbly retired to Srirangam. Dāśarathī’s return, Rāmānuja was watching, and when he came and fell at his feet, and related all that took place at T. Kōṭṭiyūr, Rāmānuja, in the midst of many assembled disciples, said:—"Do you see? Dāśarathī is now a changed person. If he had any notion of self-esteem before, how it hath disappeared now! What a transformation effected by my Guru! Rise, Dāśarathī! thou art now qualified to hear high lessons of the Spirit. I will reveal them at once." So saying, he communicated to him the quintessence of the Gitā-teachings, and exclaimed joyously. "Aye, now indeed, I may claim as my own, my Staff and Pennant." ²

¹ विद्यामौधनमद स्वतात्त्विधिषिनोमर्गः।
एतिक्षशवलिसाना मेतादिवसनांदमः।

² I.e., the two close disciples, Kūrēṣa and Dāśarathī.
CHAPTER XVI.

RÂMÂNUJA’S INTERPRETATIONS.

Some time elapsed thus. Goshtí-Pûrṇa came on a visit to Śrīraugam, where he met his college friend Tirunâlai-Ānâdan (Mâlandhara). He took him with him and went to see Râmânuja in his retreat. Râmânuja on seeing his Guru come, rose and receiving him with due respect, entered into conversation. “Râmânuja!” he addressed, “you are now to hear the utterances of our Holy Saints, the Tiru-vây-mozhi of St. Nam-mâazhvâr, to begin with. I commend you to the care of my friend Mâlandhara, who has been full well instructed in that lore by Yâmunâchârya.” So saying, he placed Râmânuja’s hands in those of Mâlandhara, and begging of the latter to take his trust through a course of the Prabandhas, left for his own town.

They began the new course of studies. But as Mâlandhara gave out the explanations of each verse as he had heard them from his Guru, Yâmuna, Râmânuja gave expanded or improved versions of the same. Mâlandhara used to say that he never remembered such explanations given out by Yâmuna. “But they are right, Sire! and Yâmuna’s mind was really that,” Râmânuja used to reply. In due course, they came to the verse: Arîyâ-k-kâlattu [T. Vây-mozhi II, 3, 3]. Mâlandhara explained it thus:—O God, when I was ignorant, thou gavest me the knowledge of my relation to Thee, and yet Thou hast confined me in this carcasse which destroys this knowledge.” “This cannot be, Sire!” protested Râmânuja, “if you consider the trend of the whole decad here [II, 3], it is an acknowledgment of all the manifold good, God did to the Saint. While so, one verse in the middle of the Decad cannot convey an accusation against God. So, by a transposition of the terms of the verse in question, the meaning becomes:—“Whilst I was yet confined in this carcasse which destroys knowledge, thou were pleased to bestow knowledge of my relation to Thee, O God!”

1 See No. 25, Hierarchic Table, in our Lîces of Âzhvârs.
2 Readers ought to read the original of this in the 2nd Volume of Bhâgarad-vishayagam, if they wish to fully enjoy this intellectual banquet.
don’t remember Yâmuna so explaining to me,” expostulated Mâlâdhara, “I like not such interpretations from thee.” So saying, he ceased teaching further. The news of this interruption of studies reached the ears of G. Pûrña. He journeyed thereon to Srirangam to inquire into the cause. Meeting Mâlâdhara, he asked for an explanation:—“Compeer!” began Mâlâdhara, “our studies never go on smoothly, for Râmânuja, I find, is too much for me. He has an eternal store of new interpretations. For instance, we had a passage-at-arms over St. Nammâzhvâr’s verse Ariya &c. [II. 3. 3.]. Whereas I construed it as conveying a spirit of invective against God for His ways of dealing with souls, Râmânuja construed it as an expression of gratitude to God, so as to make verse 3 harmonize with the other verses of this Decad. Such a protesting spirit seemed to me a violation of a disciple’s decorum, while his constructions also seemed at variance with our Yâmuna’s mind. Hence I had to stop studying with an eccentric pupil like Râmânuja.” “But, pardon me,” interrupted Pûrña, “Râmânuja is right, for I remember our Yâmuna having so explained. You seem to have forgotten. Friend! Râmânuja is incapable of going wrong. If any one knows Yâmuna’s mind, it is he. Look upon him as like another Krishna who went to Sândipani for instruction. You are but a pretence. He knows all. No more be under the delusion that you are teaching him truths not already known to him. So, permit me as a friend, to lay it on you henceforth as a sacred duty to continue the Tiru-vây-mozhi from where you dropped it; even if, to do so, it were necessary on your part to wait on Râmânuja, instead of his waiting on you. He is such disciple as his Gurus must go to him.” So saying, G. Pûrña went to Râmânnja’s monastery, accompanied by Mâlâdhara and Mahâpûrña. Seeing them, Râmânuja rose exultingly, and prostrating himself, welcomed them all. G. Pûrña thus made peace and saw to the Prabandha-studies being again pursued in right earnest.

They sat to the study again under these terms of conciliation. A passage was again being explained by Mâlâdhara. “Not

1 Consult Vishnu-Purâna.
so, Sire!" interrupted Rāmānuja. Yāmuna meant it another way." "How dost thou know Yāmuna?" excitedly queried Mālādhara, of Rāmānuja, "thou hast never conversed with him once in thy days. Thou but sawst him after his death. And yet Thou darest to interpret his mind to me!" "With thy leave, Master," submitted Rāmānuja, "look upon me as the Ėkalavya¹ to Yāmuna. That will explain how I understand him." "I understand thee now, Holy Rāmānuja. I find the words of my friend G. Pārṇa indeed confirmed by my own experience of thee. Thou art even an Avatāra. To me art thou teacher, not I to thee. I have learnt from thee many things that I had not learnt from Yāmuna." So saying, Mālādhara rose and made obeisance to Rāmānuja.

Thus, without further impediments to progress, the study of a course of the Prabandhas was in due time completed. Mahāpūrṇa now suggested to Rāmānuja that there were other mysteries yet, which if he so desired, he might learn from the venerable Tiruvaranga-p-perumāl Araiāyar. Rāmānuja took the hint at once, and from that day forward engaged himself for six months to offer milk daily to Araiāyar as a premium for learning. And to this he added the service of preparing for Araiāyar a turmeric-paste (mañjal-kūppu) for ablution-purposes, when the adhiyayana-festival came round in the year. One day the preparation was found not quite to Araiāyar's liking. Rāmānuja threw it away, and immediately prepared it anew. Araiāyar was watching this solicitude on Rāmānuja's part. "He loves me as one may love God. He loves me, a son of God, as God Himself incarnate," thought Araiāyar. "Come, noble disciple," said he, "you are fit to know the highest mystery. By your services to me you have earned it. So you lay claim to all that I have. Know then that God's apostles and representatives on earth are God Himself visible in that form. Our Sāstras hence proclaim:—

¹ See 132nd Adhyāya, Ādi-Parva, Mahābhārata for the Story. Ėkalavya made a mud-image of Drōṇa, and learnt from this mere image of a Guru, all the science of archery.
"The Guru is Parabrahman Himself; is one's real Wealth; is the Object of love, and our Refuge. He is our Wisdom and the Way. Who preaches such a Saviour, is the Saviour of Saviours."¹

"Know that God asleep is the Guru awake; God invisible is the Guru visible and moving. The Gurus bring messages of God. They are God's mouthpieces. Through them, God chooses to teach mankind. Look upon the Guru (Saviour) then as God Himself on earth. Look upon him as St. Madhurakavi² looked upon St. Nammazhvari, as Lakshmana upon Râma and Setrugna on Bharata. This is called the Pañchamopâya,² or the fifth and ultimate means of reaching God." Thus did Araiyyar descend on the greatness and virtue of Saviours, as the constituted channels through which God becomes most accessible to mankind. "They are appointed and sent by God to perform the functions of salvation. They are empowered mediators between man and God. Who reject them reject God, and their salvation is imperilled thereby. This truth is hard to be realized by mankind, which is apt to deny the Saviour by the very fact of His moving with them, living with them and sharing with them all their joys and sorrows. The very intimacy breeds contempt. Those only steer clear of this danger of denial, who can pierce through the veil of the visible symbol of the Guru. Râmânuja! seriously reflect over this truth and be blessed." Obtaining this truth, Râmânuja became supremely happy.⁴

¹ गुरुरस्वरं बाध्य गुरुर्वस्तुवरं नमः। गुरुरस्तुवरं गृहसे गुरुर्वस्तुवरं सः।
   गुरुरस्वरंविषय गुरुर्वस्तुवरं मादि। यम्मातिकुमदेतासः तस्मातियुहंतोरुः।
   [Kāśyapa-Samhitā].

² बाराणीसहरसाणाचार्यर्जुनसंशय: [Pañcharātra].

³ Read his life in our Lives of Āśhrārs. [See No. 10 in the Table, Ibid].

⁴ The other four Means being Karma, Jñāna, Bhakti and Prapatti. It is also called the Charana-porva. See Table of Soteriology, pp. 573-574, our Bhagavad-gītā.

⁴ I and my Father are one, said Christ. Our Upanishads say:—
   यस्यदेवसमक्ष्येदादेवतत्त्वायैैः [Subāla: Up. end].

That this is an old Indic doctrine may now be understood by all who may have doubted it ere this.
Here it may be asked, how one disciple can have more than one Guru? It was Mahāpūrṇa who acted the first sacramental Guru to Rāmānuja, at Madhurāntakam, as already narrated. And yet we find Rāmānuja resorting to many Teachers for instruction. There is no serious spiritual objection to such a procedure, it is stated. For a king may entrust more than one minister of his, with the wealth of his realm, to be made over to his heir when he comes of age. Each minister discharges his particular trust in due season. Such was the case with Rāmānuja. For the great Yāmuna had made many, the custodians of Spiritual Truths, which were to be imparted to Rāmānuja, each in his turn. Rāmānuja was to have received them directly from Yāmuna, but fates had ordained otherwise. Rāmānuja's hopes, which had been dashed to the ground when Yāmuna suddenly passed away, were now fulfilled. Yāmuna had signified to his disciples that Rāmānuja was to be the High Pontiff of their resuscitated Ancient Church; and the deposit of spiritual truths he had left with them was to be placed in his hands. The Gurus of Rāmānuja therefore were thus bound to discharge their sacred trust. When they did so, each in his time, they were relieved and happy. It may be the teacher or the disciple. The canon laid down is that whoso is qualified to receive spiritual truths must be told them, regardless of formalities otherwise prescribed, for the disciple to wait on the teacher and so on. A teacher, it is even said, becomes a teacher only when he has found a fit pupil, only when he has transferred to him his wisdom. Thus Rāmānuja's teachers became entitled to that honor only after teaching Rāmānuja, and disciples became true disciples only after becoming disciples of Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja is therefore described as the Central Gem in the precious necklace made up of the gems of Teachers and Disciples of the Vaishnava apostolic.
CHAPTER XVII.

Râmânuja’s Ministry Begins.

Râmânuja’s studentship was now complete. He was already spiritual before intellectual. The naturally spiritual man was by means of intellectual accomplishments, to bequeath a legacy to the world in the shape of written works. He composed three in the beginning embodying the principles and practices of the Vaishnava faith. These were the gadya-traya (The Three Proses), the Daily Worship-Manual called the Nitya, and the Commentaries on the Bhagavad-Gītā.¹ The cardinal doctrine established by him in these works is the Unity of Godhood expressed by the term Nārāyaṇa of the Taittirīya Upanishad and others.² And Râmânuja disseminated the doctrines among many who were gathering about him; and thus did his ministry begin.

It was the practice of Râmânuja, as a mendicant who had abandoned the world, to visit seven houses daily and collect alms. Only upon this is the Sanyāsin to subsist, according to the Yati-dharma. Alms-begging is enjoined on the principle that the ascetic has nothing to call, or ought not to own, any worldly goods as belonging to him, as such owning begets a series of attachments necessarily and weds him again to worldly interests; and to show to the world that the world to the spiritual man is beggared before God; in other words, beggary means death to the world in order to live unto the spirit. This is the spiritual interpretation of the donee’s mendicancy compassing eleemosynary merit to the donor. Both are abused in India. The worldly man ought not to beg, and the spiritual man ought not to bestow,—this is reversed in modern times. The law is: the material man is the custodian of the spiritual man’s body, and the spiritual man, of the material man’s soul. The commodities of exchange between the two are substance and spirit. Each party has his laws and conditions for the exchange. Hence a spiritual-beggar is no burden upon society. Other

¹ This is the one we have English-translated.
² Vide Introduction to our Lives of Saints, and Topic 84 in our Divine Wisdom, for a disquisition.
beggars are indeed so, and ought to be interdicted from their professional praying upon others’ honest labour. A spiritual beggar is a benefactor inasmuch as his very presence among men, not to say of the influence of his words on them, is a great moral and spiritual influence, elevating them from the gross to the ethereal, from the fleeting to the lasting. Such a monk-mendicant was our Râmânuja.¹

We have said above that Râmânuja’s main endeavour was to establish the Unity of Godhood. In doing so, he did not abstract God from His Universe,—a process tried by monism ending in negation,—but restored God to His Universe in all the fullness of His Infinite nature, so to say. By his practice, he illustrated it, even when he went about his begging excursions. For it is chronicled that Râmânuja, while so engaged one day in the throughfares of Srirangam, a few boys, form mere frolic, waylaid him and pointing to a figure like man which by their toes they drew on the dust, said: “Boasted friar, here is your God. If He is everywhere, here He must be. Worship Him then.” Râmânuja was delighted to hear the boys sermon to him thus. Anon he put his bowl down, prostrated himself before the Figure on the floor, and thanking the boys went his way.

On another occasion he came across a number of boys in the streets. They were enacting all that they saw their elders doing in the Temple. They had described in the dust a diagram of the Srirangam Temple, with several chambers allotted therein for God, for His Consort, His Saints and so on. Regular worship they commenced, and it was now time to offer food to the several Deities. The boys procured the food easily; for

¹ Âpastamba in his Dharma-Sûtras, says [11. 5, 10]:—

The gist of this is that unless conditions stated are present, begging is to be discouraged. Read infra, Râmânuja’s explanations to Kongilpirâti, on why great men go to poor houses making begging but a pretext.
they gathered the road-dust, made it into convenient heaps, and offered the same to their God pictured on the ground. Food so consecrated should be distributed next, to all the worshippers. That is the rule. So the boys did; and finding Râmânuja in their midst: “God’s food, Sire, take,” cried they. Râmânuja fell reverently on the floor, and rising, as reverently stretched his hands and received the food and went his way.

Râmânuja’s stewardship in the Temple necessarily gave rise to bickerings on the part of the priests. They were jealous of his discipline and his growing power. Why not do away with this Sanyâsin, and let us freely revel in corruption? thought they. They would poison him, decided they. To one of the seven houses which Râmânuja was found frequenting for alms, they went and prevailed upon the owner to mix poison with the alms and give it to him. In India, the housewife is to perform the duty of doling out alms. So the husband told the housewife to do the nefarious deed. She objected, but he persisted. She was obliged to obey. Râmânuja came. With hands somewhat trembling, she doled out poisoned food to him, and prostrating herself before him, abruptly retired with eyes downcast. Her manner, he observed, was somewhat peculiar that day. This raised suspicion. He thought he would place the food before a dog. He did, and lo! it made the dog sick and giddy; it fell and died. “This is food with poison (sa-gara)” cried Râmânuja: “Let the poison (gara) go to its birth-place (sâgara).”¹ So saying with a pun on the word sagara, he cast the food into the waters of the Kaveri river close by.

From that day Râmânuja would fast, but soon news of this flew to G. Pûrṇa who left from T. Kottiyûr for Srirangam to set matters right before it was too late. Pûrṇa had neared Srirangam and was crossing the dry bed of the Kaveri river in the midday sun, which was scorching the head and the feet. Râmânuja, with his chosen, went to meet the Guru, and fell prostrate before him on the burning sands. Pûrṇa did not bid

¹ This has reference to the Churning of the Milk-See Legend, when poison was one of the products of that sea.
him rise. Kidâmbi-Âchân by name, a disciple of Râmânuja, who loved him much and who had accompanied him, watched this with painful expectancy. Finding the suspense insupportable, and provoked beyond patience, he cried to Pûrṇa: "Sire! are these the exactions of civilities between Teachers and Disciples? Doth thy code of etiquette permit such infliction of cruelty? Doth thy stony heart demand, that a tender flower like my Râmânuja should be fried and roasted before thee like this? Hast thou sense? Hast thou the milk of humanity? I care not for thy absurd regulation." Thus fulminating his objurgation at the Guru, he swiftly raised Râmânuja and hugged him to his breast. A moment of the most painful anxiety and suspense, it was too, for Pûrṇa; for he was by this means trying to find out the person, who truly loved Râmânuja. Looking now at Âchân with eyes beaming with approbation, Pûrṇa said: "Âchân, thou art the sort of person I have been looking for. Now that I have found thee, my fears for Râmânuja's future safety are dispelled. I appoint thee his body-guard; and no one but thyself shall cook for Râmânuja. Thou alone shalt discharge that most important and holy duty henceforth." Kidâmbi-Âchân became thus the Mahânasâchârya, or Râmânuja's Master of the Hearth.

Thus shielded from schemes against his life, Râmânuja was spiritedly diffusing to all earnest comers, the philosophy of true religion. An important event came about at this juncture. A profound Brâhmân scholar there was, by name Yajña-mûrti. Wherever he went, he entered into debates with learned men on knotty points of the Vedânta, invariably carrying off the palm of victory. He went for a bath in holy Ganga, and there also he entered the arena of Vedântic discussion and vanquished the disputants. He became the one-staffed Sanyâsin,—a proclamation this that he was professor in the successful establishment of the Mâyâ-vâda, or the illusoriness of the Kosmos.

Fascinated by subtilities of his sophistry, many became adherents to his cause; and he rose in fame, and pride as well. But he was told that there was a Râmânuja at Srîrangam, and until he crossed swords with him, his victory would not be
complete. This roused his vanity. Mightily did he prepare himself for the contest. He armed himself with heaps of books and arguments, and came down to Srirangam, with his band of disciples, and with all the ostentation and demonstration of a big Pandit. Dashing up to Rāmānuja in all the style of an egotist, he invited him to an intellectual warfare. Rāmānuja declared he was ready. "What is the wager for our combat?", he asked of the savant. "If I am defeated," he said, "I will embrace your faith." "If you win," said Rāmānuja, "I shall give up my ministry in the world." So staking, they fixed eighteen days for the discussion. For sixteen days it waxed hot, and yet there appeared no odds between them. But on the seventeenth day, the balance began to swing in favour of Yajña-mūrti, Rāmānuja having felt the want of an argument to overpower the fiery array of them on the side of the adversary. Yajña-mūrti, reading the signs of discomfort, and puffed with pride, left Rāmānuja in that situation, as if in contempt, and stalked out of the monastery for that day. Rāmānuja felt the situation keenly, and poignant grief entered into his heart. Tortured with thought, he shut himself up in the chapel, and after worshipping his own Lord Varada there in the usual routine, prayed to Him thus in agony:—

"Holy God! if I, a weak mortal, am repulsed in the fight, Thy Cause can never be repulsed—a cause which has been established on earth of yore, by such saints as Nammāzhvār and sages as Yāmunāchārya. So far, the success attending our Dispensation is because of Thy will. By Thy Holy Word (Revelations), Thou hast been justified and demonstrated in all Thy variety of manifestation as well as essence. Now it hath pleased thee to pitchfork a false prophet on Thy world-stage and let him dance. Let it be, if such is Thy will." Imploring thus, Rāmānuja fasted and slept. The Lord Varada appeared to him in a dream and thus spoke:—"Beloved, be not vexed. We are giving thee an able adherent to help Thy mission. To-morrow, the last day, level at Yajña-mūrti all the quiver-full of arguments against māyācāda, to be found in the works of thy Grand-Guru Yāmuna. Rāmānuja bounded with joy, and performing all the routine duties of the day, and prostrating to his chapel-God, ventured forth into the debating hall,
Yajña-mûrti was already there. Râmânuja's dignified manner, stately gait, and glory of countenance, struck terror into him. A presage of defeat, it seemed to him already. "What a contrast," exclaimed he, "between the state in which I left him yesterday, and that in which I see him this day! He is advancing towards me in all the majesty of a mad elephant. This is surely extraordinary. He must be more than human." So thinking to himself, he instinctively rose, and advancing towards Râmânuja, cried: "Sire, no more words between us, I pray. I confess I am beaten." As he said, he placed Râmânuja's sandals on his head, and implored him to deign to gather him to his holy fold." "What is this?" said Râmânuja, surprised, "I never expected this from you. Our case is still contested. Let us argue it through and see where it will land us." "Pardon me, Sire," submitted Yajña-mûrti, "no more fight. When I actually see you are one with God, I dare not open my mouth again." "And yet," rejoined Râmânuja, "I wish to say that the Mâyâvâda or illusion-doctrine necessarily strips God (Para-brahman) of any attribute. But from our Scriptures we derive no support for an attributeless God. Such texts as that 'God is Truth' &c., become untruthful. But if you justify the God of attributes, because of His becoming so conditioned by avidya (ignorance), then 'how is such a God, who allows His Light to be eternally obscured by such ignorance, ever to get rid of it?' 1 If you say, what of it, then you will thrust yourself into a position from which there is no escape. For, you will have postulated two eternal things: God and Ignorance, or knowledge and non-knowledge, which is dualism and therefore antagonistic to monism. In your attempt to establish monism or non-dualism, you necessarily negate every thing else than Brahman; but in that very act, you posit a duality, viz., ignorance, which eternally thwarts that Brahman! The pampered elephant of advaita (monism) therefore gets all unawares, stuck in the mire of

1 ब्राह्मणपरसंग्रह तत्तत्त्ववा विश्वासितः

This is the controversy turning round the term personality, again and again cropping up in all Viśishtadvaita works.
dualism. Thus did Rāmānuja preach. Yajña-mūrti followed the speech in rapt attention, and when it ended broke his staff and bending himself before Rāmānuja implored his blessings. Rāmānuja drew Yajña-mūrti to his breast, and blessing him, took him through a series of expiatory ceremonies, as the latter had discarded the holy thread &c., and con-

1 Our readers may be curious to know what the māyā-vāda is. We shall let Lāla Baijnāth, Chief Justice of Indore speak:— "The later Vedāntic philosophers of India, including Sāntākārāchārya, have, however, pressed these teaching to mean that the world is "Māyā," a baseless illusion to be destroyed by knowledge. This is, however, not the true philosophy of the Upanishads. In none of them, except the Śvetāsvatara-Upanishad, does the word Māyā, which supports the illusion-theory, occur, and even in the Śvetāsvatara, the word māyā is used synonymously with prakṛti, undifferentiated matter. "Know the Māyā to be Prakṛti, and the Lord of Māyā to be Mahēśvara; this whole world is pervaded by power which are his parts" [Śvet. Up: IV, 10]. To say that the objects of the world are as unreal and have as intangible an existence as those of dreams, the great doctrine preached by Śankarāchārya and his followers, or that the world does not really exist, is therefore wrong. The Upanishads do not support a pariṇāma-vāda. The process of manifestation of the universe is according to them a real and not an illusionary process. When they say that all name and form are merely nominal, that earth in jars, pots, &c., or gold in every ornament, is only true, they mean, not that pots or ornaments do not exist, but that they do not exist apart from the earth or gold. The same is true of Brahmā. The world does not exist in its present form, and it does not exist apart from Brahmā. It is not an erroneous appearance, as that of a rope mistaken for a snake, but it has no individual or separate existence. This is perhaps the great error into which the later Vedāntis have fallen, and which has been the cause of their teachings not guiding popular religion. In fact, the second Sūtra of Vyāsa, which is that Brahmā is that from which the origin, subsistence, and dissolution of this world proceed, does not at all support the illusion-theory. The Sūtra proves that the world owes its existence and subsistence to God; that it dissolves into Him; that while the real nature of Brahmā is satyam, jñānam, and anumānam, the true, the intelligent, the limitless, the creation, &c., of the world are only such of his attributes as reside within Him at certain times and not at others. It also proves that the world, differentiated by names and forms, containing many agents and enjoyers, the abode of the fruit of actions, these fruits having definite times, places, and causes, and the nature of whose arrangement cannot be conceived by the mind, cannot proceed from any but a Lord possessing the above qualities." [Pp. 63-64, Vol. I. Trans. of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists, London, in 1892.]

2 हनुमानीशवचतन यद्यपि यामविवकास: ||
तस्यक्रियानिर्मलात: प्रणवविवोधीयते ॥
गात्रसुविशालस्य प्रागायपत्रसमाश्रयत: ॥
पुनस्संस्कृतमाहात्म्य धार्मिकाप्रवकृतितत: ॥ [Tati-dharma-Samucchaya].

15
ferred on him all the sacraments of a Vaishnava, and the name of Arulāja-p-perumāl Emberumānār, which was his own name combined with that of the Lord Varada, by whose grace he was enabled to acquire a golden convert to his Faith. The Sanskrit of this is Devarāja-muni or Devarāt. Rāmānuja led him to Ranga's temple, where he was made a recipient of all the honors due to a member of the Faith, and brought him back to his monastery, where he was introduced to the worship of his Lord Varada, and consecrated food thereof given him. The partaking of food completed the initiation and the convert became a part and parcel of the Vaishnava community. A course of studies relating to the Prabandhas and other esoteric teachings was gone through; and the love-religion of the Vaishnavas was thus spread before him, at which his heart melted and the intellect bowed.

Rāmānuja had in Devarāt a great access of strength. His addition made his flock brilliant. He joined the other two jewels of Rāmānuja's band, Dāsarathi and Kūrēsa. Classes in philosophy &c., were ably conducted with these members. Rāmānuja's fame went abroad. Anand-āzhvān or Anantasūri, Ecchān, Tondanur Nambi and Marudur Nambi, hastened to become his disciples. When they came, he directed these to Devarāt for initiation into the Faith. He obeyed but declared that Rāmānuja was thus trying to hang heavy stones to the neck of a poor sparrow! “Beware”, he said to the new disciples, “I am but his vassal, his tool. Rāmānuja is your real Saviour. Me, forget; but him, remember.”

1 ॥भवायतपसस्ताः वैच्छद्युनिनयमिष्ठपतात्।
सर्वोपमेशुपतां ब्रह्मस्तवादिनिच्छति॥
उपवीतिषतिदर्दश पांजलिपित्वतिकम्।
१०१ पांजलिपित्वतिकम्॥ [Ibid].

2 ॥No. 283, Hierarchic Table, [see our Lives of Āzhvāras.] He was born in Kirangur, near Srirangapatna, Māsīr.

3 ॥A holy place near Melkote where the big Mottalav pearl-tank is situated. See infra when Rāmānuja comes to this place.
CHAPTER XVIII.

RÂMÂNUJA'S FIRST TOUR.

Râmânuja's school was thus filling. A course of studies in the Prabandhas was being conducted, and the verse in St. Nammâzhvar's Tîru-vây-mozhi: Oshivil-kûlam, was reached. This verse is of the Decad III. 3, addressed to Lord Venkatapati or Śrînivâsa of the Holy Tirupati-Hill. It says:—

Ever joined to Thee at all times,
Services all, we must render Thee,
O Father! and Light of the Hill,
From which limpid rills trickle down!

On reading and explaining this Râmânuja went to the Sacred Hill, called Pushpa-mantâpa in ecstatic thought, and glancing on the assembly of scholars before him, asked: "Is there any one amongst ye, prepared to stay in Tirupati, make flower-gardens, and daily serve Śrînivâsa with flowers thereof?" Ananta-Sûri stood up, "Bid me go, Sîrê," said he and quickly went to Tirnpati and there getting up a flower-garden, carried flowers daily to the Lord there. He called the garden Râmánujam.

Râmânuja was informed of all this from time to time, and he longed to visit Tirupati himself. For this purpose, he swiftly went through the Tîruvây-mozhi course, and proceeding to the Temple, prayed to the Lord Ranga therein to permit him to go on a tour to Kâunchi, Tirupati, and other shrines. "Granted, but return soon," was the reply that came.

Obtaining thus the holy permission of Lord Ranga, Râmânuja left Srîrangam with his disciples on a tour, the first of the kind after his anointment as the Pontiff of the rising Vaishnava-faith. On his way north, he visited Mahita-kshêtra, and other shrines, arriving at Déhalâi-Nagara, or Tiru-k-kôvalûr, where he rendered homage to Lord Trivikrama, who appeared to the Three First Âzhvârs.\(^1\) Thence he proceeded to Chitra-

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\(^1\) See p. 206, for this and other terms, of our Lives of Âzhvârs.

\(^2\) See their account in our Lives of Âzhvârs.
kūta or Chidambaram, but hearing that it was infested with the most bigotted Saivas, left the place thinking that it would not be possible for him to introduce any reform in the place in a hurry.

He next arrived at Ashtā-sahasra-grāma, where he had two disciples by name Yajñēṣa and Varadārya. Of these, Yajñēṣa was very rich and Varada very poor. To the former Rāmānuja sent two of his disciples to announce his arrival, and ask him to be his good host during his halt. Yajñēṣa, when the disciples came, was in an arrogant mood and heeded them not; thinking that when Rāmānuja chose to come himself to his doors, he would receive him in proper form. At this cold treatment, the disciples returned to Rāmānuja with fallen faces and reported to him the conduct of Yajñēṣa. "Then we shall not enter his doors," said Rāmānuja, "we shall go to our poor disciple Varada at once and without notice." So saying, they threaded their way to Varada's lowly hut. But he was absent on his daily begging rounds. His wife, the good Parutti-kollai, espied them coming. She wished to step forward and welcome them, but she had such a thread-bare garment to cover her—owing to abject poverty—that she could not with any decorum show herself to any. So, she sheltered herself behind a door, and clapped her hands so that Rāmānuja might take it for a signal of welcome, and not go away elsewhere, as that would be disastrous to her soul's welfare, inasmuch as Rāmānuja's condescension in having come to her poor house would prove profitless. Rāmānuja at once understood the delicate situation in which the poor lady was placed, and taking off the colored cloth which covered his head, flung it through a window into the house. She picked it up and wearing it, approached Rāmānuja whom, in welcoming to her house, she prostrated most humbly and said:—"O my gracious Guru, you are most welcome to my humble cottage. Pray accept this water for

1 The latter's full name is Parutti-k-kollai Varadāchārya, and his wife is the famous Parutti-k-kollai Nācchiyār, Sanskritized into Kārpaś-ārāṇāmbā.
washing your hands and feet; and be seated here." She then thought to herself like this:—"What mighty merit must mine have been what austerities must I have done, what gifts must I have bestowed, in order that Râmânuja, who is Vishnu Himself incarnate, come on earth to save mankind, should come to our house. Divine grace has descended upon our undeserving selves. For the Guru (Saviour) is God Himself, He is the Good. All our goods, body and soul are His. The true disciple is he who thinks and acts thus. So do our Scriptures say. But I have not a handful of grain in my house, nor a single coin whereby to worship the worthy Sannyâsin. My husband is out on begging, but his petty pickings will not suffice for the worthy guests. To honor a guest like Râmânuja, I will even sin. St. Parakâla, in the old days, robbed and cheated people in order to serve God. He ensconced himself in fastnesses, waylaid men, stripped them of their goods, and offered them to God. Even Lord Ranga Himself was once eased by him of all his precious jewels; and with them feasts were given to the faithful. Creatures whirl round the wheel of Samsâra, but the Guru comes with his teachings, and extricates them from this; and gives them God. To repay the Guru for this is impossible. Hence I will even sell my body and worship him therewith. For God Himself has said:—"If for My sake thou sinnest, it becometh merit; all merit without reference to Me becometh sin." The Guru is even greater than God. Therefore I shall have recourse to the rich merchant of this place, who has been casting his adulterous eyes on me for a long time. I shall now let him have his wish, let him feed on this wormful body. The wealth he will on this account bestow on me, shall all be used for the entertainment of my honored guests." So thinking she addressed Râmânuja thus:—
"Holy Sire, rest here but a moment. By your grace, you shall anon see my house filled with articles to feast you and yours with." So saying, the virtuous lady left the house and hur-

1 Read his life in our Lives of Saints.

2 नञ्चितेषयकुञ्जलसिंहसिनिनिपुष्पयायकल्पते।
मामनाृत्यमुथसिद्धिपुष्पयायायकल्पते॥
ried to the merchant, and forcing a most bewitching smile into her face to please him, said: "Good man, time has now arrived for the fulfilment of thy long-cherished desire. My Guru is pleased to come to my house. And I have to entertain them, for which all food-stuffs and vessels are wanted. Please order them at once." The merchant, studying the standing beauty more than ever, and inflamed at the overtures she herself made this time, obeyed her commands without a word, and sent an abundance of things with her. The good woman stood before Rāmānuja in all humility with these things. He was struck with her devotion and commanded that she should herself cook for him,—a great privilege, indeed, bestowed on a woman by a holy person (in India). She did so. And Rāmānuja and his disciples, after bathing and worshipping God, partook of the holy food, offered him in love, and rested in her house, his whole being pulsating with blessings for her.

While thus Rāmānuja was resting in his loving votary’s house, Varadārya, the husband, returned home after his begging. The good wife related to him all the circumstances beginning with the Guru’s arrival and up to the repast which she was able to spread before him during his absence, and the worship and joy which she, in his absence, was able to give to the illustrious guest. "Madam," said the husband jubilant, "though thou art young, thy wits are eld; else how couldst thou have done such a grand task? Thou art not a wife, but a goddess I ken thee. Nor art thou a nominal disciple, for, for thy saviour, thou hast sacrificed all, even thy woman’s honor." Applauding her thus, he went to Rāmānuja and clasped his feet firmly; then rising and with palms joined, praised him thus: "O Prince of men! King of ascetics! a thousand salutations to thee. For the redemption of things life-ful and lifeless, thou art born amongst us, Viṣṇu Himself, the Lord of the Universe. Thou art all-knowing, and all-wise, and art the very reflection of Hari. As, in a deep dark well, wallow creatures entangled in the meshes of their varied deeds, who else but thou art able to lift them from this dismal abyss? who but the magician can draw the venom out of the cobra-bitten person? who but the sun can dispel darkness? what but cool water can allay a man’s thirst?"
The *samsāra*-smitten sinner finds relief only by worshipping thy holy feet. Praise be to my *Guru*, by whose magic the evil spirit left the princess and itself was redeemed. Hadst thou not appeared amongst us, how could a sinner like me have been saved? Learned men there are by the hundred, but their ways are *pāshuṇḍa*, leading them downward. How gracious! thy holy steps were directed to the abode of a poor creature like myself. The very sight of thee has absolved me of all my sins. I am content. I rest in peace; and so do my ancestors.” Rāmānuja blessed him and giving him the *Śrīpūḍa-tīrtha*, let him partake of food (*prāśaṇḍa*). He was struck with joy at the unity of heart and purpose, this excellent pair possessed, and dwelt with them for some time.

The pair now thought of returning the kindness of the merchant. They both went with Rāmānuja’s *tīrtha* and *prāśaṇḍa*, and delivering them to him, asked him to partake of the same, and then do what he liked with the wife. He left. The merchant’s heart leapt with joy, but when he drank the holy water and ate the holy food, he felt within him a strange revolution. His carnal intent for the damsel gave way to wisdom and worship. He walked round her and threw himself before her, and with hands upraised in devotion said:—“Madam, thou art my mother, and thy husband is my father. The darkness of un-wisdom had overspread my mind, making me a fool and lustng after thee. I fall at thy feet, mother. Pardon me. Protect me. Take me to your great *Guru* and throw me, a slave, at his holy feet. Subject me to any penance by which my sin may be expiated. Let me walk in the path of righteousness anyhow.” The good dame told her husband of all this remorseful confession and begged him to quiet the convulsed soul of the merchant. All this was marvellous. Anon Varadārya bent his steps to the penitent man and leading him to Rāmānuja, cast him at his feet. Rāmānuja, who inquired how all this came about, was told all. His surprize was equal to his joy. He had made a good disciple, to whom therefore he duly administered all the five *Va śśpanava* sacraments.¹ It is chroni-

¹ *i.e.* The *Panṭha-Samskāra*, already described. *Op:* “He shall baptize you with the *Holy Ghost* and *Fire* [8. Luke, III. 16.]”
cled that this disciple thenecoNard shone as bright as the summer moon, having placed all his wealth at the disposal of Rāmānuja, whose fame thus spread all over the country.

Yajñēśa, the rich disciple, knew nothing of all this. Whereas he expected Rāmānuja would be coming to him; probably he was on his way. So he had gathered together many things at home to feast his Guru; and was prepared in other ways to receive him, as he thought. He waited thus with his relatives, but there was no sign of Rāmānuja coming. This set him pondering, and he left home in quest and despatched other men also. They learnt that Rāmānuja had bent his steps to Varadārya's house, after the indifferent manner in which his two messengers had been treated by Yajñēśa. These tidings carried they to Yajñēśa. On hearing it, he fell to weeping; and hurrying to Varadārya's house, cast himself at the holy feet of Rāmānuja, beseeching his pardon. Rāmānuja lovingly lifted him up and read to him a sermon thus, calculated to be useful to the whole world: "Yajñēśa, listen. What I utter is good for thy soul. A Vaishṇava should require the five Samskāras, should know the five Truths, and follow his saviour. But more than all this is the service to those who are godly. The two messengers that came to thee were Vaishṇavas, godly men. They came as guests besides, and were way-worn. But them thou didst eject from thy threshold. This did not become thee. Thou shouldst have welcomed them, washed their feet, fanned them, fed them and worshipped them in every way befitting Vaishṇava-visitors. They are Vishṇu Himself in that form. After they had eaten, thou shouldst have eaten what was left as thy prasāda. When this course is strictly followed, that shows a real Vaishṇava. But when it is followed for the sake of show, fame or gain, it is as good as not done. Houses of show, fame or gain, Yajñēśa, are not our houses. What pleases God is sacrifice made without motive (sātrīka-dāna)." Yajñēśa heard this and was ashamed. "Lord," he prayed lowly, "I am undone, extend to me forgiveness, and accept me." "Son, listen," said Rāmānuja, "thou shalt make amends by daily washing clean the clothes of the Vaishṇavas here, and thus be
saved.” So commanding, Rāmānuja left Ashṭā-sahasra-grāma with his disciples and by way of Tirukkōvalūr or Dēhalīnagara,—where he visited the ancient shrine of Trivikrama and the Three First Āzhvārs¹—reached Kāṇchi. He first entered the monastery of Kāṇchi-pūrṇa, who was still living, and prostrated himself before the venerable sage, dedicating a verse to his memory:—

श्रीमकाण्ठधामन्दिरस्ते कमलपतितिनन्दनम् ।
बराद्विसदसुरसावनपरायणम् ॥

The joy of Pūrṇa at seeing Rāmānuja covered with glory, knew no bounds. He led him lovingly to the Temple of Lord Varada—the God of Kāṇchi, it will be remembered, who granted Rāmānuja to Lord Ranga of Srirangam. As he reverently walked, he fell on the floor before the entrance-cupola, (the Gopura) and the Ānai-kāṭṭa deity there. He entered the gate and washed himself in the holy pond Ananta-saras. With the twelve holy names of God he consecrated his body next, and visited Jiūṇa-p-pīrān (Varāha) in the outer enclosure. Proceeding further, he bowed successively to the Āzhvārs, Bali-pītha, and the Jaya-riyayās, the celestial Door-keepers. Winding round, he saluted Ādi-śesha or Ananta, and the Holy Ant-hill, and the great hall to the east of it where Yāmunā’s gracious eyes had for the first time descended on him and elected him as the future Minister of the Faith. Here he repeated the memorial verse for Yāmunā:—

नमोनमोयामन्य यामुनायमोनम् ।
नमोनमोयामन्य यामुनायमोनम् ॥

Thence he visited Kariya-māṇikyat-t-emberumān and looked up reverently to the vimāna (tower) over the Holy of Holies, then bowed to the goddess of the culinary apartments,

¹ See their account in our Lives of Āzhvārs.
and then Perun-devi, the Consort of Lord Varada, dedicating to Her the verse:

\[ \text{Meena\varun\-tāvikā} \]

Thence Chakra-tūṣṭhā (the Archangel Discus), Garutmāṇa, called the Large-foot (Pārītya-tūrvaś), Vishvakasena, the Lord of Hosts, and then ascending the steps of the Hasti-Giri (or Elephant-Hill), Lord Varada was reached, Kāṇchi-pūrṇa all the time leading, and Rāmānuja following. Rāmānuja threw himself before his old Patron God, and receiving tīrtha, prasāda, and Satīkahōpa, returned with mind steeped in divine bliss.

He informed Pūrṇa of his intention to proceed north to Tirupati to visit the Lord Venkata. Pūrṇa congratulated Rāmānuja on the joy that was in store for him by the intended trip, and bade him god-speed. He was journeying on thus with his adherents, when he lost his way. On looking round, a man was found drawing water from a well. “Show us the way, good man,” he asked. “This way, gentlemen”, said he showing the way. “In what way can I show my gratitude to this person?” Questioning himself thus, Rāmānuja prostrated himself before the pikotta-man. Seeing this, all the disciples did the same, astonished though at Rāmānuja’s spiritual views of men and things,—uncommon of course to other men. The track shown was a straight one, and led unmistakably to the foot of the Holy Tirupati Hill. Here the Ten Āzhvārs are enshrined. Due obeisance was made to them and the Holy Hill itself, rising from there in sacred grandeur. Rāmānuja would not mount the hill for fear of desecrating it with the touch of his feet; and so remained at the foot for some time, when

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1 Meaning:—Spouse beloved of Varada, praise to Thee.
—In traits Three, perfect,—In Lotus ever abiding,
—Mother of all the worlds.

The Three Traits are Ananyaśrattra, Ananyaśeshaśattra, and Ananyabhdhyattra, meaning the Three relationships in which souls stand to God, i.e. "Destined for God," "Disposable by God," "Enjoyable by God." These are mysteries of religion which can never be properly understood by means of even the best translations. Our first difficulty is the want of appropriate words.

2 Tho Kerub.
Vṛthala-Dēva, the king of the Tondira country, struck with the fame of Rāmānuja, became his disciple, and brought to him abundant wealth, with which he established a village of thirty houses, with thirty small estates attached to each, and granting them to thirty deserving families attached to his band, named the village Ilā Mandayam. The news that Rāmānuja had arrived reached the ears of the venerable Śrīśaila-Pūrṇa and others residing on the Hill. They swiftly descended and heartily greeting Rāmānuja, asked him to go up the hill with them to see the Lord Venkata (Aptau). “Look, Sire,” Rāmānuja addressed Pūrṇa, “the Ten Āzhvārs have remained at the foot without daring to tread on the Hill. How can I do so now? It satisfies me quite to remain with the Āzhvārs here, and do them services. “If you won’t go, Rāmānuja,” said Pūrṇa “neither shall we go.” “Then be it as you will, Sire,” so saying, Rāmānuja bathed, and proceeding to the Tamarind tree, at the foot of the Hill, did obeisance to the Holy Hill; and saying: “By the foot, he ascends,” tremulously climbed he. As he crossed the seven hills and dales, he enjoyed the charming panorama of nature presented to his sight, the rills trickling down the hill slopes, vegetation low and high adorned with flowers of all imaginable colors and the hills and the valleys teeming with animal life—the most interesting and mischievous of these being the monkeys. Pūrṇa had gone in advance, and by the time Rāmānuja reached the Tiru-p-pariyaṭṭa rock, he returned with Lord Venkata’s tirtha and prasāda, to welcome him. “Could not some youngster be deputed for this work, venerable Sire, instead of yourself coming to do me these honors?” asked Rāmānuja of Pūrṇa. He replied:—“Sire, I searched all the four corners of this place for one younger than myself. I could not find one. I am the youngest, hence I have come to welcome you.” On hearing this language of humility on the part of a venerable person like Pūrṇa, Rāmānuja and his fol-

1 पर्याय-विद्या is one of the God-meditations taught by the Upanishads [vide No. 11, in the Table of the Vidyās, p. 129 of our Bhagavad-Gītā]. The aspirant to God, when he proceeds to Vaikunṭham is said to ‘place his feet on the Holy Seat of God,’ even as a child fearlessly treads on its mother’s lap. See Kaushitaki Upanishat, 1st Chapter.
owers expressed wonder, and humbly accepting the honors that had been brought, proceeded to the stone-fencing, where all the monks, recluses, acolytes, the elders and all the establishment attached to the Holy Fane, met him in a great body, and escorted him. Rāmānuja now came in sight of the Fane itself, and prostrating himself before the Vaiṇkhēha-gate, bathed in the Konēri (a tank), decked himself with the Twelve Holy Marks, went round the four streets, drinking in with his eyes the handsome dwellings of the Faithful,—the ramparts, cloisters, colonnades,—then saw the flower-garden tended by Ananta-sūri, who had gone to live there, upon his direction; there, from sheer delight, he embraced his faithful disciple, saying: "having nursed thee, I now reap the fruit." He enjoyed the surrounding scene of gardens thick with vakula, Pātala, Punnīga and other trees, fragrant and flowing with honey, affording eternal shade to weary travellers, and delighting their vision with bunches of flowers hanging from their branches, and entertaining their ears with strains of music poured forth by bees and all kinds of beautiful-plumaged birds. Here and there embosomed in the gardens, were cool ponds, covered with white and violet lotuses, in the midst of which swam and danced cranes and storks and all sorts of water-birds, in all the voluptuousness of nature's bounty. Passing on from these bewitching scenes and songs, he went to Varāha's Shrine, before which he bowed and then to the gate of Arāra-cchāshendō and the Attānī Tamarind Tree, and then the Bali-pillar, and then the pavilion called Yamunai-ttēraiavar. He then sipped the holy water of Sūmī-Pushkarini,

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1 Some inscriptive information may be useful to our readers: [P. 24, Vol. III, Epigraphia Carnatica, by B. L. Rice]: "It records the grant of Mandya, otherwise called Krishnarāpura, to Govinda-Rāja, a descendant of Anantarāya, on whom (the god) Venkaṭesha (of Tirupati) had placed the garland. Anantarāya (or Sūri) it appears, was a disciple of the reformer Rāmānuja-chārya, and the only one among his disciples who volunteered to accept the duty of daily preparing the garlands for the God Venkaṭesa of Tirupati. This he did solely from bhakti or devotion to his guru." His memorial verse is as follows:—

"अीणायाचामपिममभुभुधा श्रीवैकटेशांगुरुधारमा।
देवेशुद्धाद्विद्विशिश्चानस्मातभारतसरसास्मायुम॥"
entered the gate Șanbaka, visited in order Madai-ppalli (cookrooms), Yaga-șâla and Tiru-mâna-mandapa, Vishvakasena and Vengada-ît-ari (Nrisimha). Here he looked up reverently at the Avala-nilaya vimâna, (cupola over the Holy of Holies), crossed the Kulașekhara threshold, until at last his vision was blessed with the Blissful Image of Srînivâsa within—the God in the Heart—resplendent with all the Holy Weapons and Ornaments, and Sri in His Bosom. "Abode of Grace (Srînivâsa)!" Râmânuja exclaimed, "I have fallen at Thy Holy Feet," and so saying, he stretched himself before God, and rising, stood transfixed before the Beatific Spectacle, with hands raised and folded. Tirtha and prasâda were given, which he received in all humility and stayed to see the ablution-ceremony (Tirumaijanam), and the Bali-festival of Azhaga-p-pûrân. "This is indeed Heaven," he cried, "this is indeed the abode of angels; I must not stay here long lest I desecrate the Holy Place." "But three days in a Holy Shrine, the visitor ought to stay," remonstrated Pûrṇa. "So be it," said Râmânuja, and after three days were over, he walked into the Shrine, Pûrṇa leading, to take leave. As he stood before Lord Srînivâsa, a voice came from Him (i.e., the Image): "Have we not already conferred on thee in our Southern House (=Srîrangam) both the kingdoms, the material as well as the spiritual (Ubbhayavibhità)?" "Thy pleasure, Almighty!" responded Râmânuja; and descended the Holy Hill with Pûrṇa.

In the Lower Tirupati, Râmânuja sojourned for a year in the house of Srîsaila-pûrṇa, partaking of his food there and reading with him the Râmâyana, the first of the Itihásas. Here he found Govinda—his maternal cousin—engaged in doing all kinds of services to Pûrṇa. One day, Râmânuja found him prepare the bed for his Guru, and sleep on it first himself. He reported this strange conduct of Govinda to Pûrṇa, who sent for him and asked for an explanation, enquiring further what punishment a disciple, who so behaved, deserved?

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1 Sri = the Logos = the Sophia = the Son in the bosom. Cp. John I, 18: "The only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father." See Topics 135 and 137 in our Divine Wisdom.
Govinda submissively said: “Such an act, Sire! surely deserves perdition, but listen. If by my trying your bed myself beforehand, I make myself sure there be nothing in it rough or knotty which may press against your soft body, sure there be no insect to bite and disturb you when you sleep, it matters little if I go to hell.” Rāmānuja was delightfully astonished at this strange explanation, and his love towards Govinda increased.

On another day, Rāmānuja had gone out on a visit to Pūrṇa’s Holy Garden; while he was returning, on the way he observed Govinda put his fingers into the fangs of a snake, and withdrawing them go to bathe, and proceed to Pūrṇa’s house to perform the usual services. Feeling curious at this unusual act of Govinda’s, he questioned him. He explained that he saw the snake open its mouth as he approached and he found, on examination, that it had a thorn on its tongue. He extracted the same from it to relieve the suffering creature, and then went about his business. “What a tender heart possessest thou, Govinda!” said Rāmānuja to him, struck with wonder.

The reading of the Holy Rāmāyaṇa was now finished. And Rāmānuja humbly begged Pūrṇa’s permission to return to Srirangam. You have come so far, noble soul,” said Pūrṇa, “what have I done for you?” “Sire,” answered Rāmānuja, “when I learnt that our dear Govinda went astray, it caused

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1 The following inscriptive notes will be useful: [pp. 28-29, Vol. 111. Epigraphia Carnatica, by B. L. Rice] — “The grant in this case was made, it is said, to a grandson of Śrīśailapūrṇa or Tātāchārya, who had received the name of Tātā from (the God) Venkaṭēsa (of Tirupati), and was guru to the author of the Bhāṣya; (meaning thereby Rāmānujāchārya, who wrote the Visisthādvaitsa-vedānta-bhāṣya). The reference here is to the story about Śrīśailapūrṇa, known as Bhūri-Śrīśailapūrṇa (in Tamil, Periya Tirumalai Nambi), the maternal uncle of Rāmānujāchārya, that one day when he was engaged in the service of God Venkaṭēsa at Tirupati, the God was heard to say to him, “Give me water, Tātā!” whence he acquired the name of Tātāchārya.

The following memorial verse, recited even now by all Śrīvaishnavas before commencing Rāmāyaṇa, was dedicated to Pūrṇa: विदितम् स्वाभाविकानां श्रीमान्यं श्रीरामं श्रीरामवाक्यं नमस्ते। He is said to have explained the Ṛgveda in 24 different ways, or with 24 different meanings, to Rāmānujāchārya.
me heartache; I was pondering how to reclaim him, when you, Sire, fulfilled my heart’s wish by circumventing the poor heretic, by preaching to him the True Faith, pointing out to him the dangers of the path he had strayed into and otherwise convincing him of the Truths of our Religion: and thus by destroying the perverse notions he had formed in his wandering mind, restored him to our holy fold. What better achievement can be effected than this? Permit me to ask yet another favour of you, Sire,—can you part with him, and let me have him?” Without a moment’s thought, “come, Govinda,” called Pûrṇa, “thou art from this moment, Râmânuja’s own. I make a free gift of thee to him. Go with him and be to him, I command, all that thou hast been to me. Nothing less will please me.”

Govinda said not a word, but followed Râmânuja, after prostrating himself before his Guru. They all now left Tirupati, and visited on their way home the Holy Places of Ghatikâchalam, Tiru-p-putkuzhi—where the holy well Gridhâ Saras and other holy waters are situate,—and Tiruvehkâ, and in due course reached Kânchî, whereto he was welcomed as usual by Sage Kânchî-pûrṇa.

Govinda was found to grow cheerless, and was day by day losing health. Râmânuja was watching him decline; and divining that separation from his beloved Āchârya must be gnawing at his heart, producing all the outward symptoms of grief, he thought it prudent to send him back to Tirupati. So, he bade him depart, giving him two Srivaishnavas as escorts to see him safe to his destination. Govinda reached Tirupati, and stood outside his Āchârya’s house, in mute devotion. The attendants entering informed Śrīśaila of the return of his old disciple,—who was standing at the door. Pûrṇa was displeased and indignantly cried:—“Let the mad fellow depart. He ought not to cross my threshold.” Pûrṇa’s wife watched this and interposing begged her husband that one who had come so far and hungry and tired, should not be so summarily dismissed, but that he might be permitted to have rest and food “No,” gruffly said the husband, “no such consideration can
be shown to a sold thing. A sold cow cannot be given grass. Let him be off.”

Govinda spoke not a word, and tired and hungry as he was, he left with the two Srivaishnavas immediately, and reaching Kāñchī—where Rāmānuja was still sojourning—stood before him like a dumb statue. The Srivaishnavas told Rāmānuja all that had taken place at Tirupati. Rāmānuja admired the farsightedness on the one hand of Śrīśaila, and on the other, the implicit obedience of Govinda, whom he gradually won over, with kind treatment and sage counsels to himself. Govinda thus became in time reconciled to his new environments.

Rāmānuja now bade adieu to Kāñchī and Pūrṇa, and duly taking leave of Lord Varada, left the place, and in due time returned to Srirangam. He was met by all the notables, elders and dignitaries of Raṅga’s Fane, and conducted thereto with joyful ceremony. “Hast thou, beloved, visited My North Abode (Tirupati)?” thus enquired Lord Ranga of Rāmānuja, who stood reverently at the door; and bestowing on him tīrtha and prasāda, bade him go to his old monastery and resume his holy ministry to the growing congregation.
CHAPTER XIX.

GOVINDA'S CHARACTER.

Thus did Rāmānuja make his first holy pilgrimage, and was now settled again for another term in Srīrangam, imparting instruction to his followers on the holy science of Vedānta, both in Girvāna and Drāvidā. Govinda, amongst them, drank deeply of this knowledge, and felt more and more attracted to Rāmānuja, in mind as well as in heart,—an attachment which was enhanced moreover by the fascination of Rāmānuja’s glorious person and services rendered to him, with unflagging solicitude.

One day, Rāmānuja was conducting his ministry in a large assembly of the faithful, when the latter applauded Govinda for his estimable qualities, such as wisdom devotion, self-abnegation, and devotedness to his spiritual preceptor. Govinda, all the while, nodded assent. Rāmānuja observing, questioned: “How is it, Govinda, whilst it is seemly for others to heap plaudits on thee for thy perfections, thou dost not think it unseemly to accept them all? When others exalt us, we must not allow ourselves to be piqued, but profess humility. That would be more becoming indeed!” “Noble Sire,” said Govinda, “pardon me if I explain to you why I nodded assent. Their praise means:—′Dog, thou art,—gaṅitrus seeds round thy neck,—running hither and thither with pot-fulls of water to Kālahasti-gods! To this I must nod ‘yes.’ Their praise next means:—′Divine thou art, that thou hast been redeemed from evil paths by our Saviour Rāmānuja—a very God on earth. Not like ourselves, but sunk as thou were in abysmal depths of rottenness, thou hast been lifted by Rāmānuja, and elevated to a state where thou hast good reason to exclaim: ‘Who is equal to me on earth? Who is equal to me in heaven?’, Heart! good, good, glory thou hast won.’ To this again I must nod ‘yes.’ For where their eulogy of me is but commendation of yourself and your glory on earth, I have no other alternative but to say ‘yes.’ On hearing this, Rāmānuja was simply enchanted with Govinda, and saying, ‘good, good’, drew him warmly to his bosom, and cried:—
"Govinda! embrace me that I may become as enlightened as thou art. By this embrace, convey to me some of thy grace."

One day, Govinda was found standing at the door of a strumpet's, stupefied as it were. This looked strange to people who passed that way. News of it reached Râmânuja. He sent for him and asked: "what made thee, brother, linger at the doors of infamy?" "Sire," he said, "the inmates, there whoever they were (I do not know), were singing your praises. This fascinated me so much that I was rooted to the spot, and so long as the music of your praise rang in my ears and lifted me into bliss, I could not stir from the spot." Râmânuja made inquiries whether they were really hymning his praises there (tâlâṭṭhu), and found it was true. "An angel on earth, thou art, Govinda! can such love as thine be found on this dust?" exclaimed Râmânuja.

It is written that Govinda was an extraordinary soul, who had realized in his life what it was to lead a spiritual life. This was further displayed in a crowning event in his chapter of life. In Râmânuja he realized God, ever-present. This presence made him ever feel that there was neither solitude nor darkness. God in Râmânuja's form ever filled his outer eye as well as his mental vision. Hence he felt no solitude. Constant spiritual illumination and light of God filling all space made anything like night or darkness impossible for him. He never left Râmânuja, and was ever engaged in listening to his expositions of the Divine Science. One day, while they were so engaged, Govinda's mother found occasion to enter the hall and within Râmânuja's hearing informed her son that his wife had come of age. Govinda told her: "If so, mother, let her come when there is solitude and darkness." But the mother waited for days and failing to find her son in 'solitude' and in 'darkness,' complained to Râmânuja about his waywardness and probable unwillingness to keep house with his wife, in the manner of the world. Râmânuja thereon called on Govinda to abide by his mother's pleasure, and for one night at least, to remain with his wife. He bowed assent. And they made feast for the nuptial ceremony, and put Govinda
and wife together in a bed-room and went their way. Left alone with his wife, he began a discourse on theology and theosophy, and all the night through preached to her, God and His Glories, His Riches and His Wonders, His Blissful Presence in the heart and His Love to His Creatures, and so on himself, as he preached, revelling in the rapturous enjoyment of God. It was now morning, and relatives came to offer congratulations on the happy state of the couple. But the mother was aware, by overhearing, what had all night transpired within doors. "How is it, son," remonstrated the mother, "you seem to have been engaged otherwise with your wife. We could hear a regular religious sermon in a nuptial chamber!" "Mother," replied Govinda, "when God is in my heart, and is everywhere present, and ever watching me, how can I escape from Him, and feel lonely enough to be able to do any other work than that of His contemplation, and praise? With no solitude, no secret act is possible; with no darkness, no dark act is possible." This interview between son and mother was reported to Râma-nuja. "Govinda," he said, calling him to his side, "so, thou hast passed the greatest or deal which can be put upon a pure soul like thee. Thou canst never be a worlding, seeing how thou hastest things of that sort. But, come, Sâstras require every man to belong to some one definite Order; and as thou canst not be a householder, be of the Order of the Sanyâsin. This was exactly the wish of Govinda, and he begged that he be so ordained at once. It was done, and Râma-nuja conferred upon him his own name of Emberumândr. "That, noble Sire," said Govinda, "is too great an honor to put upon an humble creature like me. Bless me with a name which a shadow like me deserves. "Then", gracefully said Râma-nuja, "let it be Emûdr, the shadow (or abbreviated form) of Emb(emerumân)dr."
CHAPTER XX.

DEVARĀṬ.

With Rāmānuja and his exemplary adherents, like Govinda, days were thus passing in Divine Discourses, Divine Incidents, and Divine Occupations. In a previous chapter we left Yajña-mūrti, re-named A. P. Emberumānār, after his conversion by Rāmānuja. To this sage some incidents happened about this time. A number of Srivaishnavas from a foreign land came on a visit to Srirangam and inquired of the streetgoers where the monastery of Emberumānār was located. "Which Emberumānār?" they asked. The travellers feeling strange, asked whether there were two such sages for the Faith? "No, but here is A. P. Emberumānār bearing that name, a name after Rāmānuja. Hence our question. If you mean Rāmānuja himself, there is his monastery." So instructed, the travellers found their way to Rāmānuja. This conversation however accidentally reached the ears of A. P. Emberumānār; and it grieved him much to think that he should be confounded with Rāmānuja. "No such confusion," he thought, "would have arisen, had I not lived apart from Rāmānuja in a separate monastery; and that with his name, as if I were a rival here set up against him! My dwelling hence ought not to stand." So saying, he immediately pulled it to pieces; and hastening to Rāmānuja, clasped his feet, crying: "Oh, my Holiness! was it not enough that this sinful soul of mine had in all the past eternity been estranged from Thy Holy Feet, and why should this alienation yet persist?" "Beloved," said Rāmānuja, "thou art talking in riddles; what is the matter with thee? Why art thou in such great affliction? "Holy Sire," said he, after narrating to him the street-conversation of travellers" and how it affected his reputation, "no more can I live apart from Thee—a contingency this, which gives occasion for mistakes which are injurious to the well-being of my soul, and which jeopardize its eternal interests. My soul can only thrive by being made to live ever with thee and move about as the marks of thy sole
and as thy shadow; and to be allowed to do thee every service."

"Be it as thou willest," said Rāmānuja, graciously lifting the prostrate form of Devarāt, for whom he composed a work called Nītīyam, or the method of worshipping God, and appointed him to the daily-worship-duty in the math. From that day forth, he never left Rāmānuja's side, and drank deep all the precious truths of philosophy and religion which flowed like honey from Rāmānuja's holy lips. These sterling truths of the Vedānta, he embodied in two short treaties of his, composed in Tamil verse, called Jñāna-sāra, and Pramāṇya-sāra.¹ The substance of these works is (1) that to the true disciple, the Teacher himself is God visible, and (2) that services at his feet are the crowning joy of the soul.

¹ These have been latterly commented on by Maṇavāja Mahā-muni-gal [A. D. 1370. No. 39 in the Hierarchic Table of our Lives of Âzhvāra.]
CHAPTER XXI.

ŚRĪ-BHĀSHYA AND OTHER WORKS.

Of the most tried fidelity and consummate learning, were now his four disciples, viz., Kūrese, Dāsarathi, Devarāt and Embār (Govinda). There were countless others, of course, in his congregation. Daily classes on theological subjects were conducted. As they were reading St. Nammāzhvar’s Tiruvāymozhi, they came across the verse:—I-lingat-tattapa-pramāṇattirum, Šamanarum Šākkiyaram &c., [IV-10-5.] i.e. Diverse faiths, as taught by the Liṅga-purāṇa (=Śaiva), the Šamaṇas (Jainas) and Šākyas (Buddhas), &c. And they discussed the defects of these systems, as also those of the advaita dictum that liberation (moksha) is made sure on the mere knowledge of the meaning of such Vedic texts as Tattva-masi,—Thou art That, i.e. Thou, Soul, art That, God; of the system of those who maintain that not mere knowledge alone, but works as well as knowledge, combined, bring about deliverance (moksha). None of these systems, they argued, have hit the true spirit of the Vaidika-religion, i.e., Vedānta and that where they have hit the truth, it is partial. The final verdict of the Vedas is: By love to God is emancipation (moksha) to be won. Love to God or God-love is what is intended by such terms as Vedana, Dhyāna, Upāsana and Bhakti. Such love is fostered by good works and knowledge of God. Mere knowledge of God as learnt from Vedic texts is inefficacious, as also are good works done without a heart for God. Whereas knowledge and good works are calculated to lead to love, and love alone secures salvation (moksha), knowledge or good works, without love, jointly or separately, cannot directly lead thereunto. Thus they discussed, and arrived at a decision that a true interpretation of the Vedānta, accordant with these views, should be systematically made and Rāmānuja accordingly sat down to prepare a standard work embodying an exhaustive refutation of monism (advaita) and similar theories and a consequent defence of Visishtadvaita or qualified monism.

Kūrese was selected to help Rāmānuja in this grand task. Before he began, Rāmānuja enjoined upon Kūrese that
if in the course of his reducing to writing his dictation, he should find anything not agreeing with his views, he should cease writing. Thus was Śrī Bhāshya, the stupendous standard work on Viśishtādvaita philosophy of the Vedānta—or a commentary on Brahma-Sūtras—begun to be written. As the work was progressing, Rāmānuja dictated a passage wherein he gave the definition of soul (ātmā = jīvātmā) as that which is conscious or that which has cognition alone as its distinguishing attribute. Here Kūreasā ceased writing, for to him such a definition, though valid, was as good as no definition, inasmuch as the most essential characteristic of the soul, namely, its allegiance or leigship to God (Śeṣatva), was a serious omission; and that such an all-important omission was tantamount to defining the soul as identical with the body itself; for no basis for true religion was raised by merely apprehending the soul as that which is characterised by consciousness, unless the soul is also the sole property or possession of the Universal soul, God. Defining soul as that which has consciousness merely, without any reference to its being essentially related to God, as quality is related to thing, or as property to a base, or as mode to substance, as light to the sun, or scent to the flower, amounted to tacitly ignoring such essential relationship; and that without this relation to God first emphatically asserted and defended, anything said of the soul was ineffectual, inasmuch as a soul without God is non-existent, in the same way as without the sun, light is non-existent. What made the soul really soul was its indiscernible relation to God, otherwise it is non-existent. And where was the beauty or utility in loading such a separated soul, or soul orphaned of God, with any number of attributes such as consciousness and bliss? Such was the train of thought running in the mind of Kūreasā and hence, when Rāmānuja defined the soul as that which is conscious, he stopped transcribing the same. But Rāmānuja was absorbed in his thoughts; and continued

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1 Similarly the identity of Universal Soul with Individual Soul, of the Advaitin, is as good as materialism.

2 We invite our readers to peruse the Chapter on soul, or Chintaprakāraṇa in the Tattva-traya by Yogi S. Pārthasārathi.
dictating further but Kûrēśa had come to a full stop. This incensed Râmânuja, who cried:—“Sir, if you mean to write the commentary on the Vyāsa-Sūtras (= Brahm Sūtras), you may do so,” and kicked him and ceased dictating. But Kûrēśa was neither taken aback nor ruffled but remained imperturbably cool and collected. But friends vexed him with the question: “How dost thou view this affront?” “Comrades,” he replied, “I have no view other than that I am my master’s property (chattel), which he is at liberty to use or treat in any manner he thinks fit.” Râmânuja, by this time, reflected over the whole position in his retreat; and it flashed on him that his omission to define the soul as that which is a belonging of God, was a grave mistake inasmuch as this essentiality of soul was the very foundation of his theology. If that were missed, all the superstructure was built on air. Kûrēśa did well in ceasing to write to Râmânuja’s dictation, but it was at variance with the right view of the question which Kûrēśa knew, being a perfect savant as he was. Also Kûrēśa’s own behaviour after the harsh treatment was an actual illustration of the view he so rightly entertained. These thoughts converted Râmânuja’s rage into repentance; and calling Kûrēśa at once lovingly to his side, “Son, you are right,” said he apologizingly; “now pray write down the true nature of the soul as that which is God’s, and let us proceed with the rest of our work.”

In this manner did Râmânuja compose the standard works: Śrī-Bhāshya, Vedānta-Dīpa, Vedānta-Sūtra, Vedārthi-Saṅgraha, and Bhagavad-Gītā-bhāshya. And thus did he fulfil one of the wishes of Yāmunāchārya.¹

¹ Read p. 56.
CHAPTER XXII.

Râmânuja’s Travels.

The worthies of Râmânuja’s congregation, who had so long listened to his teachings and who had the good fortune as well to see all the tenets of his faith perpetuated in treatises, rose one day and reverently bowing to Râmânuja said:—“Holy Master, your system is now perfect, and it must be made known to the world at large. The ways to God are diverse, and confusing. Let the true way, you have discovered to us, be made accessible to all. Pray then undertake a tour of ministry and as a tour, it shall have the added object of visiting Holy Shrines.” “So be it,” said Râmânuja, and representing his intention to Lord Rângâ, he obtained his permission. With his elect, he left Srîrangam, and visited Tiru-kkuḍandai (Kumbhakonum) and other places in the Chôla-maṇḍalam, and won victories there by theological disputations. Thence he bent his steps to Tiruvâlî-Tirunâgarai, the nativity of St. Parakâla or Tirumangai-Âzhvâr. Here an interesting incident happened. Râmânuja was devoutly making his round of several holy shrines encompassing the Central Shrine Tirunâgarai, when he met a Chandâla woman approaching. Râmânuja, in order to avoid pollution by her proximity, commanded her to hold off, so that he might pass on. But she without moving away addressed Râmânuja and said:—“Sire, which side shall I move? Here before me stands thy holy self, a Brâhmaṇ whom I cannot approach lest I pollute thee by my nearness. Behind me is the Holy Shrine Nîl-nilâmûttam (=Tiruk-kâṇnapuram); to my right are the Tirumaṇâñ-kollai (where St. Tirumangai waylaid the Lord) and Tiruv-arâṣu (the Pipal tree used by the St. as his watch tower); and to my left is Lord Tiruvâlî-Maṇavâlan. There is thus purity all about me here, which side then can my impurity turn?” Râmânuja was struck dumb at this unexpected answer from an unexpected quarter. “Forgive me, madam,” he said, “nor did I divine such spirituality in a low-caste woman as thou art. But for all that thou art holier than myself. So saying he administered

1 Read our “Holy Lives of the Saints.”
to her the holy Vaishnava sacraments; and allotted her a place in the Shrine, where her image is to this day seen and revered by all the visitors. Thence he turned to the south, going to Tirumāḷ-irun-jōlai (10 miles north of Madura), and other Shrines, in the Pāndya-mandala and held disputation there with the learned on philosophy and won laurels. Thence he travelled to Tiru-p-pullāṇi (Darbhāṣayanam near Rāmnāḍ), Sētu (or Rāma’s Bridge), and returned to Tirunagari, the birth-place of St. Nammāzhvār, before whom he reverently repeated the Kaṭṭinuṇ-Siru-t-tāmbu of St. Madhura-Kavigal. The Saint was delighted with Rāmānuja’s devotion and blessed him with tīrtha, prasāda, and other honors. And Rāmānuja, dedicating the verse:

\[\text{वकुलश्रव्यमालवर्षे, वेदाद्यवभवसमयवादक्षेत्रपूजनीयम्।}
\[\text{विपुलकुक्रनानालकारिशृङ्कल्लोकेऽरभ्रुपमोऽहंचक्राहस्तेनस्त्रोगः॥}

took leave of the Saint after visiting the Holy Tamarind Tree under which he is enshrined, and Lord Ādīnātha resident there. The various Shrines in the vicinity were all visited, engaging in polemic controversies wherever he went and overthrowing his opponents. Duly he reached Tiru-k-kuruṇgudi (Kuranga- nagari about 20 miles south of Tinnevelly), and visited the Lord Nambi. A voice came from him thus:—“Rāmānuja, we have often incarnated on earth, as Rāma, Krishṇa, and so on in order to save mankind; but we have never been able to persuade people to Our ways as thou hast done. How dost thou do it?” “Almighty,” said Rāmānuja, “if thou wilt ask me in the way that a disciple or a pupil is required to ask his teacher or tutor, I will answer thee.” Nambi understood Rāmānuja, and commanded a throne being brought and begged Rāmānuja to

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1. *Read the Lives of these Saints in our Lives of Āshīrvaḍa.*
2. Another version has that Rāmānuja went from here to Tiru-vanamalapuram (Trivendram) first. And here he wished to introduce the Pāṇḍhakāśa mode of worship, but the Nambūdrī Brāhmaṇas, the priests of the Temple, objected. Rāmānuja persisting, the Lord Ananta-padmanābha, siding with His old priests, transported Rāmānuja when he was asleep to a rock (called Purishāṇa-pīṭha) on an islet in the Sindhu river, a mile from Kuranga-Nagari. Finding himself alone, he called for a disciple of his by name Nambi. But Lord Nambi appeared in the guise of this disciple, served him and led him to the Temple, where however He vanished out of sight, to Rāmānuja’s great astonishment.
be seated there and from that position answer the question. Râmânuja mentally placed his Āchârya, Mahâpîrśa, on the throne and taking his stand before it, whispered into Lord Nambi’s right ear thus:—

“Of all the mantras, the Mantra-ratna, and the Dvaya are great. Easily do they carry one to the Supreme State. Those teach that the way of Resignation or Surrender to God variously called nyâsa, prapatti, sarândgati, is the most beneficial to man and compasses for him every good.”¹

“Thus, Great God,” said Râmânuja, “by Thy own best instruments of salvation, have I prevailed upon the hearts of men.” Lord Nambi was mightily pleased with this declaration, and proclaimed that He was henceforth Râmânujanai-udayân² Râmânuja gave Nambi the Holy Name of Srivaishnava-Nambi and tendering his apologies³ for what had occurred, left Kuranga-nagari.

From here Râmânuja entered into the Malayâlam (Mala-bâr) country, visiting the Shrines Tiruvan-parîśâram, Tiruvâttîr, and others and paid homage to Lord Ananta-padma-nâbha in Tiruvanantapuram (Trivendram), through the three doors of this Sanctum, and left the place after overcoming opponents and establishing a Râmânuja-Mâth there with the help of the then king, who became a disciple of his. He proceeded north along the western sea-coast of the Peninsula to such Holy Shrines as Mathura (Muttra), Nanda-vraja, Govardhana, Brindâvana, and others and Sâlagrâma, Muktinâtha-Kshetra,

¹ सर्वसामान्यमनासां मन्त्ररत्नमानवहम्।
   सहस्त्रमर्नस्माष्ट्रा द्वासति-समस्तम्॥
   मन्त्ररत्नम्: प्रपतिसर्वप्रायत:॥
   श्रीमानारणाः त्रिशिवस्फालपदम्॥ [Pâścha-ratra].


² Means: “We who have Râmânuja as Our own.”

³ This is embodied in the verse:
   अपचारापद्धेषं कृन्तनहर्षाणि।
   अपचारानिरावरणम् जमस्वपुषुप्रेषिष्ठम्॥
Gándakí-river; ("Sálagrama Hill" is stated in another work. It must be a part of the Himálayas. Vaikundam, Dváraka, and Ayodhíya, Badařík-āśrama), Námiṣáranya and Pushkara, and thence on to Bhaṭṭi-mándapa; (this is probably Bhaṭṭi-mándala near Labore), and Kāshmír, the seat of Sarasvatí, the Goddess of Learning, was now reached. Sarasvatí requested Rámañúja to expound the meaning of the Vedic passage: तस्सवथाल्लस्तम्म पुराणरीक्षेत्रमालिकाः। Rámañúja did so at great length and embodied it in the verse:—

कारिरस्वादित्य-सन्तिहममितिरस्यस्यक्षमम्। 
पतितोंन्यासथिविवक्षाः प्रयाजा श्रीमतादशाहमतथावच्छ।

On hearing this, Sarasvatí said:—"Rámañúja! Sánkara had ere this unhappily interpreted this as "monkey's posteriors" and I was much grieved at his perverse understanding and warped heart. Thou hast now wiped my tears" So saying, she placed Rámañúja's Sri-Bháshya on her head, drew Rámañúja to her breast, and gave him the title Bháshya-kára and handed him the Image of Haya-gríva for worship.

The pandits of the place, on seeing these special favors of Sarasvatí bestowed an Rámañúja grew envious, and called upon him for a disputation. This was granted and in the end they were routed. The king of Kāshmír silently watched these events; and when he found the pandits discomfited, he looked upon Rámañúja as no ordinary mortal and permitted himself to be enlisted into his fold. The king asked Rámañúja to explain the Traditions on which he based his Viśishtádvaita interpretation of the Brahma-Sútras. Rámañúja said that the old Traditions were the Bodháyána-Vrìtti, and the glosses by Tánkä, Guhádeva, Kapardí, Bháručhi, and others. The king went with him and the pandits into his library, and had a search

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1 Chándogyà Up. 1-6, 7. The readers are referred to p. 32, where the controversy with Yádava is fully explained.
2 Sun is called Kapi, because he drinks (pibati) water (kam). Śruti itself explains Kapi to mean sun's rays:—"Kapi gubhasti te jñanaṁ." Kapi-āsa is then that which, by rays, is blown (asa = viśāsane = to expand); and that is the lotus. A full-blown beautiful lotus is thus a simile for the beautiful eyes of God.
3 Read Sánkara-bháshya on the Ch: Up: here. His interpretation is a reproach on his reputation as a Vedic scholar.
4 Rámañúja Bháshya on Brahma-sútras was so named, i.e., Śrī-Bháshya.
made for such works. They were found, and on a perusal it was found that Rāmānuja's exposition was correct. Rāmānuja and Kūrēśa took this opportunity of studying the Bodhāyana-Vṛitti better, as the Pandits would not allow the work to be taken away by him. Rāmānuja was anxious to secure the work, but objections to his taking the book away were insurmountable. He felt grieved, but Kūrēśa assured him that he had retained the cardinal passages in his memory, and could reproduce the same whenever wanted. This allayed Rāmānuja’s anxiety; and he allowed the Vṛitti, though very reluctantly, to be restored to the Library, at the King's request, as the latter knew his Pandits would otherwise give trouble and would not hesitate even to kill Rāmānuja. And yet the Pandits resented all this, as their prestige suffered so much; but being powerless to openly harm Rāmānuja, as the king was already on his side, they entered into a dark conspiracy to kill Rāmānuja by black magic. This

1 The following extracts from Max Muller's *Theosophy or Psychological Religion* are interesting to the student of philosophy:—“**Rāmānuja does not represent himself as stating a new theory of the Vedānta, but he appeals to Bodhāyana, the author of a Vṛitti or explanation of the Bhṛgaṇḍa-sūtras, as his authority, nay he refers to previous commentaries or Vṛitti-kārās on Bodhāyana as likewise supporting his opinions. It has been supposed that one of these, Dārācī, the author of a Dārācī-bhāṣya or a Commentary on Bodhāyana, is the same as the Drāvida whose Bhāṣya on the Chhāudogya-Upanishad is several times referred to by Saṅkara in his commentary on that Upanishad, and whose opinions on the Vedānta-Sūtras are sometimes supported by Saṅkara (See Thibaut S.B.E. XXXIV, p. xxii)” [P. 100.]

“** We have thirdly the commentaries of Saṅkara, Bodhāyana, Rāmānuja and many others. These commentaries, however, are not mere commentaries in our sense of the word, they are really philo-

phical treatises, each defending an independent view of the Sūtras, and indirectly of the Upanishads.” [P. 101.]

“** I have generally followed the guidance of Saṅkara, as he seems to me to carry the Vedānta doctrine to the highest point, but I feel bound to say that Professor Thibaut has proved that Rāmānuja is in many points the more faithful interpreter of the Vedānta-Sūtras. ** Nor was Rāmānuja a mere dissentient from Saṅkara. He claimed for his interpretation of the Vedānta the authority of philosophers more ancient even than Saṅkara, and, of course, the authority of the Vedānta-Sūtras themselves, if only rightly understood. Rāmānuja’s followers do not possess now, so far as I know, manuscripts of any of these more ancient commentaries, but there is no reason to doubt that Bodhāyana and other philosophers to whom Rāmānuja appeals were real characters and in their time influential teachers of the Vedānta.” [P. 313.]
came to his knowledge; but spiritual giant as he was he remained undaunted, and simply watched how events would develop themselves. They resorted to black magic, but instead of their plans succeeding, it had a contrary effect; for they were all suddenly seized with madness, and began to rave and play such antics, as to be ridiculed by all. The king saw this, and pitying the poor wretches, approached Râmânuja, and falling at his feet, implored him to relieve them, as he could not look on their sufferings. Râmânuja, by a simple act of his will, cured them; and the king made them members of the Faith, and escorting Râmânuja with all his staff, a few stages on his return journey, took leave and joined his capital.

Râmânuja took the road towards Vârânasi (Benares), which he reached in due time, and bathing in the Holy Gangâ (Ganges), and visiting the Lord of Kândamemnum Kadinagar 1 proceeded south to Purushottama-Ksetra (Jagannâtha or Pâri, on the east-coast of the Indian Peninsula). Here also were disputations held on philosophy and religion, Râmânuja coming off victorious; and a Râmânuja-Mâth also was established. Here, on his attempt to introduce the worship, as laid down in the Pañcharâtra, into the Temple there, the priests objected; but as Râmânuja still resolved to reform the practices prevalent there which were not cleanly and to his liking, Lord Jagannâtha is said to have appeared to him in his dream and prevailed upon him not to attempt the reforms, as his priests were much attached to Him with their old ways of worship, which therefore he might not disturb. And when Râmânuja awoke, he found to his surprie he had been transported all the way to Sri-Kûrma. Here he paid homage to the Lord in the Kûrma-form and journeyed on to Simhagiri (Ahobila), and other shrines. Winning his way throughout by polemical triumphs he finally arrived at Tirupati. Here a Saiva-Vaishnava controversy of a curious character had been waged.

St. Pâyâzhvâr, who lived centuries before Râmânuja, had sung of the Lord of Tirupati, as wearing both the Saiva emblems, such as matted locks and serpent girdle, and the

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1 Deva-prâyâg on the way from Haridvâr to Badarinâth.
Vaishnava ones, such as the Discus and the golden girdle, and the Saint expressed his wonderment at Vishnu having chosen to appear to him in this dual character of Hari-Hara, or Vishnu-Siva. On the authority of this verse, in all probability, the Saivas made an attempt to claim Tirupati as their own exclusive Saiva Shrine; but Rāmānuja contended it was Vaishnava, but the Saivas would not give in. Rāmānuja proposed that both Saiva and Vaishnava emblems, such as Trisūla and Damaruka, and Chakra and Śankha, be placed in front of Venkaṭeśa’s Image in the sanctum sanctorum, and the doors be closed and securely locked, after carefully examining the chamber that no one lay hidden there; and the character of the Deity might be determined by the choice of the emblems made by Him. This test was gladly agreed to by all. The emblems were accordingly prepared and placed before the Image. Next day, both the parties came in a body with eager expectations of their own opinion being realized. But when the doors were thrown open in full day-light and in the presence of the whole assembly, it was found that the Lord had assumed the Vaishnava-emblems, with the Saiva emblems lying unused on the floor. Rāmānuja’s joy knew no bounds. He sang and danced, eyes streaming with tears of delight at the miraculous event and the Beatific Vision presented to his view. The Saivas were thus ousted.

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1 Read verse 63 of 3rd Tiruvandādi: “Takṣa-Śadaiyum, &c.” Nārāyaṇa includes Siva. In Nārāyaṇa’s (or Vishnu’s) body, a place is assigned to Siva in the same manner as his navel is assigned to the four-faced Brahmā, and his bosom to Śrī or Lakṣmī (Logos). Read Bhagavad-Gītā xi-15. Paśyāmi, &c., and numerous other authorities. So then this dual appearance proved Vishnu, not Siva exclusively, as Saivas thought.

2 A piece of Epigraphic Information is here annexed for the use of our readers:—
“We have received this year a very interesting report from the Epigraphist to Government [1903-1904 A.C.]
The Epigraphist has meanwhile inferred from a set of very dubious conclusions as to the ruined temple and Tiruchchānur, that Tirupati temple was perhaps originally Saiva in character. From the fact that the temple is mentioned in the inscriptions as Ṣangoyil and that the same word is seen in the Saiva Periyapurāṇam and in another inscription as the name of a temple which must certainly have been Saiva and that another inscription says that the temple now in ruins was built as an accompaniment to the shrine at Tirupati, he first infers that the Tiruchchānur temple
(Continued) foot note on page 143.

must be Śaiva and that a fortiori the shrine at Tirupati for which the former was meant as an accompaniment, must also be a Śaivite one. We fear every link in this argument is hopelessly weak. Mr. Venkayya has not shown satisfactorily that the Tiruchchānūr ruined temple was as a matter of fact, built as an accompaniment to the Tirupati temple whatever that expression may mean. The Ganga-Pallava inscription of Dantivikrama Varman which is said to prove this, he neither quotes from nor gives the contents of. This example will emphasize the necessity of the Government insisting upon a publication of all the inscriptions collected every year, so that independent scholars might work at them and deduce from them all the historical connection they are capable of yielding. Again it is not quite so certain that the Tiruchchānūr temple was solely Śaiva. It might most probably have been a combined Śaiva-and-Vishnu temple as the one at Chidambaram and many other places. It is a fact that many important Śaiva temples have a shrine of Vishnu towards the west, generally mentioned in the inscriptions as Melai Sri Koil. At any rate the Tirupati temple was undoubtedly Vaishnava in the 4th century during the reign of the Chola king Rajaraja, the great, who gave grants to the Vaishnava God there. It must certainly have been at least claimed as Vaishnava during the times of the three great Śaiva Saints, the authors of the Ṭeravar, Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar, who sang Thiruppārumkāram, Tiruvanniyur, Kalahasti and other places in the neighbourhood, and omitted all reference to Tirupati. That there was a long standing dispute as to the real character of the Deity of that place is certain. The old Vaishnava Saint, Peyāzhwār, sings in the Iyarpāt, that the God of Tirumalai wore the symbols of both Śiva and Vishnu and it is noticeable in his verse that he always mentions the Śiva emblem first. This dual character seems to have continued till the time of Rāmānuja in the 12th century, when this curious incident is related by the Tamil Rāmānuja-Divyakārīta of Pillai Lokanāthajīvar to have taken place. Rāmānuja was annoyed that owing to this dual character of the Deity, the Śivites worshipped him as their Nayanar or God. He therefore proposed a scheme by which to test which way the God leaned and said that the emblems of both Śiva and Vishnu should be placed in the innermost shrine which was to be carefully locked up till the morning and that according to the emblems the God should be found wearing in the morning, his real character was to be judged. When the Garbhagriha was opened in the morning the God was seen resplendent with the couch and the Śiva emblems were found carelessly thrown at his feet. After this explicit declaration by the divinity himself there could be no question as to his real nature and he has continued Vaishnavite ever since. The facts go to show that if the Tirupati Temple was at all exclusively Śaiva, which seems to be unlikely, it must have been so considerably prior to the authors of the Thiruvāram. [Hindu.]

Another extract:—“In his latest Report on Epigraphy, Mr. Venkayya has opined that there is an air of truth in the popular belief that the temple on the Tirumalai was originally a Śivite one. In his “Iyarpāt” stanza 63, Peyāzhwār distinctly mentions the dual appearance of the image. The stanza referred to might be rendered into English thus:—

“‘How wonderful! our Lord who is on the Sacred Hill (Tirupati) which is bathed by the great mountain streams surrounding it on all sides combines in himself the two forms (of Śiva and Vishnu) by his appearing with flowing matted
Rāmānuja made the circuit of the Shrine, and descending the Holy Mount, did homage to the Āzhvārs enshrined at its base, and thence proceeding to Kānchi and other Shrines such as Srī-perumbudūr (his birth-place), Tiruvallikkeni (Trivpicable) and Tiru-nil-malai, and thence crossing over to Madhurantakam and the Holy Vakula-tree there, under which his Guru Mahāpārṇa gave him the first initiation, and thence on to Tiru-vayindra-puram (Tiru-vendi-puram near Cuddalore), where he tendered his salutations to Lord Deva-māyaka, and vanquished disputants wherever met, and thence on to Vira-nārāyanapuram, the Holy Place of sage Nātha-muni [the place where he sat for Yoga (meditation)] and Lord Māmna-nārāyaṇa-thērvār.

Foot note on page 144—(continued).

locks and high diadem, with the beautiful Masū... and discus... with a serpent and a golden waistcord entwined (round his waist)."

Therefore, it is evident that the God of Tirumalai was worshipped as Vishnu in the days of the early Vaishnavaite Saint Pāy-Āzhvār.

Clearer still is the allusion to the Vaishnava nature of the deity, in the classical Tamil poem "Silappadikāram," 1st Century A.C., where the author describes the god as "standing on the top of Vēngadatt, like a blue cloud with the couch and discus (which are compared to the sun and moon)" (Kādukā-Kādai, li. 41-51)

"M. N.", in his reply to Mr. Venkayya's rejoinder in the Hindu, has proved that in the days of the Devāram Hymners, the temple might not have been Śāiva, and that Pājaraja, the great Chōla King, himself a Śāiva, has made grants to the Vishnu on the hill.

In the face of these explicit statements in early Tamil literature, it is really incredible how Tirumalai could be doubted to have perhaps been Śāiva. Let us hope that in the examination of the innermost prākāra, more light will be thrown on this rather important question. [A. VAISHNAVA in Madras Mail, 9th December 1904.]

There is a legend related here. There was a person by name Tāl-pākkam Channayya. He was a favourite of God Śrīnivāsa of this Shrine, so much so that when he sang hymns to Him, He kept time by dancing to it. Rāmānuja came to know this, and asked the devotees to kindly ascertain from his God whether he (Rāmānuja) may hope for Moksha (Salvation). Channayya, when he next sang and the God danced to him, reverently submitted to him Rāmānuja's petition. God answered:—"Certainly he shall be saved." "And I, Lord?"

asked Channayya. "No" was the answer. "But have I not sung to Thee, Lord, all these days, protested Channayya. "But have I not danced to thee, son, as often as thou sangest?" retorted He. "Then I am undone, O Lord! Fray show me the way of salvation. By no means can I forfeit that state."

The Lord answered: "Go to that Sānyāsi, our Rāmānuja, fall at His Holy Feet and win it. He is fit to give Moksha to whosoever he will." This story illustrates that salvation is won, not by bargain, but by grace.
returned to his head-quarters, Srirangam. He proceeded to the Temple to visit Lord Ranga, announcing his arrival; and after the usual ceremonies, Ranga's voice came inquiring: "Art thou satisfied?". Râmânuja answered: "Holy Lord, how can I be otherwise, when thy Blessed Vision is ever reflected in my mental mirror wherever I may be. I have but fulfilled Thy holy errand on earth." Ranga commanded tīrtha and prasāda to be given him. Râmânuja thence bent his steps to his own monastery, his soul steeped in peace and bliss.
CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BIRTH OF VYÂSA-BHATTA AND PARÂSARA-BHATTA.

Thus had our Bhâsha-kâra accomplished his second pilgrimage through Bharata-khanda. Those were days of religious rejuvenescence in Indiâz brought about by the inspired personality of our Râmânuja. For his influence spread from house to house, village to village and throughout Bharatâland, and his spirit fanned the fire of religion, smouldering in human hearts.

Kûrêsa was the very soul and shadow of Râmânuja. In erudition he was a savant; in conduct, he was a paragon of excellence. Never a day was he found remiss in all the duties of the day, classed as Abhigamana, Upâdâna, Ijâd, Svâdhyâya and Yoga.

We have already told our readers that Kûrêsa lived by alms; because he had given away his all at Kâra and come to Srîrangam to live with Râmânuja. One day, it rained all the morning till it was past the Sangava or the Upâdâna time, which is set apart for excursions for collecting alms. Kûrêsa’s strict rule it was, to beg each day’s requirement at the houses of virtuous folk, and never to store a second day’s provisions in his house. Prevented then by the rainy day from stirring out, Kûrêsa and his pious wife Âpâlamma fasted, after taking the usual bath, performing the morning sandhya and other ceremonies and offering to his Chapel God, a fruit and some water, which latter, sipped, being sacramental. It was now evening, and Kûrêsa, performing the evening sandhya, never bestowed a thought for his hungry stomach, but devoutly went through a reading of the Tiru-vây-možhi (Prabandha) considering this as his manna, and thus went to sleep. But the wife

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1 See page 140 for Râmânuja winning this name.

2 A work recently published in Madras (1904) by D. T. Śrînivâsa-chârya, called Paîcha-kâla-prâkâsha gives full details of these five-fold day-occupations.

3 See Chapter XIII.

4 See Bhugavad-Gîtâ, IX, 26.
was awake and was sore grieved at heart that her god-like husband was fasting. As she sat, she heard the temple drums and bugles announcing that Lord Ranga was having his night-offering of food, called the Periya-avasaram. This disturbed her musings; and she gave vent to her feelings thus:—

"Ranga, when thy bhakta is fasting, how canst thou revel thus in feastings?" A cry of distress like this was of course heard by the Lord; and the cry, it is said, pierced his ears like arrows.

Uttamanambi, a temple-functionary, was asleep on a pial; and he dreamt a dream in which Ranga appeared to him and commanded him thus:—"Nambi, my bhakta Kuresha is fasting; rise, go to my Temple, and carry on thy head the holy Aravanai-food which has just been offered me, in right processional style from the Temple to his house. Uttama-Nambi awoke, startled, and hastening to the Temple, did as commanded. As the music and other din of the procession reached Kuresha's doors, he was disturbed from his sleep, and awoke, wondering what was happening at that hour of the night; met the processionists and inquired of them what brought them there. Uttama-Nambi said: "Sire, Lord Ranga bid me carry you His holy food. Pray accept." Kuresha received the same devoutly but he would not have the whole quantity. He said to the messengers:—"Holy sires, I should not deprive the Lord of His income by disposing of this food as usual. But I cannot refuse it altogether, as it has been so graciously sent by Him. I should but take two morsels, one for myself, and the other for my wife. Lord Ranga has so fully made me His own that I do not stand in need of anything on earth. I thank you, sires; please retire with the remaining food to the Temple." After thus dismissing the Temple servants, Kuresha sat down and asked his wife whether she thought of any thing in particular when he was asleep. She confessed to him she did so. She said she envied Ranga enjoying his last sumptuous course of food for the day, while His bhakta was hungry. "Good lady," said Kuresha petulantly, "you should not have been thus guilty. Do not this again." And they both devoutly partook each, one of the two morsels that had been retained; and Kuresha
went to bed again, somewhat out of humour with his wife. But he had a dream. Lord Ranga appearing spoke to him: “My beloved, the two morsels you have eaten, will be the seed for raising two precious sons in your family. They shall be considered as my own sons. As sons, I myself choose to appear in furtherance of my own future purpose, in the same manner as I chose to appear as Râma, the son of Dasaratha, and Kṛishṇa the son of Vasudēva.” The dream was over. Kûreśa awoke, and related it to his wife and others, and attended to his duties, quietly expecting events to develop in their own good time.

Some time went by. In due course, two sons were born to Kûreśa as predicted by Lord Ranga. The ten days of puerperal sūtaka were over, but Kûreśa never concerned himself about the name-giving and other sacramental rituals, which the Vedas require to be administered to new-born infants. His idea was that to his Râmânuja’s spiritual family the children belonged, and it was for Râmânuja therefore to do the needful. Râmânuja, however, now made his appearance, accompanied by Govinda; and commanded him to bring the little ones to him. Govinda sped in all earnestness to Ândâlamma, and lovingly hugging the two gems of babies, ran to Râmânuja, muttering all the way the Holy Dvaya-Mantra as a protective shield for the babies against evil influences; and lovingly lifted them up to Râmânuja. Râmânuja graciously scanned them with his love-moistened eyes, and observing the splendid appearance and glorious looks of the infants, blessed them heartily, and addressing Govinda, said:—

“Brother, what didst thou? The smell of the Dvaya-Mantra comes to me from the babies.” “Sire, yes,” replied Govinda, “as I was conveying the precious charges to you, I shielded them with the power of that Mantra.” “Then brother,” commanded Râmânuja, “as thou hast constituted thyself the guardian of the bodies of these gems, thou shalt be the guardian as well of their souls. And these two infants are no other than the two sentences of the Dvaya itself, made manifest in their persons thus.” So saying he stroked the infants with his hands, adorning them with the Pañcā-ayudha ornament; and in due time made Govinda administer the Pañcā-
samskāra, naming the infants Parāśara Bhattārya,1 and Vyāsa-Bhattārya,2 thus fulfilling another of the three wishes of his Great Guru, Yāmunnāchārya.3 Thus were two great luminaries for the Faith ushered into the world—in the wake of Rāmānuja.

Uttama-Nambi, in a work called Lakṣmi-Kāvyā, composed by him, sings of them thus:

पुजीकृतोर्जनप्रबंधकोषपरशरकृतकलपवृत्।
गोपिनाथसदस्यतुममवेमस्यपूर्वावलितायम्॥
कृत्रििनदनन्वन्ते वासनोर्जनवासिनम्।
अनेकार्धितवैशायेः जात्वप्रीणामदेशियोऽ॥

Another event also occurred about this time enabling Rāmānuja to fulfil the remaining wish of his Great Guru Yāmuna: to name some fit person by the name of Parāṅkuṣa or Nammāzhvār in perpetuation of the memory of the Saint of that name.

The reader will recollect the redemption of Govinda by Śriśaila-Pūrṇa of Tirupati, described in a previous chapter. When Govinda joined the Vaishnava-band, he felt so blessed in his regenerate life that he would not allow his newly awakened delight to rest in himself alone. So, he sought out his own brother by name Śiriy-Govinda-p-peremāl, and explained to him the beauties of the New Faith. He brought him to Pūrṇa, who graciously accepted him as his disciple. Govinda and G. Perumāl had thus become spiritual associates as well, and had both come to live with Rāmānuja at Srirangam.

The event which came about was that G. Perumāl had a son born to him, and this, to Rāmānuja, was another valuable acquisition to his Faith. So he hurried to Perumāl's place, and blessing the child, named him Parāṅkuṣa4-Nambi. This

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1 See No. 32, in the Hierarchic Table of our Lives of Āshvārs.
2 Śrī-Rāma-pplān is another name.
3 See page 56.
4 Parāṅkuṣa = St. Nammāzhvār.
fulfilment of Yāmuna's third wish was recorded by Uttama-Nambi in his Lakshmi Kāvyā, thus:—

गोविन्दराजान्योपजीविषी पराशुरामागुरुवृमननस्सु।
वषपाठकार पाक्षेतुतीय विराजतेवृक्षमिनियपदि॥

We shall close this chapter by asking our readers to remember the "three-finger-miracle" of Yāmuna, related in chapter IX and that the three fulfilments thereof by Rāmānuja, on whom had devolved that sacred duty, were, in order, the composition of Śrī-Bhāshya, the Commentary on the Brahma-Sūtras; the naming of two children in memory of Parāśara and Vyāsa; and a third child, in memory of St. Nāmāzhvār.

1 See page 56.
CHAPTER XXIV.

BHÄTTÄRYA.

Our readers, in this Chapter, will be treated to the interesting traits which the new luminary Parāśara Bhāttārya, or simply Bhāttārya, displayed as he grew.

Lord Ranga commanded the two little brothers to be conveyed to His Fane, and adopting them, as fashion required, as his own sons, had cradles swung there in His own chamber, called the Maṇattāyas and Himself and His Consort Lakshmi taking care of them in every way. The Lord had willed that before He accepted the courses of daily food offered to him, the children should be first served; nay, that they should help themselves to what dishes they pleased by allowing them to toddle about to the place where the food in several dishes was spread before Him.

One day the children, as usual, stole about at pleasure and helped themselves to the viands that had been placed before Ranga that day as the special service of the Râja who then ruled. The priests were offended that day at the conduct of the children, and handling them somewhat roughly, conveyed them outside the Temple premises. That night the Râja had a dream. The Lord appearing to him, declared: “I had just tasted your food-service. When the fools of my officiating priests interfered with my children, the Bhāttāras, preventing them from having their full share, and treated them roughly, I could not partake of thy food any more. I am this day not pleased with thee.” The Râja awoke and making inquiries, found his dream to be correct, and strictly decreed that services should thenceforward be conducted in the manner which best pleased the Lord.

Bhāttārya was now a boy of five years, and showed signs of extraordinary intelligence for his age. His father Kûrēśa was one day reciting the Decad of St. Namûzhvâr, beginning with Nequmâr-k-adîmai (viii. 10. 1). In this Decad, the greatness of God’s Saints is described. In the third verse, the
description runs thus: शिरु-मात्र-मनिसर” i.e. God’s Saints are small-great. The boy, who was attentively listening to the recitation, stopped the father at this place, with the eager query: “Father, how can a thing be both small and great at one and the same time, for thou saist small-great” “My dearest, what an unexpected question from a stripling like thee! But it would be a hard task on my part to convince thee of the justness and beauty of the apparently contradictory terms, by resorting to learned discourses on it, based on Sāstras. But I shall try by other easier means to make thee understand this puzzling passage of our Holy Saint. Dost thou see our Sages of Sṛirangam, Sṛiry-āchān, A. P. Emberumāṇar and others like them? See, they are small in stature, but very great in knowledge and wisdom. So, dost thou now see how contradictory things like small and great can yet be harmoniously combined in one and the same thing?” The young questioner was satisfied.

The boy was a budding genius, as became evident from another incident which happened at about this time. There was a learned man by name Sarvajña-bhaṭṭa, who was proud of his erudition, and had successfully carried on a warfare of polemics in Vārāṇaṣī and other places; and who had now arrived at Sṛirangam. To show to all how great a man he was, he installed himself in a sedan chair and paraded himself in the streets, with his followers before and behind, proclaiming his fame and titles, and announcing that he was the Sarvajña-bhaṭṭa, meaning one who is all-knowing. Bhattachar, the boy, was at this time playing with the dust in the street. He heard the name Sarvajña dinning in his ears, and he got irate at it. “What!” exclaimed he, “while there are such all-knowing giants amongst us, as Rāmānuja, Kūrēśa, Dāśarathī, Dēvarāṭ and others, who dare call himself by the proud name Sarvajña, all-knowing?” So saying he took a handful of dust in his hand, and running up to the sedan, in which the Pandit was seated, spoke mockingly at him thus:—Halloo, man, stop, and answer me this before you step further. If you are all-knowing, as you call yourself, tell me what quantity of dust I have in my hand.” This sudden and curious interrogation, by a mere boy,
checked the Pandit, and he was so confounded and confused that he could not compass a ready answer. "I see," cried the boy, "you are dumbfounded by the paltry question of a boy. Could you not say: 'you have a handful of dust?' you don't deserve the title all-knowing." So saying, the impertinent little boy turned to Sarvajña's attendants and asked them never more to exhibit their poor master pompously in the streets, and exhorted them in the sweet words of five, to drop the insignia they were carrying, and cease blowing the trumpets." The surprise of the Pandit at this strange behaviour and talk of a mere urchin, now turned into wonder and admiration. He inquired of the by-standers whose son was this prodigy? They said:—

"Sire, he is the son of Kûrûṣa, the soul of our Guru Râmânuja, the Pontiff of our Faith." Sarvajña exclaiming: "The fledgeling surely flies, not creeps," lovingly lifted the little marvel into his sedan, and moved on till the procession approached the house of Kûrûṣa. Pon-nâyachiyar or Kanakâmba, the good wife of Dhanurdâsa,¹ was standing at the door watching. Espying the boy Bhattârya seated in the sedan with a strange person, she ran up, and drawing him from the vehicle, covered him with her garment, and rushed with him into the house, muttering the Dvaya-Mantra, and delivering the precious load unto the arms of its mother Ándâlamma, chided her for having allowed her gem to stray out thus into the streets and expose himself to 'evil eyes'; and anxiously sprinkled him with Râmânuja's Śri-pâda water,² to ward off evil influences which might have injured the boy. She also vaguely feared, lest such a prodigy as her boy would be allowed to live long on earth!!

Bhattârya grew older. About eight he was now, and the holy-thread ceremony, Upanayana, was duly made; and he was sent to school to learn the Vedas and other subjects. The boy attended the first day and learnt some Veda. The second day, when he went to school, he found the teacher repeating the same lessons as those of the previous day to the boys. He therefore left the school and went to play. His parents finding

¹ Read next chapter.

² Holy water washed off the feet of Râmânuja; water thus consecrated is considered an antidote to every kind of evil, material or spiritual.
him thus employed, questioned him as to why he did not attend school. "I did attend, father," said he, "but they were reading the same lessons again, and so I left it." "But did you learn the lesson in one day?" asked Kûrëśa. "Yes," was the ready answer. "Then let me hear it," demanded the father. The boy repeated his lesson without a flaw, even in the difficult intonations of the Vedic syllables, called the udatta, anudatta and svarga. The precocity of Bhattārya terrified the parents, who seriously thought of delaying his education for some time. In due course, however, the boy rapidly picked up all learning, Kûrëśa and Govinda personally instructing him in the artha, and the tatva, Sāstras.

It has already been said that Lord Ranga and His Consort Lakshmi were the adoptive Father and Mother of Bhattārya. As a child and boy, he really looked upon them as such. But he had now grown up into youth, and was taught that Ranga and Lakshmi should be adored as God and Goddess of the cosmos. Well, the youth was once on a visit to the Temple, when Ranga and Lakshmi were having their retired moments after all the bustle of the day's worship had subsided. Ranga, in feigned anger, bade Bhattārya depart. The youth went a few paces, when Ranga ordered him back. He obeyed. And Ranga asked him: "when thou didst visit us now, what didst thou think us to be?" "As God and Goddess of the universe, Lord," meekly replied Bhattārya. "But," asked Ranga, "what didst thou think us to be before this?" "As my Father and Mother," responded he. "Think of us in this relation always. That pleases us more than the relationship of God and slave." The reader will gather from this that God is more in search of men's hearts than their heads.

Another incident is related about this time. A Smārta pandit took it into his head to test Bhattārya. He entered as the latter was seated in his house, and after preliminaries asked him to explain how a Vaishpava is distinguished from a Smārta. Bhattārya did not care to enter into an elaborate controversy with his adversary on this question, delicate in as much as it is a bone of contention between the two great
divisions of Brāhmaṇas in India, the Śaṅkara (advaitins) and
the Vaiṣṇavas (vīrāgā-advaitins); but simply called the ques-
tioner's attention to the signs of Chakra and Śaṅkha inscribed
on both his arms—a sacrament enjoined by Sāstras on all
Vaiṣṇavas. "I see", the Pandit said; "but what authorities,
master, can you quote from the Sāstras, justifying you to
set to yourself this kind of custom?" queried he. "Sir,
replied Bhattārya, "I shall not trouble you with all that, for
when I shall quote one authority, to which we in common
profess allegiance, you shall go satisfied. Hast thou not learnt
the first sūtra of Āpastamba-Dharma, which says Āpastamba-Dharma,
वेदांत, i.e., the wise practices of our wise elders are our best
authority; then come the Vedas? My father Kūrēśa observed
the sacrament in question and therefore I do. Enough; for do
you not follow in the footsteps of your elders?" The Pandit
was thus silenced and went his way.\(^1\)

The young student's course was now finished and it was
time that a mate should be found for him. As the reader
knows, Kūrēśa had left his kith and kin in the Kānti land
and had adopted Srirangam for his country. So, when the
marriage-question of his boy came up, Kūrēśa did not know
where to bring a girl from. "Hence," appealed he to Rāmā-
nuja: "sire, not only have I no relations of mine in these parts,
but those others who may willingly offer a girl belong to a lower
rank in society. Contracting matrimonial alliance therefore
with them can only be distasteful to us as unworthy of our
status. What shall we do in this fix?" Such was the great
social question which Rāmānuja had to solve in those days. (We
know how this same question is still unsolved in our days).
Rāmānuja said:—"We have our Mahāpūrṇa and his people. We
must choose from them. As for Śūtra, Śākha, Brāhmaṇa and
Vaiṣṇava, our two clans agree. But they are of the Briha-
ccharana set.\(^2\) This is the only difference, which I think may

\(^1\) See Chakrabhājana-vijaya and other works on this Vaiṣṇava Sacra-
ment. It is like the fire-sacrament which obtained among the primit-
tive Christians.

\(^2\) The Mahāpūrṇas belong to this denomination. The Vahānas have
no consanguinity with them. Marriages now take place between the
Bhāṭāras and Periya-Nambis.
be overlooked. These considerations satisfied them and they applied to this clan for a girl. But they could not give one, said they, with impunity, for the hard and fast barriers dividing clan from clan for a long time, would not permit it, though they would heartily wish for a junction with such a worthy clan as that to which Kûrêşa belonged, and considering moreover the exemplary personal character of Kûrêşa himself, apart from every other consideration. So here was a stumbling block though there was willingness on both sides. No further steps were taken; they could not in the face of such insuperable sentimental difficulties. But Bhattar was advancing in years, and must be married at once or all thought of it must once for all be abandoned. His mother Andâlamma was in a perplexity. She made bold to twit her husband on his stolid indifference in such an important affair. "Our neighbours are laughing at us, Sire," she finished. But Kûrêşa told her in a careless way: "Chafe not, old lady! I am helpless in the matter. Knowest thou not that our children belong to Lord Ranga? I have resigned them to His care. Let His will be done, whatever it be." With these soothing words, he left his wife and going to the Temple, laid the case before The Lord and returned home. That night, Mahâpûrna's relatives had a dream, in which Ranga commanded them to make matrimonial alliance with Kûrêşa without ado. They rose and what they had rejected when proposed by, they now voluntarily offered to, Kûrêşa. For, two maidens by name Akkaachi and Manni were gladly given in marriage to our Bhattaraya. A social question—a very hard one indeed—was thus solved in those days; and our hero of this Chapter was thus installed in the order of the householder.
CHAPTER XXV.

DHANURDÅSA.

In the last Chapter, appeared two new characters, as our readers are aware. They are Kanakâmbâ, who was standing at the door of Kûrêśa’s house, and her husband Dhanurдрása, (in Tamil, Pillai-Uṟangâ-villi-dâsar). They became disciples of Râmânuja. How they became is what shall be narrated in this Chapter.

In Nichulâpuri or Modern Uṟaiyur (near Trichinopoly) dwelt Dhanurдрása, so called because he was a good athlete and archer, belonging to the Malla caste. To his caste-men, he looked as terrible as death. He loved a girl by name Kanakâmbâ, who was very beautiful. So much was he enamoured of her that he never left her side for a moment and never took his eyes off her moonlike face. The Chaitra festivities of Lord Ranga now came round. Kanakâmbâ was anxious to witness them, and so she left Uṟaiyur. The lover of course would not let her go alone. So he accompanied her, and walking by her side, held his coverlet over her head in great solicitude to screen her handsome face from the sun’s rays. Not a ray should even steal in. So eagerly did he watch her face.

Râmânuja was returning from his ablutions in the Kaveri river, surrounded by his disciples, to join the procession of Lord Ranga. As he was coming, his eye fell upon this loving pair, and wondering at the intense care the lover was bestowing upon his beloved, turned to his disciples and said:—“Sons, look at this curious spectacle. Here is a despicable specimen of humanity who is the slave of a woman! Shameless, in the public streets, see, he pays such attentions to a courtesan! Man may be blind with love for a girl; but he generally keeps it all a secret; but here it is a bold outrage on public decency. It is interesting to me however to see how love can be blind.
Let me try to turn this man's love from the girl to Lord Ranga.' So saying, he set a few disciples to shadow the pair and find where they lived; and return with news. On his disciples bringing him the necessary intelligence, Râmânuja sent for Dhanurdâsa, and looking on him most graciously, asked who he was and what brought him to Srirangam. The looks of Râmânuja, filled with kindness, acted on him like a spell; for Dhanurdâsa made obeisance and explained that his residence was Urâiyûr, where he was a renowned gymnast, and that he came to Srirangam on a holy visit to Ranga. "But," said Râmânuja, "wilt thou allow me, son, to chide thee for thy open violation of public morality? Thou sayest thou art a powerful gymnast; but how is this consistent with thy open love-making to a girl, shamelessly? A sense of shame stole on Dhanurdâsa at this well-meant rebuke, but he replied: "Holy Sire, how can I help it? She is so lovely, this dear Kanakâmbâ. Her eyes are more beautiful than the lotus. My heart and those eyes are one. The least exposure to the sun, how can those charming eyes bear? Did they fade, my heart would burst. This is the truth, O Saint; now tell me if I am wrong." Râmânuja listened to this guileless speech, in silence, and looking on Dhanurdâsa with pity, said:—"But, son, if I could show you better eyes than those?"—"Ah, Sire," interrupted Dhanurdâsa, "if so, it were a great gain to me; and that by your favour." "Come then at once"; so saying, Râmânuja led him in to the Temple, and showing him Ranga's Figure, recumbent on His couch, Sêsha, "look at those bewitching eyes," said he, catching hold of his hand, "they are the eyes of Ranga, Lord Ranga, the Father of this universe; look steadily and study their beauty." Dhanurdâsa did so, and he saw something there extraordinary, divine, and he found he could neither stir from the spot where he stood, nor move his eyes from the Vision before him. He was completely hypnotized as it were. "God's grace has descended on this person," murmured Râmânuja to himself, as he watched and left for his monastery Dhanurdâsa gave up food and sleep from that day and was daily found in the temple, looking on Ranga with straining eyes. Râmânuja, now sent for him and asked him
how he felt. He said: "Master! how can I be grateful enough to you for the bliss into which you have deigned to steep a wretch like myself. Make me thy slave and complete the work of salvation you have, unasked, taken into your hands." Rāmānuja smiled and conferring on him the sacramental Pañcha-samskāra, took him into his flock. Kanakāmbā came to know of all this, and a wish rose in her mind to become herself a disciple. So she sped to Rāmānuja, and repentantly implored him to take her also into his Vaishnava fold. Rāmānuja, overcome by her solicitations, did so, and joining her with her lover,—now as wife to husband,—blessed them both, and allowed them to work in his math as his most dutiful servants. It is chronicled that the wife even excelled her husband, in wisdom and all other spiritual prefessions, by the wonderful grace shed by the Holy Feet of Rāmānuja. Like Hanumān, who did every service to Rāma was this pair to Rāmānuja.

Dhanurddāsa had so far been metamorphosed, that he became the greatest favourite of Rāmānuja; so rare too was his piety, that though he belonged to a lower caste, he had privileges conferred upon him. For often, Rāmānuja was found returning from his river-bath leaning on the shoulders of Dhanurddāsa; though when he went to the bath he lean on Dāsarathi, a Brāhmaṇa. A Brāhmaṇa is unclean before bath, and clean after it; and thus Dhanurddāsa as a Sūdra, and Dāsarathi as a Brāhmaṇa must have changed places. But Rāmānnja had it the other way, as told above, which much exercised the minds of his Brāhmaṇa disciples. They once made bold to ask him for an explanation, which he condescended to tender thus:

"O Vaishnavās, have ye not heard that learning, riches and high-birth swell a fool with pride, but adorn a wiseman?" 1 This Malla is utterly destitute of this threefold vice, but ye are not. Hence he is fit enough to be touched by me and to prop on". On hearing this, the disciples bent their heads in shame, and dared make no protest; but all the same, malice rankled in

1 विषामदी धनयान्तयोभिभिन्नायेन भी।
एतेमा वलिसामा मेतेवसतूतर्दया॥
their breasts against Dhanurdâsa, that he a Súdra should stand so high in their master’s estimation, their own prestige as Brâhmânas being jeopardized thereby. Râmânuja was aware of this and wished to cure his Brâhmâna disciples of the disease, which in his opinion was spiritually fatal. To convince them of their error, he resorted to a device. He called one of his intimate disciples privately, and ordered him to secrete all the clothes of the objectors, at night when they were asleep—clothes which it is our custom daily to wash and hang up to dry. The order was duly carried out. The disciples rose in the morning, and finding their clothes were missing, fell foul of each other and made a great hubbub. Râmânuja was witnessing all this fracas, unseemly to a Brâhma in his opinion; and smiled. To put a stop to further disturbance, he called them all to order, and putting on the mien of a judge, listened to their complaint, and condoning them for their loss, advised them to be reconciled to each other, and wait for better luck whenever it might please Providence to send it them. He let some time pass thus, and one night, he called Dhanurdâsa to his side, and was engaged in conversation with him alone for some time. He now called the aggrieved parties, and in the hearing of Dhanurdâsa, spoke to them thus: “Sons, I remember well your grief and strife at the loss of your clothes some time ago. I will now tell you something which will fetch you much profit. Indeed it will very much more than compensate for your loss. See, Dhanurdâsa is with me. I will keep him here engaged. You will proceed to his house unobserved. As it is very late in the night, you will find his wife Kanakâmbâ drowned in sleep. She has a lot of precious jewels about her person. Go and cleverly strip her of them all and come away.” Taking these orders, the Brâhmânas stole to Dhanurdâsa’s house like thieves. They effected entrance, and to their joy found Kanakâmbâ fast asleep on her bed, decked out in all her splendid finery. They approached her softly, and deftly stripped her of all her jewels on one side, as she lay sideways. As they were doing it, she awoke, but just opening her eyes a little, closed them again, lest they might flee away in fright. Nor did she move a limb, lest they might be disturbed in the middle of their work. For she saw
they were Vaishnavaś, for whom she had nothing but love and reverence. She was glad they were taking away but their own property; for whatever effects she owned in this world were not really hers but entrusted to her for their sake. This is how property is to be spiritually viewed; and we have already said that in spiritual perfections, Kanakāmbā excelled even her husband. Well, she lay thus quiet till every one of the jewels was removed from one side. She was now anxious that the Vaishnavaś should complete their work, and not go away with only half work done. She therefore gently rolled over to her other side, as if in sleep. This movement however created fright and put the thieves to flight. They returned. Rāmānuja seeing them back, gave leave to Dhanurdāsa now to go home, as it was unusually late. As soon as he went a few steps, Rāmānuja called the robber-disciples, and taking from them the jewels, bid them dog the footsteps of Dhanurdāsa in the dark, unobserved by him, and watch all that might take place in his house and report the same to him correctly. They did so. In the house, Kanakāmbā was expecting her husband back from his rather long absence that night, and when she heard his footsteps, she rose and washed his feet and welcomed him home. He looked at her, but she looked very strange with one side of her bare and the other side only decked with ornaments. "What is this, lady?" he cried, taken aback. "Nothing wrong, Lord," said she soothingly, "I will explain all and you will be pleased. The Brāhmaṇas, who you know are our Gurus, came here, and I was lying as if asleep. They laid hands on me and took all the jewels on my right side. Our effects are theirs, Sire, as you know. So to let them have all, I quietly turned round on to my left side. With all my care in doing so,—to make them believe I was fast in the arms of sleep—it gave them alarm, and they, to my great regret, ran away." On hearing this, Dhanurdāsa flew at her in rage, saying:—"Foolish woman! thou hast spoiled the work. It was thy duty to have lain quite motionless. If thy jewels were theirs, theirs also was the liberty to take them in their own way. But instead of letting them exercise that liberty, thou didst dare exercise it in allowing thyself to move just when they had done half their work. They would probably have turned
he round, hadst thou been perfectly still. Well, thou hast spoilt it all. At any rate, half thy jewels have been well invested; the other half is vanity.” Thus half consoled as it were, he went to sleep, with his thoughts fixed on the Holy Feet of Rāmānuja.

The Vaishnava Brāhmaṇas who were outside, eavesdropping, heard all this conversation and hurrying back to Rāmānuja, gave him a full report of it. Rāmānuja on receiving it addressed them thus:—“O wiseacres, do you now see? Some fellows, fools very likely, made away with your clothes some time back. But on that trifling account, you fell to quarrelling and, calling each other names, made such an inglorious uproar. But here is Dhanurdāsa, whose mind was not in the least disturbed, albeit he lost so many valuable jewels. Please tell me, sirs, whose wisdom is great, yours or his? Know then that caste is of no importance. It is virtue that is most prized.” Thus did Rāmānuja sermon to the disciples who bore a grudge against Dhanurdāsa. They were crest-fallen and spoke not.

The night was spent thus. The next morning, he sent for Dhanurdāsa, and drew from him an account of all the incidents which took place in his house, and restoring to him his jewels, blessed him. Dhanurdāsa never refused what was given him, for, if he did so, it would be like opposing his Guru which behoves not a true disciple. Unquestioning obedience to the spiritual preceptor is one of the most important canons laid down by Vaishnavism. And this, the hero of this chapter observed to the very letter. It is recorded that Dhanurdāsa’s regenerate life was full of such incidents. One such interesting event is recounted by Periya-vāchānpiḷḷai in his commentary on St. Namāzhvār’s Tiruviruttam, v: 99: “İnacchol”. Kūrēṣa read Tiruvāymozhi, and Dhanurdāsa, who heard it, melted into tears. Observing this passionate ebullition of feeling, Kūrēṣa exclaimed: “Fie on us, beloved Dhanurdāsa! We are known to fame as very clever dialectic gymnasts over knotty questions of philosophy and all that sort; but none of us can claim the privilege of thy birth which brings to thee a love-lorn heart, which we so hardly struggle to possess.” It
is related again in the 36,000 commentary on Tiruvāymozhi (VII-4-1 "Āzhi") that Dhanurdāsa was called "Mahāmati" by the worthies of Srirangam, inasmuch as his love for Ranganātha was so intense that whenever, the Lord was taken in processions in the streets, 'Mahāmati' walked in front with his sword drawn, so that he may cut any who dared to do any act, in the least offensive to the Deity. Vidura of the Mahābhārata fame was called Mahāmati, inasmuch as his love for Krishna made him to examine the seat, which he had himself prepared for him in his own house, lest he might have unwittingly allowed any danger to lurk in there. Mahāmati literally means wiser than wisdom, this expression having the force of wisdom blinded by love for God. Dhanurdāsa also was thus so wise, i.e., so love-blind as to fear danger for one (God), who is above all dangers.

Kanakāmbā, the wife of Dhanurdāsa, proved to be an exemplary devotee of Rāmānuja, for she looked upon him as the Saviour. It is related that a number of disciples approached the lady one day and expressed to her their doubts as to whom they should look upon as their true saviour, for it was in their experience that many professed themselves as saviours, and they also severally owed to more than one preceptor the spiritual knowledge which they had received and the good-conduct which they had adopted in their life; and it was thus evident that if Rāmānuja was to be looked upon as saviour, there were others as well to whom a measure of this qualification was ascribable. Kanakāmbā on hearing this, simply flourished her locks and gathering them together into a knot, tied it up with a red thread, and kept silent. The disciples understood what she meant to convey by this behaviour. The numerous black hairs signified many teachers but the saviour was Rāmānuja alone, represented by the red thread,—Rāmānuja who crowned them all and bound them all together into his representative self; in other words united into his unique person, all the functions of minor teachers who went before and came after him. The disciples wondered at her steadfastness and fidelity to Rāmānuja, and went away congratulating her on her spiritual eminence.
CHAPTER XXVI.

DÂSARATHI; MARANÉRI-NAMBI.

Such were the additions that were being daily made to Râmânuja’s holy band.

We have seen in a previous chapter that Mudali-y-ândân or Dâšarathi was Râmânuja’s sister’s son. A few particulars about this sage are related at this juncture. We have seen in the last chapter that when Râmânuja went to the river Kaveri for his daily bath, he would lean on Dâšarathi for support, and when returning from the bath he would lean on Dhanur-dâsa. One day Râmânuja was asked why, when he donned the robes of the Sannyâsin (ascetic), he did not give up Dâšarathi, inasmuch as that order demanded that all kith and kin should be renounced. Râmânuja said that Dâšarathi was an exception to this rule, for he was to him as valuable as his triple-staff (trîdanda). When he went to Kôtîiyûr to receive instructions from Gôshthî-Pûrpa, he had told the latter the same thing. “So, gentle-folk,” said he to the questioners, “if it is possible for me, an ascetic, to give up my staff, only then can Dâšarathi leave me. He, though a bodily relation, is yet a kin to my soul.”

Râmânuja was once teaching Dâšarathi Tîru-vûy-moshì, in all his leisure moments. One day, as he was teaching it from his couch, Dâšarathi was so overcome by the sentiments of love to God contained therein, that he stopped repeating the verses with Râmânuja as is usually done. Râmânuja saw this and was glad to see Dâšarathi so sensitive to devout emotions, such as characterize real mystics. “Son,” he said, “it is no wonder our love-saints so move your heart. For the Vedas themselves have been given out to the world in the shape of the Drâvida-Prabandhas, even as ‘the Vedas themselves are said to have incarnated as Râmâyâna, when the Lord of the Vedas himself incarnated on earth as Râma’.”

1 वेद-पूर्दनम् पुरुष हृदयाचरणम्।
बेद-पूर्दनम्। साधनमविशयवत्मकम्॥ [Sîru-pûrda].
Thus were many days spent in useful occupation, and in thinking out projects for the amelioration of the world. One day, Attuzhây, the daughter of Mahâpûrña, left her mother-in-law's house to her father's. "What is the matter, daughter?" he asked her. "Father," she complained, "you know we women have to go to the river to bathe, after our monthlies. I asked my mother-in-law to accompany me, girl as I am and having to go alone. But she chose to be ill-tempered and further taunted me by saying: 'Your parents have indeed sent so many servant girls as a part of your trousseau (stridhana); why not take one of them with you instead of asking me'? I felt this jeer so keenly that I have come to you." "I do not know anything of these matters, poor girl!" said he coaxingly, "go and inform Râmânuja, who is our Head." So Attuzhây hastened to Râmânuja and laid her grievance before him. "Oh, I see your mother-in-law wants a servant for thee at her house," said Râmânuja, "here is one, take him." So saying, he called Dāsarathi and bid him accompany the young lady, and work under her orders, considering himself as part of her stridhana. Dāsarathi immediately obeyed, and following the young lady to the river where she bathed, worked in her house like a slave. The sudden advent of Dāsarathi, and that for purposes of menial service, excited the curiosity of the members of the household, for they knew him as a venerable person attached to Râmânuja, and for whom they had devout regards. So, they asked him to say what made him leave Râmânuja and come to their house unasked, and that for gratuitous service? "Friends," he said, "I am not master of myself, nor can I judge why my Master Râmânuja wishes me to serve in your household. He bid me go with this maiden and be at her service. I have done so. For reasons and motives, if you are particular, I must refer you to our Râmânuja." They all ran to the monastery and humbly falling at the feet of Râmânuja, besought him to say why such a high personage as Dāsarathi was directed to go to their humble dwelling for drudgery. They submitted further that this measure imperilled the safety of their souls inasmuch as they were put to the necessity of using a
saint as a slave. "We are already sinners, Sire," pleaded they, "pray let not this addition be made." Râmânuja simply answered: "Good men, we sent our Dâsarathi as a part of our bride's outfit, for the little Attuzhây is my guru's daughter, and therefore our daughter. If you are not willing to accept what, in duty bound, we have sent, you are welcome to return it." They returned home and begged Dâsarathi to kindly return to Râmânuja.

At this time another momentous question turned up. One of Yâmuna's disciples was Máranëri-Nambi of Máranëri, of the Pândya country. He was a Sûdra i.e., a member of the fourth caste of the Hindu social system. He lived with Mahâpûrna, who was a disciple himself of Yâmuna, and a Brâhmaṇa. Máranëri being a beloved disciple of Yâmuna, Mahâpûrna had great regards for his master's man. Máranëri fell sick. He prayed to Mahâpûrna thus:—"Sire, though my body is of the Sûdra, it is one which by service to my master Yâmuna, is sacred. It is going to die now. Pray cast it not to dogs. Who will throw to dogs the oblations (pûrodâsa) set apart for Devas? My body belongeth to Yâmuna." Pûrna quieted him by saying that he need have no anxiety on that account; that all would go well. With this assurance, Máranëri breathed his last, and Pûrna cremated him—instead of burying, which is the custom for the Sûdras—and had the Brahmamedha rites performed, which is only ordained for the Brâhmaṇas.

Râmânuja,—Pûrna's disciple,—came to know this. Though he was himself a reformer, yet, in his opinion, time was not yet ripe for extending all Brâhmanic privileges to Sûdras. They must be gradually raised, first in spirit, i.e., in principles and customs and morals, and then only such social privileges granted, as may not outrage at once the communal sense of the composite body of the Āryans. Râmânuja was doing this work cautiously, even so having to face much obloquy from the higher caste-men. While so, for Mahâpûrna, to have extended the highest privileges of a Brâhmaṇa, viz., the Brahma-Medha obsequies, to a Sudra, however
high he may be spiritually, was a shock to the communal feeling which it was not expedient to deliver. Rāmānuja going to Mahāpūrṇa, and making due obeisance, argued with him in this manner and finished by saying: "Sire, I am building a system, but you are pulling it down." To which, Pūrṇa answered thus:—"Rāmānuja, I admit the force of your objections. But I am for radical reforms, not half-measures, and then, we ought to have a margin for signal exceptions like Māraneri. Besides, have I not precedents to justify my present act? Am I superior to Rāma, the Hero of the Ikshvāku race,? Is Māraneri inferior to the Bird Jaṭāyu, for whom Rāma performed the Brahmanedha?¹ Am I greater than Dharma-putra? and is Māraneri lower than Vidura, to whom the same Samskāra was administered? And are the truths uttered by St. Namāzhvār, in his Tiruvāymozhi: "Payilum" [iii-7] and “Nedumāl” [viii-10], descanting on the greatness of godly men, irrespective of caste and color, mere senseless babble?"

On hearing this, Rāmānuja was silent. "But in my turn; I have to propose to you one question," began Pūrṇa "and that is this. How is it that I found Māraneri, uttering neither: 'Ranga is my refuge,' nor 'Yāmuna is my refuge,' when he died? You know this is what is enjoined on all the Faithful at time of death," Rāmānuja said: "Such an omission is no ground of accusation against him. For I know he had abandoned himself entirely at that moment to God, trusting Him in His promise that: 'at the time of death, it is not for the dying man to remember or say anything, but for God to remember the dying man and do the needful.'²" But retorted Pūrṇa, "this is a Promise made by Varāha, when he when he was consumed with love for His Consort Bhū. How can such a Madman's Word be depended upon? Rāmānuja answered: "Know you not, Sire, that our salvation is sure when our

¹ Rāmāyaṇa, III.66.—
"Libations of the stream they poured
In honor of the vulture lord,
With solemn ritual to the slain,
As scripture's holy texts ordain."

² [Varāha Purāṇa]
Father and Mother are ever together?" 1 Pūrṇa was pleased with this apt and intelligent answer.

At this time happened another incident. Śrī Rāmānuja was one day observed leading a poor dumb man with him and shutting himself up with him in the monastery in a private chamber. Kūrēṣa was watching this unusual conduct on the part of the high pontiff; and looking through a chink in the closed door, observed Rāmānuja showing the dumb man by means of signs, his own holy feet, and making him understand thereby that their contemplation would be the sole means of his salvation. Kūrēṣa, on seeing this supreme act of grace, soliloquized to himself thus: "Alas that I have been born Kūrēṣa, a man of learning and wisdom; I had fain been born dumb and boorish to have deserved such precious free grace as this man!" It is said, that Kūrēṣa swooned away under the weight of this reflection.

About this time, Rāmānuja undertook a journey to T. Kōṭḍiyār on a visit to his Āchārya Goshṭhi Pūrṇa. He was found seated in a high loft in his house absorbed in contemplation. Rāmānuja waited for an opportunity and submissively asked what it was he so intently dwelt on; in other words what was the mantra he muttered to himself and the dhyāna or object of his thought. Pūrṇa said: "Noble son, my only mantra is the Holy Name of Yāmuna and my only dhyāna is his blessed figure (vigraha) which fascinated me as I studied it when he was bathing in the holy Kaveri waters. "The Guru's Holy Name is our hymn and his image the object of our loving contemplation" 2 as say the Sāstras. Rāmānuja prostrated himself before his Guru and returned to Śrīrangam.

1"When the son is ever with the Father," as a Christian would say.
2युजोपावादाधुजस्यपापेऽव युजपिंमतिकामश्री. 
CHAPTER XXVII.

CHOLA’S PERSECUTIONS.

It is written: "When the gracious eyes of a good Guru fall on a person, his salvation is sure, be he dumb or deaf, fool or wise, old or young." Râmânuja was showering his graces on all in this way; and was holding his Vedânta-discourses in splendid style with a splendid array of disciples, headed by such illustrious personages as Kûrêśa, Dâśarathî and Devarât. The Chola-king, for the time being, happened to be a most bigoted Saiva. He was bent upon destroying Vishnu temples, and otherwise prosecuting Vaishnavas, though his son (Vikrama Chola. 1113—1128 A.C), wisely hinted that he had set to himself an impossible task, inasmuch as he could never destroy the two strong props of the Vaishnavas, the Tiruvâdâvomôzi of St. Namâmâzhvâr and Râmâyana of Vâlmîki. The Saiva system is anti-Vedic, and Vaishnavas condemn it as un-Āryan and erroneous. The king, then resident at Chidambaram (or Gangaikonda Cholapuram) was so bigotted an adherent of this system that he adopted coercive measures to bring men of all other faiths into its fold. For this purpose, he had a proclamation issued in which was written: “There is no (God) greater than Siva;” and every one, especially every learned man, was commanded to affix his signature to the document in proof of his assent to this proposition. Many obeyed either for fear of being punished, in case of refusal; or on grounds of conscience, or enticed by hopes of rewards of land and money from the king; and others deserted the country and hid themselves. Nâlûrân, a disciple of Kûrêśa, happened to be the king’s minister. “What is the use, your Majesty!” said he “of your obtaining signatures from all men indiscriminately. No good purpose is served thereby. If you can obtain the signature of the two veterans of the Vaishnav faith, Kûrêśa and Râmânuja, living in Srîrangam, that will be a capital stroke of policy, and your declaration about Siva’s pre-eminency will only then have
received irrefutable testimony." Chola immediately directed messengers to go to Srirangam and bring Râmânuja. They arrived and standing before the gate of the monastery, declared their errand, and said that Râmânuja must go with them to the King's Court forthwith. The door-keepers rushed inside and whispered the news softly to Kûrêśa, who was then engaged in serving bath-water to Râmânuja. Kûrêśa foresew the dangers of persecution that threatened; and without telling Râmânuja what he meant doing, he donned the colored robes of Râmânuja, and taking up his tridanda, emerged from the monastery; and saying: "I am Râmânuja, proceed," to the King's men, stepped on. Mâhâpûrṇa, observing this, followed Kûrêśa on this ominous expedition.

Râmânuja, coming from his bath, called for his colored robe and staff, but Dâśarathi told him that Kûrêśa had worn them and departed with the King's messengers, who had come for Râmânuja, in order to compel them to sign a declaration-paper maintaining Siva's superiority over all other gods. On hearing this, Râmânuja exclaimed in sore distress of heart thus:—"Oh, what will become of Kûrêśa and Mâhâpûrṇa, in this war of bigotry! Pray let me wear the white garments of Kûrêśa, that I may not be discovered by that heretic-chief's myrmidons!" "You must not, Holy Sire, even remain in this spot," submitted Dâśarathi in fear, "lest harm should come to your valuable life." Râmânuja's fears were further aroused, but he knew not how he should act in such an emergency; and so he hurried to his Chapel—Deity Varada, and made supplication to him meltingly to ward off the evil which threatened to engulf them all and to obliterata, by one stroke, all the good work that had for years been so patiently done. And in giving vent to his feelings, be prayed in the fashion of St. Bhaktângrih-Renu thus:—

"If the luckless Buddhhas, Jains and those,  
That follow Rudra's feet, in poignant words,

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1 Read Topic 146 Pp. 161 ff. in our "Divine Wisdom of Dravida Saints."

2 Read his life in our Lives of Āshvârs. The verse is the 8th in his Tirumâlai:—"Guru poodu Samañpar, &c."
Do hateful talk of Thee, O, Lord! Thy slaves,
With anguish keen pierced, sure sickening die.
Hence Thou, that swell'st Kâmund hugo, pray list.
If chance e'er thusly thwart my virtuous path,
Such God-denying souls, but righteous work I ween,
I then and there their heads lay low."

"Good God," "said he," the Chola king is very powerful just
now. I leave to Thee how and when thou wilt do away with
him. I will now leave this country; and elsewhere, I will, if
necessary, resort to measures which will hasten his tyrant's
destruction." So saying, he looked northward in the direction
of Melkote, and taking his disciples with him, left Srîrangam
with a heavy heart. In the meanwhile, Chola's men coming
to know that it was not the real Râmânuja who was trapped,
came in pursuit. By this time Râmânuja was crossing a
broad sandy river; and sighted the pursuers. "What shall
we do?" he cried, addressing his disciples, "let us take hand-
fuls of sand and with this mantra" repeated over it, throw
them in their path as we proceed; and leave the rest to God."
They all did as he said. When the royal emissaries trod on
the enchanted sand, their feet stuck, and their pursuit was thus
checked. "Ah, these Brâhmaṇas have used magic against
us," exclaimed they, and beat back in confusion. Râmânuja
proceeded now on his way with Lord Rânga for his help.

They threaded their way through trackless wilds and
before they arrived at the base of the Nilagiri Hills, Râmânuja
and his disciples missed each other in the wilderness. They
were wandering in search of each other, when one disciple met
a few forest men busy ploughing land. These happened to be
the disciples of Tirumalai Nallân Chakravarti,—an old disciple
of Râmânuja. Meeting a Srîvaishnava, they naturally felt
themselves attached to him; and accosting him asked:—
"Sire, whence art thou coming?" "From Srîrangam, good folk,"

1 Or Śrî-Nârâyaṇa-puram, on a hill, 30 miles north of the city of
Mâisâr.  
2 The 4th verse: "Kâdal-kâdalindu" of Periyâzhwar's Tirumâzhî.
[V.4.4.]
he replied. "There, is our Râmânuja doing well? Is all going on well with our blessed Lord Ranga?" asked they. "Good folk, where is God? What do we care for His blessed state? Know that our Master Râmânuja had to desert Srivangam on account of Chola's persecutions, and we know not whither he has strayed away in this wilderness"; replied they in grief. On hearing this, the men ceased their work in the fields, and for six days searched for Râmânuja without food and water. On the sixth night, in the gloom, they heard men's voices. They were sure the voices were like the voices of Brâhmaṇas. They listened. Râmânuja's party also had sighted a fire which the searching party had lit on a field to warm themselves. For it was a dark night, rainy and chilly. Râmânuja had reached the foot of a hill and his other disciples had joined him. They were all wet and hungry and shivering with cold. And Râmânuja, after descriing the light, was asking his disciples to carry him thither. The search-party guessed already they must be the objects of their search; but of course were not sure; and so, as soon as they heard their conversation, cried out:—"Hither, sirs, come hither, we shall show you the way." They joined one another. The guests were led to the blazing fire and warmed; dry clothes were provided and every service was gladly rendered to make them comfortable. And then they inquired: "Whence are you all coming, sirs?" "From Srivangam," they said. "What is our Râmânuja doing there?" they queried. Râmânuja kept silent, but his disciples asked;—"How do ye, good men, know Râmânuja?" "Sirs," they said, "our guru is Nallân Chakravarti. The last advice he left with us was that Râmânuja should be cherished in our hearts as the Grand Guru; and that His holy feet alone were our Way to salvation. Thus we know Râmânuja." "Then here he is." So saying, they pointed out Râmânuja amongst them. On this

1 This was the personage who performed cremation to a Chandâla's dead body which came floating down the Vaigai river near Kântchí, inasmuch as the body bore the marks of Discus and Conch, the symbols of Vishnu. The townsfolk resented this, but Lord Varada said:— "இந்து மனிதர்கள், பாவம்தேசர்கள், மூச்சிகங்கள், பாவென்று மூச்சிகங்கள்" i.e., "He is bad to you, but good to me."
discovery, they fell on their faces and clinging fondly to his feet, wept for joy. They then brought grain and honey in abundance; and new pots, in which to fry the former, pound it into powder, and mix with honey and eat it. Râmânuja and his men gratefully partook of the same, after having been greatly exhausted by journeys and elemental inclemencies; and retired for a long-wished-for rest.

The next morning, they were all up and prepared to continue their journey northwards towards the hills and beyond. One of the forest-men and one disciple 1 were chosen to carry tidings to Sîrîngam and inquire how it fared with Kûrêśa; and the rest—forty-five disciples, it is written—journeyed northward, guided by the forest-men. They performed about six days’ journey and reached a certain fastness in the heart of the Nilagiri Hill range, where the chief of the forest-men lived. The chief was gone out hunting. The guides conducted their holy party however to his house, where they were introduced to the chief’s wife, whom, as their high mistress, they addressed thus:—“Madam, these holy men are our Gurus; we commend them to your care. Pray attend to all their wants, and whatever it may cost, debit it to us and write off the same in the accounts against wages due to us by your master.” Thus entrusting their holy burden to good hands, they departed. The chief now returned from his hunting, and was told all. “How can we eat, while these good men are hungry,” he said, and despatched his men to conduct them to a neighbouring village, to the house of a Brâhmaṇa, named Kâṭṭâlai-vâri, sending an abundance of provisions to entertain them with, without the least delay. The messengers saw this done and returned and reported the same to their chief.

The wife of Kâṭṭâlai-vâri was the reputed Kongil-pirâṭti or Chelâñchalâmbâ ². She prostrated herself before them and asked whether she might not cook for them. They replied in the negative. “To whose feet, sirs, do ye belong?” she

1 This is said to be Mâruti-yândân. Another, Ammanj-ammâl, is said to have also accompanied them.

² For brevity, we shall call her Kongil.
inquired. "Rāmānuja," they replied. "Doubt not, sirs, I also belong to him," rejoined she. "Strange, pray give an account how that came about," asked the guests. "Sirs," she began, "once rains failed, and famine was on the land. We therefore left our native land and went to Srirangam; where myself and my husband engaged a house, living on the second floor thereof. I was daily watching Rāmānuja emerging into the streets, after his morning’s duties in the temple were fulfilled, for the sake of entering seven houses to collect his daily alms. As his holiness strolled in the streets like a very god on earth, many people fell at his feet; among the number I particularly observed Akalankanattāzhvān, the husband of Tripurādēvi. One day, Rāmānuja entered my poor house. Observing it, I ran down the stairs and stood behind a door, attentive. "Good dame, what is in thy mind," he asked me, and I humbly said:—"Holy Sire, thou comest a-begging to poor peoples’ houses, whilst I see kings fall at thy feet in the streets. Please solve this mystery for me." He said:—"Dear daughter, I tell these men bits of news about God; and they become attached to my person. And it is my duty to go to poor houses, and go anywhere where there may be people who wish to hear good tidings of God." Then, Holy Father," said I, "may I not be the recipient of a little of it?" "Surely," said he, "and he told me what was good for me and took his departure. Now rains fell, and famine had left our land, and we resolved to join our native country; but I had forgotten the good advice given to me by Rāmānuja. I was troubled and did not know what to do. As I was pensive however, Rāmānuja suddenly dropped into our poor house again. I ran down the stairs to meet him and excusing myself for my bad memory, begged of him to tell the tidings of God once more to me, as I was about to leave Srirangam for my native village. Looking upon me graciously, he impressed upon me once more the Dvaya-mantra, along with the Holy Names of all the Apostles of our faith, God downwards and ending with himself. He was leaving me; but I entreated him to stay a while and bestow on me something which I might carry in remembrance and which I might
worship as my saviour. And he was so kind as to grant me his holy sandals. And then myself and my husband returned home with this blessed gift. Never since have I had the joy of seeing Râmânuja again. It is many years ago now.” Râmânuja heard all this, but he was half in cognito, wearing the white garments of Kûrêśa and many days had gone past, so that Kongil had not recognised him yet. Learning, as he did, the account given, he gave her permission to cook and commanded a disciple of his to watch her performances. She left and her procedure was thus:—By repeating: ‘Blessed be Râmânuja,’ she sprinkled her head with water so consecrated. She washed the whole house with cowdung and water, took fresh pote, and wearing a clean washed cloth, cooked meals, all the time muttering the holy prabandha, and after placing the viands in clean baskets, entered into her chapel. Here she placed Râmânuja’s sandals on a raised dais, and repeating: “Râmânuja’s Holy Feet are my sole refuge,” offered the viands she carried, and returning to the guests, begged them to wash their feet and get ready to discuss the meals before it became cold. The disciple, told out to watch her, was now called aside by Râmânuja to give an account and he recounted exactly all that she did, but he said:—“It was dark in the chapel. There were two black objects, which looked long, which she worshipped and to which she offered food.” “Daughter,” called her Râmânuja, “please let us see what you worshipped in the dark.” She brought them and said:—“Holy Sire, these are the sandals of my Râmânuja, which he gave to me at Srîrangam. I daily worship them and eat only after offering food to them. And this day I did the same. Nothing more.” Râmânuja measured them with his feet, and said:—“Curious enough, they suit me; but come here, daughter.” She approached and he whispered into her ears thus:—“Daughter, know that these disciples of mine are very strict. They see the sandals suit my feet, but this does not quite satisfy them however, please let me hear what Râmânuja taught thee.” Kongil repeated the mantra taught her before. “Good, but dost thou discover Râmanuja in this band?” asked Râmânuja. Kongil returned inside and bringing a light examined Râmanuja’s feet, and exclaimed:—
“Sire, your feet are indeed like Râmanuja’s, but you wear white robes which he did not and could not as a Sanyâsin. I am confused, Father.” Râmanuja, moved by her anxiety and no longer wishing to hide himself from her said:—“Dear daughter, I am Râmanuja.” On hearing this, her confusion turned into joy and wonder. She fell on her face and nestling to his feet, wept for joy. “Disciples,” said Râmanuja, turning to them. “now there need be no more hesitation on your part to eat her food. Sri Krishna ate Vidura’s food, for it was pure and good.¹ Such is our Kungil’s food. Go and eat.” They did so, but Râmanuja did not. So Kungil was troubled and cried: “But how about you, father?” “Daughter,” he said, “you see the food has been offered to my sandals. So I cannot eat that.” “Then, father,” said she, “I shall bring milk and fruits; offer them to your God and eat.” Râmanuja did so, and all then rested, steeped in bliss.

The devout Kungil collected the remnants of food left, after they all ate, and taking it and the foot-washed water of Râmanuja to her husband, who was sleeping aloft, roused him and let him eat. But he saw her fasting. “Why dost thou not eat, dear?” asked he. “Lord,” she answered, “Râmanuja and his disciples have come to our house from Sri-rangam, and they have slept away without taking food.” “What can I do, lady?” he asked. “Cannot you, Lord, become Râmanuja’s disciple?” “If you please,” said he. On obtaining this promise on the ruse, she ate and went to rest after her hard day’s loving labour. Next day, she awoke and approaching Râmanuja, entreated him to stay yet longer, and deign to take her husband to his fold by administering to him necessary Vaishnava-sacraments. He gladly consented and did every thing needed and reading to them many a useful lesson for their future welfare, sojourned in their good home for a few days, and taking leave of the good pair by blessing them, pursued his journey.

¹ निम्नानामविनिजये वर्षातितिगुणवत्तिच. [Mahâbhârata, Udyoga: 90-42.]
CHAPTER XXVIII.

RĀMĀNUJA AND MAISŪR.

The Nilagiri Range was thus traversed, and threading their way with toil north-west, they reached Vahni-Pushkariṇī. Resting here for a few days, they made their way to Mithilā-Sāligrāmā. Here they found the place full of Vira-Śaivas, or staunch adherents of Śivaism, who gave the new arrivals scant or no welcome. Rāmānuja hit upon a method to turn their minds. He called Dāsarathi to his side and said:—"Son, here is the fountain from which the village folk carry their drinking water for their households. Unnoticed by them, dip your feet into the water and watch the effect." He did as bid. The villagers drank the water and their hostility for the new comers turned into civility. They even went so far as to become Rāmānuja's followers in Faith. A memento of this incident of the water, magnetized by the holy feet of the best of his disciples, effecting a miracle, is to this day still preserved in the shape of a small shrine erected on the spot, in which are installed the feet of Rāmānuja for devout worship by all, and the holy fountain is close by, connected with the shrine by a flight of steps, by which every pilgrim descends into it and reverently sprinkles the waters over his head. "The town deserves the name of Sāligrāmā, i. e., the stone symbol of Vishṇu," said Rāmānuja in joy, on account of this strange event.

Of the many who embraced the Faith here, the chief was Vaduga-nambi or Āndhra-pūrṇa, who became a most devout and intimate follower. Rāmānuja taught him all the arcane truths of religion for days, in the Temple of the Lord Nara-

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1 The exact route is not recorded as far as our information goes.
2 Ramānuja seems to have followed the course of the Kāveri as far as Satyanagaram, then taking a chord line, reach Kāveri again at Rāmanāthapuram.
3 Rāmanāthpur, on the Kāveri River, about 40 miles west of Mysore.
4 Now known as Mirla and Sāligrāmā, two villages, about 30 miles west of Mysore.
5 The Shrine above named belongs to the descendants of this disciple who are related to myself, the writer of this book. The village is reputed to be unaffected by cobra-poison, for Rāmānuja is Śesha.
simha, in the outskirts of the village. And here also, it is chronicled, Rāmānuja prayed fervently to Lord Srinivāsa of Tirupati to put an end to the cruel Parāntaka or the Chōla king and heretic, his tormentor, persecutor and the declared enemy of the Śrīvaishnava-faith. It would appear that this intense invocation to the Deity produced its effect inasmuch as Chōla found a carbuncle—the king’s evil—forming on the nape of his neck, festering with worms, and eventually killing him after much torment. Hence he is known as Kṛmikāṇṭha Chōla, or worm-necked Chōla.

Rāmānuja now left Sālígrāma and proceeded eastwards to Tondānūr, which seems to have been then the capital or a capital outpost of the Hoysala Ballāla kings of the Jain persuasion ruling at Dvāra-samudra or Hālēbid.1 Vīthala-Deva-Rāya was the name of the ruling king and he had his head quarters at the time, at Tondānūr.2 He had a daughter whom an unclean spirit had taken possession. The king had called many physicians and magicians to treat her, but it was all in vain, and he was very grieved. There was a good man in the town by name Tondānūr-Nambi, who lived by alms. He used to frequent the palace, and one day finding the queen, Sāntala-Dēvi3 in grief, asked her the cause thereof. She explained that it was due to the condition in which her daughter was found, who even shamelessly ran about the streets naked, and did other antic things, all in consequence of the devil which had entered into her. T. Nambi said: "Noble Queen, may I tell you that a great and holy man, by name Rāmānuja, has arrived at our town. I have become his disciple; and I have learnt that he once treated a similar case to that of your daughter, and succeeded in delivering a princess from an evil spirit—a Brahma-raksha.4 If you will get him

1 Vide Rice’s Gazetteer of Mysore.
2 Known now as Tonnūr, about 16 miles north of Mysore on the way to Melukote. Even as late as 1316 A.C. the kings used to retire to Tondanur. [Pp: 241-2 Vol. I Rice’s “Mysore Gazetteer.”]
3 See p. 41 Intro: Rice’s “Belagola Inscriptions.”
4 See pages 41, 42.
to see your daughter with his gracious eyes, I have hopes of a speedy cure for her.” The queen was overjoyed at this revelation and communicated it at once to her royal spouse. He said:—“Lady, if Rāmānuja will cast the devil out of our daughter and restore her to a sense of shame, we shall fall at his feet and accept him as our guru.”

In the meanwhile, the king intended to give a feast to his caste-men, the Jainas who abounded in the country. The queen however warned her husband thus:—“Lord, thou givest a feast no doubt, but thy castemen, the Jainas, will reject thy invitation on the score that thou art wanting in a finger of thy hand.” “How can they dare refuse a king’s invitation?” said the king irritated, and consulted his kinsmen about it. They said:—“King, the Turushka 1 emperor of Delhi, captured thee and thy country; and set a mark on thee to show that thou hadst lost thy independence and sovereignty, by depriving thee of a finger. But our custom does not allow us to eat in the house of a finger-less man. Dost thou forget thou art called Bitti-deva, 2 or the finger-Lord? We refuse to eat in thy house.” This greatly incensed the king and he vowed vengeance against them.

The queen approached Bitti-deva and said:—“Lord, why art thou concerned thus? What care we for our kinsmen? Let us dissociate ourselves from their community and join the Vaishnava ranks by becoming disciples of Rāmānuja. Hast thou forgotten what our Nambi told us about him? And is not our mad daughter also to be set right?” “Well said, we shall at once send for Rāmānuja,” said Bitti-deva, and sent out men to invite Rāmānuja to his palace. But when the men delivered their message to Rāmānuja, who had camped outside the town limits, he told them that he would not plant his foot in kings’ cities. Nambi was there at the time. He rose and falling before Rāmānuja, pleaded thus:—“Holy Sire, we beseech thee not to be so determined, but enter the king’s house.

1 Or Turk, a general name for all foreign invaders, except the Yavanas and the Feringhekas. Read A. Barth’s Religions of India: P. 211.
2 Converted into Sanskrit as Viṭṭhala-deva.
He will be an invaluable gain to our faith. Melukote or Tiru-Nārāyaṇa-puram, about which thou hast been dreaming, is situate in this king’s dominions. Thy desire is to restore this old and forgotten place of worship. To do this we want a king to espouse the cause. So we earnestly pray thee not to reject the king’s overtures. Enter his house and shower on him thy graces.” Rāmānuja was won by this persuasion and immediately made his entry into the city and the king’s mansion. Bitti-deva was elated with joy, and as the holy sage advanced, he ran to him and threw himself at his feet. Rāmānuja made kind inquiries, and entering the royal apartments was told the sad plight in which the king’s daughter was. He commanded his disciples to have the girl brought before him and sprinkle her with the water made holy by the washing of his feet. This they did. And lo, the evil spirit left her; she was no more demented but returned to a sense of shame, ran into the inner apartments and shrouding herself in garments, returned and fell before Rāmānuja, saying: “Holy Saint, thou art no ordinary mortal. Thou art a celestial being descended from heaven. Else I should not have recovered. Praise be to thee. I bow to thee.” Vithala-deva was simply carried out of himself on witnessing these miracles, and needless to say, at once became a disciple of Rāmānuja, and devoted himself to his service for ever. Rāmānuja bestowed on him the name of Vishnu-Vardhana-Rāya.  

1 Rāmānuja knew of this from the Yādavagiri-Mahātmya contained in the Nārada and the Matsya Purānas.  
2 The Indian Antiquary Vol. II. May 1873 quotes a passage from Sravana Belagola Śthalapurāṇa thus:—“In Saka year 1039, Durmukhi (=1117 A. C.), Bṛgga-vardhana, under the taunts of his favourite concombine(?) and the arguments of Rāmānujačārya, received Tapta-mundrā (mark of religion) and thus became a convert to the Vaishnava religion. He then changed his name to Vishnu-vardhana, and with a bitter hatred against this (Jaina) religion, discontinued or abolished all the ācāmas, destroyed 790 Bāṣṭi temples, and set up Paṁcha Nārāyas, viz.—Chennig-Nārāyaṇa at Bēḷūru, Kirti-Nārāyaṇa at Talakādu, Vijaya-Nārāyaṇa at Gadug, and Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa at Haradanahalli, transferring to these all the svāsthayas or ācāmas that had formerly been given to the Bāṣṭi temples. He built the tank at Toḍanārū from the stones of the destroyed Bāṣṭi temples and called it Tirumalasagara. Having abolished different kinds of Jaina ācāma * * * he established below this tank Tirumalasagara chaṭṭa for the feeding of the Rāmānuja-kūta.
The Jainas rose in revolt against Rāmānuja. It is said that a body of 12,000 of them marched to Rāmānuja, who had taken his abode in Lord Nrisimha’s temple at Tondanūr, and demanded of him that he should first argue with them on religion and philosophy, before he interfered with their king. Rāmānuja seeing this tremendous onslaught of an infuriated crowd, thought to himself thus:— “In order to escape from lightning, I have courted thunder; fearing the scorpion, I have fallen a victim to the fangs of a cobra; breaking away from fetters, I have thrust myself into stocks. What is the way now?” Nambi, finding his guru thus embarrassed, said:— “Holy Sire, thou art no ordinary mortal. Is not it thy worth while at such a crisis to reveal thy true celestial nature? May not all men realize thy greatness and be saved?” Rāmānuja, saying: “let it be so then,” retired into an ante-chamber in the temple, and commandeering a curtain to be hung up between him and the crowd, became a thousand-headed serpent,¹ and argued with the Jaina disputants in a thousand ways, vanquishing them completely. This incident is memorialized to this day by means of a painting of Rāmānuja, overshadowed by the thousand heads of Sēpha, on a wall in the Nrisimha temple, existing to this day in good repair in Tonda-

(Continued) foot note on page 181.

He gave the name of Mēnkoṭe and Tirunāṟṟarappram to the village of Doddaguruganahalli, constructed several temples and places, and caused steps to be erected to the hill of Mēnkoṭe.” According to the Belūr inscription: Nārāyaṇa Pratishthā took place in ‘1039. S’ (1117)

[P: 218. Rāmānuja-Dirya-Charitam.]  
¹ Rāmānuja being known as the Adi-Sēsha, is the Lakshmana of Rāmayana, and Balarama of Mahā-Bhāsara [See p: xiv.—our Bhagavad-gitā with Rāmānuja’s commentary.]
nür (called Chaturvedi-mangalam.) Most of them embraced the Vaishnava faith by becoming the disciples of Râmânuja. Vishnù-Vardhana, the king of the Poysala (Hoysala) country became more and more attached to Râmânuja. Out of the materials of Jain temples pulled down, he got a tank constructed, intercepting the drainage of the river Yâdava coming down from Mêlukôte or Yâdavâgiri, 10 miles to the north. ¹

¹ A few notes bearing on these events may be of use to the reader. (A) Rice’s Mysore Gazetteer Vol. II, p. 274 [1897] —“Moti Talâb” or lake of pearls, a large tank at Tonnûr in Seringapatam Taluq. It is formed by an embankment carried across a gap between two rocky hills, which stems the water of the Yâdava-nadi and other mountain torrents that there unite their streams. The mound, whose dimensions are given as 78 cubits high, 150 long, and 250 thick at the base, is said to have been constructed by Râmânûjâchârya, the Sri Vişnûvâra Brâhman reformer, who had taken up his abode at the neighbouring town of Mêlukôte. He named the tank Tirumalasâgara.” (B) Ibid, Vol. I, p. 474:—“He (Râmânuja) then travelled over great part of Southern India, defending and expounding the Viṣṇava creed. He established several mathes, the principal one being at Ahobala. He also converted or restored many Sîva temples to the worship of Viṣṇu, among others the celebrated temple of Tirupati. The Chola King Karikâla Chola, in whose dominion Sri Ranga was situated, was an un-compromising Viṣṇa, and on Râmânûjâchârya’s return thither after these religious successes he was required in common with all the Brâhmans to subscribe to a declaration of faith in Viṣṇa. To escape persecution he fled to the Hoysala kingdom in Mysore. Here he converted from the Jain faith the king thenceforward known as Viṣṇuvâr âdhana, the date assigned to this event being 1117 (?). Having put down the Jains by the severest measures, he settled under the royal favour and protection at Mêlukôte, and there established his throne, which is still occupied by the guru known as the Parakâla Râmânuja (?). After twelve years, on the death of the Chola king, he returned to Sri-ranga and there ended his days.” (C) Ibid, Vol. I, p. 338.—An important event in his (Ballâla or Bîttideva) career was his conversion from the Jain faith to that of Viṣṇu by the apostle Râmânûjâchârya, who had taken refuge in the Hoysala territory from the persecutions of the Chola king, an uncompromising Viṣṇa. This step, accompanied by a change of his name to Viṣṇuvâr âdhana, by which he is principally known, was probably taken in about 1117 (?). Different reasons are given for it. One is that he had a daughter who was possessed: the Jain being unable to effect her cure, it was undertaken by Râmânuja, who cast out the evil spirit, and further, in eighteen days of public disputation, refuted the Jains and convicted them of heresy; those who after this would not submit being ground in oil-mills (?). Another version is, that the king had a Viṣṇuva wife who, by instigation of Râmânuja, hinted to him that the Jain priests were so haughty they would not even accept food at his hands. He was indignant at the idea and resolved to put it to the proof. Now the king had lost a finger, a mutilation that would prevent the Jain priests from eating with him. When, therefore,
(Continued) foot note on page 183.

he found himself dishonoured by a refusal of his invitation, he went over in resentment to the other side, and abandoned the Jains to persecution. Rāmānuja demolished nearly all the Jain temples at the capital, said to have been 720 in number, and used the stones in embanking the large tank."

(D) Ibid, Vol. II, p. 295:—"* * Subsequently, about 1117, (P) Rāmānujāchārya, the celebrated apostle of the Vishnuit sect, on fleeing from Drāvida to avoid a confession of faith prescribed by the Chola Rāja to be made by all his subjects, which was to establish the superiority of Śiva over Vishnū, took refuge in the Mysore country, where he succeeded in converting from the Jain faith the powerful Hoysala king, Bṛjī-Deva, thenceforth known as Vishnūvardhana. This royal convert conferred on his apostle and his followers the tract of country on each side of the river Kaveri at Srirangapatna, known by the name of Ashtagrāma or eight townships, over which he appointed his own officers under the ancient designations of Prakūsa and Hebbārā."
CHAPTER XXIX.

MËLUKOTÈ OR ŚRî-NĂRAYANAPURAM.

Râmânuja was thus employed. He not only expounded the profound truths of the Vedânta in Nrisimha’s temple at Toudanâr, but with those truths converted thousands of alien faiths to the royal roads of Vedântic Vaishnavism. While thus employed he ran short of Tirumâna, or the holy white earth, with which Srivaishnavas are required to illumine their foreheads. To go without this distinguishing mark is the greatest misfortune to Śrî-Vaishnavas. Naturally therefore Râmânuja was much concerned. He had a dream in which Lord Śrî-Nârayana of Melukote appeared and spoke thus:—“I am very near thee, Râmânuja, on the Yadugiri hill, awaiting thy arrival; and there thou shalt have thy Tirumâna also as well. Come soon.” Râmânuja awoke and related his wonderful dream to all his comrades, and sending for Vishnu-Vardhana, the king, delivered to him the message. The king marvelled and immediately ordered gangs of men to clear the forests in the direction indicated by Râmânuja, and as Râmânuja advanced, the king devoutly followed him behind. Steadily progressing thus, they arrived at the foot of the Yadugiri hill, and ascend-

1 Some notes from Rice’s Epicographical Carnatick Vol. III. p. 20, are here added: “—Inscription 80 Sr. records the grant of the title to the sacred earth at Melukote, which, it is said, was discovered by Emberumânar, or Râmânujâchârya, the great Vaishnava reformer. It is a fine white clay or decayed schistose mica, which is used by the Srivaishnava Brâhmins for making the ndâma or sectarian marks on their foreheads; and is in such demand for this purpose, on account of its purity, that it is transported to distant places, even as far as Benares. It is said to have been brought to Melukote by Gâruman, the bird of Vishnu, from Svetâdvîpa in the Kashiramudra or milk-ocean.

2 Some Vaishnavas work it by digging the whole substance out of the beds in which it lies, and throwing it into large vessels of water, it is stirred about; and while the mica swims, the segments of quartz remain at the bottom and are taken out by the hand. The mica is then allowed to subside and forms into a mass, which is divided into small pieces, and afterwards made into balls by being moistened in water. These are sold for use, and are perfectly white” [Buchanan, I. 348].

3 Cp. (a) “We sign the servants of God in their foreheads” [Rev. 7. 3].

(b) “Which have not the seal of God in their foreheads” [Rev. 9. 4].

(c) “Having his Father’s name written in their foreheads” [Rev. 14. 1].
ing it, arrived at the fountain called Véda-pushkariṇī, and sighting the holy slab, (paridhánasíla), where of yore Dattátreya had worn his ascetic robes, Rámánuja bathed in the fountain and laying aside Káréśa’s white robes, worn when leaving Srírangam, put on his colored ascetic robes. The date of entry into Yadugiri is chronicled as the Bahudhánya year, in the month of Tai (or about 1090 A. C., or when Rámánuja was about 80 years of age). From the Véda-pushkariṇī, they silently walked forward in search of where Lord Náráyaṇa (i.e., His statue) lay hidden. They failed that day to find the place Rámánuja however saw in a vision vouchsafed to him that He lay covered up in an ant-hill, between a Champaka and a Vakula tree on either side, and to the south-west corner of the Kalyáṇi-pond, and that the ant-hill was overgrown with the sacred basil. He also saw that the place where tirmañ was deposited lay to the north-west corner of the same Kalyáṇi-pond, and he also heard as if Náráyaṇa telling him that fragments of basil leaves would be strewn along the path which lay between Rámánuja and the places indicated. Rámánuja awoke from his reverie and followed the directions given. This led to Kalyáṇi, and thence on to the ant-hill. This was covered with basil as prophesied. Rámánuja was transported with joy and prostrating himself before the place, removed the earth, and lo, the statue of Náráyaṇa was found underneath. Inexpressible joy animated the devout band who were privileged to be present on this most auspicious and blissful occasion; and the divine sight so intoxicated them that they deliriously danced, chanted praises, sent forth peals of hand-clappings and ejaculations, and with king Vishnu-vardhana in their midst, celebrated the occasion with a blast of trumpets and a beat of tom-toms and a burst of instrumental and other music—all, a united outburst and demonstration of the intense spiritual glow in which they had become enveloped by an event, the most unusual and extraordinary in the annals of mankind. Pails of milk were brought and emptied over the Holy Statue.

¹ Mr. Rice puts 1117 A.C., as the year of Bitti-Deva’s conversion. This must be wrong. Bahudhánya tallies with 1099, A.C., when Rámánuja was exactly 82 years of age.
followed by a detail of ritual prescribed by the Pañcharātra Sāstra. Rāmānuja himself personally worshipped the Deity for three days, and Nārāyana was thus reinstalled after ages of oblivion, and the decad of St. Nammāzhvār, beginning with Oru-udyakam [Tiruvāymozhi, v-i], was dedicated to this God, inasmuch as Rāmānuja was the rightful inheritor of all the spiritual wealth of the apostles preceding him,¹ and was thus the authority to interpret forgotten traditions.

Rāmānuja next proceeded to the north-west corner of the Kalyāṇi-pond, and made a furrow on the ground with his holy staff. It revealed white beds of clay, and thus was another act of his vision realized, to the marvel of all present. Rāmānuja thus obtained the holy earth he wanted, (described in the beginning of this Chapter), with which he signed himself on the twelve parts of the body prescribed, and to his great delectation.

The jungle over the summit of the Melukoṭe (Yādavagiri) hill was cleared away, streets were aligned, rows of houses built, a temple erected for Lord Nārāyana over the ant-hill; and a series of festivals, monthly, annual and so on were instituted. But an utsava (processional) image was wanting—an image cast of a compound of five select metals in fixed proportions. But this was difficult of accomplishment, and Rāmānuja fell to musing deeply as to how this difficulty was to be overcome. He was again given a vision, in which Nārāyana appeared to him and spoke thus:—“Rāmānuja, our moveable representative is alive, named Rāmapriya, which is now in Delhi with the Turk Ḍambūdū Rāya. Proceed there and bring it. Rāmānuja accordingly made preparations and journeyed all the way to Delhi and there meeting the Rāya or king, prevailed upon him to grant his request. The Turk king gave orders that Rāmānuja be taken to the apartments where his plundered treasures were hoarded. There were many idols, but Rāmānuja failed to find among them Rāmapriya; and he fell into a reverie as he

¹ Read verse: Ṣūrāja Qubāfātibādha [Rāmānuja's taniyan by Anandāzhvān or Anantasāri.]
pondered how to trace it. He was given a dream in which Rāmapriya appeared and said:—"I am with the daughter of the king. She has made a plaything of me. To her dallierings and caresses, I am a living person. Come there and find me." Rāmānuja awoke and reported to the king that the idol he sought was with the Sultāni. The king's curiosity was roused at the revelations, a foreign Sanyāsin of a different persuasion was making to him; and not curiosity but respect and adoration for the holy saint. The King took the Sanyāsin Rāmānuja into the seraglio, where no other man dared enter; and wonderful to relate, Rāmapriya was there found, fondled by the Sultāni, his daughter, to whom He played the husband. Rāmānuja, entering, called Him by His name, and lo, the Image jumped down from the couch on which the Sultāni had placed Him, and walked to where Rāmānuja stood, in all the glory and grace of an incarnated deity, embellished according to all the ideals of taste natural to Āryan imagination. Rāmānuja embraced the advancing Divine Beauty with all the fondness of a parent finding his long-lost son; and in commemoration of the discovery, called him by the endearing name of Selva-pillai, which in Samskrit is Sampatkumāra, by which name the Image is still called. The king, who witnessed all this procedure was simply astonished beyond measure, and loading Rāmānuja with gifts and honors, sent him back from the scene of his holy mission.

The daughter Sultāni would not bear the separation from the, to her, living doll. She wanted it back for herself. But the father said: "It is their god, daughter; how can we claim Him?" "Then," cried the Sultāni piteously to her father: "Send me with my God. "Most cheerfully," said the father, and allowed her to depart with untold wealth and other things, telling Rāmānuja:—"Holy hermit, thy God goes not alone, but with a wife as well—a precious wife. I consign her to thy care." Rāmānuja proceeded with his Divine treasure, and reached Yādavagiri in due time. Here he inaugurated Sampat-kumāra in all ceremony, and instituted all the festivals which must be celebrated throughout the year, with the necessary establishment to conduct them for all time to
come. And Râmânuja assured all who made Yâdavagiri their holy residence, that they would be entitled to attain to the same spiritual state as himself. By the name Nârâyanâdri in

1 Our readers, we are sure, would like to have some historical light thrown on this most curious incident in the life of Râmânuja. We shall try how far it can be thrown. The word Emmâdu is a clue,—a philological clue which comes to our help. Emmâdu is a most probable corruption of the word Mahommed, Mahmûd, Ahmed, Masûd or Modûd. These are the names of the Turk Kings of Ghazni and Mahmûd of Ghor, at the period between about 1090 and 1102. A.C. 1090 A.C., is the probable year of Râmânuja’s entry into Yâdavagiri or Melukote; and the probable year in which or before which the Jain King of the Hoyasalas, Vittala-deva, was converted to Vaishnavism, receiving the name of Vishnu-vardhana. The death of this king was about 1133 A.C., as we learn from Rice’s Sravana Belagola Inscriptions. [Intro : p. 23].

Purânas (read Yâdavagiri-Mahâtmya) tell us that Râmapriya, the image descended as a holy heritage from Râma of the Solar Race to Kuśa his son and came to Krishna of the Lunar Race, as dowry, who worshipped Him as his tutelary God.

Mahmûd (Emmâdu ?) or Mahommed of Ghazin’s various expeditions into India are known, and his foundation of the Muslim Empire at Lahore in A.C. 1022 [See p. 6, Ch. II, Letchbridge’s History of India], the sack of the Somnâth Temple in A.C. 1026-27, when Râjput princes from all parts flocked to defend their holiest shrine assembled in the sacking and booty obtained thus from various parts, Râmapriya appears to have been carried away. How He was carried away from Melukote is buried in the obscure tradition of prehistoric days. Mahmûd died in A.C. 1030. Ahmed (Emmâdu ?) succeeded him, and then came Masûd the Second (Emmâdu ?) in A.C. 1098 who resided chiefly at Lahore, and whose generals carried his arms beyond the Ganges [vide p. 305, Elphinstone’s History of India]. Then comes Modûd (Emmâdu ?), and lastly Mahmûd (Emmâdu) of Ghor. The latter established the Delhi empire no doubt in 1131, but he had exploited often in India. But he might be left out of account for our purpose.

Râmapriya’s image seems to have been carried hither and thither in these days of turmoil, and thrown into lumber in Delhi or perhaps Lahore guarded by some king, a general or viceroy of any of the Emmâdus, at the time Râmânuja visited the place.

It is probable that by the chief name Mahommed (or Emmâdu), any king, or his general or viceroy who stationed himself at the time at Delhi, was known in the far south. And even a Hindu sovereign at Delhi might have been called by that name, if there was one at the time, inasmuch as he was subjected to the onslaughts of Musalmans of the period. But an account given by Buchanan [p. 351, Vol. I], confirms what otherwise would be a mere conjecture. He says:—“Near the place (Tonda-nûr), there is a monument dedicated to one of the fanatical followers of Mahmud Ghazni, who had penetrated this length, and had here suffered martyrdom.” By this it is clear that Mahmud Ghazni’s depredations had extended as far as Melukote, the temple of which he would surely have desecrated and despoiled of its riches.

If all this is not quite satisfactorily tenable, we must speculate upon Râmânuja’s visiting Lahore or Ghazni itself; but then we have no tradition to that effect unless by
the Krita-yage, Vedâdri in the Trîta-age, and Yâdavâdri or Yâdavagirî in Dvâpara age is the holy hill of Melukote known, and in the Kali-age, as having been restored by the Yâti (aesthetic) Râmânuja, it is called Yati-śaila. Thus it is written in Śârvâta-Samhita¹ (Pânchârâtra).

Footnote on page 189—(continued).

the general term Delhi, any chief city or even the country generally of the Musalmans in the far northwest of India, was understood by the far Southerns of India in those days.

Buchanans account of this incident given in his Journals, I, 342, is very interesting, and deals with what became of the Moslem Sultani as soon as she arrived at Melukote, and how the Parâshis or Chamars or Pânchâmas who assisted Râmânuja were given by Râmânuja the honorific title of Tiru-kâkulattâr, &c. This word means: The blessed caste. Râmânuja gave them the privilege of entering into the Holy Temples of Melkote, Srikkantham and Belur (in Mysore), once in the year. Râi Dâs, a Parâsh or Chamar, and a disciple of Râmânnadî, the disciple of Râmânuja, set afoot a movement for the regeneration of his class, between 1820 and 1830, in the district of Chattisgarh. They called themselves Samanis. Readers are referred to Pp. 266 ff. of Theosophist, Vol. XI, 1890, for an account of this reform. We refer our readers to our pamphlet on the Pânchâmas, and also to pp. 272-3, of Rice's Gazetteer, Vol. II, 1897, where other interesting informations as regards Melukote Temple and its endowments is given, as also the fact of the Mahârâjas of Mysore having been Vaisnavas. We shall add an interesting account which may be of some philological use, even though the account may not be true. A work called Yavânaprâsana has been written by Prabhakara, the subject matter being the marriage of Sâmpat-kumâra with the Sultani. It is usual in Hindu-marriges to read the lineal pedigree of both the bride and the bridegroom. For Sâmpat-kumâra, Harita-gotra is assigned as he is the holy son of Râmânuja, and for Sultani, who is Yavani, Gârgya-gotra is assigned. To Hindus, all foreigners are Yavanas and Mlecches. So the Turk-girl is Yavani. The philological interest to us here consists in introducing Rishi Gârgya. Yavanas proper are Greeks; and Gârgya is said to have begotson Kâla-Yavâna; and thus Gârgya (Greek) becomes the patriarchal progenitor of the Greeks. Vishnu-purâna V. 23, 4 and 5: "Tâkâlayâna Târâyâyavânavîcâh. Phânisâryâna- Yâtô Pâîsâpa Sâkâtiksâm: II Tâkâlayânamânam, &c. Also see Harivâma: 115-15: "Mairuâpâyâpâma Yâtapâ: Nîyânâpâchulapâ: Tâkâlayânamânam: II" See also Asiatic Researches Vol. VI, p. 506; Vol. XV, p. 100.

¹ कलियोऽयसुःसृवते सतिहृदयजयांति:।
यतस्तैलमेतिवधते सायमेयार्चतरूपिरः॥
[47-48, Yâdavagirî-Mâhâtmya.] Also in Śârvâta Samhita, 20-278 ff.:—
"मधूमशस्यान्तः कृमिकम। ततवृशचमूनिता मायार्द्धत्वानि:॥
इवâmâmaçayâहु बलभूतमिवै॥
कालितस्याृहुः काशिहस्वालिकायम:॥
नानाशुभवेनागिते र्वषेनासिर्यिति॥
[In the stupendous work involved in the institution of this Holy Shrine, and the, in those days, hard journeys to distant countries which had consequently to be undertaken, the Pañchamas or the Pariahas or those low-caste Hindus who are relegated to a place in the Hindu Society beyond the pale of the law-sanctioned Chātur-varṇya (i.e., the four constituted members of the Hindu polity, the Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sūdra), were, so says our tradition, of great help to Sri Rāmānuja. He gave them the title of “Tirukkulattār” or the “Blessed Descendants,” and further allowed them the privilege of entering into the Holy Temples to certain limits, viz., the outer gate near the altar (Dhvaja-Stambha, or Bali-pitha), this practice remaining in force even up to this day, in the Temples of Srīrangam, Melukote, and Belur (Hassan District). They are allowed to bathe in the Holy Ponds attached to the Temples, to which on other days than those allowed, this privilege is strictly disallowed; and the highest class, viz., the Brāhmaṇas, cannot during the privileged days allotted to the Tiruk-kulattārs, complain of contamination when they may chance to rub shoulders with each other in the holy streets. Rāmānuja opened the doors of religious instructions for these classes, as well as certain modes of ritual and other privileges peculiar to Sri-Vaishnavas, such as the Pañcha-Samskāra or the Fine Holy Vaishnava Sacraments. It is thus evident how seriously had Rāmānuja bethought of elevating the low-classes as regards their eligibility for salvation. Rāmānuja had already confirmed too in his own days, what his predecessors had ordained, viz., the enshrinement of saints in the Temples, to whatever caste they might belong.]

1 Read St. Tiruppānī Āzhvār's life in the Lives of Drāvida Saints. Recently a Pandal was erected in Bangalore bearing the inscription: "Tirukkulattār," to greet Their Royal Highness (5th February 1906), and the following remarks were recorded by the Hindu of this date:—“* * * nothing is of greater historical interest than the word Tirukkulattār. * * When Sri Rāmānujāchārīya, the immortal founder of the Vaishnava sect, went to Melkote in the Mysore Province, the Pariahas made themselves so useful to that sage that he felt for their hard lot. To elevate them socially be gave them the name of Tirukkulattār, which means people of high or noble descent. His great aim was to abolish the word Pariah and thus to put a stop to the degradation of a section of the people of this country. He
Rāmānuja also established a see of his at Yati-śaila, called the Yatirāja-math, where a Sanyāsin is always to live and manage the affairs of the Fane. The building still exists intact, and the monastery has had a line of illustrious successors to this day. An old badari tree still lives in it.

During the time Rāmānuja was so installed in his high pontificate, he is said to have gone to Padmagiri,1 and engaged

Foot note on page 191—(continued).

also awarded to them the rare and valued privilege of visiting the temple at Melkote three days in the year. Thus the emancipation of the Pariah commenced long ago, and if it has not been yet accomplished, the cause is not solely the absence of consideration for the class on the part of some of the most illustrious founders of religious sects in India. Though at the present day the followers of Śrī Rāmānuja-chariar form probably the most exclusive form the Brāhmaṇ community, still the fact remains that the founders of the sect laboured for the elevation of the depressed and despoised castes. * * * The hallowed name of Tirukkuḷattār carries us back to those good old days when the practice and the preaching of religion meant really the elevation of men, and the greatest of saints considered it a part of their duty to minister to the religious cravings of the lowest classes of people.”

In these days we have the spectacle of a Mīrādās a Mahomedan, who has embraced Vaishnavism, and is performing Harikathas all over the country and of a Čenchu-dās, (a Tirukkuḷattār), at Kolar (Mysore State,) who is working for the religious elevation of his class, by establishing temples, Čuḷa and Bhajana-kūṭas, and to whom his spiritual guru, of Tirukkuḷavur, has delegated the privilege to administer himself, to his men, the Panchasamskāra sacraments and receive dues called the Pancha-kāṇkās.

1 The Baudhás and Jainas are grouped together in the one category of anti-Vedic. But Baudhás seem to be the first who came to Maisūr, followed by the Jainas, as the Sravana Belagola Inscriptions, by Rice, tell us. Padmagiri appears to be one of the names of this place. The following extract is from Rice’s Belagola Inscriptions:— [P. 37].

“We now come to a series of inscriptions connected with Ganga Raja. The first of them are the last lines in Nos. 75 and 76, which state, in Jainas, Mahārāṣṭri and Hale Kannada respectively, that Ganga Raja had the enclosure or cloisters round (amala-śayām) made for the colossal statue of Guṇaṭeswara. The inscriptions are on either side the image, immediately below those of Channuda Raya, and in characters to correspond. Their date, for the reasons already given (p. 23), is fixed as A.D. 1116. The erection of this enclosing parapet walls and other buildings around has certainly detracted from the imposing and picturesque effect the gigantic image must previously have presented when standing alone in its naked sublimity on the summit of the hill. But probably the walls were now required for its protection from injury. For when it was erected the Jainas were in the ascendant, and Jainism was the state religion. But, with the conversion to the Vaishnava faith of
there with the Bauddhas in a philosophical controversy. He succeeded in vanquishing the atheists, and owing to a wager made evidently by them that, in the event of defeat, they would submit themselves to be ground in an oil-mill 1, in case they were not willing to become adherents to the new faith, they seem to have been allowed to undergo the self-imposed punishment.

Foot note on page 192—(continued).

the Hysala king Bittī Deva (subsequently called Vishnu Vardhana), in probably this very year, by the reformer Rāmānuja-chāryā, great animosity was excited against the Jainas, albeit they were too powerful to be altogether set aside. There are even stories of Rāmānuja-chāryā’s having mutilated the image, so as to ruin it as an object of worship. No trace remains of such injury, unless it be that the forefinger of the left hand which is shorter than it should be, had a piece struck off below the first joint and was afterwards sculptured into a perfect finger again. This particular form of revenge would easily have suggested itself if it be true, as one tradition states, that the change of the king’s religion was in some degree brought about by the refusal of his Jaina guru to take food with him because the king was mutilated, having lost one of its fingers.

1 As for the grinding in oil-mills, this seems to have been a stock-punishment, either true or an allegory to express the total overthrow of the disputants in wordy war. Such oil-mill-grinding accounts are common as between Bauddhas and Jainas, and Jainas and Saivas. [Vide p. 45, Rice’s Sravana-Belagola Inscriptions and p. 471, Vol. I. Rice’s Mysore Gazetteer 1897 in the latter Kumarila having ground Bauddhas and Jainas together]. If this was literally true, then we have parallels in Jesus Christ, of whom we are thus told in the Epiphany, p 14, Janu, 24, 1903, Vol. XXI, Calcutta:—“The hands that worked loving miracles of mercy, lifted also the lash of cords, to scourge the sacrilegious and the covetous out of the temple courts. Terrible words issued from those lips so full of grace.” * * *

‘Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels!’ Such were some of the sayings of the Incarnate Love of God.—Actions, utterances, which those who seek to emasculate that Character into an ‘Oriental Christ,’ destitute of everything but a weak tolerant benevolence, are vain to ignore or obscure, as scarcely to be fitted into their imagined scheme of human perfection.” So if Rāmānuja is not to be emasculated, we may also credit him literally with the mill-grinding story!
CHAPTER XXX.

CHOLA'S PERSECUTIONS.

Twelve years, it is written, did Râmânuja stay in the Maisur Country, with his head-quarters at Sri-Nârâyana-purâna (Mêlûkôta). All this time he had no news of what events transpired at Srirangam, which he had left owing to the Sivite king Krimikantha-Chola’s persecutions. Now a Sri-Vaishnava arrived, and fell with his face flat before Râmânuja. Raising him, Râmânuja eagerly inquired:—"Is all going on well with Lord Rânga and all His holy affairs?" "All is well, Sire," said he, "save that you are very much missed." "But," asked Râmanuja with a fluttering heart, "how did Kûrêśa and Mahâpûrṇâ fare, who were forced to appear before the apostate Chola?" "Sire," he began, "the two good men, as you are aware, were taken to Chola’s presence, and Chola commanded them to set their signatures to the written declaration: _No higher being than Śiva exists._ But Kûrêśa poured out before him voluminous authorities from the Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis and Purâñas, proving that Nârâyana was the Highest God, being the Cause of the cosmos, as also its Author for creation, sustentation, and dissolution, and therefore the only Object of worship and contemplation; and that Chatur-mukha Brahmâ and Rudra were respectively His son and grandson; and cited other verses to demonstrate his position 1. But Chola after all said in angry tones:—"Look here, thou art indeed a very clever person, and therefore capable of interpreting authoritative texts to suit thy own preconceived prejudices. I will not hear all this. Here is my circular containing the statement: "There is no higher than Śiva." I command thee to sign it without another word of protest". Kûrêśa took the paper, but before attaching his signature thereto, wrote:

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1 Two are cited here for the use of our readers:—

एकाधारसतःतात्म मन्यत:पशुकवयः।
अपि, दीर्घतःतुर्गकश्चिनीत्रयासनम्॥ [Kûrêśa]

यज्ञीविन्दुसमस्तोऽस्मिन् तथा भूमिधारायणविषयाः।
वातुन्मवरमलोचनं विंस्यदत्तात् श्रीमण्डलविविद्यम्॥

[Bhâgavata, 111. 28-22.]
‘Dronam asti tatah param,’ and then signed his name under it. The meaning of this passage is: “But drona is higher than that.” This, and “Sivat parataram nasti,” meaning: ‘there is no higher than Siva,’ together make a couplet in Sanskrit verse. Taken together, they read:—“There is no higher than Siva; but Drona is higher than that (Siva).” By this Kûrêsa implicated a pun on the terms Siva and Drona; Siva meaning a small measure, and Drona, a greater measure. This play on words was taken as a slight and affront which necessarily threw the king into a rage, who exclaimed: “Pull out the eyes of this daring jester.” “But” exclaimed Kûrêsa in return, “thou needst not take that trouble, tyrant; I will do that act with my own hands, for my eyes ought not to remain after seeing a sinner like thyself.”1 A martyr to the cause of Vaishnavism, Kûrêsa, so saying, gouged out his eyes, striking terror into all who witnessed this blood-curdling scene. The cruel king now turned to the venerable old áchárya Mahâpûrṇa, and cried:—“Now, Sir, will you sign this circular or no?” Pûrṇa said he could not, supporting his refusal by citations from various scriptures. On this, the king commanded his myrmidons to catch the dissenter and pluck out his eyes. This cruelty having been inflicted the king drove the two martyrs out of his palace.

Blood streamed out of the eye-less cavities of old Pûrṇa, and the poignant agony consequent may be better imagined than described. Pûrṇa’s daughter Attuzhây-ammâl had followed the martyrs unobserved. When they emerged from the palace with gore dripping and drenching their persons, she ran to them, and leading them by their hands, passed out of sight, and comforted and consoled them as best as she could, wiping their bloody faces, bathing with water, and thus doing her best to stop the blood and alleviate their terrible sufferings. Kûrêsa was middle-aged, and had besides a strong will, which he further strengthened by the reflection: “Ah, God, what grace of Thine indeed that thou hast chosen me as Thy vessel to give eye for

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1 For other particulars of conversation, see Topic 101, in our Divine Wisdom of Dravida Saints, p. 118.
eye," the second eye meaning faith—the Vaishnava-faith. Thus he bore the pain with a courage, superhuman. But Pûrṇa was in his declining years, and tottering as he was in the weakness of old age, found the pain beyond his powers of endurance, and therefore laid himself down on the way in the open, his head resting on the lap of Kûresâ; and his feet on his poor daughter's lap. "Holy Sire," said they to him, "what cruel fate has befallen us, and you in particular. Your birth-place is Srîrangam, your God is Rânga, and your disciple is Râmânuja himself; and yet to think that destiny should have ordained your grave in an out-of-the way field near Gangai-kônda-sûzha-puram! Does this cause you grief?" To this, Pûrṇa said:—"My beloved children, have ye not heard that wherever a Vaishnava may chance to die, there God is present with him" even as Blessed Râma was present at the dying of Jatîyu, in the wilderness? And have ye not heard that, "the best place for a Vaishnava to die is on a Vaishnava's lap or in a Vaishnava's house?" And this besides is holy land too where I am dying, for it is where our holy ancestors Nâthamuni and Kurngai-kâval-appan died. Also know that if we grieve, because we did not die at Srîrangam itself, all our posterity will think that for salvation, death in Srîrangam alone is necessary. No, no, our rule is that a good soul, which has capitulated to God (prapanna) may meet his death anywhere, and yet be sure of God beside him there." So speaking, Mahâpûrṇa expired with his last thoughts lovingly fixed on Yâmuna-chârya, his Guru, and sped to ineffable Rest in the bosom of God.  

According to custom, Pûrṇa had to be cremated with due ceremony and honors. There came some way-farers and said:  

1 यशवाण्यकवदेशे वैष्णवविद्यायादि । 
2 तयात्मायुपासार्थाय करोतिगायान: च-जः ॥ 
3 Râmâyâna III, 69. 
4 वैष्णववृद्धिपरावश्यक युपासार्थायाय । 

A place called Paṇḍrapy Koil, about 7 miles from Kândiyur (Tanjore District) is pointed out as the place where Mahâpûrṇa breathed his last.
“O man, you have a corpse, and we help those who are abandoned by all, as you evidently are.” Kūreśa cried:—“Sirs, God is with us; so proceed on your way and succour those who are really abandoned. These searches, then, after anātha-pretas (helpless corpses) went their way. And now turned up suddenly Śrīvaishṇavas, people of Kūreśa’s own faith, by the help of whom he cremated Pūrṇa by the special rite called the Brahma-médha.

Kūreśa was now gently led to a shelter, and after resting there for a while, after the tremendous trials he had undergone, was brought to Srīrangam by night-marches to elude pursuit by the king’s emissaries, if he still did intend to persecute the fugitives. Kūreśa was spending weary days lamenting over what had happened, and grieving that he was denied the privilege of dying with the veteran Mahāpūrṇa.

One day, Kūreśa desired to visit Lord Rānga, for the first time after the chapter of disastrous events related above. Being blind, he slowly groped his way to the shrine. But king Chola had strictly decreed by his royal mandate that none should be allowed to enter it, who was a follower of Rāmānuja. When then Kūreśa was about to step into the Temple, the guards said: “Sire, our orders are strict. No one belonging to Rāmānuja are to be admitted. But you are a good man par excellence, and so we make of you an exception. Enter, but pray make an avowal that you have seceded from Rāmānuja.” On hearing this, Kūreśa closed his ears and said: “Good guards, what have I heard? If I have to secede from Rāmānuja, and recant as you wish, I had better give up this God Rānga. Without Rāmānuja, no God exists for me.” So saying, Kūreśa groped his way back, bent with grief, and fell on the ground weeping, uttering, in despairing tones, the holy verses of saints. Soon after, he left Srīrangam, with his two children, to Tirumālirunjolai (near Madura) to spend his days there in grief and solitude.

Such was the narrative given by the guest who had arrived at Melukote from Srīrangam. Rāmānuja listened to the bitter tale, which was to him like molten lead poured into his ears.
With difficulty he suppressed his rising emotions; and at last, containing himself no longer, burst into a passion of grief, dropped on the ground like a felled tree and rolled in the dust, wetting it with his burning tears. His disciples gathered round him and did their best to console him. And he resigned himself at last, thanking God that Kūrēṣa at least was alive, whom thus he had yet a chance to see, though the thought of the loss of his eyes was to him unbearable.

Mahāpūrṇa, being his Guru, all the sacraments to be celebrated after death were duly performed such as Śrī-chūrṇa-paripādana, and memorial verses¹ were dedicated to him.

Rāmānuja's heart was wrung with agony. He called M. M. Ândân² to his side, and directed him to proceed to Śrīrangam, carrying condolences and a budget of news to Kūrēṣa, and return with all the intelligence of that place; and engaged himself more vigorously than ever in prelections on the Vedânta which he delivered to his devoted audiences.

About this time, Goshthī-pūrṇa, one of the Gurus of Rāmānuja, also died. His disciples gathered round him and asked him what were his thoughts in his last moments. He said he was thinking of his Guru Yāmunāchārya, and the meaning of his verse:

एकःपरमपूर्वाःपरयज्ञायांपर्यन्तस्मातिस्मायाः
प्रस्तवातिरिक्तनान्तरस्यनान्त्रितस्माया॥

'O Rāma Great, who forgave the miscreant Kāka!'
'O Krishna Great, who forgave the miscreant Chaitya!'

How can my sin persist against such grace of Thine?

So saying Pūrṇa died. And Terk-Âzhvâr, his son, performed

¹ कमलापतिकवल्लापुरुषांभवनिवेया।
पुरूषांभवनिवेयायस्मातिस्मायाः॥

² Full name: — Maître Maruti-y-Ândân.
all the funeral ceremonies. Memorial verses were dedicated to him.¹

Tirumālai-Andān², Tiru-v-aranga-p-perumāl-Araiyar,³ Sri-šaila-pūrṇa,⁴ and Kāṇchi-pūrṇa,⁵ the other gurus of Rāmānuja also soared to the Eternal Regions, at this time; and memorial verses were dedicated to them as custom demanded.

Thus ends a black chapter.⁶

[It is chronicled of Kāṇchi-pūrṇa that it was a very dark night at the close of a day, when he had finished his services to Lord Varada, and had to go home. A torch-bearer by name Arulālan attached to the Temple was found on the premises. Pūrṇa begged of him to conduct him back to his retreat lighting the dark way with his torch. But he excused himself saying he was much tired that day, and slipped away, to sleep snug in a corner. Pūrṇa thought he would find his way in the pitch-dark night as best as he could; but hardly had he crossed the threshold of the Temple-gate, when there was found a torch-bearer with his torch, ready to conduct him home. Pūrṇa was glad that the man had kindly changed his mind for his sake. The next morning, however, when Pūrṇa came to the Temple to do the round of his duties, the torch-bearer ran towards

¹ शमदगुधुष्टाः यामुनायवसादात्
ब्रजिन्तपरमश्रेय भ्रानभिस्वादितिस्यभूम।
यतिक्ष्णिनाय श्रीकृतवन्यनिमहुः
पितुरहरेशगोमेष्यवंशनांनि ॥

² यामुनायपदामोज धीमक्ष्ममभूतसागरम्
श्रीमदगोंधरीपुर्णाः वेशिक्षिन्त्रमामः ॥

³ रामामुनीश्राय श्रामिकौपनिषतःस्वर्मः
मलाधरगुहावनं वावृिकक्षितम् ॥

⁴ ब्राह्मणवतीश्राय परायुक्तसहस्तिकामः
तत्तत्रेषयवलंदे श्रीरुपिपदविकम् ॥

⁵ विनामहस्यापितामहाय प्राचेतसदिशकलमदायः
श्रीभाधुकरोपमेतशिकाय श्रीशैलपुष्पिनमोनमस्तालः ॥

⁶ कहकाराणामाय शर्कायमहात्मने ।
श्रीमदगोंद्रदासाः श्रीशैलपुष्पिन्तमः ॥

⁷ “Yes they are gone, and round us, too, the night,
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.” [Matthew Arnold.]
him, and with a look of great repentance, fell at his feet craving pardon for his refusal, the previous night, to light him home. Pûrṇa was taken aback at this demonstration, for he had had him actually the previous night. It now however flashed upon his mind that it must have been Lord Varada Himself after all (whose Tamil name is Arulâlan also), who had personated the torch-bearer. With joy bubbling in his breast at this additional evidence of God's love for his humble votaries, he dismissed the real torch-bearer, of course forgiving him.¹]

[A tradition also has been handed down, with regard to Arulâlan that he was the favorite of Kânchipûrṇa, so much so that he daily received from the latter the remains of Varada-offered food in the temple, after having been eaten by him. One day Pûrṇa gave the food on a leaf to Arulâlan. Somehow a leaf had found its way into one of the holy vessels with which food was offered to Lord Varada; and Pûrṇa was shown this. He identified it with the leaf he had given to Arulâlan; and the latter, when asked, said he could not explain how it found its way into the shrine and into a holy vessel. Of course the temple-officials resolved to perform a great purificatory ceremony. But Lord Varada declared to them that he would brook no such ceremony, inasmuch as Arulâlan was such a dear servant of his, and Pûrṇa was a sacred person, whose touch of the food and Arulâlan's touch of it again made the leaf so holy that he would rather have the day's food served to him with the leaf. This was accordingly done and no purificatory ritual customarily binding, was gone through. It is said that Râmânuja had come to learn the extraordinary sanctity of Pûrṇa and of all that concerned him and of the esteem in which Lord Varada held him; and that it was on this account Râmânuja had been eager to partake of the food first taken by Pûrṇa. It was for this purpose, it may be remembered, that Râmânuja invited Pûrṇa to his house; but he was thwarted in the design by the indiscretion of his wife—which has already been related on page 70.]

¹ This account fortuitously [a miracle I should say] fell into my hands on the day of my paying a chance visit to the Holy Shrine of Kovaludi (Tanjore District) on the 21st February 1905, vide Prapancha Mitran (Tamil) dated Friday 17th February 1905.
CHAPTER XXXI.
RĀMĀNUJA’S RETURN TO ŚRĪRĀNGAM.

M. M. Andān, who was despatched by Rāmānuja to Śrīrāngam, arrived there in due time and making obeisance to Kūrēśa, announced himself to the now blind but heroic martyr. Kūrēśa fell into ecstasy and looked upon Andān as Rāmānuja himself arrived, and hurriedly asked, in anxious tremulous tones, how it was faring with Rāmānuja. Said Andān:

“He is well enough; but his grief at what has happened here and especially at the loss of your eyes, is inconsolable. He has sent me to tender you his heart-felt sympathies.”

“Good,” said Kūrēśa, “but inform my master that so long as his life has been saved from the bigot Chola—a life which sustains the world—the loss of my eyes is of no account whatever.”

Intelligence arrived at this time that king Chola had died \(^1\) of a carbuncle on his neck, festering with worms. Andān, to make sure of this, journeyed to Gangai-konna-Sozhupuram (near Chidambaram ?), and obtaining corroboration of the glad news, hurried on to Melukote, taking with him Ammangi-ammāl, whom he met on his way.

In due course they arrived at Melukotte, and finding Rāmānuja busy at the time bathing in the holy pond Kāiyāṇi, fell before him, and shedding tears of joy, related to him the news of Chola’s death. Rāmānuja was transported with joy at the death of the sworn enemy of his Faith, and raising up the two disciples, embraced them, himself shedding tears of joy and

\(^1\) From inscriptions it is made out that Kulottunga Chola I or Vira-Chola or Bāja-Rajendra Chola’s time was 1064 to 1113 A.C. And he is said to have died a few years earlier than Vishnu Vardhana of Hoysala, who is found at Yādavapura (Melukote) in 1125 A.C. (No. 16, Inscription, Mysore.) He is also known as Krimi-kaṇṭha and also Karikāla, as is seen in the verse:

“

[Kaṅingattupparāṇi.]
said:—‘O faithful sons, how far indeed have you travelled, bearing so many hardships simply to carry me this joyful message! How can I sufficiently reward you? The best that I can give you is the Holy Dvaya-mantra. Receive it.’ So saying he initiated them in the Holy Formula; and looking round to the group of followers who had surrounded him, addressed them thus:—‘O my faithful, our bitterest foe is gone. Our faith has stood this most severe and crucial trial. This holy pond Kalyāni is really kalyāni, auspicious, and this Māruti-Āṇḍān is really māruti, Hanumān.’

‘Yea,’ all cried jubilantly. In a body they all mounted the sacred Hill of Lord Nṛsimha, rising from the edge of the pond. Prostrating himself before Nṛsimha, Rāmānuja praised him thus:—‘O Slayer of Hiranṛya, of yore, even now hast thou slain Chola, the demon. Even as thou savedst thy devotee Prahlāda then, hast thou saved Kurēṣa now.’ Tīrtha and prasāda were duly bestowed on Rāmānuja who thereon descended the hill, and entering the adytum of Nārāyaṇa, asked leave of Him to return to Srīrangam, now that his work was completed. Nārāyaṇa returned no answer for a long time, when Rāmānuja urged his request again: ‘Almighty, Ranga’s command was that I should stay for ever in Srīrangam. Owing to unexpected calamities, I was forced to leave the place. Now that all has been accomplished here, may I not return?’ Lord Nārāyaṇa’s voice now came: ‘Be it so, then.’

Rāmānuja had established in Melukote, fifty-two officers (Aimbattiruvvar) for the restored Fane of Nārāyaṇa. These magnates, hearing that Rāmānuja was about to leave them, fell at his feet weeping, and said: ‘Holy Sire, how can we live without you?’ Rāmānuja raised them up lovingly and brushing away their tears, said:—‘Take heart, sons, I shall let an image be cast after my own likeness, and leave it here, filled with my power. It shall answer all your purposes. Further, I lay it on you all to take care of our Sampat-kūmāra brought from Delhi. He is like my son standing near the brink of a well. Such is my love for Him. See to the proper discharge

1 The messenger who brought Rāma the joyful tidings of Sītā.
of all the sacred functions connected with Nārāyana's Temple. See that you do not cheat God of what is due to Him, or cheat each other. Remain ever firmly friendly to one another, and be not remiss in your loving services to God whom we have installed in this country."

Leaving besides a detailed code of temple-procedure, he left Mēlkote, after passionate grief had been displayed, by him on the one hand at having to part from his beloved Sampat-kumāra and his disciples, and on the other hand by his disciples and all at having to part from their cherished master and pontiff. Rāmānuja's progress thus from the Temple was very slow for some distance out of the town. He looked back at every step, drinking in with his eyes, the sight of the temple, its turrets, corridors, the streets, and the homesteads which had risen all round, and with a heart overflowing with kindness for all that he was going to leave behind. Nor would the townsfolk allow him to depart quietly. After he had gone some way forward, they waylaid him and cried:—"Sire, how can we be sure you are in your Image? Give us evidences; else you cannot leave us in bereavement." "Beloved men," said he, "return, and standing before my image, call me by my name." They ran back and did so. "Rāmānuja, our Lord!", cried they. "Yes, I am here and for ever," came the voice from the Image. They were satisfied, and running back to Rāmānuja, fell before him and after a vehement outburst of grief and of gratitude, and consolation by Rāmānuja, he was allowed to bid adieu to them all.

In rapid marches,—love for Sampat-kumāra restraining him, but prospect of seeing Lord Ranga urging him forward—he arrived at the banks of Kaveri at Srīrangam. He stopped there to bathe and decorate himself with the twelve holy marks and make other preparations before planting his foot on the sacred land. In the meanwhile, the magnates of Srīrangam were apprised of his arrival. Their joy was indescribable. They all ran up to him in breathless excitement, and wel-

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1 Cp. "For where there are two gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them". [Mat: XVIII, 20]. "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world". [Mat. XXVIII, 20].
comed him back home with a salvo of greetings. After having been away for nearly twenty long years, he was now making triumphal entry in the midst of a seething crowd,—all eyes and hearts turned to him,—after having undergone so many hardships and trials for the Faith. A ceremonial entry was made into the adyum of Ranga, with prostrations at every step. "Son," said the Lord, opening His mouth, "thou hast been away from Us far and long; sure thou must be very tired. "Merciful God," replied Râmânuja, "while Thou art alive with Thy elect by Thy side, there is no fatigue to me or all the universe put together." Ranga was pleased and commanded tīrtha and prasāda to be administered, and granted him leave to go and join his monastery and rest after his toils and trials.

But as Râmânuja threaded his way round the streets of Srirangam, where he gladly witnessed the charming scenes which he had long missed, his thoughts were occupied with Kûrēśa, and the first thing that he would, and did, do was to step into his dwelling. Of course blind Kûrēśa, who had ere this returned from Tirumāliirunjolai (near Madura), was informed beforehand of his master's return; and as he heard Râmânuja approach, rushed forward from his door, and prostrating himself, firmly clasped Râmânuja's feet, and bathed them in a flood of tears, and lay there speechless like one bewitched and stricken. Râmânuja was himself greatly moved. He gently lifted up Kûrēśa, and firmly embracing him, was himself made speechless by the mingled sentiments of joy and grief shaking the very foundations of his soul. with great difficulty, obstructed by tears and by voice made tremulous with emotion and refusing utterance, spoke the one phrase: "Kûrēśa, thou hast given thy eye—the eye of our faith—for the faith!" Kûrēśa who had lost his voice so long, recovered somewhat, and was able to say:—"Master, beloved! I must at least have sinned by thinking, 'this man's mark on the forehead is crooked.' Hence my punishment is deserved." Râmânuja said: "Beloved, thou, to sin? Rather mine must be the sin, for which thou hast atoned. Come, let us go." So saying, Râmânuja reached his own monastery, leading Kûrēśa lovingly by the hand, followed by the immense host of devotees and others mustered thick.
CHAPTER XXXII.

SHORT EXCURSIONS AND INCIDENTS.

After twelve (or some say fourteen) years of absence, Rāmānuja had returned to his central see, the centre of his operations. The faithful gathered round him. Love and veneration for him had multiplied and deepened; and they all said:—

"Worshipful master, by the loss of Mahāpūrṇa, a blank has been created in our hearts, and by the loss of our Kūreśa's eyes, a sore. Have we lived to see you,—a salve for our ills? Listen, master, the apostate (infidel) Chola not only persecuted us and our leaders, but carried his vandalism to great excess by destroying our Vaishṇava temples everywhere. He had thus demolished the Vishnu Images in Chitrakūṭa,—about which you shall anon hear more, and was on his way to Śrīrangam to do the same. But when he halted for the night in a village, he was suddenly taken ill, a fatal sore burst out on his neck, and killed him after terrible suffering. Śrīrangam, the centre of our faith, was thus miraculously saved. Listen now to what happened at Chitrakūṭa (Chidambaram). The place, as you are aware, is infested with Saivas, and their leader Chola, had torn up Lord Govinda-rāja from His seat,—both the mūla and the uṣava Images,—and had directed their being cast into the sea. But there was a courtesan by name Tīlyā (or Tillai) who is a staunch Vaishnava devotee. She managed to divert the king’s attention at the time, so far as to enable the Vaishnava adherents of the place to avert the sea-grave form their Lord, and secretly make away with Him to Tirupati up in

1 Like Rāma who would not return to Ayodhya for 14 years in spite of Bharata’s prayer, the Lord Ranga would not fulfi l Rāmānuja’s prayers to end Chola’s persecution, till he also (being Rāma’s brother) travelled for 14 years. According to a Belur inscription (vide foot note 1, p. 182) Dāsarāthī established the Belur Temple in 1039 Śaka, (A.C. 1117), so that taking Rāmānuja’s entry into Melukोṭa as about 1092 A.C., it gives 18 years for Rāmānuja’s sojourn and plus 2 years for travel, makes in all 20 years as the interval between Rāmānuja actually leaving Śrīrangam and rejoining it, 6 years being allowed for his travels to other Shrines &c., after leaving and again joining Śrīrangam.

2 This is said to have been caused by God Venkaṭeśa striking his neck with the discus, in answer to Rāmānuja’s prayers.
the north." Rāmānuja heard all this vandalistic tale with a troubled heart, and hot tears rolled down his cheeks. "Beloved disciples, take heart and be comforted, I will set matters right." So saying, he again girded himself up for action, though now very old and exhausted. 1 "Start," commanded he, "let us go to Venkatāsa." So they all went to Tirupati, arriving at which place, Rāmānuja had a temple built at the foot of the hill, by the help of a Yādava-rāja or Kaṭṭiyadeva, 2 and had Govindarāja of Chitrakūta installed there. He called Him by the name Tīlai-Govindarāja, 3 and created a town round the Temple, Govindarāja-pāṭāla (Pāḍapuri), which is still flourishing at the present time. Rāmānuja now recollected the old Saint's verse:

and wondered how prophetic it was of the Saint to have sung the Shrine of Tirupati along with the Shrine of Chitrakūta

1 Rāmānujārya-Divya-Charita of this Vishnu Shrine by Kulottunga Chola as:

i.e., 1009 Śaka = 1087 A.C., so that it must have been just immediately or after Rāmānuja left Srirangam for the table-land of Mysore.

1117 A.C. finds Rāmānuja at Melukote, and thus he must have now been past his centenary, when he was back at Srirangam 20 years more brings it to 1137 A.C., the year of his death.

2 See p. 86, Venkatāchal-etihāsā-māla. His capital is said to have been Nārāyanapura.

5 The reader will perhaps run away with the idea that the Vaishnavas are polytheists—not monotheists as we profess—inasmuch as we speak of God Ranganātha, God Varada, God Venkatesha and so forth. These names are various names given to but one God, a different name for a different Shrine. The Names have also their etymological significations and associations. We are thus rigid monotheists. It is the One God under different symbols and images, one Light lighted from another Light as we say: Dīpād-utpāsa-phādāphāt—One God pro-creating or hypostasizing so to say. This reminds us of what Dionysius the Areopagite said, though he said it with reference to another matter, —"That light is one and entirely the same through all things and although there is diversity of objects, the light remains one and undivided in different objects, so that, without confusion, variety may be assigned to the objects, identity to the light." [P. 474, Max Muller's Psychological Religion].

See Topic 171 in our Divine Wisdom.
in one verse. He then ascended the High Holy Hill of Tirupati to pay his homage to the Lord Venkatesa. Here, Râmânuja imparted the Art of worshipping God in His Images (Årâdhana),—called the Nitya—to his two disciples Kûrêsha and Hanumad-Dâsa. There was another disciple Vangi-p-Purattu Nambi, to whom he had promised this knowledge for some time, but an opportunity had not presented itself so far. As however he was concluding his instructions, V. P. Nambi suddenly presented himself before Râmânuja, who felt somewhat difficult therefore in the delicate situation, viz., his unbosoning secrets to some, while he had not done so to those whom he had promised; but Râmânuja excused himself to Nambi thus:—“Listen, Nambi! Hitherto I could not solve to myself the riddle how Lord Kârishna, who is God all-powerful, submitted himself to be bound by a rope by an ordinary woman Yasoda. To-day I find the solution inasmuch as by the importunity of my disciples Kûrêsha and Hanumad-Dâsa, my own strong will bent to impart knowledge to them though I had promised it thee first. My own experience then, of how supplication made my own will to give in, supplies me with the key how even God will allow his resolve to melt before the fire of His votaries’ love. So saying, he gave the promised knowledge to Nambi.²

Râmânuja took leave of the Lord and descending the Holy Hill, wended his way back to Srírangam via Kânchi. Settled thus in his see, the High Pontiff dispensed his teachings to crowded audiences, who received them, it is said, as cool showers and balmy zephyrs lulling their parched souls to heavenly rest.

Kulottunga Chôla II (1128–1158 ?) or Vikrama-Chôla (1113–1128) who perhaps was also called Kulottunga, the son

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¹ Consult pp. 87 ff. of Venkatâchala-tihasamâla for further details. Hence in the Ashtottara Hymn to Śrînivása (Venkatâsa), His name is coupled with Govinda thus:—

\[ P. 78, \text{Venkatâchala-Mâhâtmya-Vârâha}. \] On Venkatesa, see Rig Vedas VIII, 8, 18. Sûtra-vibhâsa-vibhâga- 

\[ \text{Vinayâdigam} \]  

\[ \text{Śrî-govinda-samhita} \]  

\[ \text{Svârâbha} \]

² Vide Commentaries on Tirumozhi 57, 4.
of Krimikantha-Chóla, who was a pro-Vaishnavite and who had in vain tried to convince his father of the futility of his schemings against the Vaishnavas inasmuch as their strongholds, the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata could never be repressed, though he might demolish all the Vaishnava temples on earth, and had also suffered reverses of fortune¹ on account of the sins of his father, hearing of Rāmānuja’s arrival, repaired to Srirangam in haste, taking with him the Pāṇḍya and Chera Kings. Approaching Rāmānuja, he fell at his feet and craved pardon for his father’s faults. From the largeness of his heart, Rāmānuja granted it; and took Kulottunga, by his request, into the Vaishnava fold by administering due sacraments and made him a disciple of Dāsarathi. “No more”, cried the king, “shall I exercise any jurisdiction over the Temples August Sire. I pray you to assume the entire control yourself from this day.” Rāmānuja consented, and calling Dāsarathi, had the entire administration of the Temple formally bestowed on him as a gift in the manner prescribed by the Śāstras. It is written in the work, called Koil-ozhugu, that a stone inscription to this effect was caused to be installed at the Ārya-bhaṭṭal gate.² Rāmānuja is stated to be past his centenary by this time.

¹ These reverses appear to have been an invasion by the Pāṇḍyas, and subsequent vassalage under the kings of Vijayanagaram. [Vide p 37, Contributions to the Imperial Gazetteer, Trichinopoly, 1904 A.C.]
² See No. 23, Map of Temple to the second collection of Papers relating to Śrīrangam, 1894, A.C. From Epigraphica Indica, Vol. V, pp. 97-99, it may be seen that the grant of Vira-Chóla, or son of Kulottunga I gives more than 245 Vaishnava names; showing how Śrī-Vaishnavism had been well established and its adherents venerated. And Viṭhala, a Mādhva sang of Rāmānuja thus:—(Rev. Kittel’s Translation in Indian Antiquity Vol II).

Refrain.
Rāmānuja, Doctrine-supporter!
Rod for the great mountain of Dark heretics!

Song.

“They say the Chóla put up a post (Kambha) saying:—
‘He with the eye on his forehead (Śiva), and no other Godhead there is!’

The Master of the Yatis (Yatipati) seized and flayed him alive,
Rāmānuja was sore at heart at Kūreṣa's having become blind. One day, he called him anxiously to his side and said:—"Son, beloved! Lord Varada of Kāñchī is, as we know, a ready granter of wishes. I enjoin thee to sing a hymn to Him to bestow sight on thee again." "Sire," submitted Kūreṣa, "this material sight, I desire not." "But, beloved, do as I desire," often exhorted Rāmānuja. Kūreṣa accordingly sang the hymn known as Varadarāja-stava—one of the five stavas—beginning with:—

वारांडरायणस्तवः

"Hari! who deck the top of the Hasti-Hill, whom the Vedas declare as to have neither equal nor superior, bless me." And in the twenty-third stanza, he prayed:—

नमःस्वयंवरांडरायणस्तवः

"Hasti-Lord of bluish hue! Recliner on Ananta! I beseech Thee to ever let my sight see Thy bewitching beauty." That very night, the Lord appeared in his dream and said: "granted," Kūreṣa rose next morning with a joyful heart, and after performing the day's ablutions, &c., finished the stava, and proceeding to Rāmānuja, repeated before him the whole stava, and said:—"Sire, the previous night, the Lord appeared in my dream and he has granted me such spiritual sight as is able ever to enjoy his Beatific Vision—Vision such as obtains in Vaikuntha, according to the verse:—

बैकुण्ठविनिवेशवत्मतः

(Continued) foot note on page 238.

And made a Chola Shed (Chappara, a shed of the Chōla skin)? See, my brother! [verse 1]

Saying:—"It is a Vyāsa-Tōḷu! they (the Lingāyatas), not minding,

Fasten a bull (Nandi) to a standard (Dhwaja) and worship it. Hear!

For one (or, for that one) Vyāsa-Tōḷu, our master (Ayya) [Rāmānuja]

Stripped of a thousand arms of Śiva's followers (Sārana). [verse II.]
‘In that Vaikuntha, beyond the visible universe, the Immortals see the Eternal Lord with their spiritual eyes.’

“My beloved, that is not what I want; come let us proceed to Lord Varada,” said Rāmānuja, annoyed, and went with him to Kāṇchi, and bade him repeat the Stava. Kūrēṣa began and as he was proceeding, Rāmānuja was obliged to leave the place for a few minutes on some business. But before he returned, Kūrēṣa had gone to the end of his Stava; and Lord Varada having appeared and bidden him to ask what he wanted, he had absent-mindedly prayed that Nāḷūrān might be saved even as he might be saved.1 ‘Be it so,’ said the Lord. By this time Rāmānuja ran in, and learning what had taken place in his absence, chided Kūrēṣa thus:—“Son, thou hast acted contrary to my wishes. Thou has spoilt matters. Oh Lord, canst Thou not deign to grant my prayer that Kūrēṣa regain (physical) sight?” The Lord was moved at this earnest appeal of Rāmānuja, and spoke thus:—“We grant him that sight; but except Me and thee, he shall see no other material object.” Rāmānuja was at least satisfied with this, and immediately put Kūrēṣa to test by asking him to look at Lord Varada, and describe Him. Kūrēṣa did so. ‘And now describe me,’ asked he next. Kūrēṣa, his face lit up with heavenly joy, described his preceptor’s person accurately in all detail. Rāmānuja was satisfied and taking leave of the Lord, returned to Śrīrangam.

Rāmānuja was, after his return, engaged with his disciples, in reading St. Āṇḍāl’s Hymn, the Nāycehiyar-Tirumozhi; and coming to verses IX. 6 and 7: Naṟu-naṟum and Inṟu-vaṇdu, in which the Saintess declared that “she would place before the Lord Sundara-rāja of Tirumālirunjolai, one hundred vessels of nectarous food; and if He but came down and ate it all, she would place a hundred thousand more.” Rāmānuja stopped at this and looking at his disciples, said:—“Why do not we proceed to the Holy Shrine at once and carry out her wish?” So saying, they all rose and journeyed to the place, and spread a great feast before the Deity. Rāmānuja proceeded thence to Śrī-villiputtūr, the birth-place of St. Āṇḍāl,

1 This was the person who instigated Chōḷa to send for Rāmānuja to sign the Paper of his faith. He is a disciple of Kūrēṣa. See p. 170.
and as he was standing before her, lost in devotion, the Saintess, by the voice of her priest on duty, conferred upon him the title of Kōil-āṉgar. Rāmānuja next proceeded to Tirunagari of St. Nammāzhvār. From Tirunagari, Rāmānuja paid a visit to Tirukkōḻur, about two miles north of it, the birth-place of St. Madhurakavi. As he was proceeding, he met a damsel by name Tiruk-kōḻur Ammai coming from Tiruk-kōḻur. 'Whence art thou coming?' asked he of her. 'From Tiruk-kōḻur' said she. To this, Rāmanuja chidingly said:—'I wonder, lady, thou shouldst emerge from a Holy Place, into which, according to the verses of St. Nammāzhvār, every one should enter?' To this, Ammai gave the following long reply*:

Holy Sire! who am I to deserve to live in such a Holy Place? for:

1. Did I go on such a holy mission as Akrūra?
2. Did I entertain in my house like Vidura?
3. Did I cast off my body like the Rishi's wife?
4. Did I cause a Rāvana to be killed like Sītā?
5. Did I raise the dead like Tonḍamān?
6. Did I offer a corpse like Ghanťakarpa?
7. Did I adorn (a Sītā) like Anasūya?
8. Did I seek for a Father like Dhruva?
9. Did I repeat the Three-letterd Name like Kṣatra-bandhu?
10. Did I get trodden like Ahalya?

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* See Topic 117 and foot note thereunder, p. 133, Divine Wisdom o Drāvida Saints.

1 Vishnu-Purāṇa.
2 Mahā-bhārata, Sābhā-Parva.
3 Śrī Bhāgavata, X, 23, 38:—तत्रेकादिविदुत्तानका भगवत्संवयास्तुतम्।
हृदयपूर्वविज्ञान्ते देवकर्माविन्यभन्नम्॥ Sudarśanā of Itihāsa-samuccaya(?)
4 Rāmayāṇa.
5 Mahālakshmi, Kūrma's wife, Venkateśa-Māhātmya (Bhavish-yottara, 14th Adh).
6 Harivaṃśa.
7 Rāmayāṇa.
8 Vishnu-purāṇa.
9 Vishnu-dharma. The Name is Gp-ṛiṇ-ḍa; also see Tirumālai, 2, 4.
10 Rāmayāṇa, or Adhyātma-Rāmayāṇa, 14th Adh.
11. Did I ripen, while yet raw, like Andāl?
12. Did I establish (or proclaim) Nārāyaṇa like St. Periyāḻvār?
13. Did I ransack religions like St. Tirumazhiśai?
14. Did I know Him as “the Subtlest” like St. Nammāzhvār?
15. Did I say: “anything,” like St. Kulaśekhara?
16. Did I say: “I pledge my word,” like Krishṇa?
17. Did I give clues (to Rāmā), like Kabandha?
18. Did I reveal secrets like Trījata?
19. Did I recognize God (in Rāmā) like Maṇḍodari?
20. Did I say: “I know Thee,” like Viśvāmitra?
21. Did I say: “I know of no other God,” like St. Madhurakavi?
22. Did I give birth to a God like Devakī?
23. Did I say: “conceal Thy discus,” like Vasudēva?
24. Did I bring up a Cowherd like Yaśoda?
25. Did I do a mite (of service) like the squirrels?
26. Did I take fried rice like Kuchēla?

11 A precocious prodigy in divinity. Read her life in our Lives of Āzhvārs.
12 Read his life in our Lives of Āzhvārs.
13 Do. do. Do. do.
14 Also v. 75 “Purīyam” of Periya-Tiruvandādi may be read. verse IV, 10. Perumāl Tirumozhi.
15
16 Bhagavad-gītā XVIII, 65: सर्वत्र-पिताज्ञानिवीणिमेव. Also Bhārata story is referrable, where a dead boy was restored to life by Krishnā—all others having failed. He is said to have spoken thus:—यदिमेवभग्न-द्वीपः सत्याश्चाभिलेभमेव सत्याश्चाभिलेभमेव. Also see Aṣvamedha-Parva, 70 and 18 ff. beginning with नन्त्रीयुग्मतीमिहया सत्येनास्वेद्यः विश्वमिहाय. &c.
17 16 Rāmāyaṇa.
18 Do. भुवन. I, 19, 14.
19 Verse Tēva-matt-āryā in Kaṇṭinun-Śiruttāmbu.
20 26, 26 Vishnu-Purāṇa.
21 पद्म-पुराण (?) Also v. 27, Tirumoli.
22 Śrī Bhāgavata.
27. Did I bestow weapons like Agastya?
28. Could I enter the seraglio like Sanjaya?
29. Could I, by 'works' obtain bliss like Janaka?
30. Did I bite the toe and see Him like St. Tirumangai?
31. Did I become the umbrella and so on, like Adi-Sêsha?
32. Did I carry Him, like Garutman?
33. Did I keep promise, like Nam-pâduván?
34. Did I behold God in a nook, like the First àzhvârs?
35. Did I guard two princes, like Vâlmiki?
36. Did I offer two garlands, like St. Tondaraçippodi?
37. Did I obtain truths, like Tiru-kacchi-nambi?
38. Was I absorbed into God, like St. Tirup-pânâzhvâr?
39. Did I say: "send," like Vañishtha?
40. Did I worship sandals, like Königil-pirâtti?
41. Did I offer clay-flowers, like Kuruva-nambi?
42. Did I vociferate: "Oh: The Origin!," like Gajendra?
43. Did I offer scents, like the hunchback Kubjâ?
44. Did I offer wreaths, like the Mâlakâra?

27 Râmâyaña.
28 Śri Bhágavata and Bhârata.
29 Bhagavad-gítâ, III, 20, Kâmañâãvahî, &c.
30 Read his life in our Lives of àzhvârs.
31 Stotra-Batna v, 40; and v. 53, Ñanûl, 1st Tiruvandâdî.
32 See Gajendra-Moksha, Bhágavata.
33 Kâïsika-purâña.
34 See our Lives of ázhvârs.
35 Râmâyaña, the two princes being Lava and Kuñja.
36 Read his life in our Lives of ázhvârs. Flower-wreath and Hymn-
wreath (Tirumâlai).
37 See Life of Râmânûja.
38 See his life in our Lives of ázhvârs.
39 Râmâyaña (sending Râma with Vîrvâmîtrâ).
40 Read Life of Râmânûja. (Râmânûja’s Sandals), p. 176.
41 Kuruva-nambi or Bhima. [Venkatêsähârtha, Bhâvishyottara,
11th Adh.]
42 Bhágavata.
43 and 44 Vishnu-purâna.
45. Did I keep my assigned place, like Bharata?
46. Did I serve on the way, like Lakshmana?
47. Did I land on the other shore, like Guha?
48. Did I fight with the demon, like Jatayus?
49. Did I land on this shore, like Vibhishana?
50. Did I offer sweet fruits, like Sabari?
51. Did I say: "Here He is," like Prahlada?
52. Did I hide (Krishna) like Dadhibhanda?
53. Did I go to the forest, like Rama?
54. Did I proclaim discovery (of Sita), like Hanuman?
55. Did I relinquish both hands, like Drupadi?
56. Did I say the excuse: "milk boils over," like Vaduga-nambi?
57. Did I hold my throat, like Selvappillai?
58. Did I deserve the command: "stop here," as Idaiyatttu-k-udi Nambi?

45, 46, 47, 49, and 50 Ramayana.
43 Vishnu-purana.
32 This is said to be related in Agnaya, Mahabharata or Brindavana-Mahatmya? Dadhibhanda was a curd-seller. He is said to have given shelter to Lord Krishna when he was hotly pursued after by His associates in the play called hide and seek and when Krishna asked the curd-seller to ask his reward, he asked for Moksha for himself and for those who belonged to him, down to the curd-pot in which Krishna had hid himself. This was granted.
54 Ramayana.
55 Mahabharata, Saba-Purana.
56 Vaduga-nambi alias Andhra-purana. See his life p. 221.
57 It appears one day very hot milk was offered to the Lord at Tirunarayanapuram (Melakota). Selvappillai, who was a great devotee felt the milk scorch his throat; and hence held it in pain. Also the incident of Lord Sampatkumara embracing Ramanuja is referable.
58 By oversight we omitted this Topic in our Divine Wisdom of the Davida Saints. I. K. Nambi was a regular visitor to Shirangam when festivities of Lord Ranga came on. After one set was over and before another came on, he constantly dwelt in the interval in his mind on the happy scenes which he witnessed during the previous festivities. Another season of celebrations came round. But Nambi had grown nearly a hundred years old, and could not go to the first day of the ceremonies (Ankar-arpana). But Lord Ranga was never happy without his devotee being present. He was however able to attend on the sixth
59. Did I carry the message: "He is dead," like Māruti-yāndān?
60. Did I go in pursuit (of God) like Nāthamunigaḻ?
61. Did I say: "I want Him not," like Kūrēṉa?
62. Did I refute Advaita, like Rāmānuja?
63. Did I see the discus, like Nallān?
64. Did I go to Anantapuram (Trivendraṃ), like Āḷavandār?
65. Did I feel separation like Teyva-vārīyāndān?
66. Did I compose Andādi like Amudanār?
67. Did I give counsel, like Mālyavān?
68. Did I opine: 'mere ocean-roar,' like Mahāpūrṇa?

Foot note on page 214—(continued).
day, when the Lord asked: "what can we do for thee, beloved?"
"Lord," he said, "so long has the body, Thou gavest me, served me well;
now it is so old and worn out that it cannot serve any good purpose. It is
on that account that I have this season been for five days absent." "In
that case return no more from Us," said the Lord. And by the time the
Lord's procession approached the middle entrance of the Temple, Nambi
had shuffled off his mortal coil.
50 Read Rāmānuja’s Life. He refers to Krimikantha-Chōḷa [Bhaga
vad-vishaya Vol. VII, p. 3538, Vāykkum VII, 10, 4.]
51 Read his life.
52 Where Kūrēṉa refused to enter Lord Ranga’s Shrine [Page 197].
53 See Rāmānuja’s Life.
54 Nallān was a Brāhman disciple of Rāmānuja, and a great devotee
of Lord Varada of Kāḷīchi. He saw a corpse floating down the river
Vaigai which bore on its arms the Vaishnava symbols of discus. This
was enough for Nallān to drag it to shore and perform funeral rites.
The Brāhmānas of Kāḷīchi resented this and declined to eat with him.
But Lord Varada put on a Brāhmaṇa’s disguise and attended the funeral
meals. The Lord thereon gave him the title: Naṭṭukku pollān, Namakku
nallān’ i.e. ‘Though the whole world is against him, we are for him,’
55 See Yāmunāchārya’s Life.
56 See Yāmunā’s disciple who wasted away without his guru.
57 Disciple of Rāmānuja who composed Rāmānuja-Nuṭṭ-andādi in
praise of Rāmānuja.
58 Rāmāyana. Mālyavān’s advice to Rāvaṇa.
59 See Rāmānuja’s Life, with reference to funerals performed on a
Śudra, Māranēri-Nambi, which when Rāmānuja objected, Purṇa declared
all the ordinary regulations on the subject, having strict reference to castes
etc., were as useless as the ‘roar of the ocean.’ [Pp: 167-168].
69. Did I exact promise, like Gōshṭi-Pūrṇa?
70. Did I obtain mercy like the dumb-person?
71. Did I give up my body, like Tiru-naraiyūr-araiyar?
72. Did I profess insignificance, like Śrīśaila-pūrṇa?
73. Did I thrust my finger into the snake’s mouth like Embār?
74. Did I vanquish (a Pandit) by showing marks on arms, like Bhaṭṭārya?
75. Did I seek a secluded spot like Villiputtūr Bhagavar?
76. Did I jump into water like Kaṇapuratt-ammai?

On hearing this, Rāmānuja was thunderstruck and taking Ammai with him back to Tirukkolūr, rested under her roof, and partook of the food prepared by her as a token of his admiration and appreciation of her spiritual enlightenment and attainments evinced by her most erudite discourse. Before

Rāmānuja’s Life, where Pūrṇa exacted a promise of secrecy from Rāmānuja not to divulge religious secrets, but which Rāmānuja infringed. [P. 97.]

Rāmānuja’s Life where he gave salvation, unsolicited, to a poor dumb creature. [P. 169.]

See Śrī-Vachana-Bhushan I. In order to quench the flames in which the Lord’s car had by accident been enveloped, he rushed into the flames with his sons and perished in the act.

Rāmānuja’s Life where Śrī Sāila came in advance to meet Rāmānuja on the Tirupati-Hill.

See Rāmānuja’s Life.

See page 156.

He was a Sanyāsin. When he went to a bathing place which was resorted to by all, he left the crowds and sought out a secluded spot. Jāna-Sāra of A. P. Emberumānar, verse 13: “Pandā” and Periya Jiyar’s Comment thereon, may be consulted.

This lady is said to have been a disciple of Sage Yāmuna. He was once crossing the Kāveri in full flood—from Uṭtamarkōṭil (Karaumānur) to Śrīraṅgam, in a boat. The boatman complained of too much load. He was rowing in midstream with all his might, and now feared the boat would sink. K. Ammai, in order to save the life of her guru and others in the boat, undertook to ease the boat by jumping into the river. The boat, thus relieved, was rowed away in safety to the shore. But Providence saved the lady’s life, for when she jumped, she found herself landing on a rock just below the water-surface.
returning, he blessed her, and saw to the due performance of all festivals connected with Lord Nikshepavitta and St. Madhurakavi. Ramanauja now returned to Srirangam.

An interesting incident is chronicled¹ as having occurred about this time. The washerman employed to wash the clothes of the Srivaishnavas of Srirangam, one day washed Lord Ranga’s garments as well. He brought them and showed to Ramanauja. Ramanauja was so pleased with him that he took him to the Lord in the Temple and prayed to Him thus: “Lord, deign to notice the careful way in which this washerman has washed Thy garments. Indeed, with these wound round Thee, Thou wouldst appear to such advantage.” Lord Ranga accepted the recommendation and replied to Ramanauja thus:—“For the loving services rendered to us this day by this washerman, we forgive the offence of his ancestor, the washerman of our Krishna-avatār.”² To this day it is the custom for the Lord to receive the clothes from the washerman just as he brings them and use it for the Lord. This is a privilege inasmuch as in Indic Society, the washerman is a low-caste man and the clothes brought by him have to be washed again before a Brāhmaṇa will wear them.

It is here chronicled that there was a disciple of Ramanauja called Pattini-p-perumāl. He is said to have been of low-caste. He lived away from the sacred town of Srirangam, in an out-of-the-way hut; and used to drown himself in the joy of singing the psalms of the Holy Āzhvārs. Ramanauja’s way from the river Kaveri to Srirangam lay where this disciple thus lived. One day he was returning from his bath accompanied as usual by a large number of his followers. He stopped short at the hut, and bidding his followers leave him and proceed to Srirangam, entered the hut, and spent the time with the disciple as long as it pleased him, in the sweet ecstasy brought on by the singing of the Holy Hymnal. Had an ordinary person consorted thus with a low caste man as Ramā-

¹ Vide Bhagavad-vishaya, on Tiruvāyurkali V. 10, 6, Ninra-vārum also Topic 53 of our Divine Wisdom of Dravid Saints.
² Read the story in foot-note, op. cit.
nuja did, he would have been outcasted, but they dared not utter a syllable of reproach against Râmânuja's doing it—another illustration of the canon that great men alone can do such things, as laid down in the Dharma-sãstras, साहससंवधताम 'the daring acts of the Mahâtmas,' and नेरासंवधताम of Sîrîmad Bhâgavata. No reproach thus attaches to the character of glorious souls. Such incidents though trivial in themselves, are fraught with great significance and important issues as affecting and moulding the organic-character of a new community which would at the time be taking definite shape and acquiring special functions in the body-politic of the Æryan-Drâvidas.

This new community of Sri-Vaishnavas was not confined exclusively to the Brâhmans. It was catholic and entertained in its fold every man and woman regardless of caste or color. The community was growing fast and counted millions, of which a definite number as constituting the elite, and as calculated to carry on the evangel set on foot by Râmânuja, is memorialized in the verse:—संसोवितसंवधिनित्वस्य वैद्युतसातिमित्वस्यमे 'स ददायेरातपशुमके रातोधविनित्वताभूम: 'िे. "The King of the ascetics, Râmânuja, had in his following (700) seven hundred Yatis (ascetics), (74) seventy-four (episcopal) Thrones, known as the Âchârya-purushas, and countless others,—(12,000) twelve-thousand Êkângis (monks of all classes), (300) three-hundred Kotti-amãsais (nuns), many kings, and others both 'of the Holy Thread' and 'the Threadless (Sâttâdavar). ' A list of the names will be given separately. And here, only the chief members with the work allotted to them in the immediate establishment attached to the eec, will be noted. Kûrêsa, Dâsavarathi, Nadâdûr Álván and the Bhattars were to attend Sri-Bhâshya Discourses; Yajña-mûrti (Arujāla-p-perumâl-Emberumânâr) was to attend to the worship of the chapel; Kidâmbi-p-perumal and Kidâmbi-âchân were to superintend the culinary department; Vâtu-pûrîâ or Andhra-pûrîâ (=Vâdunga-nambî) was for oil-bathing and other sundry services to Râmânnja; Gomâtham Siriy-álvân was to carry the kamañâlu (vessel) and sandals; Dhannurdása was to be the treasurer, Ammangi was to boil milk; Ùkkal-álvân was to
serve meals; Ukkālammāl was to fan; Māruti-p-periyāndān was to minister on occasions of natural impulses; Māroṇīllā-Māruti-y-āndān was to be the steward; Tūya-muni-velam was to be the waterman; Tiru-v-aranga-māligai was to be the storekeeper; Vaṇḍar and Sundar were to take service under kings and fill the see-coffers; Rāmanuja-vēlaikkārar was to be the body-guard; and Akalanka-nāṭṭālvān was to win polemical victories over dissenters.
CHAPTER XXXIII.

VATU-PŪRNA OR ÂNDHRA-PŪRNA.

Vatū-pūra or Ândhra-pūra, whose first entry into our history may be remembered as having taken place when Rāmānuja was at Sāligrama (Mysore), ¹ is known, above all other disciples, to have been the closest attached adherent of Rāmānuja, and the staunchest follower of the Path, known as the Pañchamopāya, or the Fifth Path—the Āchāryabhīmāna, ² in other words, unswerving faith placed in the Saviour, who is incarnated on earth, and never dividing such faith between a saviour who has taken on humanity, and God who ever remains Divine.

Vatū-pūra was not a mere theoretical believer in this mode of salvation, but exemplified it forcibly by his personal example. In the exclusive worship he paid to Rāmānuja’s Holy Feet, he excluded all thoughts of God. His Saviour was his God. He recognized no other rival Saviour-God to his visible human Saviour. Once on an occasion, Rāmānuja went to the Holy shrine Tiruvellarai (about 10 miles north of Srirangam). Vatū-pūra followed him of course, carrying the Tirupplikkūṇai ³ containing washed clothes, images, articles of worship, &c. Rāmānuja, after reaching Tiruvellarai, went to bathe and returning, opened the cover of the wallet to find to his surprise and chagrin that his own sandals had been placed on the top

¹ The descendants of this disciple are close relatives to the writer of this work; and to this day enjoy the rights and privileges of the shrine built over Rāmānuja’s Holy Feet at this place—a place of holy pilgrimage to this day. In the days of Krishna-rāja Odeyar, two brilliant lights of this family known as Sīlāghaṭta Sudarṣana-chārya and Rangāchārya (brothers) shed their Vaidī glory in his court; and wrote many works such as Charamārtha-vivriti, Ghaṭa-Karpara-Bhedi, Pada-renukā-Sahasra, Rāmānuja-Sārva-bhauma-śaṭakas, Yādavādvi-nilasa, a Sūtra-Bhāṣya, Kamalāpta-karāṇvaya, Bhaja-yati-rāja-Stotra, Bhaja-bhāṣyakāra Stotra, Siddhānta-bheri (nātak), Āchārya-stuti, and many songs in Sanskrit, Telugu and Kannada. Their descendant Rāmāchārya has been winning laurels in the court of the Baroda Maharāja and has made many disciples in Bombay and Guzerat side. Their memorial verse is thus sung:—भोमद्रामार्तुजयमानेप्रसिद्धिवर्धनः/निरवर्धीमाणंस्यमानप्रसिद्धिष्ट:।

² For which, see our Soteriological Table, pp. 573-4 of our Bhagavad-gītā. That Vatū-pūra is an illustrious example of this Path is prominently shown in Lokāchārya’s Srivachana-Bhusana, and Periya-Tiyar’s Ārti-prabandha.

³ A kind of wallet or portman-teau made of reeds.
of all other things. Irate, he called Pūrṇa and asked him to explain this sacrilege—the sacrilege of placing his sandals over the heads of his holy Images of worship! “Sire,” promptly answered Pūrṇa, “how is my God inferior to thine?”

Rāmānuja went to visit the Lords in the temples, but Pūrṇa’s gaze was steadily fixed on Rāmānuja’s handsome person. Rāmānuja often marked this; and once remarked: “Son, why dost thou not direct thy sight to the charming eyes of the Lord?” Pūrṇa then looked at the Lord and looked at Rāmānuja alternately for a few seconds and then exclaimed; “Sire, the eyes that have seen thee cannot see other objects.”

Rāmānuja used to hand over the remains of food, after he had eaten, to Pūrṇa to eat; the latter, after eating, wiped his soiled hands on his head. Rāmānuja fretfully chided him for this slovenly habit and directed him henceforth to wash his hands with water. “Yea,” said Pūrṇa. The next day, Rāmānuja handed over to him to eat consecrated food given to him in the Temple. Pūrṇa ate and washed his hands with water. “What hast thou done, son?” exclaimed Rāmānuja, “the Lord’s food is too holy to be thus washed away, thou oughtest to wipe it on thy head.” “Sire,” reported he, “I have done as thou badest me yesterday.” Rāmānuja simply said: “Son, thou hast overcome me.”

On another occasion Pūrṇa was busy boiling milk for Rāmānuja in the Math, when Lord Ranganātha was conveyed in procession, decked in all the glory of decorative art Rāmānuja rose to go, see and pay homage to the Deity, calling Pūrṇa, as he went, to come and do the same with him. But Pūrṇa, immediately excused himself saying: “Holy sire, if I come out to see thy God, the milk that is on the fire for my God (Rāmānuja) will boil over.”

At one time, some kinsmen of his came to his house as guests, and used his cooking pots for preparing their meals. But as soon as they left him, Pūrṇa broke them all and threw them into the rubbish heap; and picking up cast-away pots in
the backyard of Dāsarathi, brought them home and used them; thus showing that everything that belongs to the Saviour is holy, and all else is unholy. This demeanour proves the acme of the state of a spiritually risen soul dissevered from all touch of worldliness (vairāgya.)

Pūrna was strict as regards the taking of Śrī-pāda-tirtha, for he sipped no water washed off any other’s foot save that of his Saviour, Rāmānuja. He memorialized this faith of his, by shaping an image of his feet and setting them up for worship for all time to come at the village of Sāligrama—as the most cherished treasure for himself and all posterity; and that it must be looked upon as such by all the coming generations, was the most solemn trust which he imposed on those near and dear to him, at the time of his translation from the mundane. Vatupūrna is thus assigned a place in the inner circle of Rāmānuja’s hierarchical institutions, called the Ashta-diggajas, or the Eight Elephants of Faith to guard the eight cardinal points of the compass. This sage it was who sang the famous hymn to Rāmānuja, called the Rāmānuj-āsthottara-śata-nāma, sung every day by every Śrīvaishnavas. The last verse runs thus:—

यहात् भूमिनमात्रायं स्वयं स्वतं रामानुजानाय ।
ततो ज्ञान-विद्यार्थियां ब्रह्माज्ञानसंसारसानाम् ॥

1 The meaning of this is that when a spiritual relation with spiritual men is established, that becomes holy, and all affections contracted with kinsmen who are worldly are contaminations. Their very touch is considered antagonistic to the growth of the new spiritual relation. The parallel to this idea is Jesus saying:—“Every one that hath left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name’s sake &c.” [Mat. XIX, 29]; and “if any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother &c.” [Luke XIV, 26].

2 The holy descendants of Pūrna mentioned on page 220, foot note 1, have sung thus in their Yatirāja-sārva-bhāuma-Sataka:—ब्राह्मणपुरुष-सूदरसर्वचन्द्रामालाकाश्युड &c.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

ANANTA-SŪRI OR ANANTÂCHÂRYA.

Some interesting incidents in the life of Anantârya, another staunch disciple of Râmânuja, are related thus. From previous pages it is known that he was the person who had undertaken to settle in Tirupati and do all the services of Lord Srinivâsa. It may also be remembered that he had created a flower garden to which he was paying personal attention. He now wished to construct a small reservoir for water for that purpose. He began excavating it by his own manual labour. But a Brahmachârin suddenly put in his appearance and saying: "Aged sire, the task is too much for thee. Let me help and lighten it," stretched his hand to take off his head the basket, in which he was carrying earth. Anantârya arrested the boy's hand and said: — "Son, if I resign my basket, I shall faint; if you take my basket, you will faint." But he was a stubborn boy and rejoined: — "No fear of that, Sire, trust me." Anantârya remonstrated and said: — "Son, this service is my life; if you also want life, go, fetch your own basket, and carry it." The boy disappeared for the present. Anantârya went on with his work and pressed his poor wife into the service, though she was pregnant at the time. She was employed in carrying loads of earth and emptying the same on to the bank. Her returns were at first slow, but they became soon rapid. Anantârya remarked it with surprize and asked her to explain how she managed to return so rapidly. She naively said: — "A Brahmachârin boy, sire, meets me half the way, carries the load for me and brings me back the basket. Hence Sire, your work is done more speedily." "Who is that impertinent urchin meddling with my work, uninvited!" fulminated Anantârya in anger, and running after the boy, gave him a poke under the chin with his crow-bear, saying: "Take that for thy trouble, and get thee gone." The boy took to his heels as if in fright. But the temple authorities found, and Anantârya too after, that Lord Srinivâsa in the shrine was profusely bleeding in the chin. This they stopped by stuffing camphor into the wound. [This is done even to this day, and the camphor is distributed to devotees as prasâda].
As Anantārya was fast progressing with his work, he was one day bitten by a cobra. But he went simply to the holy Svāmi-Pushkārini pond, bathed and returned to his work. People observed to him that he should put himself under treatment, unless he meant to die. But he quietly remarked: "No treatment is needed." He now went to the Temple on a visit to Lord Śrīnivāsa, when the Lord remarked:—"Son, beloved, what was thy thought when thou wouldst do nothing to extract the fatal poison from thy system?" "Lord," said he, "if the bitten serpent (i.e., I) is more powerful, it will simply bathe in thy holy pond and do service here below; but if the biting serpent is more powerful, the bitten serpent (i.e., I) will bathe in the Virājā-Stream and do service there above (in Thy Heaven). This was my thought when the cobra bit me."

Anantārya, once upon a time, left Tirupati to go to his native land, Pāsala-country 1 taking food for the journey. After doing a stage, feeling hungry, he sat down to discuss it; but lo, when he opened the box, he found the food swarming with ants. "Curse me, I have sinned," cried he, vexed. "The best Saints have desired to live on the Holy Hill of Tirupati, even as stocks and stones. 2 And I a sinner, have deprived these holy ants of their holy abode." So saying, he carefully closed the box and retracing his steps, hungry as he was, released the ants on the hill, and went his way.

Yamunāi-tūrāivan is a chamber in the Tirupati Temple premises, named after sage Yāmūnāchārya. Anantārya sat there usually to make flower-garlands for the Lord. When he was once thus busy and had not finished, he was called to attend on some other work in the Temple, but he refused to stir. And when he went there with the finished garland, the Lord asked him to explain his disobedience. Anantārya said:—"What have I to do with Thee, Lord, when my flowers are just blossoming, and I should not delay stringing them together lest their fragrance be lost for Thee." The Lord said:—"what if we

1 Present Mysore. His birth place is Kirangūr (Śiruputtūr) near Śrīrangapatna.

2 Ṣrīmad St. Kulaśekhar-Ārāvīr's Tirumozhi : "நாய்க்கையே சார்க்கு நோய்க்கையே நீதையே உருவை கொடுக்கையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதை� கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கைதையே கை�
dismiss thee from this place?"  "Lord, our Saints have sung that Thou art a sojourner on this Hill\(^1\) like myself; Thou mightest have come to stay here a little earlier than myself; and that is all the difference between us. This Hill is therefore not Thine, it is our common property. Thou hast no authority therefore to dispossess me of it." The Lord was mightily pleased with His curious devotee, which Ananțārya was.

\(^1\) "அநந்தரை உயர்த்து வேண்டும் சக்தி என்றும்."
CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SALVATION OF KÛREŞA.

Tradition here takes up the finishing episodes in the life of the most exemplary disciple and martyr Sri Kûreša. It is said that his figure forms the alto-relievo in the Life of Râmânuja, and his exit from the world's stage takes place in advance of that of his revered Master. Sri Râmânuja as will appear in the sequel.

Râmânuja must have been about 110 years and even more by this time. As redoubtable as he was in his championship of Vaishnavism, he was in his strength and zeal unflagging. A recluse, in quiet seclusion, he was importing to his hosts of disciples the quintessence of the doctrines it was his mission to propagate. One day, Kûreša went to visit Lord Ranganâtha all by himself. "Thou seemest as if thou hast something in thy heart to tell me," said the Lord. Kûreša broke out into praise which took the shape of a splendid Sanskrit verse,—gifted poet as he was—which he explained at great length by his own commentaries. The Lord was so pleased as to press Kûreša to ask any favour of him. But Kûreša humbly said that he had every favour bestowed on him; there was nothing more to ask. "No," said the Lord, "once more ask, and ask for more, if not for thee, for the love that I bear to my beloved Spouse, Sri, and love for my Râmânuja. Kûreša submitted his wish that he be released from the prison of the body, and be gathered to His Feet. "Ask some other thing than that," the Lord said; but Kûreša declared that he could think of nothing else. 1 "Let it be so, then," the Lord said; "what thou askest shall not only be boon for thee, but a boon conferred on every one that has any sort of relation with thee." Kûreša, receiving this message, walked out from the sanctum in all the dignity and glory of a crown-prince, soon destined to occupy the throne in the Kingdom of Parama-pada; and instead of going to his own house, sped beyond the outermost rampart of the Temple and took

1 ॥ नवनीतां नांयुधानमं त्यम् खलु. [2nd T. Andâdi, 92].
shelter in Āzhvar's (his father?) house. Intelligence soon reached Rāmānuja as to what had happened. Agreeably startled, he stood up, and flung his upper garment into the air—an expression of infinite joy. The disciples who watched this, failed to understand what Rāmānuja meant by this act, and humbly asked him to explain. "My faithful," he said "I bear also relationship with Kūrēṣa. My salvation, about which I may have doubts, is thus made safe and sure." This explains the important consequence that follows from the spiritual relation into which a Master and his disciples may enter; and that is, that saving power is as truly vested in a qualified disciple with regard to his Master, as is in a qualified master with regard to his disciple. But Rāmānuja's joy soon gave way to grief, at the impending prospect of separation from his dearest disciple and associate, Sri Kūrēṣa, the like of whom there was none; and he forthwith left his Math with all his assembly to meet Kūrēṣa ensooned in the Saint's shrine. They met and Rāmānuja chidingly remonstrated with Kūrēṣa for having done an act without previously taking counsel with him. Kūrēṣa kept submissively silent. "Why dost thou not speak, Āzhvān," addressed Rāmānuja, "What was thy object in asking the Lord to let thee go to the Blessed Realms in advance of me?" "Holy Sire," now spoke Kūrēṣa. "My object was to preserve the order of precedence there." "Speak not, beloved, in conundrums," returned Rāmānuja, "explain thyself." "Sire," began Kūrēṣa, "the saint's hymn 'mudiyudai' tells us that the angels who are our elders in Heaven come out of its gates to welcome those younger brothers of theirs, who proceed thither from here. This is out of order; for younger ones should always go and welcome the elders. This is the order I wish to preserve. Hence I go in advance and welcome my Master when he comes." Rāmānuja said:—"My most beloved, thou forgettest the rule that obtains in heaven; 

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1 How could Rāmānuja, himself a Saviour, doubt his own salvation? is a question which will naturally arise. The doubt had come to him on the occasion of his incurring the displeasure of his guru of Goshti-pūrṇa (vide P: Ch.), whom he dis-obeyed, by revealing the mysteries of religion kept so long sacred, and this doubt vanished by the Lord's gift to Kūrēṣa, to whom Rāmānuja bore spiritual kinship. Read verse at the end of this chapter.
all differences and distinctions disappear there; and yet thou desirest to perpetuate even there the relation that obtains here between us as master and disciple. In all the spheres, is there a soul to match thee!” So broke out Rāmānuja, and could not restrain tears trickling down his cheeks, attended by so; but observing that Kūrēṣa had little time now, checked himself and approaching closer, hugged him to his bosom and whispered into his ear the Holy Dvaya-Mantra; and turning to the spectators, whose curiosity was evidently roused by this act of his, spoke thus:—“Understand me, sirs. Our Kūrēṣa does not need a sacrament of any kind, and yet I administer it in the last moments, lest our spiritual prince Kūrēṣa miss the bliss of hearing the sacramental formula from my lips, even like the royal scion asking for his after-dinner aromatics, though he had chewed it a thousand times before. To our Kūrēṣa, the Dvaya is his daily nutriment; and I must serve it for the last time.” “Dear son, beloved Āzhvān,” he said, now turning to Kūrēṣa, “thou art my very soul, how can I part with thee? Canst thou not be kind to thy Master? Take him with thee to Heaven. Why leavest him behind to suffer cruel pangs of separation? How canst thou enjoy Heaven without him? [On page 2527, Vol. V of the Telugā Edition of the Bhaga- padvishaya, the conversation is thus recorded:—“While I am yet here, son, how wert thou anxious for Heaven? “Sire,” said Kūrēṣa, “in the depth of my thoughts for the miseries of earthly existence, I forgot this point. Pray forgive me.” Rāmānuja said, “if Lord Ranga could grant thee a boon, he could grant me one too. So I will go and ask him to stop thee here.” So saying, Rāmānuja, went a few paces towards the shrine, but stopped abruptly, and reflected thus:—“God’s will is unalterable. What audacity on my part to go and force Him to change it? Peccavi. Let me submit and be resigned to the inevitable.” So saying, he retraced his steps. Then followed the further conversation with Kūrēṣa]. How can I exist here without thee? Alas, the Lord in Heaven has attracted thee, though our Lord Ranganātha here possesses every attraction. So then, thou wilt sever thyself from thy Ranga? Happy is the Lord in Heaven and happy His celestial
hosts to claim thee as their own! Luckless are we here and this sleeping Lord here, Ranga, to lose thee! But let me not, my dearest, change thy mind and disturb thy plans. Be it as thou willest. All hail to thee, my son; go, go to the Blessed Eternal Kingdom and rule there in eternal peace and bliss!!” So saying, Râmânuja drew him closer into his embrace and fondly stroking him on the back, continued:—

“Ázhván! I salute thee; thou hast now my leave to depart.” Kûrêśa spoke not a word. “His heart was too full for expression. He fell at Râmânuja’s feet like a senseless block of wood. Râmânuja speedily raised him up, when Kûrêśa pressed his holy feet on his head and to his breast, and prayed for the administration of the holy water washed of his feet. Râmânuja administered it in serene solemnity and Kûrêśa took it after addressing the memorial verse:—

योनिर्मयतंयुक्तपदमज्ञुमदस्यम् ध्यामाहितस्तदितलाबिलक्षायमेव।
ब्रह्मचर्यांगत्वोदयःकृत्याऽपि रामाजुर्जस्पर्शकविशारदंपदः॥

“Râmânuja’s Holy Feet are my Refuge—Râmânuja, my blessed guru; the Ocean of Mercy,—Râmânuja who so loves the gold of God’s Feet that all else to him is dross.”

Râmânuja made a move now towards his Math, towards the North River (Kolladâm), Kûrêśa following him a little distance. “Pray stop now,” enjoined Râmânuja and Kûrêśa with folded hands retraced his steps to a pandal close by Ázhvär’s house. He now called his wife Ándal-ammal to his side and asked her what her wish was. She said: “August Sire, thy wish is my wish. My own, I have none.” So saying she fell on his feet with folded hands. He now called his sons Bhatārya and Śrī-Râma-pilli to his side, and counselled them thus: “Dear children, ye have no bereavement to bemoan, for ye have Lord Ranga, your Father, and His Holy Spouse is your Mother. By them ye have been brought up. But

\[1\] Washing the feet of holy men is an oriental ceremony, which Christ himself did to his disciples. The sipping of the water (known as Śripāḍatīrtha) which prevailed among the Srivaishnavas is done in order to imbibe the magnetic influence of the spiritual person, as a cure both for physical as well as psychical ills.
forget not that Rāmānuja is your Saviour. Be obedient to Āndāl. By thought or speech or deed sin not against Holy Men; on the other hand ever seek their company." The sons wept and fell at their father's feet. "Weep not, dear children," cried Kūrēśa, fondly raising them, "for if your grief is caused on account of temporal relationship, ye meddle with spiritual relationship, ye hold with Rāmānuja; but if it is due to our soul-relationship, then ye call it in question by such grief. Either way ye have no cause for regrets. Cease then and rise above such worldly weaknesses." So exhorting, Kūrēśa laid himself down,—head towards the Temple, resting on the lap of Pillai-pillai-Āzhvân, and feet resting on the lap of Āndāl amma—discarding from his mind every other thought than that of the Holy Feet of Rāmānuja, winged his way into the ethereal spaces. Rāmānuja was soon apprised of the event. He at once hastened to the spot and consoled Bhattārya who was weeping, and telling him that no tears should be shed over an auspicious event, directed him to attend to the funeral ceremonies.\(^1\) The Brahma-medha ritual combined with that of the Vaishnava, was duly performed; \(^2\) and the following verse was composed to his memory:

\[\begin{align*}
&\text{श्रीकृष्णं सहिष्णु नमः सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः हि} \\
&\text{श्रीसुक्तं सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः हि} \\
&\text{श्रीमहानगरकुलसिद्धं सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः हि}
\end{align*}\]

\(^{(a)}\) श्रीभुपाल्यान्यामः प्रेतोुरुविन्तयोति।
\(^{(b)}\) Mr. Leadbeater says:—"All the ghastly paraphernalia of woe—the mutes, the plumes, the black velvet, the crapes, the mourning garments, the black-edged note paper—all these are nothing more than advertisements of ignorance on the part of those who employ them. The man who begins to understand what death is at once puts aside all this masquerade as childish folly, seeing that to mourn over the good fortune of his friend merely because it involves for himself the pain of an apparent separation from that friend, becomes, as soon as it is recognized, a display of selfishness." [Pp. 59-60. Outline of Theosophy].
\(^{(c)}\) Read St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians IV, 12 to 17, of which 12 runs thus:—"And we will not have you ignorant, brethern, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, &c. And 17: "Therefore comfort you one another with these words."

\(^2\) The following authorities may of be use to our readers on this subject:

\[\begin{align*}
&\text{श्रीम्यं सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः हि} \\
&\text{श्रीमहानगरकुलसिद्धं सहिष्णुः सहिष्णुः हि}
\end{align*}\]
Our Elders repeat the following beautiful verse in praise of Kūrēṣa on his birth day every year:

'How can Kūrēṣa be fitly praised, by whom even Rāmānuja's salvation is made sure,—Rāmānuja, who is the sure passport to others' salvation?'

Tradition says that while Rāmānuja or (Lakshmanāchārya) is Lakshmana himself of the Rāmāyana fame, Kūrēṣa is Rāma himself, born again to render back to Lakshmana all the services which Lakshmana rendered to him in those bygone days.

It is said that without Kūrēṣa, Rāmānuja would not have been what he has been. A. P. Emberumānar sang the praises of Rāmānuja in his Drāvida Rāmānuja-nutrāṇ-dādi, in imitation of Andhra-Pūrṇa's Samskrit Rāmānuj-Āṣhtottara; but when Rāmānuja heard it, he rejected it as it contained no reference to Kūrēṣa. Verse 7. "Mozhiyai" was then introduced. Then the hymn was sanctioned and assigned a place along with the 4,000 Prabandhas.

Foot note on page 230—(continued).

1 See foot note 1 on page 275.
CHAPTER XXXVI.

RÂMÂNUJA’S LAST DAYS.

Parâśara-Bhattârya, or Bhattârya shortly, the son of Kûrêśa, had now come to the estate of his father;—spiritual estate. Râmânuja of course knew from the moment of Bhattârya’s entry into this world, that he was destined to be the apostle of the Viśishtâdvaita Dispensation—having been presented to the world by Lord Ranganâtha Himself as His own (God-)son. Providence designed that Kûrêśa should make his exit from the episcopal stage—for he was too saintly and retired from the world to be an active worker, the requisite for a propagandist. Bhattârya was of this type. So Râmânuja led the budding young man one morning to the Holy Temple, to present him formally to the Lord, so as to make him the anointed, to authoritatively transmit to posterity the great Message he had brought from Heaven. Râmânuja led then this juvenile apostle-delegate to the Lord, and presented him. “We again repeat and confirm our God-fathership to thee, son. We consecrate it by giving thee this turmeric-water to drink. Grieve not for the loss of our Kûrêśa, thy Father, for we stand to you in that position, more so even.” So spoke the Lord. Râmânuja interrupted:—“Majestic Lord! Bless this scion with long life; and I will give him all education.” Lord Ranga did not deign to reply, but simply gave them leave with his blessings, symbolized by the serving of tirtha and prasâda. Râmânuja returned to his see and calling Embâr (Govinda-Jîyar), assigned to him the sacred task of preparing Bhattârya thoroughly for the position he was to occupy, by a complete course of studies, in doctrine as well as discipline. After thus discharging the sacred trust which had been vested in him, Râmânuja settled down once more quietly, to spend his time usefully in imparting instruction to his large congregation in Bhâshya and Bhagavat-vishaya.

Kandâdai-Ândân, the son of Dâśaratthi, one day approached Râmânuja reverently and said:—“Holy Sire, thou art to us in this Kali-Age, God Himself incarnate, come on this earth to establish Dharma, like Lord Krishna in Dvâpara-Age. If
parimāṇya' is said to Him, thou art: पुरुषार्मोजिकात्सय पागवान्तचायच्छ।
श्रीमानविद्यामुखी समाजविद्विकः॥ रामानुज the Sun, incarnated, to
open the lotus of virtue, and dissipate the darkness of vice.” So,
Holy Father, permit us to instal in Sri-Perumbudur (Bhūta-
puri), thy image, that all posterity to the end of time may be
enabled to know thee, love thee and serve thee as their Saviour, and
secure their salvation.” Rāmānuja granted the prayer. Āṇḍān
accordingly brought a statuary to study Rāmānuja’s figure
and reproduce it in metal. This was done and shown to Rāmā-
uuja. He scanned it closely from top to bottom. Being satis-
fied, he embraced the statue pouring into it all the spiritual
power and grace he had possessed, for the benefit of posterity
and commanded that it be installed in Bhūta-puri in the month
of Pushya when Jupiter would be in that constellation. 6 Āṇḍān
carried the Image in state to Bhūta-puri, and installed it along
with the Mula or fixed Image, sculptured out of stone, exactly
in the month and on the day fixed by Rāmānuja. As the installa-
tion ceremonies were being proceeded with at Bhūta-puri,
Rāmānuja at Srirangam was suddenly taken ill. He was
startled at this, but recollecting that that was the moment his
Image was being inaugurated at Bhūta-puri, understood the
meaning of his illness. This he also took as a foreboding of the
end of his stay on earth and the completion of his vocation. He
therefore sent a message to Āṇḍān to return immediately.
Āṇḍān obeyed the summons and joined Rāmānuja.

Rāmānuja had thus all his band of disciples and devotees
remain by his side, and gave them the quintessence of his
teachings thus:—“Listen, sons beloved,” began he; “Men are of
three distinct types, the God-ward (anukūla), the God-against
(pratikūla) and the God-indifferent (anubhaya). The first type

1 Bhagavad-gita IV 8.
9 The figure answered the description:—

“पुरुषार्मोजिकात्सय पागवान्तचायच्छ। श्रीमानविद्यामुखी समाजविद्विकः॥
रामानुजान्तचायायच्छ।॥”

It is of this Image,—the frontispiece to this work.

8 This star, it is significant, is the star of Sri Rama's coronation.
are the Sri-Vaishnavas; the second are the antitheists; and the third are the worldly (samsāricins). If you meet with the men of the first class, joy as if you found flowers, scents, aromatics and so forth; as if the blush of moonshine spread about you, and zephyrs softly crept over you; as if you met your own most near and dear kith and kin. If you come across men of the second stamp, fear as if you faced a venomous reptile, fire and so forth. If you chance to meet men of the third description, mind them not as you would not mind the stocks and stones that lie on your way. If you discover willingness in them, teach them things of the spirit; if otherwise, treat them with pity. Why these men are turned away from God is because of their love for lust and lucre.

If out of pride consequent on lust and lucre, men condemn Sri-Vaishnavas it is nothing short of contempt for God Himself. If to such pride, holy men descend to paying courtship, it is like the king's wife wandering in the streets for begging. If to samsāricins, holy men allow themselves to be lured on account of their wealth and so forth, vain is their wisdom, as they have not learnt to distinguish between gem and glass.

There are six ways by which you can usefully spend your days: 1. Read Sri Bhāshya and teach it to others. 2. If that is above your level, read Tiruvāimozhi and make others read it. 3. If that is beyond your ken, build a hut in any holy land, and live there. 4. If that is impracticable, do services in a Temple. 5. If that is inconvenient, dwell ever on the profound truths contained in the Holy Dvaya-Mantra. 6. If that also is difficult, take shelter or service under a holy man.

Rāmānuja now sent for all the servants of the Blessed Fane of Ranga, and addressed them thus:—"O Faithful Servants of our Lord, my time is over, and my services in your company have to come to an end. In the performance of my duties with you, I may have offended some and pained others. As I am now about to leave you, it is seeming that I ask of you, one and all, to forgive me for my short-comings."

"Holy Sire," said they all in one voice. "Why do you speak
thus to us your humble servants? your speech is strange—not only strange, but drives fear into our breasts! You, beloved father, to leave us orphans? You, the soul of the worlds, to leave us lifeless corpses?" "Speak not so, sons," said Rāmānuja, comforting them:—"Ye lose nothing by losing me; for there is Your Lord Ranga here, ever present, and who never leaves you. He is safe sleeping on his serpent-couch and steadily gazing to the South,—for his Bhakta, Vibhishana dwells there. Never be sparing in your services to Him. Be vigilant and devout. I wish you all the constant company of the Lord’s own elect,—the Śrī-Vaishnavas. Farewell." So exhorting them and assigning to select disciples the care of the different sections of his large following, Śrī Rāmānuja led Bhāṭṭārāya to Lord Ranga’s presence, and let him receive the tīrtha and prasāda, prior to him,—signifying by this act that Bhāṭṭārāya was to be the Head of the Śrīvaishnava Church after his departure—and turning to his disciples, said:—"Gentle folk, he shall be next to me in succession. Look upon him as such." Turning to Bhāṭṭārāya, he said:—"Sou, there is a servant of repute, by name Vedānti in the uplands (Mysore). Go there, win him by polemics, and convert him to our Faith." After thus consecrating Bhāṭṭārāya, Rāmānuja returned to his Maṭh, and once more addressing the assembly of his disciples, commanded them not to stray from the Path when he passed away; not to take his loss so much to heart as to interfere with the due performance of duties falling to their share, "for," said he, "you will then forfeit your connection with me, Mahāpūrṇa and Yāmuna; and you will moreover act contrary to the will of our St. Śtahagopā. Approach me, then, each of you, and swear by my holy feet, that you will carry out my behests, and will never swerve from the lines of virtue, I have marked out for you all."

Rāmānuja now commanded that they should retire and return after eating of the consecrated food prepared for them. They obeyed; and when they returned, Śrī Rāmānuja gave his last words and last blessings; and withdrawing himself gently,—as if he was falling into a quiet natural sleep,—closed his eyes, and laid himself down, his head turned towards the
Temple, and rested on the lap of Embār, and feet placed on the lap of Vaṭu-pūrṇa (Āndhra-pūrṇa).

The whole Śrirangam and his wife crowded to the Math to witness the last moments of the Great Rāmānuja. A party of the elders, in solemn tones, sang the Brahma-valli and the Bhrigu-valli of the Vedas; and another party sang the hymns of the Drāvida-Prabandhas. As they watched Rāmānuja lying in state, their hearts beating with the importance of the supreme moment, the crown of his head (at the pineal-gland)\(^1\) burst and the holy Ambassadar of God winged his way back to the Native Land the feed souls, the Empyrean of the perfect.

Like the mighty trees of the forest, uprooted and blown down by the fierce blasts of the hurricane, did the assembly fall flat on the ground, senseless; when to recovering sense only to feel all the more the keen agony of their irreparable loss, followed by an uproarious outburst of grief, unparalleled by any other event of the kind. Torrents fell from their blinded eyes, and they ejaculated inarticulate words from their choked throats shaking with passion; and in short, their limbs lay as if bereft of motion by the paralytic stroke dealt by Rāmānuja’s passing away from the sphere of his labours, up to Heaven,—His Native Home,—to enjoy that unutterable rest there—the reward of all the benefactors of mankind.

‘Indeed,’ cried they, ‘have we realized the truth of शैलीक्षण,\(^2\) and धर्मवेचक: \(i.e.,\) when you sprang into our midst, we obtained the ‘light of knowledge’; and now your exit envelops us in the ‘gloom of evil.’”\(^3\)

When Rāmānuja’s Grand Guru Yāmuna-āchārya ascended to Heaven, a routine of observances and sacraments, processions and interment was gone through as prescribed by the Śāstras for a Vaishnava and a Sanyāsin. All this, even to minuter elaborations, and greater detail was solemnly gone through. Thus passed away the Great Rāmānuja.

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\(^{1}\) The Brahma-raudhra.

\(^{2}\) This is a muemogram indicating the birth-date of Rāmānuja Śaka, 939 (1017 A.C.)

\(^{3}\) Another muemogram enshrining the date of his departure: Śaka 1059 (1137 A.C.)
CHAPTER XXXVII.

RÂMÂNUJA’S GREATNESS.

"Endless are the incidents in the Chapters of Râmânuja’s life. It would be impossible to record them all. Only the salient features have been recorded," so says our chronicler, Pin-balagia-Perumâl-Jiyar. He collects now in one summarized compass all the evidences eloquently testifying to the greatness of Râmânuja.

1. Lord Ranga declared with his own lips that all the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven as well as of earth were placed at Râmânuja’s disposal.

2. Lord Srinivâsa confirmed this grant by His holy word also; and to prove that this was not mere flattery, it is written that a milkmaid by name Tumbaiyûr Koṇḍi, was supplying curds to Râmânuja. When he was once on his way to Tirupati, the woman appeared and presented her bill for payment. Râmânuja commanded Kiḍâmbi-Âcehan to give her food in the Math. She ate and coming to Râmânuja, prostrated to him and submitted to him that she had a favour to ask. He bade her ask it. She said:—"Holy sire, I desire not payment in coin for my curds, but grant me Moksha instead." \(^1\)

"But that power I possess not," replied Râmânuja, "Lord Srinivâsa alone can grant thy prayer." "Then give me a written permit, sire, to take to the Lord" asked she. Râmânuja, overcome by her faith, gave her one. She forthwith ascended the Sacred Mount, but she had hardly reached the summit, before the Lord Himself met her on the way, and receiving the permit, gave her Moksha on the spot.

3. Lord Varadarâja of Kânchipurâ proved Râmânuja on two occasions, when He appeared once in Yâdava-prakâsa’s dream and commanded that circumambulation of the world enjoined for a would-be Sanyâsin was accomplished by once circumambulating round Râmânuja; and when hot de-

\(^1\) i.e., Liberation.
bates on philosophy waged between Rāmānuja and Yajñamūrti, and the latter was scoring points for victory, the Lord appeared in Rāmānuja’s dream and suggested certain Vedic passages¹ being quoted as those would level the adversary to the ground. Next morning the opponent was vanquished.

4. Lord Nārāyaṇa of Melukote, proved Rāmānuja by His showing the way for Rāmānuja’s future in a dream when he was staying at Tondānur; and further condescending to assume the position of a loved Son to Rāmānuja—Sampat-kumāra.

5. Lord Sundara-Rāja of the Azhagar-Hill near Madura, proved by summoning one day all the disciples of Rāmānuja before Him. They obeyed, but the kinsmen of Mahā-pūrṇa (the Āchārya of Rāmānuja), stopped away. Pūrṇa asked them why. “We are your kinsmen, are n’t we? And Rāmānuja is our disciple therefore,” said they. The Lord on hearing this spoke:—“Your taking Rāmānuja for a disciple is only matched by Daśarathī and Vasudeva taking Rāma and Krishṇa for their sons respectively. On another occasion Kidāmbi-ācāchān repeated before the Lord the verse: Aparādhaka……,² in which the expression agatim: ‘wayless’ occurs. “How darest thou utter this,” interrupted the Lord, “when thou hast Rāmānuja for thy ‘way’?”

6. Nambi, the Lord of Tiru-kurungudi, proved by expressing surprise that Rāmānuja should be able to bring many souls to God’s fold, while He Himself could not ac-

¹ पर्यावेबनुमस्तश्रताःश्राद्वाराणां सदस्तहस्यपुच्छते


² अपरादश्चाधिकार्याणि पलितभीममवार्षेवाति

[Stotra—Ratna by Yānumā.

“Freighted alas! with a thousand sins,
A wreck in the dreadful sea of death, I pine!
Lost is my way, O Lord, my God!
I yield me up to thee;
Thy grace alone must save,
Ah! make me thine.”]
complish so much, despite His repeated Incarnations on earth; and He retired every time sad with the thought that souls were more prone to roll down and down into the depths of samsāra, than climb up to Him. “Wouldest Thou know the secret, Lord?” said Rāmānuja, “then put thyself in the position of a disciple.” Nambi did so, and Rāmānuja whispered the secret of his success into the Lord's ear; and ever afterwards, Nambi prided Himself on this kind of spiritual tie established with Rāmānuja.

7. St. Nammāzhvār felt so much compassion for the sinful world that he laid a wager with God Himself. “See, Lord, I shall convert the world unto Thee.” “Know they not Thy Greatness, that I should tell?” and so forth. But when he saw the world averse to his preaching, he retired disappointed, crying:—“Is it possible for me to correct this large world?”; “Enough; myself and my mind have yielded to Him.”

But again when he looked forth into the future, he saw hope and exultingly cried,—“This dark world shall yet be set right. Yet, this dark age shall bring salvation”! Thus did this Saint; refer to the advent of Rāmānuja, as the coming Messiah. Sage Nāthamunigal prophesied Rāmānuja's advent by saying: ‘A plash may quench a sparrow's thirst; but a loch will feed a vale.’ By loch he symbolized Rāmānuja. Embār sang this by the following beautiful metaphor:

1. வேதமிக்காயார் [Bh. Gitā, 1V, 5]
2. ஆய்மிகீபோராரச [Bh. Gitā, XVI, 20]
3. கூறிள்முனையார் [T. Viruttam 16]
4. எ! மகூர் எமூ! [T. Vāymozhi, II, 2-2]
5. அகாத்தாசமுட்டியால் அகாத்தாசமுட்டியால் [P. T. Andādi, 26.]  
6. எ்மும்ம் எ்முரும்ம் எ்மும்ம் [P. T. Andādi, 29.]
7. வேதமிக்காயாரஸ்தீர்க்கள் [T. Vāymozhi, V. 2-1,] 

"நேட்கிறானே குறுகின்ற கூவே" தோற்பொருளிப ஆலயா கூறிள்முனையார்கள்."
8. Yāmunāchārya when he was at Kānchi-pura on a visit, and saw Rāmānuja, following in the train of Yādava-prakāṣa, pointed him out to his disciples, saying:—"Look, He will be the first leader of our faith."

9. Mahāpūrṇa proved Rāmānuja's greatness thus:—One day he and his daughter Attuḻāy-amma, were seated in their house, when Rāmānuja happened to enter with his train of disciples. Mahāpūrṇa at once got up and prostrated himself before him. His daughter asked him how he could do such an act of obeisance to Rāmānuja, who was his disciple. Pūrṇa replied: "Those feet and this head are a match to each other." Another day Rāmānuja was returning from his bath in the Kāveri, when Mahāpūrṇa meeting him did obeisance. But Rāmānuja stood erect instead of returning this customary homage, and simply lifted up his Guru. Rāmānuja's disciples asked him to explain his unusual conduct. He said: "My Guru wishes to please himself by honoring me. If that is his pleasure, it is my pleasure. I should not cross him." The disciples next asked Pūrṇa to explain his unusual behaviour. "He said:—"Sirs, I saw in Rāmānuja my own Guru—Yāmuna after my own Guru, all the perfections of a Guru find their haven in Rāmānuja." And Pūrṇa made his own son Pundāri-kākṣha the disciple of Rāmānuja.

10. It has already been related, that Goshti-pūrṇa—the second Guru of Rāmānuja,—revealed the secrets of religion to Rāmānuja by exacting a promise that he would not impart the same to others; but that Rāmānuja broke the promise anon by openly declaring the secrets to all in the Temple; that Pūrṇa became wroth on coming to know this and demanding an explanation from Rāmānuja, the latter confessed his fault, but sub-
mitted that if his disobedience did entail on him hell, he had the satisfaction of thinking that thousands were saved—a great price to get in return—; and that Pūrṇa, on hearing this embraced Rāmānuja exclaiming: “What a large heart thine for others; my shallow heart did not warm like this! Thou art no other than he (Yāmuna).” And he made his son Terk-ālyār, Rāmānuja’s disciple.

11. Tirumalai-Nambi or Śrīsāla-Pūrṇa—another Guru—it has already been narrated, replied,—when questioned by Rāmānuja why an elderly person like himself came to meet him on his way up the Holy Hill of Tirupati, when there were many young persons, any one of whom he could have despatched,—that with respect to Rāmānuja, he could find no other person younger than himself. And further Pūrṇa made a gift of Embār to Rāmānuja, and made his son Rāmānuja to become his disciple.

12. Tirumālai-Andān or Mālādhara—another Guru—was teaching Tiruvāyamohzi to Rāmānuja. When the verse ‘Ariyākkāllattu’ [II. 33], was explained, Rāmānuja gave his own interpretations. This gave offence, the Guru ceasing to teach. Goshṭhi Pūrṇa, coming to hear of this speedily appeared on the scene, and gave Mālādhara to understand that Rāmānuja’s interpretations were correct, as they were those of Yāmunāchārya; and that he must look upon Rāmānuja in the light of such a disciple as Lord Krisṇa was to Sāndipa. On another occasion, when Rāmānuja, gave out an explanation, which he said, was according to Yāmuna, “thou hast never spoken to Yāmuna, how dost thou know?” cried Mālādhara. “Sire” replied Rāmānuja, “am I not Īkalavya to Yāmuna?” The Guru anon fell on the ground, saying: “Indeed thou art an avatāra,” and made his son Sundarabāhu, Rāmānuja’s disciple.

13. Rāmānuja did humble service to the venerable Tiruvarangam-p-perumāl-Āraiyar, when the latter, one day, said: “The price of thy services, Rāmānuja, is my all”, and he taught him the secrets of the Fifth Way (Pañcham-opāya), and made his son Tiruvāyamohzi Āraiyar his disciple.

14. Andhra-Pūrṇa was a firm believer in this Fifth Way, which to him was the Holy Feet of Rāmānuja.
15. Kanjiyanur Siriyacchân, declared on oath (i.e., when remaining half immersed in water) that faith in Râmânuja was the only road to salvation.

16. Yajñamûrti (a convert from Advaitism), whom Râmânuja set up in a separate see, as abbot, and to be looked upon as a second Râmânuja, declared to his intimate disciples, Ecchân, Anandâlvân, Tondanûr-Nambi and Marundûr-Nambi that Râmânuja was the real Saviour, and his second Râmânujâship was only a gracious honor bestowed on him, inasmuch as he felt it as a millstone hung round a sparrow’s neck.

17. Pillai-pipillai-yâzhvân became the disciple of Kûreśa. The latter when asked his pastoral fee (âcharyadakshina), stated it as the curbing by him of his three instruments of thought, speech and deed against offending holy men. But the disciple found it very difficult to carry this advice into practice, and evinced great perplexity. Kûreśa observing it, called him and said:—“Here is a way out of thy difficulty, son! Thou canst avoid hurt by deed, for thy foe will return it, or the king will punish for it. Thou canst avoid hurtful speech, if thou wishest to keep peace with the world; for so says a stanza:—यदी भाषितिस्विदः कठीणेनकरा-मेघः। पराशारस्तुऽर्थे गायकर्नोत्ति:ः। This is to thy advantage. There remains now thy thought which is difficult to curb. Hence if thou wishest thy mental sins not to offend God, trust to Râmânuja’s feet for reconciliation.

18. Milaâzhvân challenged Dâšarathi for a debate. The latter consented and asked for a wager. “If I am beaten,” said Âzhvân, “I will carry thee on my shoulders.” This was agreed to; and Dâšarathi won. Âzhvân, true to his word lifted the victor on to his shoulders, ran a few paces, and setting him down asked forgiveness for his impudence. Dâšarathi lead him to Râmânuja, and said: “There is thy forgiveness—his holy feet.”

19. Embâr counselled Bhaṭṭârya thus:—“Son, vaunt not thyself that thou art the Godson of Lord Ranga, Kûreśa’s son, and a servant. Faith in Râmânuja alone will save thee.”
20. Bhattârya counselled Nañjîyar thus:—“Son! pique thyself not on being a great Vedântist, on thy becoming my disciple, and on thy giving up all thy wealth to me, as my fee. But firmly believe in Râmânuja as our Saviour.”

21. Nañjîyar warned Nambillai thus:—“Grow not haughty that the world calls thee: ‘World-teacher’ (Lokâchârya); that thou art a clever expert in expounding the Prabandhas. Râmânuja’s feet alone can save thee.

22. One day Nambaillai took hold of the hand of Siva-kkarai-p-pillai, to go out; and as he crossed the threshold of his house, he discovered a holy man asleep on the pial outside. S. pillai called out to him to withdraw his legs as his master was there. Nambillai immediately let go his hold of S. pillai saying:—“Son, our saints have declared that the legs of holy men are holy legs. To call them ‘legs’ in derision is against thee a proof of disrespect and ignorance. Begone from me.” S. pillai went to his village in disgrace and set up loud wailing, and cried:—“Oh master! thou hast cast me away like the stone in a sling, from thy holy place between the two rivers.” Nambillai on hearing this repentance, sent for him and enjoined:—“Trust in Râmânuja, all thy faults are remitted.”

23. Tiru-k-kurugai-p-pirân Pillân was once in a place called Siru-p-puttâr. Sômâsiy-Åndân read Sri-Bhâshya under him three times. Pillân left the place for his native country, when Åndân pleaded: Sire, I live in this country far from you. Deign to tell me the choicest article of faith for my life.” To this Pillân replied:—“Son, keep off intumescence that comes of thy ability to descant on the science of Pûrva-Mimâmsa, and to discourse on Sri-Bhâshya; but place implicit faith in our Saviour Ramanuja.” And Gomathatha-p-pillan bade in a similar manner his disciple Kâkkai-p-pâdi-y-acchan-Pillai.

24. “When God was angry with you, what didst thou do?” asked Engal-Åzhvân of K. P. A. Pillai “I resorted at such times to the appeasing power vested in our Saviour, Râmânuja;” he replied.
25. A coterie of disciples read Śrī-Bhāṣhya under Nāḍādūr-Ammāl. They asked:—“Father, Bhakti (love to God), we find is a hard thing to do.” Ammāl taught them the way of Prapatti (faith in God). They again pleaded: “Sire, it is hard to get faith.” “Then,” taught Ammāl, “your only way is to depend on Rāmānuja.” Nāduvil Āzhvān administered similar instructions to his disciples Vangipurattācchi and others.

26. “This is a mighty torrent, this Śrī-Bhāṣhya,” complained the Aimbatt-iruvār (52) magnates of Tirunārāyana- puram (Mēlukōte) when Veda-ṛṣya-Bhāṭṭar expatiated on it before Rāmānuja’s shrine in the Temple. “Then,” said Bhāṭṭar, “trust solely to your household-God Rāmānuja, and that is enough.” So again did Nāduvil-Tiruvīḏhi-p-pillai- Bhāṭṭar comfort his disciple Elaiya v-alagiyyār.

27. Āndhra-pūrṇa often reproached Kūrēṣa and Dāṣarathi for double-heartedness inasmuch as they wavered in their devotion between God and Rāmānuja, the Saviour; whereas he was single-hearted as being firm in his trust in the latter alone.

28. The devil Brahma-rakṣas signified Rāmānuja’s greatness, by so declaring it to Yādava-prakāsa.

29. The dumb lad was another illustration. He was born in Kāṇchipuram, dumb. After his fifth year he was found missing for two years. He suddenly appeared again. People surrounded him and questioned him as to whither he had gone. He replied that he had been charmed away to Kshirābdhi (Milky Sea). “What is the news there,” asked they. “The only news of any importance,” said he, “was that on earth an avatār in the shape of Rāmānuja has descended.” The boy was not seen again, after he delivered this message. This story, the holy Bhagavat-senāpati-Jiyar took pride in often relating, to vouch further for the greatness of Rāmānuja.

30. As among Divine Incarnations, those of Rāma and Kṛishṇa are notable; Vyāsa, Parāśara, Suka, and Saunaka among the Rishis; Śrīrangam, Tirupati, Kānchi and Mēlukōte
among the Holy places; St. Nammāzhvār among the Saints; so is Rāmānuja among the Āchāryas (Apostles), such as Nātha-muni.

31. The importance of Rām-Āvatāra consists in Rāma’s declaring the Divine Gift of Free Grace to all who may approach Him, irrespective of caste or creed, color or condition; in seeking friendship of humble folk like Guha; in performing the obsequies of a Brāhmaṇa for Jatāya; in accepting food from the hands of a Sābara; in eating in the company of Hanumān; and so forth.¹

The importance of Krishn-Āvatāra consists in Krishna’s delivering the Apocalypse of Bhagavat-gitā, with its Charama-Sloka;² in rejecting the hospitality of Bhishma and Drona for that of Vidura;³ and so forth.

The reputation of Srirangam comes of Lord Ranga’s having mixed with the (Pariah) Saint Tiruppānar, as intimately as body and soul; that of Tirupati comes of Lord Srinivāsa’s having spoken to and moved freely with such souls as Bhima, (Kurumb-ayutta-nambi), the potter, and Tondaman; that of Kāṅchi (Perumāl-kōil) comes of Lord Varada’s having been so intimate with Kāṅchi-pūrṇa; that of Melukote, of Lord Nārāyaṇa’s having eaten of the food offered by Sucharita’s son; and of His having deigned to become the son of Rāmānuja —hence called Yatirāja-sampati-kumāra.⁴

The distinction earned by Veda-Vyāsa is because of his Vedānta-Sūtras and the Sātvika Purāṇas, by all of which he proclaimed the Ultimate Truth by his finishing stanza:

\[
उ पुरुषसत्सवस्तरं उष्णसत्सवस्तरं
वेदशास्त्रार्थारितात् नैवेद्यकृतात्तपर् II
\]

"I declare, once, twice, thrice.

¹ See Rāmāyaṇa.
² Gitā, XVIII, 66.
³ विदुराजनिविदुरुज्ञेकुण्डिनिविन्यासतीव. एव, [Bhārata, Udyoga Parva.]
⁴ जिनसंभवस्य जिननैवेद्यमोजयेत.
There is no Scripture like the Veda, nor God like Kēsavā, that earned by Parāśara is because of his Vishṇu-purāṇa, in which he gives a clear definition of the Three Eternal Verities, God, Soul and Matter,—hence styled by Sage Yāmuna as ‘The Magnificent’; that earned by Suka is by his Bhāgavata by declaring in it the greatness of Vishnu and his earning immediate mukti, ṣaṅkīrṇa; that earned by Śaunuka is by his famous work Vishnu-Dharma; that earned by Nārada is because of his declaration as the slave of the holy Vaishṇavas. The distinction of St. Nammāzhvar arises from his composing four Prabandhas analogous to the Four Vedas, thus popularising Scriptures, and his revealing to Sage Nāthamuni the Four-Thousand Prabandhas, thus establishing the Vaishṇava Dispensation. But above all towers the reputation of Rāmānuja, inasmuch as he was unobedient to all, the Holy Sense of the Chārama-Sloka, made clear the obscure and abstruse texts of the Vedas, made manifest the truths of St. Nammāzhvār’s Tiruvāyumoṭhi, wrote exegetics on Brahmma-Sūtras according to the Canons established by Sages Nāthamunni and Yāmuna in their Treatises; wrote other independent works such as the Gadyatraya; won victories over false prophets and philosophers; thus bequeathing to posterity a system pre-eminently known as Rāmānuja’s system, though it is a system of thought co-eternal with God Himself.

32. Rāmānuja was one day conducting his ministry in his congregation, taking up the Doctrine of God’s Free Grace to frail humanity, as illustrated by Rāmāyaṇa. Vibhīṣana, though born among the demons (Rākshasas), was angelic in nature. He tried to dissuade his brother Rāvaṇa from his evil ways, but he would not listen; so he severed himself swiftly

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1 बदेशपौर्णमसः भर्गशत्वभुजामानवम्।
भारतेषुवदर्शिता दुराक्षेत्रनिश्चयवम्॥

2 तत्त्वद्विविधिक्रियेत्तत्त्वम् भोगाविरगितायाम्बीदारः।
सन्तोऽयाचिन्मतित्वरूपश्रवः तस्मातनामगितावर्गवर्गवशः॥ [Stotra-Ratna, 4]

3 भजयुगमिषयिनेशुरिन्ध्रितस्यविषयोऽर्पमपुर्वतमनांकीर्तित्वप्रघवः
हस्ततपित्पुरुषः मस्तकपरस्यकथते सर्वसङ्गासमिकायतस्यप्रसिद्धवः॥
from all connection with him, and soaring into the sky, crossed the ocean with four attendants and coming to Lord Râma, who was encamped with his army on the other shore, cried thus:

‘O Râma,’ thus he cried, ‘in me Vibhishanâ, Râvân’s brother, see.
By him disgraced thine aid I seek,
Sure refuge of the poor and weak.
From Lankâ, friends, and wealth I fly.
And reft of all on Thee rely.
On Thee, the wretch’s firmest friend,
My kingdom, joys and life depend. [Râmâyana, VI, 19.]

***

I left my children and my wife
And fly to Raghu’s son for life. [Râmâyana, VI, 17.]

And yet the Vânar-chiefs of Lord Râma said to Him:

‘Râma!
We wait thy word; the order give
And these thy foes shall cease to live.
Command us, mighty king, and all,
Lifeless upon the earth shall fall. [Râmâyana, VI, 17.]

On hearing this, Dhanurdâsa stood up and cried:—

“Godsire, if Vibhishana, who left wife, children and all in order to seek refuge with Râma, deserved to be stoned by Râma’s Vânar-chiefs, how much more indeed do I deserve that treatment,—I, who have made no renunciation at all like Vibhishana!!” “Peace,” cried Râmânûja, “Listen to me, my son, I will unfold to thee the secrets of salvation. Sri, the spouse of Lord Nârâyana, ever stands by Him as our Mothermediator. She is the personification of the most exalted attribute of God, viz., Grace or Mercy. When our Lord through Sri is ever anxious to shower His mercy unstintingly on His erring children on earth, what fear is there for us?

1 Sri also symbolizes love of God for man and love of man for God, She ever dwells in the bosom of God, like the Christ, the Son [John I. 13.]
We have an unbroken chain of apostles, reaching down to us from God, of which the first link is God, and His Grace, Sri, the next. St. Sāthagopa is the next important link; and he has declared in unmistakable terms that he has obtained Heaven (moksha). If he has won it, Nāthamuni has won; if Nāthamuni has won, Yāmuna has won; Yāmuna winning, my next guru above me, Mahapūrṇa, has won. If Pūrṇa has won, I have surely won. When I have, ye have all indeed won. Take comfort then from this thought. Dvaya-Mantra, which I have taught thee, declares, as thou art aware, he indissoluble unity of God with His Grace, Sri; and an unbroken chain binds God and His creatures in one bond, from which it is impossible to escape and stand aloof. With me goes my flock. What I share it undoubtedly shares. The areca tree is watered by the gardener, but the plantain trees round it take the moisture as well. I and my church are linked together for one testing. My destiny shall invariably be its destiny. When Viḥiṣṭāna was after all allowed to approach Lord Rāma, no separate invitation to the four Rākshasa-men, who accompanied with him, was needed, nor when the Vānara-chiefs wished to drive him away, did they think of driving those four persons separately. In other words, the four persons counted with Viḥiṣṭāna as one, in gains or losses. Even thus counts my flock with me. Hence, son! thou mayst rest assured that if Heaven is mine, it is thine without question. As St. Bhaktisāra has said; the flock has even more merit than the shepherd, Satrughna has more merit in following Bharata, than Bharata, Lord Rāma; St. Madhurakavi than St. Sāthagopa; St. Āndāl than St. Vishnu-Chitta, her father; and so forth.

1 பாட்டும் தேவர் மாசும்.

2 Cp. (a) "Where I am, there also shall my minister be. If any man minister to me, him will my Father honor."

[John, XII, 26.]

(b) "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

[John, XII, 32.]

3 அரவித்திருவரவானானால்-மத்பாவை

எம் பூமிப்பானாய். [4th T. Āndādi, 18.]
33 Hence Amudanār in his immortal work Rāmānuja-nūtt-Andādi, sung daily by all the Vaishṇavas and in all the Vishṇu Temples, testifies to Rāmānuja’s greatness as Saviour of mankind, thus:—

“Our elders aver that God dwells in His Holy Shrines in heaven and on earth, but His Holiest Shrine is the Holy Heart of Rāmānuja. Hence we worship God by worshipping Rāmānuja; by resorting to Rāmānuja we shall have resorted to all the Holy Shrines.”

34. Nādadūr Ammāl declared, that the way to salvation is not by works (karma), not by knowledge (jñāna or gnosis), not by devotion (bhākṣī), not by faith (prapatti), but by implicit trust placed in Rāmānuja; and this was the ultimate truth proclaimed to all by Amudanār in his R. N. Andādi. 3

35. “Here are two Holy Names,” Kūrēṣa often said, “namely, Nā-rā-ya-na and Rā-mā-nu-ja, each is made up of four syllables. But Nārayana as denoting God, can both save and damn, but Rāmānuja as Saviour, can only save. In this consists our stay, strength and safety.

36. “Rāmānuja,” exclaimed Amudanār, “it matters not where I am, hell or heaven, but let thy Beauteous Figure haunt me ever. To this bliss, I will forego even the Lord whom thou canst show upon thy hand.” 4 “Where those great souls, Rāmānuja’s servants, dwell, that is my Empyrean.” 4 “Rāmānuja,” said he addressing him directly, “My very bones may split in agony, but let me at all times and all places indulge in love for Thy servants.” 5 It is chronicled that so addressed, Rāmānuja looked on Amudanār with eyes beaming with benevolence and passed on. And Amudanār put a finis to his hymnal by the verse:—“I seek Śrī, the spouse of Ranga, that she may bless me with the bliss of crowning my head with

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3 & 4 B. N. Andādi, 105, नारायणवादी.

5 Do. 107, अमुदानार.
the blooms of Rāmānuja’s Feet—blooms of the plant of love growing in my heart.”  

Lord Rāma declared: “Both Heaven and Earth are granted thee, Rāmānuja.”

37. One day St. Kulasekhara’s verse: अन्नसंधारा was being read. This meant that when Rāma left Ayodhya for the woods, the whole Ayodhya’s kiti and kiti of Rāma accompanied him. But some one in the auditory objected: “They only accompanied a little way off and then returned. How then did this Saint say they accompanied with him throughout?” Rāmānuja answered: “When Lakshmana who said: “All services I shall do,” followed, it is as if all followed, referring to himself thūs.

Thus was the greatness of Rāmānuja.

2 Cp Jesus saying:—”All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" [Mat. XXVIII, 18.]
3 “Aham sarvam karishyami.” [Rām. II, 31, 25.] This is an indirect reference to himself.
CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ANCIENT AUTHORITIES ON RAMĀNUJA.
APPROXIMATE DATES IN THE CHIEF EVENTS OF RÂMÂNUJA'S LIFE.

1. Birth at Sríperumbûdûr ... A.C. 1017 (Sâlivâhana Sâka 939).

2. Study with Yâdavaprakâśa ... ... A.C. 1033

3. First entry to Srirangam to see Ålavandûr. ... 1042

4. Taking holy orders ... ... ... ... 1049

5. Flight to Mysore (under King Cholâ's persecution) ... ... ... ... 1096

6. Convension of Bittî-deva, the King of the Hoysala Country (Maisûr), and naming him Vishnu-vardhana ... , 1098

7. Installing Lord Srî-Nârâyana at Melukote. ... 1100

8. Stay in this Country up to ... ... ... ... 1116

9. Return to Srirangam ... ... ... ... 1118

10. Finis to earthly career ... ... ... ... 1137

Total length of life, years 120
SUCCESSION LIST OF RĀMĀNUJĪYA ĀCHĀRYAS.

1st. Nimbarka,
2nd. Svāmīcakrīkādi (Disciple of 1st).
3rd. Parākṣepati (Son of 2nd).
   1. Vīśnupāl (Son of 3rd).
   2. Sūryadeva (Son of 3rd).
4th. Āprābhāda after Yāmuna or Vīrvēdjhāda (Son of 8th).

5th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 5th).
6th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 6th).
7th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 7th).
8th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 8th).

9th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 9th).
10th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 10th).
11th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 11th).
12th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 12th).

13th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 13th).
14th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 14th).
15th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 15th).
16th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 16th).
17th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 17th).
18th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 18th).
19th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 19th).
20th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 20th).
21st. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 21st).
22nd. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 22nd).
23rd. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 23rd).
24th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 24th).
25th. Śrīmad-Vīśnupāl (Son of 25th).

Note: We are indebted to Śrī T. A. Gopālānanda Ācārya for initiating this tabulation.