"RAMACHAR AND HIS LINEAGE"

By

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DEDICATED TO

MY GRAND FATHER 'NYAYA RATNA'

POOJYA

*Kollur Ramacharaya II*

IN HIS EVER LOVING MEMORY

—SRINIVASACHARYA KOLLUR.
I am indebted to the following erudite scholars who offered their valuable opinion after going through the typed script.

1. Sri G. K. Kulakarni, M.A.
   Station Director All India Radio, Gulbarga.

2. Sri V. P. Deulgaonkar
   Retired Professor in Marathi Gulbarga.

3. Vedamurthy Bannanje Govindacharya, Udupi.

4. Vedamurthy Prabhanjanacharya, Vyasanakere, Bangalore.

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7. Sree Nandeeswara Printers, Bellary who printed this book with great interest and devotion.

8. It would not have been possible for me to complete the printing of this book had not Sri Ramacharya Malgi, Bellary, provided me with the necessary facilities and accommodation at his residence at Bellary. I offer my hearty thanks to him and his family.

I hope readers will receive this book with love and appreciation.

SrinivasaChari
Shri Shri 1008 Satya Dhyana Teertha Swamiji of Uttaradhi Mutt
SHRI KOLLUR RAMACHAR-II
Vidya Guru of Shri Shri Satya Dhyana Swamiji of Uttaradi Mutt
Photo of VENKATACHAR KOLLUR S/o Ramachar-II
Smt. Sridevi, Srinivasachar, Chi. Dr. Pranesh, Smt. Bharathi,
Chi. Raghavendra, Chi. Ramesh, Smt. Shanta, Chi. Shobha,
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FOREWORD

This book gives us a short history of an illustrious family covering nearly five generations up to this day. The present head of the family, Shri Shrinivasacharya Kollur now 70 retired as Superintendent in the Department of Industries and Commerce, Government of Karnataka. During his service, while he was in Bangalore for more than a decade, he has been mentioning to me about the huge heap of manuscripts in Bengali written by his great-great-grand-father Kollur Ramachar-I. We must appreciate the pains-taking efforts of Shri. Shrinivasacharya in carefully preserving them intact till today. He has made every endeavour to keep them in order and, to some extent, has arranged them subjectwise. To enable himself to check the loose leaves of the manuscripts he tried to learn Bengali even at this late age. The manuscripts run into thousands of pages in the big palm leaf size which are written in a flawless classical manner. Even after more than two hundred years, they appear to be quite fresh and give the impression that the ink is not yet dry. The drawings and the designs made by the author himself on the outer pages of the books present an exquisite piece of art. These manuscripts really lend an enchantment to the view. Perhaps studying them may prove a grand feast to the learned and the laureates.

I too coming from the family of Jagirdars of Samsthana Gurugunta in Raichur district and being a distant relative of this family, shared the idea of Shri Shrinivasacharya that this great treasure should see the light of the day and attract research scholars to decipher them in a perfect manner.

By far, it is now made-out that the bulk of the manuscripts pertained to Nyaya Shastra. Nyaya Shastra as we know, forms one of the basic auxiliary sciences required for propounding any Vedantic or Philosophical theory, be it Western or Eastern.
Ramachar-I, it seems, lived between 1718 and 1808. He went to Nadia (Navadweepa) in Bengal (Now West Bengal) to learn Nyaya Shastra and achieve excellence in it. He left his home at an early age of fourteen or fifteen leaving behind, his young wife of eight or ten and a lonely lamenting mother. He embarked on a journey of thousands of miles in the days when the formidable Vindhyanas and Chambal valleys lying in between were infested with thugs and marauders.

Unmindful of the risks of climate, unfavourable food habits and hazards of the journey, Ramachar-I succeeded in reaching Nadia with the sole and indefatigable desire of achieving mastery in Nyaya-shastra. He was all set for this great aim of his life and nothing could deter him. His thirst for knowledge and his sojourn in quest of it at such a tender age, that too being an only son of the family, is amazing, looking in the background of the present day luxury oriented system of learning with a wide laxity in school discipline.

Here we have to pause and ponder, what made this young boy leave everything dear and fascinating in life and to choose for himself a life of a recluse. The reason is not so simple and it is not without a background.

Several centuries ago Chalukya Pulikesi-II halted Harshawardhana on the banks of Narmada and gave him a formidable fight. Harsha had to pull back utterly dismayed. Again, the Pallawas and the Rashtarakutas from the south had once extended their political and territorial sway far in the north.

It is well known that all the Avatars of the Lord took place in the North, but all the three great Acharyas i.e. Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa were from the South. Their distinct interpretation put on the Vaidic literature formed three distinct schools of thought and these three philosophical schools have not only influenced the whole thinking minds in India, but they are even to-day excercising considerable operative force on the world thought processes. The Renaissance of Shakti movement of the south from thirteenth century onwards had its own role to play in bringing the whole of India under one cultural impact. The Vachanakaras and the Haridasas in the south and Surdas, Kabirdas and Tulsidas in the North were the Chief torch-bearers of the Bhakti movement. Thus, the great and heavenly
Himalayas, the sacred waters of the holy Ganga and the cultural and philosophical movements contributed to the National Unity and integrity of India inspite of political descensions and linguistic barriers. These varieties perhaps brought charm to our way of life since variety is the law of attraction.

We, therefore, have to appreciate our Ramachar-I in his aim of becoming an unrivalled and acclaimed world champion in Nyaya Shastra-in this background.

Ramachar-I having born in a traditional family o Madhwa School, had by the time, sufficient early schooling at home in Sanskrit and Vedic scriptural texts which he learnt them by rote. He had heard that Nadia of Bengal was known for its Scholarship in Nyayashastra.

Added to it, there was a tremendous upsurge of the Bhakti cult in the North, under the Chaitanya Movement of Namasankirtana, just a few decades ago. Chaitanya took his spiritual initiation under Iswarpuri a Vaishnava Sanyasi and disciple of Madhavendrapuri who earlier had come under the spell of Shri Vyasaraja Swamy of Dwaita School of Philosophy. Vyasaraja himself was a past master in Terka and Nyaya and had unsurpassed works as "Tarka Tendava and Nyayamritha" to his credit. By that time Shri Vyasaraja had almost brought a great victory to the Madhwa school of thought in the South. Lord Chaitanya and his Goswamies too had almost defeated all the Mayavadi scholars of the North right from Kashmir to Bengal and established supremacy of Krishna Bhakti. Shri Chaitanya took Sanyasa at a very early age, after a short married life and by twenty-four he was known as a great Pandit all over the country. He travelled along the West and the East coast of India preaching devotion to Krishna. Including Muslims thousands became his disciples. Two of his chosen discipies, Sanatana Goswamy and Roopa Gosway, who were known earlier as Dabin Khas and Sakar Mullik (Ministers under a Mustim Nawab) re-entered the Hindu-fold with the help of Shri Chaitanya and [took initiation in Vaidic Dharma. Some of the discipies of Shri Chaitanya were Muslims from the far South in Karnataka, who, it seems, were converts to Islam.

Nadia with its reputation for Nyayashastra coupled with this great devotional movement must have had solitary effect on the young mind of Ramachar-I. Perhaps this was the reason why he selected Nadia
for his study, leaving other well-known pieces like Varanasi, Gokarna, Kumbhakonam etc. Ramacharya was very keen to learn all the seventy-two Vades (Methods of arguments) which was a rarity. Such a perfect system of Nyaya Shastra study was the speciality of Nadia at that time.

Ramacharya-I having accomplished his task after a relentless study of Nyayashastra for over thirty one long years returned to the pavilion and reduced to writing all that he had imbibed in Nadia.

We are fortunate that these valuable Manuscripts have not been allowed to cross the shores of India, even under a heavy allurement by some West German scholars.

Very recently Shri R. N. Dandekar from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute of Poona introduced this topic to Dr. R. K. Sharma, Director of Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, Delhi. Thereafter Jeeveshwar Jha, Dr. P. N. Kautekar, Dr. C. R. Swamynathan and Dr. Mandan Mishra were kind enough to visit Gulbarga and have prepared a list of these books to facilitate further research and publication of the manuscripts.

Now, Ramacharya-II was also a great and unrivalled scholar in Nyaya Shastra. He was known for his unparalleled mastery over astrology and medicine. Shri Venkatacharya, father of the present head of the family, in his own right was literally a master of all and jack of none. That was his name and fame. He had mastered music, painting, Smithy, carpentry etc.

These great scholars received royal patronage under the bena- vent kings of Surpur Samsthan, who were the ardent lovers of what is best in life. Guddipidda Nayaka was known for his charity in his dynasty.

Present head of the family Shri Shrinivasacharya is again a versatile genius. In addition to his literary accomplishments in Persian, Urdu, Sanskrit and Kannada, he has proved himself a great champion of Hindustani Instrumental music. He too is a lover of art and himself is an expert in handcrafts etc. On all counts, genius seems to run in the family in an unbroken line upto this day.
Thus, I feel singularly fortunate in adding a few words by way of a humble foreword to this book "Ramachar and his lineage".

Before I close, I must say something about my sincere and esteemed friend Shri C. N. Hiremath who has spent his valuable time and sleepless nights in preparing this small but self-contained informative book about a great and noble family. His undoubtedly scholarly yet lucid style keeps the readers spell bound and at times it holds him in complete trance. His narrative exuberance streams out like the gorgeous Ganga coming down from the lofty heights of the heavenly Himalayas. In his own words, this brief history of the family is really a romantic saga of a great adventure in quest of true and perfect knowledge. The author in presenting this book admits unawares that he was possessed when he set his hand on it. He is perfectly justified in feeling so. I feel, Shri C. N. Hiremath must have some link with the Acharyas of this family at some remote point of time. Who knows! Life is known for its surprises and this is one among them!

To a great extent it is true that we Indians lack the sense of history. Out of the available scanty information, not sufficient from historical point of view, Shri Hiremath has woven such a superfine texture of narration which makes history appear as a beautiful story.

I hope, this book will serve as a fore-runner of the massive literature left behind by the scholars of this family, yet to be published after careful study and research.

Bangalore,
January 26, 1986

Sd/-KANTHIRAO
A frail tall man in his Seventies met me one day in my office room with a lot of manuscripts written on a variety of subjects. In a short while I could fathom that the person was a versatile genius and also had many anecdotes of interest to tell. Sri Srinivasachar Jagirdar the soft spoken gentleman, thus impressed me on his very first visit. What impressed me more was that he belonged to the illustrious lineage of Pujiya Vedamurthi Raja Rajeshri Ramachar, the mentor of the great Madhwa saint Sri Satya Dhyana Teertha, who was a legend in his own life time.

I remember having spent hours in my office room trying to get the details of the life of Ramachar-I and Ramachar-II from Sri Srinivasachar and wondering all the while why so little is known about the life of these two great illuminaries to the outside world. It is perhaps a curse with the Kannadigas, particularly of the people of the North Karnataka that no worthwhile attempts are made to publicise the great service rendered to this great land by these pundits of the yore.

The biography entitled 'Ramachar and his lineage' by my elderly friend Sri C. N. Hiremath thus fills a void in this regard. No wonder then that when Sri Hiremath asked me to go through his work and pen down my opinion about the same, I consider it my special privilege.

The biography makes a very interesting reading; in fact it reads like a work of fiction! Sri Hiremath has left no stone unturned while digging out the past glory of the Jahagirdars. As he himself admits 'he was caught in the divine frenzy of imagination' No more proof is required to bring home the total involvement of the author. Sri Hiremath has retold the story of the Ramachars in a titillating style. The reader is wonderstruck, the way Sri Hiremath is able to reconstruct the entire history in such a grasping manner like one who had lived in those times. As is expected, a few gaps do exist in the story which provide enough food for those interested in research. Certainly this biography is like a signpost for students of History who may like to take hint from the author and do further research.
The foreword by Sri Kanthi Rao, an erudite scholar of Sanskrit, Urdu, Kannada and English, is a valuable addition to the book which students of Philosophy and History may find very useful. Sri Kanthi Rao has lamented the lack of sense of history on the part of Indians. Perhaps the reasons for this are to be found in the very culture of this land! It may be for this reason that our literature lacks biographies. Sri Hiremath sets an ideal before the young writers in this regard also. If our writers with the inquisitiveness to know the inside of great personalities of the land, set on to write on them, that could also fill the void in our literature!

Sd/-

G. K. KULKARNI
Dear Shri Hiremath,

I think I had better begin with a word of apology and regret for not being able to meet you and Shri Shrinivasacharya when both of you had been to me on 28th May and 5th June 1986. I am sorry for the inconvenience caused to you.

It was a matter of immense pleasure for me to go through the typed booklet ‘RAMACHAR AND HIS LINEAGE’. It is indeed a revealing, enlightening and equally absorbing story of one whose passion for knowledge was at once indefatigable. You have rightly described it as a romantic saga of a great adventure in quest of true and perfect knowledge.

Ramachar and his descendants. I think, rightly deserve a place in the galaxy of great Rishies (sages) of Bharat Varsha who led a very austere life, living under the canopy of Nature, on the banks of sacred rivers, in the caves of the Himalayas, for acclamining the avowed object of self realisation. Every Indian should be proud of such high souls as Ramachar and his successors. They truly represent Indian Culture. India is described as the cradle of cultures, Will Durant the American Historian proudly calls India "Mother of us all" because India is the mother of civilisation. This is on account of the penance of our Rishies.

My friend Prof. C. N. Hiremath has rendered yeomen service not only to the Jahagirdar family but to the present generation of India by volunteering to present an account of the achievements of Ramachar and his descendants in proper perspective. I must hasten to congratulate him most heartily on embarking upon this project which is of great significance.

I have known Shri Hiremath as a writer in English for quite a long time and I have enjoyed his earlier writings both on account of the contents and the manner of presentation. He has a facile pen. The
lucid style with which he narrates an incident or depicts the qualities of heart and head of a person, is persuasive and enchanting.

He is adept in the choice of words he uses. It is no wonder, therefore, that a reader of this short history, realises the veracity of the dictum. "Truth is some times stranger than fiction".

Such a writing would be a mere mechanical exercise if the author just smatters without identifying himself with the subject matter he is dealing with. Shri Hiremath, as I know, is deeply interested in our ancient culture our spiritual traditions and our scriptures, and above all the fundamental unity of India despite the diversities in faith, language and socio-economic conditions of the people of this sub-continent. It is, therefore, no wonder if Shri Hiremath was prompted by his inner voice to undertake this seemingly difficult job of penning the facts narrated by Shri Srinivasacharya in quite an appropriate manner. So it was all loves labour for Shri Hiremath who himself admits that he was writing like one possessed. He wrote and wrote caught in the divine frenzy of imagination which only a writer knows. Any work executed with divine grace is bound to succeed. Once again he has proved himself equal to the task assigned to him.

I must thank Shri Srinivasachar for undertaking this task of publishing a brief history of his ancestors which is so inspiring and instructive. The works of Ramachar in Bengali and Sanskrit are not only to be preserved but are to be studied by the scholars in the years to come. As a matter of fact a separate Research Centre should be established by the Government and all facilities should be offered to the research scholars.

I hope this book would be published soon and reach the hands of the scholars interested in the study of Indology and a new vista would be opened for them.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity of going through the manuscript.

Sd/—V. P. DEULGAONKER
"RAMACHAR & HIS LINEAGE" is a rare book, depicting the rich heritage of scholarly eminence and versatility of the family of KOLLUR RAMACHAR. As a brilliant scholar who had specialised in Naveena Nyaya (the school of New logic) at Navadweepa, Kollur Ramachar could be deemed as one of the few scholars who had spread the fragrance of this advanced course of dialectics inside Karnataka.

Curiously enough, the scholarship in Naveena Nyaya was fostered in Karnataka Mostly, by the savants of Madhva’s Philosophy. As far as scholars within living memory are concerned, there appear to be two lineages of such scholars: The lineage of Kollur Ramachar initiated at Navadweepa, and the lineage of Chikkeruru Swamirayacharya who studied at Kashi (Varanasi).

The tradition nourished by the Chikkeruru family was Inherited by Sri HANAGAL VIRUPAKSHA SHASTRY, who, as an unrivalled scholar of his time, rose to the high position of ‘Raja Guru’ at Mysore, and acquired nation-wide fame. Eventually, he joined the ascetic order, assuming the Sanyasa name VALUKESWARA BHARATHI SWAMI. My father, Padamunnuru Narayana Acharya, was one of the two beloved disciples of Sri Virupaksha Shastri. Reputed as "Tarka Kesari", my father nurtured the tradition inherited from his teacher and shaped many generations of scholars at Udupi.

The torch of scholarship lighted at Navadweepa and carried into Karnataka by Kollur Ramachar has been inherited by no less a person than His Holiness Sri Sathyadhyana Theertha, the illustrious monk of our times. His Holiness Sri Vidyamanya Theertha, the head of Bhandarakeri and Palimar Mutts of Udupi is the foremost among the disciples who studied under H. H. Sri Sathyadhyana Theertha. It was my good fortune to be a student of H. H. Sri Vidyamanya Theertha. It is gratifying to note that as a student I have my roots in both of the distinguished lineages of scholarly teachers mentioned above.

I warmly welcome this book, as it narrates the saga of an intellectual and cultural lineage with which I am closely associated. The
work sheds light on several aspects of this lineage, which were not known to me earlier. Public memory is short, and the people of Karnataka are not yet aware of many geniuses and eminent scholars, who, somehow, escaped the notice of historians and chroniclers. The life and works of such forgotten geniuses need to be explored and recorded by books of this sort.

Prof. C. N. Hiremath, the author of the book, deserves our homage for the skill with which he has made the book all the more attractive through his graceful literary style of narration. He has rendered invaluable service to the cause of traditional scholarship of India by his faithful narration of the annals of Ramachar's family in a foreign language.

Sri Srinivasacharya Jagirdar is the living custodian of the precious heritage of Kollur Ramachar's lineage. His persevering efforts to preserve and propagate the cultural heritage of his family are most commendable. This book itself is a symbol of the cultural values inherited by him. I wish all success to his sincere efforts. May this book create a genuine concern for the cultural heritage of Karnataka among its readers.

Sd/-BANNANJE GOVINDACHARYA
I have gone through the book “Shri Ramacharya and his Lineage” which fully acquaints us with the life and adventures in learning of Shri Kollour Ramachar a rare gem in the Indian System of Logic and his Lineage.

In the different systems of philosophy of India, the Indian system of Logic (Nyaya Shastra) has won an enviable position of honour by its dialectics of rare skill. We can even state that skill and scholarship in such dialectics is a challenge thrown to the intelligence of man. However, the importance of the Indian dialectics has not been honoured by the intellectuals. It is here significant to note that Shri Vyasa Raja has denied the main Principals of Logic in Tarka Tandawa and in his Madhva Bhashya. But the honour that the Indian dialectics has attained by its rare skill in argument in the circle of learned men and scholars is almost unparalleled. Learning and scholarship in dialectics is considered to be the inevitable aspect of the skill of construction of the sentence and its meaning. Rarer and more unique is the honour that the new logic has attained. Ramacharya of Kollur, the contemporary of Shri Jaganatha Dasa has the greatness of studying and attaining unparalleled learning and scholarship in such logic in Nava Dweeapa which is considered to be the home of such learning. He studied there for three decades and left the rich legacy and scholarship for centuries. In recent years the enlightened soul Shri Satya-Dhyana-Tirtha Swamiji of Uttaradhi Math studied NyayaShastra under the guidance of another Rama Charya (Rama Charya II) of this family. This clearly evidences the significant achievement of Ramacharya. Another greatness of his is that he has left the legacy of his treasure house of learning in the form of many books to the future generations.

The book ‘Shri Rama Charya and his Lineage’ which narrates so beautifully and artistically the saga of the life and learning of the lineage of such great man is really a great work.

Shri Srinivasacharya who is publishing this book is a scion of this illustrious family. For this great work he and the author Shri C. N. Hiremath deserve our praise and congratulations.
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To the best of my knowledge such a book which narrates the biography of a learned man in English in recent years is the only one of its kind. The usefulness of the book has been further enhanced by the list of books by Ramacharya given at the end of the book.

Another feature of the book is the discerning and critical foreword by Shri. Kanthirao.

Sd/- PRABHANJANACHARYA
Note on the life of Ramachar and his lineage.

For a long time I had a desire to write about the life, teaching, scholarship and culture of my fore-fathers, as it gives not only an interesting reading to the public but also an eye opener to the present day communal fanaticism which is hampering the national development policy, communal harmony and general unity. Even though I was proud of my family, I was hesitant to write about my own family for the simple reason that naturally one has got a great love, affinity and regard for one's own ancestors and it may be doubtful whether the same love and honour could be expected from others also.

Secondly, I thought of writing the history of my family as a third person. But this also my mind did not approve. Being a descendant of Ramachar, I need not hide my face, as it amounts to discredit to my ancestors for no reason at all.

Therefore, before taking any action in this behalf, I thought it proper to consult my good old friend (Channaya Neelakanthayya Hiremath) Prof. C. N. Hiremath, Reader in English, Shri. Sharana Basaweshwar College of Arts, Gulbarga, who has the credit of being the author of eight books in English, all based on metaphysics. He is a philosophical writer and a true devotee of the goddess of learning, Saraswati. He said, it is likely that writing the family history by the family member himself may not be so effective and impressive as it would be a purely localised affair. Therefore, he expressed his opinion to offer his services voluntarily to write the history of my family.

It is quite possible, his inner voice and the spiritual inspiration within, might have induced him to offer his valuable services in this behalf.

He asked me to furnish a note in full detail on the life of my fore-fathers. Accordingly, I provided him with necessary details about my family.
Thus he solved easily my problem of writing about my lineage.

I am reminded here of the Kannada Novel 'Marali Mannige' by Dr. Shivram Karant which is the life history of three generations, where as this book presents the history of five generations commencing from 16th century till the present day. Besides, 'Marali Mannige' is an imaginary story fabricated by the author, but this book is based on facts and proofs.

I am, therefore, sure that the reader would find interest according to his taste, be he a scholar, a teacher, a student, politician, novelist, a philosopher or a logician, as it covers all.

Shri Hiremath has taken great pains to narrate the life of the ancient scholars like Ramachar. He has described the relation between a guru and sishya (the teacher and the taught) in olden days. He has also given a comparative picture of the past and present system of education. Besides, he has narrated the relation between the master and the servant, guests, the poor, the less-fortunate, uneducated and the public at large.

I am really proud of having been born in the family of Ramachar and his descendants were not only rich but renowned scholars too. They have written many books on various subjects, especially Nyaya Shastra (Indian system of logic) in Bengali as well as Devanagari Scripts. Some of them are now preserved in the Ganganath Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidya Peetha, Allahabad, some are preserved in the Lal Bahadur Shastry Sanskrit Vidya Peetha, New Delhi. and some few in the Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad, A. P. and some 426 manuscripts and printed books have been donated to Shri Satyadhyan Vidya Peetha, Bombay.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, I was denied of the scholarship and learning which my predecessors acquired by hard labour and assiduous practice. But my field was different from that of my forefathers as I had to adjust myself to the changed situation and enter into government service. I retired during November 1970 on superannuation.

The hard labour, arduous toil and the uphill task of my good old friend, would be fruitful, if the readers receive this book with
a large hand as this is a sacred proof and living example of communal
harmony which is appreciable by one and all irrespective of caste and
creed.

I offer my heartiest thanks to Shri C. N. Hiremath for having
brought to light the hither-to hidden invaluable treasure of our good
old days, through the ancestry of Ramachar.

I pray God to give him the inspiration to bring out more and more
books of such nature as they are the essential need of the hour.

I offer my hearty thanks to Shri Kanthi Rao, Jagirdar, B.A. LL.B;
Retired Director of Translations, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore,
my relative, who has got the credit of being the author of good
number of books and master of many languages. He has taken great
pains to go through this book and adorn it with his befitting foreword.

—K. SRINIVASACHARYA
Jagirdar.
AUTHOR'S NOTE

My friend Srinivasachar Kollur wanted to write the history of his ancestry. He is born in a family of Jagirdars of Rangampet. The entire village of Rakamgera in Shahapur Taluka, Gulbarga district was their Jagir village. Over and above their Jagir, they had thousands of acres of Inam lands spread over in five talukas viz., Shorapur, Shahapur, Jewargi, Devdurg and Manvi in Gulbarga and Raichur districts. Their ancestral home was at Rangampet near Shorapur. The magnificent mansion even to this day stands as an edifice of their past glory. They were fabulously rich, enjoyed power, position and honour in the society. They lived in kingly style. The Jagir and the Inam lands had been granted to them at the time of Ramachar-I by the kings of Surpur in due recognition of his unrivalled superb mastery over Nyaya Shastra (Indian system of logic). For four generations they inherited and maintained this astounding mastery over Nyaya Shastra, ancient learning, scholarship and literature. Generally wealth and property are inherited for generations. But it is rare that scholarship and learning could also be inherited with an unbroken continuity for four generations. Their home was the seat of learning, scholarship, literature and culture. The purpose, therefore, for which the Jagir had been granted to them had been in their illustrious lineage richly deserved the Jagir.

Srinivasachar had planned methodically furnishing in his account the full details of his family history. He showed it to me and wanted to know my opinion about it. No doubt he had taken a lot of pains and furnished the factual details with all the meticulous care and diligence at his command. When I read through the account, I was afraid, it would not do full justice to his great ancestors who were the glorious inheritors of our ancient culture and heritage and unrivalled arbitors of ancient learning, scholarship and literature. The account I feared would enmesh and imprison them in the local context. The account as it read gave me the impression that he was claiming the glory and greatness of his ancestors only for his family. Here were enlightened souls, really educated and cultured men in the full sense
of the term and profound scholars who left no stone unturned in their romantic saga of adventure of learning and scholarship. Real learning, scholarship and education inculcated in the individual a broad and catholic out-look and cements the bond of brotherhood of man every where in the world. More over ancient education is the integrated study of the world within and the world outside. Hence it is true education and real knowledge. Mere material education and scholarship is Avidya (false learning). Hence, the ancient system of education and learning many a time makes us look askance at our present system of education.

Therefore, I felt it necessary to lift them out of the local context and place them on a natural plane and focus and present them as true citizens of the world. I wanted to make the account more relevant to the modern world. When I suggested to Srinivasachar, that these changes had to be made in order to make the book more authentic and effective, he entrusted the work to me and gave me full liberty to work upon the facts and details of his family line and present them in any manner I liked. For the sacred trust he deposited in me, I am indeed deeply grateful to him.

But when I took upon myself the honorable responsibility of writing the book, I naturally felt I was out of my depths and out of my bounds. Here was a book which required a lot of creative thinking and imagination. Creative writing and literature are not my domain, though I confess I have translated a few books. So far I have eight published books to my credit.

Here was a book which I had unwisely taken upon myself to write without knowing my limitation. The book I was going to write was not my special cup of tea! It was a challenging work which made exacting demands on my creative imagination and thinking. I had rushed in where angels might have feared to tread! I had hopelessly committed myself to an impossible task. More over I had no model before me. I was gaping in the void. Or I felt like ‘an ineffectual angel beating her luminous wings in the void’. More over the formidable and unsumountable barrier of four hundred years was before me. Oh! how I wished to be born in those days and become a disciple of those learned Acharyas! I would have been some kind of Boswel to those learned Johnsons! But wishes are not horses......
But when I started writing I was like one possessed. I wrote and wrote caught in the divine frenzy of imagination which only a writer knows! I utilised my entire Deepavali vacation of nearly one month in writing this book. Some inner voice prompted me. Divine grace guided me through the writing of this book. call it the creative urge or imagination if you will!

The book *Ramachar and his lineage*, spans across five generations. Dr. Shivram Karant's well known magnum opus 'Marali Mannige' (back to the soil) narrates the story of three generations. It is a wonderful fabric of imagination which does full credit to the distinguished novelist, the recipient of the most prestigious Jnana Peetha Award. But the first one is fact while Dr. Karant's work is great fiction.

A great writer once said "History is the biography of the nation, but the story of great men is its autobiography". And I think culture is the bye product of such a biography and autobiography.

Ramachar and his successors were undoubtedly profound and unrivalled scholars. They undertook learning and scholarship as an exciting adventure. The physical hardships, unsummountable difficulties, the unimaginable distances they traversed (especially, the first Ramachar who travelled on foot and camel's back from Kollur in Karnataka to Nadia in West Bengal) and the spiritual trials they underwent, the story of it all makes it read like a romantic epic saga of adventure of learning and scholarship. It becomes even more exciting, thrilling and romantic than any physical adventure. What I admire in them most is their sterling good qualities, their truth, honesty, their superb moral integrity, their philanthropy, their gifting away education freely to all those who sought them as their disciples. They were great scholars. But as men they were even greater! Character and scholarship usually do not go hand in hand. With Ramachar and his illustrious line of successors what a rare combination we find—profound scholarship and sterling character! It becomes all the more relevent and praise-worthy in the present world of crisis of character and bankruptcy of all human and moral values.

They were Sthita Prajnas, men with equaminity of mind who did not lose their balance, poise or temper in the face of happiness or sorrow. Life must have appeared a comedy to them. They stood
apart and witnessed this general drama of pain, fever and fret where happiness is but an occasional episode. They were great artists in life. They lived and cultivated life as a great art. They lived and loved, fought and braved many storms and tempests, stress and strains. Honour and glory came their way, unhappiness and sorrow also came to their lot. They took them all in their stride. Their zest for life was amazing. Still they found time to laugh at it all. Well they had their last laugh in their death bed!

Ramachar II was admitted in the government hospital in Shorapur. He was on his death bed. Raja Krishtappa Naik with his two sons Raja Venkatappa Naik and Raja Pidda Naik along with court musicians Achchamma, Nabalig Rangamma and others came to the hospital to have Darshana of Ramachar. Dr. Kuppuswamy who was a good friend of Ramachar, jokingly remarked "Ramachar! Ni darshananiki Veshya Streelu Vachharu" (It is in Telugu. It means, Ramachar! prostitutes have come to see you) Ramachar did not lose his nerve. He did not take it amiss. Laughingly he retorted in Telugu itself "Doctorgaru waru veshya streelu kadu. Naku Tiskopop-wadaniki Swarganinchi Apsara Streelu Vachcharu". (Doctor! they are not prostitutes but Apsaras (devine damsels) coming from heaven to take me along).

It shows mantal alertness and fine sense of humour and ready wit of Ramachar till his end.

According to Hindu Mythology, agents of Yama come to take the life of a sinner and agents of God, like angels and devine damsels accompany the saint to heaven after death.

Venkatachar used to say, we have made advance booking with Mother Earth. In the good old days delivery was made by the local midwives only. After birth the umbilical chord, flesh and blood of the mother at the time of delivery used to be placed in a pot of mud and buried in the earth. So, at birth, man or woman has made his or her pact with Mother Earth. So, why should he or she hesitate, worry or fear to return to the Earth at death? Does it not remind us the words of the Bible 'Dust thou art. to dust thou returneth'.

They welcomed death as a joyous festival. As in birth so in life and even more so in death, they were great.
This reminds me of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar who said "cowards die many times before their death. The valient tastes it but once!"

The supreme test of a man's worth and dignity comes in the final hour of exit. Ramachar and his illustrious successors came off with flying colours not only in life but also in Death!

It is not for me but for my readers to say whether I have acquitted myself creditably in this sacred task of presenting the story of Ramachar and his lineage. Yet I assure my readers that they will glean something valuable and memorable from this breath-taking account of Ramachar and his successors, the unrivalled inheritors of culture and heritage.

Before I close, I must express my deep indebtedness to Shri Khanti Rao, Jagirdar, B.A.L.L.B., the retired Director of Translations Karnataka State, Bangalore, who has graced this monograph with his Foreword. The readers, I am sure, will find that his invaluable foreword has lent weight and dignity to the book.

He is a multilingual, who has gained proficiency in many languages like Kannada, Urdu, Persian, Hindi, Telugu, English too, the Inter National Language He has done yeoman service to the Karnataka State and the nation at large as the most competent administrator in various fields, such as the Director of Translations, Karnataka State, as the Secretary, Official Language, Legislative Commission, as the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee of Administrative Terminology, as a Member, Official Language Legislative Scrutiny Committee and as a Member, Literary Sub-committee of the First Kannada Vishwa Sammelana. He is a profound scholar in many subjects like law, religion, philosophy and scriptural lore etc. He has popularised them too in lucid language by his books, dissertations and lectures and given door delivery to the common man of these subjects which were a locked up treasure of the chosen few. So far he is the author of more than sixteen books dealing with the literature of law and administration. He has found brick and turned it into marble. "He has touched nothing which he did not adorn". He has left his seal, stamp and signature on every thing like lily which is the flower of light and fragrance. Shri Kanthi Rao is a many splendoured personality of sweetness and light.

—C. N. Hiremath.
Reader in English.
PRELUDE

Learning and education are indeed the most liberating and harmonising forces. That is why our Ancients opine that a person without education is a beast. They are considered to be the essential ingredients of culture; Of course on condition that if they are not dry as dust and if they add charm and beauty to behavior and uphold the dignity and human worth. The glory of India lies essentially in its golden, spiritual and cultural heritage not so much in its material prosperity and plenty as it is mistakenly supposed. India is justifiably a land of sages and saints, of Rushies and Godmen, of Vedas, Agamas and Upanishads, of learned men and erudite scholars who were the cultural and spiritual torch bearers of the most ancient spiritual and cultural heritage of India. These scholars and learned men replenished the waters of spiritual and cultural heritage-which flows like the most sacred Mother Ganga from the Himalayas from times immemorial, watering the arid deserts of the human mind. Who were the great men who were the torch bearers of our glorious cultural heritage? Alas! they are blissfully forgotten names down the corridors of our memory lane. They were the flowers of light and fragrance symbolising our culture. But they are as one poet sang, 'There is many a flower born to blush unseen'.

India deplorably lacks a sense of history. It is the crying need of the hour that the history of our country has to be reconstructed so as to focus and present our spiritual and cultural heritage to the world in the right perspective.

Knowledge is of two kinds. Knowledge sought for self glorification and selfish ends and knowledge assiduously pursued and acquired for its own sake. It goes without saying that knowledge sought for its own sake is better of the two and the unique kind of knowledge. When relentlessly pursued and assiduously acquired, it could become a soul filling, and romantic adventure imaginable. It could become a soul filling, soul stirring and soul lifting adventure
without a parallel, far more exciting and ever lasting than any physical adventure. The end results of such an adventure—the agony and the ecstasy, the light and delight, are indeed unique. Such people who pursue knowledge for its own sake, really become part and parcel of the history and culture of the land.

The people who seek knowledge for ulterior ends are a legion. They make a vain display of their knowledge and learning. They may push ahead, gain material prosperity and acquire enviable position in society. But in the end their own egocentric vanity becomes their mortal enemy. They come to ignoble ends and are forgotten. Those who seek knowledge for its own sake are few and far between. They never make a vaunted display of their learning and scholarship. They are like vessels filled to the brim with water. They do not spill out and make empty sound. They are like stars and dwell apart. They are separated from the common herd like lone elephants. Because their aspirations and ideals are quite different from those of the common people. That is why they live apart in the solitude and quiet of their own soul far far from the madding and still maddening crowd.
I RAMACHAR

It was midnight at Kollur. Kollur is a small village now in Shahapur taluka in Gulbarga District (Karnataka). The story I am now narrating takes us back to the late 16th Century. Every living thing in nature was caught in the death like embrace of sleep. Darkness had developed the earth like a thick blanket when every other living thing was charmed by the sleep of oblivion. Only one boy was awake, restlessly tossing his head on the pillow. The wet pillow was telling a tale of tears. Who could divine the torture and the turmoil churning within his mind? He had spent many such dark nights of his soul.

He was a boy of twelve, born in an orthodox Brahmin family. The high forehead, the sharp acquisitive nose, the tall and muscular build, the clean shaven head with a tuft of hair and oval face had lent the boy an impressing personality. His deep set eyes which were like deep pools were shining with a rare light. He was indeed a precocious boy. He had spent many hours tossed about feverishly and restlessly on bed. He got out of the bed which could not give him any comfort, soothe or console the deep disquiet in his mind. It was now close to midnight. His parents were sleeping a little distance away. They were sound asleep. He thought. God was his only safe anchor in this crucial hour of the conflict and the turmoil in his soul. Silently he stole out of the room and went to the Pooja room. There he stood with folded hands before his favourite deity in a prayerful attitude. "Oh Lord!" the boy cried with his earnest appeal and fervent prayer to the Almighty. "Grant me my heart's wish. I want to be the greatest Sanskrit Scholar unchallenged by anyone in the world. It is my life's greatest ambition. This intense craving for knowledge is burning within me like an unquenchable, all consuming flame. My parents do not realise the insatiable hunger of my soul, my life's all consuming passion. I want to go leaving my hearth and home, my parents, my near and dear ones, in search of the Great Guru who could guide me, teach me and instruct me and help me to realise my dream. I do not mind even if I have to travel to the utmost limits of the earth in quest of true knowledge and scholarship. My parents do not listen to me. They do not pay heed to my request. It is my misfortune that I am the only male child in the family. Oh Lord! I can not contain any longer the raging storm and the tempestuous conflict in my soul. Shower on me your choicest blessings. Release me from this binding illusion of my parent's affections. Make them realise my heart's intense yearning for knowledge and learning. Make them send me to my goal with their heart's blessing".
However, the boy was not aware of his mother close behind him witnessing all this devotional appeal and fervent prayer.

The poor mother who loved her only son with such a fierce sense of possessiveness, had not slept at all that night. She was keeping her vigil and a close watch on the movements of her son since the time he had placed before his father his heart’s ambition for higher education and scholarship. The poor lady was afraid that her precious jewel would be stolen from her or lost inadvertently. So the moment the boy had stolen out of bed she had followed him without his knowledge. She had come and stood behind him in the Pooja Room. The whole scene which she bad witnessed all along had stunned her and made her awe struck. Mixed feelings of joy, sorrow, suspense and awe welled up in her mind. Here was her son, her own son, flesh of her own flesh, blood of her own blood with such unusual and extraordinary aspirations and ideals uncommon for his age. Yet she knew from her heart of her hearts that he would not belong to her alone. Sooner or later, she knew, she had to give up all her selfish claims to him. He would depart from them impelled by the clarion call of his soul in quest of knowledge and learning and the ultimate conquest of truth. No! He did not belong to her alone—this ardent votary of knowledge, learning, truth and culture. He belonged to the whole humanity. He was a boy born with a divine mission. God had created him for a special purpose which lay beyond the ken and comprehension of the mere human. How could she stand in the way of divine will? She meekly submitted herself to the will of the Lord. She gifted away her son to the world with the pious hope that her son would one day bring knowledge, light and delight to the suffering humanity wallowing in darkness of ignorance and superstition.

However, before she took any decision about her son, she wanted to take her husband into confidence, consult him and abide by his wishes. She returned to bed and slept. She did not want to wake her husband up then and disturb his sleep and peace of mind.

The next morning the first thing she did was to unburden her mind of the disquieting thoughts about her only son before her husband. She narrated the incident of the night in full detail to him. Her husband was himself a well known scholar. He could sympathise with his son’s uncommon and extraordinary aspirations, his insatiable hunger of the soul for knowledge, light and learning which under the circumstances could not be satisfied either at home or any where in Karnataka then.
Did he not know his own son whom he had taught himself? Beyond any iota of doubt he was a precious child. The father was amazed at the razor edge sharp intellect and the extraordinary retentive power of his memory. The son could grasp, master and learn by rote, Amarakosha, Bhagavadgita and the Kavyas within a surprisingly short time of three or four years he had started teaching him. Under normal circumstances an average boy, even an intelligent boy would take at least fourteen years to learn and master all these. He was pleased with himself and had thanked God from the bottom of his heart for having gifted him with such an extraordinary son who could continue his illustrious family line and bring name and fame to his family. The son had already mastered whatever the father had to teach him.

What was his dismay when he heard from his wife the soul compelling urge of his son to go away from him to extend the frontiers of knowledge to its utmost limits? What should he and his wife do in their old age? Who would look after them in their old age. Who would continue their family line after him? How could they survive without him? These were the disturbing thoughts racing across his mind, raising a veritable tempest in his heart. He could not reconcile himself to the idea of separating himself from his only son the apple of his eye and the jewel of his heart who wanted to tread the uncertain path of unknown future. Let the son remain before his eyes during his life time. Let him do what he wants after his death. So the loving father thought.

So the father did not permit him to leave the hearth and home and leave the parents during his life time. However, he did not want to dash the hopes and aspirations of his only son and thus completely block his future. Because the picture of his only son unwillingly holding on to a ghost like existence on the ashes of his dead and burnt hopes and aspirations was too painful for the old man who was himself a great scholar. He put certain absolute and irrevocable conditions. He would be free to follow his own desires to chalkout his own career only after his death. He should marry before he left the house in pursuit of higher knowledge. With his palms folded and his head bowed in reverence to his father’s wishes, the obedient son, Ramachar, tacitly accepted the irrevocable conditions!

Ramachar carried out the wishes of his father in letter and spirit. He was married to a girl of eight when he was just a boy of twelve or thirteen. Nothing surprising when we consider the conditions and conventions of those times. Those were the days when child marriages
were common. Even children in the cradle before their teething time were wed. Amongst the orthodox Brahmins it is stipulated in the scriptures that a girl should be married before her maturity. Ramachar had done what has been sanctioned by religion. On the other hand his filial piety should be praised. As the most dutiful son he had obeyed the commands of his father.

Strange and inscrutable are the ways of destiny. Shakespeare says ‘Divinity shapes our ends rough hew them how we will’. Looking from this distance and reviewing the incidents that took place in the life of Ramachar and shaped and forged his career, we can safely conclude that there was the hand of providence, call it God if you will, that was behind his being and becoming. Ramachar was a puppet in the hands of his Maker whose strings were pulled, as the Great Lord willed and wished. He was being fashioned and perfected in the role intended by the Creator in the drama of life on the stage of this world. He was God’s own annointed and specially chosen man to perform the great mission that He had designed for him.

From then on things happened in a mysterious and unaccountable manner. How could we pronounce judgements on the strange happenings of this God’s chosen child with our limited human intelligence and understanding? His father died within a year or two. Young Ramachar, shocked and dazed and speechless by the sudden sad demise of his father performed the funeral rites. On the out side it appears life had ridden rough-shod over him and God had dealt a severe blow to Ramachar who loved his father so dearly who was also the main prop of his family. His father was everything to him. He had given birth to him. He had brought him up with such love, care and affection as no father could. He was also his first Guru who had taught him the alphabet and all the learning he had. Moreover the boy was trained and schooled in the old ideals (Respect your mother as God. Respect your father as God’). How could we gauze the feelings of sorrow and bereavement of the tender heart of the young boy? Dark and foreboding clouds had suddenly crowded upon his life’s horizon threatening to break into thunder and lightening and torrential rain sweeping him off his feet. No! the boy had almost lost his way in the life’s jungle on a dark night with over hanging dark clouds shutting off the moon and the stars. But look! The father of all created universe never failed him. He led him on gently but surely and firmly taking him by the hand like kindly light in the encircling gloom of his life’s darkest hour.
The one obstacle, the binding illusion of his father’s fiercely possessive love and affection, in the way of the realisation of his goal, had been removed mysteriously, unintelligible to mere man, by God. What might appear to our limited intelligence, as a great curse and a colossal calamity indeed proved, to be a blessing in disguise to Ramachar. Thus the second irrevocable condition of the father had been so strangely fulfilled. The wise opine that there is no better school than the school of adversity. That is why great men are drilled and schooled, trained and taught, fashioned and forged in the school of adversity. No school, no college, no university. In other words no amount of formal education imparted within the four walls of the class room could shape and make a personality as adversities do. Hence what we mistakenly consider with our limited understanding of these calamities as curses are indeed blessings in disguise.

One day, Ramachar, stood before his mother. He prostrated himself before her. He touched her feet and put the dust of her feet on his head. With folded hands, head bowed, with a calm but determined voice he said, "Mother, will you now permit me to go and seek my goal? I have fulfilled all the obligations and conditions of my father".

The mother looked at him, awed and appalled by the strange light in his eyes and the grim determination in his face. Here was her son born of her own womb, whom she had suckled at her breast and had brought him up with such love, care and affection. All these years he had lived and grown before her eyes. He had become the apple of her eye and the rare jewel of her heart. All these years he was her son, petted: fondled and hugged to her heart’s content. He was her only son, the main staff and prop of her old age. He was the son on whom she had hoisted all her hopes. Now the same young boy who was standing before her eyes could no longer be claimed as her son. What would have been her sorrow if her son had taken untreaded and uncertain path of unknown future. Experience and recent calamity had opened her eyes. Realisation had dawned on her. ‘Now this son, with this uncommon urge for light, learning and truth, does not belong to her any more. He belongs to the world. He is a boy with a mission. If it is God’s will, let him go and realise his goal and that she need not stand in his way’. Thus the mother thought. Thus shedding tears of joy and sorrow, she placed her hands on the head of her illustrious son and showered on him her heart’s choicest blessings. "Go, prosper, and let success attend all your undertakings".
Can any one describe this supreme sacrifice the mother made that hour, that day in gifting away her own son to the world for the sacred cause of learning and education? Do not our Shastras declare that there is nothing more glorious and more sacred and worthy than the cause of enlightened knowledge in the world? By so doing she became not only the mother of her son, she also became the mother of all those unfortunate people who were denied of education; to the down-trodden, the depressed and the denied. Can any one find a better parallel to such a sacrifice wherein gods themselves were pleased.

A similar story is told of Shankaracharya’s mother, Shankaracharya wanted to become a recluse and follow the path of sublime renunciation. It was a burning passion with him since his childhood. The sublime path of renunciation and enlightened knowledge, he thought, was his supreme goal for which God had designed his life. He had requested his mother on a number of occasions to release him from the bonds of her motherly love and give him permission to become a recluse and take Sanyasa Diksha. But the mother could not make-up her mind to give him permission and thus lose her only child.

Once Shankaracharya went swimming in the river when he was a boy of eight years old. A crocodile caught his leg. “Mother!” Shankaracharya cried “the crocodile has caught me. If you give me permission to become a recluse, I will be saved. Otherwise the crocodile will eat me up. This is God’s will!” The mother preferred her son living than be dead even if he became a recluse. Thus that day the mother made a sublime sacrifice. She gifted her son to the whole world who would later on become a Jagadguru, the teacher of Enlightened knowledge to the whole world.

Ramachar’s father, Madhwachar, as I have earlier narrated, was an erudite in Sanskrit. He was also a great Yogi. He could foretell the exact day and date of his passing away from this material world. He had told his son when he would breathe his last and under what circumstances. He had subjected his body to strict regular assiduous yogic practices and thus had gained full control over the physical conditions of his body. He used to get-up at about four in the early morning. He used to perform various Yogic Practices. No-body had ever seen him going for motion.
He practised the unusual and difficult method of cleansing the bowels and the intestines. He used to sit in a big bowl of water and suck and churn the water inside the intestines in a circular fashion and discharge it all. Thus he would be internally clean first. Then he would take his bath. Thus after being perfectly clean inside and outside, he would perform Pooja and all the rituals ordained by the Shastras. Then he would sit and meditate on God in complete absorption. Only at the the break of dawn when the crowing of the cock and chirping and twittering of the birds were heralding the rising of the sun, he would bome out of the Pooja room and attend to his domastic chores and routine. Every one in his village and the nearby villages knew about his Yogic power and practices and austere penance. Naturally he commanded great respect amongst the people. His tall, towering personality, the muscular build of the body and divine lustre of his face and his sound scholarship struck awe and respect in the minds of the on-lookers. He was a man wedded to the ruth and never deviated from the righteous path of Dharma. No wonder if he appeared like God's annointed representative to people around him and there was such a spontaneous response of reverence from them. He had told his son and the members of his family that the day when he passed motion twice, would be the last day for him in this world.

His words proved prophetic. He had an attack of cholera. There was shooting pain in his stomach. He could not control his motion. That very day he breathed his last as he had foretold correctly.

Now begins the epic saga of advantage of learning of Ramachar. It is difficult for me to describe the travails and hardships that he underwent to quench his thirst for knowledge, to extend the frontiers of his knowledge to its utmost limits. Why, it becomes even difficult to imagine for us living so snugly and securely in the present world of science and technology, in the world of fast moving trains, buses, motor cars, aeroplanes and supersonic jet planes. It must have been his life consuming passion for excellence which must have made him over come and vanquish the hurdles and hardships on the way.

What he did, where he went and under what Gurus he studied - the details of it all are not exactly known. The matter
could be safely left to imagination.

When he started from home, Ramachar was already a learned man well schooled and trained in Amara Kosha, Bhagavadgita and the Kavyas. Hence he was not a man to be easily satisfied with his Gurus. Hence he must have wandered far and near in search of Gurus who were more learned than him. He must have stayed with them for a few months, perhaps a year or two, served them with humility and learnt with rapt devotion and concentration whatever they had to teach him. After having mastered what they had taught him, he must have left after taking leave of them. No! He could not be easily satisfied. His unquenchable thirst and passion for more knowledge, prompted him, goaded him, urged him on and on unmindful of the hurdles, hardships, distances and dangers. We have read of Ulysses, his passion for adventures, experience, knowledge, wisdom and truth. He wanted to set sail in a ship with his fellow sailors in the evening of his life, when he had just a few years to live. He wanted to set sail beyond the sunset and the stars. Our Ramachar's adventure of learning in those days, the unknown distances he traversed in search of knowledge, truth and wisdom is in no way less in its epic dimensions than that of Ulysses. whatever the poet Tennyson narrates of Ulysses appears to be exaggerated, more fictitious than fact, the result of fertile imagination of the poet. With Ramachar it was more of fact than fiction. We are awed and appalled at this account of his epic adventure for learning. It only reminds one of our ancient Rishies who made learning a penance with a lifetime dedication to it.

Let us pause and ponder for a while about the conditions in those days. There were, no proper roads. Often the travellers had to travel on rough paths that lay through thick jungles infested with all kinds of beasts. More dangerous and cruel than these wild animals were, the human beasts called the thugs, the thieves and the decoits. Often these wild jungles were safe hide-outs for the out-laws, criminals and thugs who were living out-side the pale of law. Thieving, decoity, robbery, were the means of maintenance for them. There was no law, no organised police force to catch them, punish them and restrain them for the criminal acts of violence, blood-shed, murder and robbery. They used to fall upon the unsuspecting and often unarmed travellers in organised bands and rob them of all their possessions. They used to way lay them in
the thick of the jungle and make them stand and deliver. They not only robbed them of their valuable things but often took their lives. Moreover, as we know India is a vast country. It is more a sub-continent than a country. It is a tropical country where the heat of the sun is intense. The inclemency of the weather, the dust and heat of the road, the long distances make travel even in modern days so difficult, causing much discomfort. The only mode of travel then was on foot, on horse back, a camel or a bullock cart. The poor mostly travelled on foot. Therefore, in those days, pilgrims and travellers who went to distant places were not assured of safe return to home. Therefore their expectations of return were uncertain and often belied to be dead.

Under such conditions even our imagination staggers to what distant lands and places our Ramachar went in search of knowledge and learning. He went from one seat of learning to another, travelling far and wide, we learn that his ultimate destination was Nava Dweepa now called Nadia in West Bengal. Nava Dweepa then was the most famous seat of learning of Sanskrit, ancient sacred lore, scriptures, Vedas, Agamas and the Upanishads. It had also the most famous teachers in those days apart from having a library where rare manuscripts, copies of books were stored. Small wonder, then our Ramachar, with his insatiable hunger for knowledge was drawn like a magnet there. Ramachar stayed there in Nava-Dweepa for a long period of thirty years. Here was a great scholar in the making whom the whole world one day would admire. He studied all the scriptures, Vedas, Agamas and Upanishads under the greatest teachers then in India. In those days there were no printed books. Books were in manuscript form on palm leaves. Only few could afford to have such books. Only famous seats of learning could store them in one place.

Education in those days was mostly in the form of oral transmission from the Guru to his pupil. The pupils in those days had to study every thing from their Guru. They had to listen to them with rapt attention and with intense concentration of mind. They were strictly forbidden to divert their mind from study to any worldly matter. The moment the Guru noticed any such diversion in the student, he disowned the pupil and turned him out with disgrace. The students in those days had to pay their Guru-Dakshina for teaching them. This was mostly in the form of physical service rendered to the Guru. The student, in other words was expected to be his most humble servant.
and be ready to do any menial service demanded or commanded of him by the Guru. By so serving him and being implicitly obedient to him in every respect he was expected to please him and win his grace. Only when the Guru was pleased, with the services of his pupil and his implicit obedience he would teach him. Thus, education entailed a rigorous discipline of body, mind and intellect of the student. Purity of body, mind and heart were absolute conditions. That was why Naish-tika Bramhacharya, strict celibacy was rigorously imposed upon the students as long as they remained students. Mostly these seats of learning were away from city and town life—thus removed from the hub and bee hive life of the town and the crowded cities mostly in the quiet and natural surroundings of the sylvan woods. The students had to lead a spartan life in the peaceful surroundings of the Ashrama, safe from the country influence of civilisation and city life. Any one who goes to Shanti Niketana near Calcutta today and stays there for a day and observes the daily life of the students there, will have an idea of what kind of an education the students had in those days. Guru was most highly respected. He was considered to be greater than any God. The Sanskrit saying goes, Guru is Brahm, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheshwara. Nay! he is Parabramsha himself. No culture in the world pays such highest respect, such glowing tribute to Guru, as our Indian culture. Such high respect for the Guru is a legacy of the east to the west, of the orient to the occident. In fact this highest respect to the Guru is the backbone of Indian culture. Highest values of life were inculcated in the minds of the students, like respect for the Guru and the elders, reverence for the parents, obedience, duty, discipline love and kindness, truth, beauty, goodness justice love of all mankind, peace, equanimity etc. Such high values, I am afraid, have been completely eroded and are blissfully forgotten or treated with contempt as old, defunct values. Character training was the key and the cornerstone of education in those days. That was why education in those days served a full, rich and useful purpose by training their body, mind and intellect and thus resulted in a harmonious and integrerated development of the human personality of the students. The education imparted in those days not only fashioned, perfected the students in various skills, arts and other branches of knowledge but also forged and shaped their character by inculcating in them very healthy and highly humane and moral values and ideas. The education in those days was a training in excellence of every kind. The luminous essence of our glorious culture is the excellent standard of education it had
maintained across the ages. These ancient seats of learning were veritable seats of culture. They turned out highly trained individuals, exceptionally sound scholars and pandits, at the same time highly cultured, liberated and enlightened souls who looked upon the whole world as their home. The student that came out of such seats of learning were most ardent votaries of education and culture. They were the most highly respected individuals, much sought after by kings and emperors and princes. They were indeed real kings and emperors who commanded implicit obedience among the entire lower cadres of humanity. The austere discipline, the severe ordeals education and learning imposed, made learning a Tapasya, an austere penance. It was a tortuous and painful process, toil and moil, exceptionally hard work. It meant burning the midnight oil and labourious hard study.

This high praise of our ancient education makes us look askance at our present day education. Education imparted in our schools and colleges today is a British legacy and hence a carbon copy of the west. It is not rooted in the soil and suited to our culture. Hence it has become a ridiculous travesty of all that we hold sacred, in other words all the higher values and ideals of character.

Imagine Ramachar studying for thirty years in such an Ashrama, the ancient seat of learning. It is difficult to reconstruct with imagination the kind of student-life he might have led there. Though he was married, he had left her at home, a girl of eight years, traversing an impossible distance of thousands of miles from his native village Kollur in Karnataka. Throughout his long stay at Nava-Dweepa, he might have lived like a hermit and led the life of a strict celibate. In other words he led the life of Naishhtika Brahmchari. He was wedded to books, learning and knowledge pursuing it with a passion and devotion with which nothing could be compared. He might have listened to those learned teachers with rapt attention and full concentration of mind the learned discussions and exposition of the various Shastras with critical commentaries absorbing all. But still his questioning, probing and critical mind and intellect which was always alert, never accepted anything on blind faith. Wherever he had doubts, whenever he came across passages which were difficult for him to understand. whenever he found passages with dubious meaning, whenever he came across lines—the subtleties of thoughts beyond comprehension he never hesitated to approach the
teachers and clarify his doubts on clear Shastric lines. After questioning and testing and only when he was fully convinced, he used to accept their validity. There was such humility in the boy, such sweetness in his behaviour, such deep respect and love towards his teachers that the teachers were never offended or took it amiss whenever he stood up and asked them or whenever he approached them with his doubts. Moreover, he had won them over to his side and gained their grace by humbly serving them by carrying out their orders implicitly without questioning. So the teachers taught and explained to him with a smile, never taking offence at his questionings and doubts clearing away the clouds and mists from his mental horizon like the bright sun. Thus the challenge and the response from the student and the teacher were mutual and spontaneous. And both of them became rich, one by giving, the other by receiving. He was absorbed in studying the palm leaves by sunlight and lamplight, never wasting a moment otherwise. If he was not reading, he was in the class room listening to the discourses of his teachers. If he was not in the class room, he was in the teacher’s house requesting them to explain his doubts and difficulties. And if he was not doing any of these things he was serving them humbly, helping them in their domestic chores, drawing water for them, washing their clothes or cutting wood for fuel.

I have already written earlier that those were the days when printing was not known. Thus there were no printed books. Books were in manuscripts in the form of palm leaves. Such manuscripts were rare indeed and the priceless possessions of the few, or they were stored in libraries in great seats of learning. This non-availability of texts and printed books, did not deter Ramachar and dampen his spirit in his relentless pursuit of knowledge and learning. He wrote and copied on palm leaves the rare books in manuscripts. And the copies he made of those rare manuscripts are still available to us in his own hand-writing. He has written down in faultlessly clean, fully legible and exceptionally beautiful scripts thousands of pages on proportionately cut papers of excellent quality. Not on a single page any where you notice spilling of the ink, striking out lines or slurring of the hand-writing. So neat and trim was his even handwriting. The indelible, shining ink he had used, the freshness of the paper and the shining of the ink have not faded over the years. His writings appeared brand new. Even to day they give the impression of recent print.
It is mistakenly supposed that illegible handwriting is a sign of sound scholarship. This erroneous belief has strangely enough percolated down to the modern days. But Ramachar's most legible, beautiful handwriting explodes this myth of identifying bad handwriting with scholarship. The writing of a man is many a time an index to his mind and character. The writing of Ramachar reflects in no small measure his mind and character. His handwriting is steady, firm and beautiful which reflects likewise these qualities of his personality. His neatness, conviction, discipline, clear thinking without any wavering in judgement or decision are also clearly reflected. It is amazing, even difficult to imagine for us the amount of extraordinary labour and trouble he might have taken in reproducing those rare manuscript-books in his own handwriting. It was a stupendous task which only an angel could do. And only Ramachar could do it. It is because of such giants like Ramachar, our valuable manuscripts, copies of rare texts have been preserved and kept and handed on to posterity as a rich legacy of the east to the west.

So our Ramachar did not only read tirelessly but also wrote laboriously working all through the night, literally and metaphorically burning the midnight oil. Reading and writing had made him an exact man. Discussion with his teachers, with his questioning, probing and critical examination had made him a full man. Through this vast reading, tireless writing and continuous discussion and discourses he had sharpened his intellect to the edge of a razor, developed his critical acumen and enhanced and enriched the powers of his analytical reasoning. The dizzy heights of learning and scholarship that Ramachar had reached were not by sudden flights of fancy but by assiduous and diligent practice, by extraordinary toil and trouble, by the relentless pursuit of knowledge and learning with a single minded devotion and passion. Here was an extraordinary devotee of goddess of learning, Saraswathi, in the Ashrama of Nava Dweepa performing Ghora Tapascharya for a stretch of thirty long years. Little wonder if the most difficult goddess of learning, very difficult to please, was pleased with this single minded devotion and showered on him her benign grace and choicest blessings! I have to pause here and tell you something which I forgot to mention in my narration. Ramachar had come from the extreme south, from the remote Karnataka to Nava Dweepa-now Nadia in West Bengal, where Bengali was mother tongue, where no other language was spoken or understood.
The boy, Ramachar, when he stepped into Bengal he did not know any other language except his own mother-tongue Kannada. Of course he knew a little of Sanskrit. Imagine the difficulties he must have faced, the gaps in communication between himself and the teachers and his fellow-students. But undaunted and undetered was our invincible Ramachar. He started studying Bengali. It must have been a severe ordeal for him, an unimaginable hurdle for him in the way of learning and scholarship. He learnt Bengali from his fellow-students, mostly taught himself by listening, reading and conversations. In a surprisingly short time he learnt the language, learnt to speak, read and write the language. No! his passion for excellence in everything led him on to gain mastery over it and a surprising proficiency in it. The rare facility of expression in Bengali he had attained, made Bengalis themselves marvel at him.

It becomes vitally important for me to fill in the significant gap in my narration, because the medium of instruction then in those days was Bengali. This becomes more evident by his matchless and fluent Bengali in which he has written the books in his own hand-writing. He also wrote books with his own incisive and illuminating comments on various books he studied.

His special forte was Nyaya Shastra. Nyaya Shastra is the Indian system of logic. However, this Indian system of logic called Nyaya Shastra is the most difficult system to master. One has to acquire a rare skill in the art of dialectics. The Indian system of Logic is more abstruse, difficult and complicated than its western counterpart. Only a few have really mastered it. Many a time it develops into a fierce verbal duel between the opponents making very severe and exacting demands on the verbal skill and artistry of the opponents. It demands perhaps all the methods employed in a duel, parrying and thrusting with precision and incision in the unguarded moments of the opponents. One has to exercise one’s utmost vigilance and alertness. It requires the utmost presence of mind. It requires a highly trained analytical mind, with an exceptional reasoning power.

There are seventy-two arguments called Vadas in Nyaya Shastra. Each Vada is a laborious and lengthy process, very difficult to master. Many Pandits have developed these Vadas in their own style offering their own interpretations and explanations. These arguments, therefore, naturally become highly sophisticated weapons to be handled
with the utmost care and caution. This has made the Shastra even more abstruse and difficult, better to be shunned than tackled. On each Vada Pandits have written separate books. On the seventy two Vadas there are seventy two different kinds of books—which are different kinds of versions, interpretations and explanations. All this has made Nyaya Shastra the most difficult study almost impossible to master.

It is reported that three great Pandits Shri Annambhatta, Jagadish Shastry and Gadadhar Bhat wrote seventy two books each called Vadas in Nyaya Shastra. The Vadas of Annam Bhatta and Jagadish Shastry are not available now in India. Only a few Vadas namely seven or eight or possibly ten Vadas of Gadadhar Bhat are now obtaining.

A person who studies Pancha Vadas (Five arguments) is considered to be a great Pandit in Nyaya Shastra. Ramachar by his temperament and training seemed to be the God’s chosen man for Nyaya Shastra. He and Nyaya Shastra appeared to be made for each other. He was naturally endowed with an exceptional reasoning power and a rare analytical mind. He had further fashioned and perfected them by years and years of assiduous practice and hard study. With his usual passion for excellence, Ramachar was not just satisfied with mastering five or eight Vadas as was the practice in those days. He was not a mediocre to be easily satisfied with any thing like that. His mind was a veritable cauldron of seething divine discontent. Nothing could satisfy him except the highest and the best in the world. Thus pouring over books, studying day and night, he mastered all the seventy-two Vadas. Imagine the toil and trouble, the mountain of labour he might have put to achieve his most difficult goal! Naturally and quite justifiably he was acclaimed and adjudged the best in his field of Nyaya Shastra in those days. The sublime sacrifice, the severe penance he must have performed to win the grace of goddess Saraswati, none can imagine. This distinguished votary of knowledge, truth, learning and culture would have perhaps remained in Nava Dweepa for ever worshipping the feet of Goddess Saraswati. But there were duties and obligations more compelling and sacred now towards his parents, his wife, to his family, to his people, less fortunate and still ignorant and to the society at large. They were prompting him, goading him and gnawing at his bones. He suppressed them with great difficulty at the
subconscious level of his mind. No! he did not want to go. He wanted to stay still and forge ahead in the relentless path of learning and knowledge. The purpose for which he had come had been eminently fulfilled. The distant and difficult goal he had sought, had been most successfully reached. But still he was not satisfied.

But one night Rsmachar’s father appeared in his dream and advised him to cry a halt to his studies and return home to Kollur.

The reason why he advised his son to go back can very well be understood. We have already seen that Ramachar who was a boy of thirteen or fourteen was wedded to a girl of eight at the time of his departure from home at the express wishes of his father. What would be the fate of the poor girl - wife who was now a woman of thirty eight years who had dragged on a tearful life of sorrow and separation from her husband? She was doing her Ghora Tapascharya at home praying every sleeping and waking moment of her life to the Almighty that her husband and master should come and end her mesery. The Great Lord must have listened to her prayers and therefore there was this visitation of the dream to Ramachar. Who would continue the family line in his absence? Moreover, in the sacred lore it is stipulated that there is no salvation to one who has no son. Ramachar’s father’s soul must have languished in pain and sorrow during all these years of his son’s long absence from home. Moreover, the plight of a married woman in an orthodox Brahmin family whose husband was long absent from home was most tragic and miserable in those days. If the husband did not return within a reasonable time and re-unite with his wife and family, he was given up as dead. The status of the married lady was most pitiable. She was considered and treated as a widow. And a widow in those days was most mercilessly treated. Her head would be shaven, she would be forced to lead the worst spartan life imaginable denied and robbed of all her legitimate rights. Scorn, sobs and tears, blame, torture and abuse would be her life long companions. So Ramachar’s father with tears in his eyes advised him to go home back to his wife and mother and thus end this misery and disgrace which would otherwise fall on his family. Ramachar requested his father to bless him with Phala Mantrakshata. He gave him two betel nuts, two rupees and a handful of red-coloured rice as a token of his blessing. Already dawn was breaking. As was his wont he woke up early before sunrise rubbing his eyes. Lo! what was his surprise when he found all the articles of blessing of his father were intact in his right palm in the manner his father had blessed him in his dream!
In obedience to his father's advice in his dream, he started his journey back home. He collected all his invaluable manuscripts which were his only priceless possession, packed them neatly in a bundle and loaded them on the camel's back. That was the mode of conveyance and transport in those days. It must have been the most arduous and hazardous travel as he had to traverse a long distance from Nadia in West Bengal to Kollur in the remote Karnataka. In the burning hot sun, in the dust and heat of the rough roads he had to traverse an impossible long distance, almost from one end of the country to the extreme other end. It was a distance covering thousands of miles. Often the road lay through thick jungles infested with wild animals and criminals, thugs and decoits wilder and more cruel than any wild animal. He must have halted in many places to take food and water and rest for the night, perhaps finding sleep impossible as his limbs and legs were sore and because of the back-ache and the burning pain in the eyes. Who gave him food and shelter during his journey, what he did and how he travelled can at best be safely left to imagination. Moreover, travelling thousands of miles on camel's back adds more discomfort to the arduous journey. The jogging and jostling that one experiences while sitting on the back of the camel, makes the journey really tire-some and troublesome. It must have been a severe ordeal, a test of patience. It must have appeared to him a neverending journey. Because the camel is a slow moving animal. Bracing the inclemency of the weather, the sun, rain and cold and tempests, bathed in sweat and covered with dust, he must have travelled almost at a snail's pace. But in that neverending journey, full of such discomfort, pain and torture, his spirit was unbending. It was a part of his life's journey taking him on and on through long winding roads through tortuous routes, through hills and dales, through rain, shine, storms and tempests. He must have suffered untold hardships and met with many thrilling adventures. Hence the arduous journey again back home must have symbolised for him the journey of life with its ups and downs, happiness and sorrow. Ramachar who was made of sterner stuff must have braved it with equanimity, with detachment, stoically and philosophically. Bacon says travelling is a part of education. In the west even to this day travelling is considered to be a necessary part of education. No education will be complete without travel. No amount of bookish knowledge and learning will make up for real education. Books are dull and endless leaves giving dry as dust information often leading to dull and endless
controversy. Knowledge and learning will be living and meaningful rounding up in real education only when it is placed in live context, when it is coupled with mellow experience. A man on the move, travelling from place to place staying in different places, living in different countries and climes, listening to different languages, observing different customs, traditions and culture will be very highly benefitted. Such live experience added on to his knowledge gathered from books will give him invaluable wisdom and broaden his out-look. The barriers of caste, colour, creed, provincialism, language and culture will be broken. He will develop a cosmopolitan out-look and become a citizen of the world. Ramachar was singularly blessed in this regard. He had to complete two hazardous, lengthy travels in his life time which must have gained for him rich and invaluable treasures of knowledge and experience. He must have evolved as the most enlightened, liberated and really educated man in the true sense of the term.

Ramachar had now returned a full man, a rich man and a complete man in every sense of the term. He was an erudite scholar without a peer, an invincible champion in Nyaya Shastra whom no body in those days could challenge. The thirty long years of austere penance, fully absorbed and concentrated study and the strict life of celibacy with purity of body, mind, thought and feelings, had lent a divine glow to his face and a rare light to his eyes. The tall, erect, imposing and towering height of more than six feet with a muscular build without any unnecessary flesh or fat on his body struck awe and respect in the mind of the onlookers inspite of his torn, ordinary and soiled clothes. Occasionally his eyes used to light up. His face beamed like the full moon when it was wreathed in smiles which spoke volumes of love, compassion, truth, chastity and glowing good qualities that were welling up in his heart. There was such rare sweetness and light on his face which appeared like the fair index of the high state of culture, the person had attained. His heart was not hardened. His human feelings had not been smothered by years of hard study, mortification of the flesh and spartan existence. His quick reaction and reasponse be-spoke the high sensitiveness of the mind.

Now after a long and relentless trek for days and months across the subcontinent he had set foot in the sacred soil of Karnataka, the heart of Bharat. His long sojourn and stay in Bengal for a long
period of thirty years had made him forget his own mother tongue. He could not now speak a word of Kannada. But the language of love, compassion, truth and kindness is a more powerful and effective language than any human language devised by man as it has no trapping, frills and flourishes, does not cover up the true feelings of the heart. It is the language of the heart. Heart communicates with heart directly touching the chords of heart in others.

So language was no problem for the great man. It did not act as a barrier shutting off the people around him from him. Their hearts spoke and communicated with each other more directly and effectively than any language. The charisma of his personality was such. The light of his eyes and the never failing sweet smile on his face came to his aid. People understood him like some mysterious electric current passing between them. The barriers of language completely broke between them as human beings. Wherever he went, people gathered round him, people of all stages and walks of life, the young and old with palms folded and head bent with spontaneous expression of love and affection. He treated them all equally without distinction. This human, kind and equal treatment won their heart, love and affection for him. He was welcomed in many homes and was treated with cordial hospitality. His feet were washed. They bowed to his feet. He was fed with sweet and chosen dishes. This spontaneous response of love and affection for him was above and beyond the respect and hospitality usually shown to a distinguished and learned guest. He was welcome in every home, be it a cottage, a mansion or a palace. He had gone from them for a long time. Now he had come as a Julius Caesar. He came. He saw. He conquered. He had conquered their hearts and established and extended a new empire of love, kindness and respect around him.

He came to Deodurg. There was a ceremonial welcome to him. Love, affection and respect were showered on him every where. He was bound hand and foot by their love. He was treated with the utmost cordiality and respect. He was invited to many homes. He was so moved and touched by their greetings, hospitality, love and respect that he had to cry a halt to his journey and stayed with them and humbly accepted their warm hospitality.

Then the next day when he wanted to continue his journey home the parting scene from them and the tearful send off was even more overwhelming.
With great difficulty he took their leave and started his journey. Now begins the new kind of sentimental journey of Ramachar towards his native village. When he was gradually nearing home what kind of feelings must have been welling up in his heart? He had long been absent from home. In Nava Dweepa when he was pursuing his studies relentlessly with a single minded devotion, he had forcibly but painfully suppressed all feelings of home, or perhaps when his mind was so completely absorbed in books and studies he had no time for such feelings. The memory of his mother and wife and the feelings of home, sweet home, might have surfaced up occasionally creating a painful twang in his heart. Now when he had virtually set foot towards home and when his native village was now a little distance away, feelings of respect and affection for his mother who must have grown too old now and tender feelings of love for his girl wife too deep for words who might have now become a fully grown woman, crowded and rushed upon his heart. Nay! flooded and over-flowed the banks. He was choked, He broke into tears of sorrow and repentance.

Here, at Kollur the mother had grown too old and had gone all grey. She could not see things clearly. She had become partially deaf. She had sagged and become very weak and bent with age. She could move about with difficulty with a staff in her hand. She was the very picture of sorrow and grief. The bereavement and separation from her only son on whom she had hoisted all her future hopes, who had thus abruptly left her soon after the death of her husband, was too cruel for her to bear. For years together she had not heard any thing about him. She did not know whether he was dead or alive. Now about the wife, as I had earlier said, she was now a fully grown up woman of thirty eight years of age. Her youth, her charm had all faded. Her cheeks were sunk. The lustre had disappeared from her eyes. In such terrible uncertainty and suspense, She had been kept about the where-about's of her husband or about her own state. Because she did not know any thing about her husband. She did not know at all whether her husband was alive or dead. Thus the two women were helpless companions to each other. In their mutual sorrow and separation they had been brought closer to each other. They were just dragging their meaningless existence on the ashes of dead and burnt hopes for their dear one.
It was evening when Ramachar set foot in the village. His clothes were torn, soiled and dirty. He was covered with dust. The camel, the load of books on its back, the stranger, collected a big crowd around him. He could not speak their language. They could not understand his language. He and his camel and his load of books became objects of curiosity and wonder to the villagers. They followed him wherever he went, afraid to draw near him. When he made enquiries about Madhwchar's house, about his mother and his wife, some of them ran up as couriers with this message to Madhwchar's house with wonder writ large on their faces, with wide open eyes and mouths announcing to the old lady the arrival of the stranger. The old lady feebly crawled up to the door with his wife coming tripping her heels just to see out of curiosity who the stranger was. Ramachar was now standing before her. He immediately prostrated himself before her, touched her feet with his forehead, took the dust from her holy feet and applied it to his forehead. The poor lady peered at him and scrutinised his face. She could not clearly see his face. But her heart knew and understood and instantly recognised that he was her son. The eyes of both shed tears of joy. They had a baptism bath in the hot flush of tears in which all their sorrow, pain, repentance were washed away. What must have been the joy of the wife when she came to know it was her long lost husband whom she had almost given up for dead! She could not believe what she was seeing before her. Tears flowed from her eyes. She wept, she cried she laughed, she was still shy and hesitant as a newly wedded bride. Both the women profusely thanked the Lord for giving their dear one back by bringing him here safe and sound to them. They thought that it was the greatest blessing and fortune of their life that their dearest one who was given up for dead was alive and had come back with all laurels and glory, now a very famous and learned man. Indeed no words could describe this extraordinary happy family reunion. Such things could happen in fiction. But some times truth is stranger than fiction. Unaccountable and mysterious are the ways of life as well.

Thus Ramachar accepted and embraced the life of a house holder (Grahasthashrama).

The raging tempest, the seething discontent and disquiet in his soul had been quietened. The most difficult, and distant goal which he had sought, fought for, struggled and pursued relentlessly
without leaving a single stone unturned had been reached. He had come back after a painfully hard and long journey and reunited with the loving members of his family. He could now enjoy the honeyed sweetness of marital happiness. He could now bask in the sweet, sublime love of his mother, the greatest blessing of any man's life. The domestic quiet, peace and happiness, the smug security of home which he had serpulously shunned and abstained from, all must have appeared heavenly now to Ramachar, who was all these days leading the life of an ascetic.

But this honeyed happiness of hearth and home did not make him forget the greater mission of his life of teaching the ignorant, uneducated and unenlightened. of bringing light and delight to those unfortunate souls who were groping in darkness and to those unenlightened ones wrapped in illusion and shrouded in mist.

He took upon himself the duties and responsibilities of a scholar and teacher. In those days, schools and colleges and educational institutions were practically unknown. Education was managed by pathashalas and private individuals. These individuals were not properly educated and mostly incompetent. Education, in those days was restricted to three R's - reading, writing and a little arithmetic. Even people who had a smattering of such knowledge were few. Ordinary people held education in superstitions, awe and mostly did not go to school. Therefore, mostly they were unlettered and uneducated. They were content to draw water, hew wood, plough their fields, herd their cattle, do the work of a carpenter, blacksmith or goldsmith or a washerman or doing the works for which they were specially skilled, content just to live, eat, drink and be happy. They did not have any nobler or higher aspirations. The doors and windows of their mind were mostly closed impervious to light and learning. Even if they wanted to learn, villages like Kollur had no schools at all. They had to trek miles and miles in search of schools and proper teachers. Thus they were naturally disheartened and mostly discouraged by their own elders who badly needed them as helping hands in the heavy and difficult duties and responsibilities of home. Hence education had become the privilege of the gifted few.

In such a sad world of darkness and superstition, Ramachar had stepped in. The poverty, misery and ignorance of the people around him did not dishearten him. He must have been moved to compassion
to the depth of his being seeing these pitiable conditions of these people around him. So he opened a school for them. His home was his school. The young and old, the ignorant and unenlightened sought him out. came to him for learning and education. He welcomed them all with a smile, taught them to read and write with utmost patience. He listened to their pathetic stories with great sympathy, helped them, guided them with his most needed advice and words of wisdom. His words must have fallen on their wounded and bleeding hearts like gentle drops of mercy soothing and comforting them and guiding them like a kindly light in the life’s dark journey. His words of wisdom must have entered their darkened and misty souls like the rays of the sun brightening and cheering them up. What rare divine boon it must have been to them to have in their midst such a scholar of distinction and repute at the national level like Ramachar in those days. Yet the man did not keep his distance from them, shun them and show his contempt for them. He was living and moving with them talking and listening to them, laughing with them and sharing their joys and sorrows with them.

Surpur (the present Shoropur now in Gulbarga District-Karnataka) was a Samsthan, a small kingdom ruled by a warrior race (Hindu kings) who were known for their great bravery, undaunted courage, great skill in administration and the fierce and invincible love for independence. It was a small state. Surper is surrounded on all sides by towering rocky hills. It nestles snugly and securely at the foot of these hills. These tall hills on all sides naturally make it a strong, impregnable unassailable and invincible fort.

These kings of Surpur were not only great warriors who had preserved their freedom intact and extended their Kingdom at heavy odds and ends but also they were great patrons of art, learning and culture. Hearing their name and fame many famous musicians, painters, learned men, writers, poets, Pandits and scholars from far and near, even from far flung corners of the country, came to their court seeking their patronage. The Kings welcomed them with pleasure, listened to them and showered with gifts munificently in the form of lands or money or income according to their lights or hights. It is mainly because of the most generous patronage of arts, literature and learning by such Kings our glorious cultural heritage has been preserved. And it has prospered day by day. Such kings fortunately in India were a legion.
Time had now become ripe for Ramachar to come out of his cocoon of anonymity to win recognition. Rare honour and distinction for his unrivalled scholarship and invincible mastery over Nyaya Shastra. He had pursued learning relentlessly for thirty years with rare dedication and devotion and had acquired superb mastery over Nyaya Shastra as he was thorough with all the seventy two Vadás (arguments). No one had dared challenge him in the North and no one had done it in Bengal. But in Karnataka very few really knew him then. An incident happened in his life which tested his mettle and proved his worth.

One, Shri Desikachar, who was vain and very proud of his learning, came to Shorapur with his eighty disciples. He was highly conceited and thought that he was unrivalled in Nyaya Shastra. Puffed up, pompous and vain as he was, he sent up a challenge to the Kings court if there was any scholar or learned man who could argue with him in Nyaya Shastra and defeat him in argument. If none of them could defeat him in argument, Desikachar demanded the written statement of victory, Jaya Patra, from the King. The prestige of the king and the court of learned men was now at stake. So the king himself took the matter very seriously and anxiously enquired if there was any learned man in his court who would accept the challenge of Desikachar and save the honour of the King and the court. But everyone hung his head in shame. Because the fame of Desikachar and his learning and scholarship had already preceded him well in advance and none, therefore, was willing to grapple with him in argument and get beaten hollow by him and thus eat the humble pie and lick the dust. The king was really sorry and became furious at such a negative response from his chosen learned men. He then became contemptuous about them and their worth. His honour was at stake. The prestige of the court was in great danger. A solution some how had to be found. After anxious enquiry he came to know of Ramachar of Kollur who had returned from Nava Dweepa after relentless pursuit of learning for thirty long years as an austere penance. The king was highly pleased and wanted to give him a chance, a test and trial whether he would come off with flying colours and save their honour and dignity in this crucial hour of his own trial. The king was nervous and diffident how this stranger and hitherto unknown scholar would fare in the verbal duel. But still he wanted to try his luck. Because it was the only course now left for him to save
his face and the honour of his court. So, he sent a palanquin
with two bearers to Kollur with a letter explaining to him the
tight situation that had developed and expressly inviting him for
discussion with Desikachar in Nyaya Shastra.

Ramachar accepted the invitation with a smile but firmly
sent back the palanquin and the bearers telling them to inform
the king that he would come on foot. Humility and simplicity
were the hall-marks of his personality. Does not the Sanskrit
Subhashita say that scholarship and learning shine with true
humility? As a student he was used to spartan life. Even after
he had accepted the life of Grahastashrama the pattern of his
life had not changed. His wants were few. He kept himself
scrupulously away from the life of luxury and exhibitionism of
any sort. Plain living and high thinking was his ideal. Though
a profound scholar, he was stoic, indifferent to the life of
luxury. Kollur is roughly about fifteen kilometers from Surpur.
Ramacher with gaint strides could, without difficulty, cover the
distance. He appeared to proclaim to the world that he would
take every thing in life in his stride, come rain, shine, tempest
thunder or lightening. When he came to Surpur he learnt that
the discussion was arranged in the Gopalaswamy Temple.
Gopalaswamy is the Kula Devata (family deity) of the Kings of
Shorapur. It is a very beautiful, pillared architecture. The temple
is built on a hillock. It has rows and rows of stairs more
than a hundred, leading up to the temple. From that height
the temple looks even more commanding and imposing. On that
height the Lord stands as the presiding deity of the town assuring all
his devotees, all the living things with his hand of fearlessness,
protection from all evil, dangers and calamities and showering on,- all his choicest blessings. The Lord with his charismatic
smile appears to laugh at follies and foibles of the erring humanity, at their egocentric vanities and pompous pride, at their
vain glorious ambitions with kindness, indulgence, tolerance and
affection and love of a Father. He appears to pity them
all wrapped in the illusion of worldly life laughing at his own
divine sport-the illusion which He himself has created as His
Lila. The beautiful and commanding spot they have selected
for the temple is indeed a tribute to the artistic sense of the
Rajas who have built the Temple. It inculcates a great truth,
the manifestation of the divine in three forms Satya. Shiva,
Soundarya. - Truth Goodness and Beauty. They are the three manifestations of the divine inviolate and in-separable from one another.

There appears to be the hand of the Divine in this episode. Pleased with the austerity, discipline, purity of mind and severe penance that Ramachar had performed for thirty long years in Nava Dweepa in relentless pursuit of learning with single-minded devotion to appease the difficult Goddess of Learning, Saraswati, the Lord wanted to shower his choicest blessings to uncover and expose this hither-to unknown scholar. This rare Kohenur Gem of Kollur, hither to covered with mud of anonymity and oblivion. That the venue for discussion was the temple, lends support and authenticity to our supposition. Yes! the discussion was arranged in the presence of the Lord! It must have been the most exciting event of the Kingdom in those days. The news must have spread like wild fire all over the Kingdom. People from all over the Kingdom must have gathered there. The temple premises must have been filled to capacity with the elites of the town and the gown. It must have over-flowed unable to hold any longer the swelling and surging crowds, who were pouring into Surpur like an over-flowing river. A veritable sea of humanity had gathered there. The temple premises were already over-full. People were standing and sitting in every convenient and inconvenient places chatting and talking excitedly with one another about the most exciting event they were going to witness that day and about the possible results of the ensuing verbal duel between the two great Pandits.

How could any one recognise Ramachar in his modest clothes in that sea of humanity? He was wearing a plain Dhoti and had covered himself with an upper cloth. Moreover the long trek of fifteen Kilometers from Kollur to Shorapur in the blazing heat of the sun on the dusty road had covered him head to foot with sweat and dust and had made his appearance even more unkempt. People of-course had peered at him as at a stranger for some time, at his uncommon and rather imposing personality and passed on. They had ignored him and almost totally forgotten him taking him to be one amongst them who had come to witness the great debate. Stiththa Prajna as Ramacher was, he took this great insult to his dignity and worth in his
stride. He was standing near the Garuda Gamba laughing in his sleeve at these strange quirks of destiny. Luckily for him the bearers of the palanquin who had gone to Kollur with the invitation saw him and instantly recognised. They ran up and informed His Majesty. The king, in great joy, hurried outside along with the bearers. He was no less surprised at his ordinary dhoti and modest dress and humble demeanour. The king was deeply impressed by the personality of Ramachar at first sight itself. The King was a great judge of men and matters. The humility, simplicity and modesty of the man, proclaimed to him the inner sterling worth of the person. He bowed to him in reverence, Ramachar blessed him with a smile. The King led him inside, taking him by the hand. When the people came to know the identity of the stranger near the Garuda Gamba as Ramachar, the distinguished scholar, who was to participate in the discussion on that day, they were even more excited. They were filled with awe and wonder.

The king took him to Desikachar and personally introduced Ramachar to him. Ramachar bowed with respect and humility to Desikachar. But Desikachar, pompous puffed up and vain as he was who was over-confident of his victory did not even acknowledge the salute. He looked at him up and down, took in the ordinary, almost soiled dress he was wearing and his unkempt appearance. He appeared to assess his adversary at one glance. He could not hide his contempt for him which was expressed in his broad derisive smile. The two must have appeared-Desikar dressed so regally and ostentatiously and Ramachar so modestly, as the slurring peacock with all its plumes spread and the royal, dignified white swan to the King. potentiates the learned men and the elites of the town that had gathered there in the temple premises.

But Desikachar was soon in for the biggest surprise and shock of his life. Never before had he countered such a powerful opponent. He was filled with awe at his adversaries, profound scholarship and the razor edge sharpness of his intellect. Here was indeed hither-to unacknowledged master of Nyaya Shastra who had mastered all the seventy two Vedas while Desikachar had mastered just six or eight Vedas. What was his shock and dismay when Ramachar met his argument with his argument on his own ground? His parrying and thrusting were of no avail.
Ramachar's more penetrating and incisive arguments made him shiver in his limbs and quail and flounder before him. Every hard butting argument Ramachar countered that day was in the nature of a shock treatment in the nature of pinprick to this bloated balloon of vanity before him. But Desikachar did not want to easily give-in and acknowledge his defeat. The discussion and argument continued for a week! Ramachar ultimately vanquished Desikachar in the debate!

The joy of the King and his court knew no bounds. The applause, the clapping, shouts and cheers of the King, his court and the people were difening. They rose up to the skies and seemed to reach the very heavens. The King could no longer contain his joy and appreciation. Here he had sighted a priceless, most rare Kohenoor gem. He got up from his throne, came down the steps and openly embraced Ramachar. In due recognition of the great man and his distinguished scholarship and the astounding victory he had won, he conferred on Ramachar the title of Nyaya Ratna. Here was a dear friend who had stood by him in his great need and had come to his aid as no one had done in his greatest crucial hour. He did not want to lose sight of him any more. He had saved his face, the court's prestige and his Kingdom's honour. He was overwhelmed with gratitude for the man who had done all this to him. As a token of his deep gratitude, love and respect he settled on him a jagir which comprised of the entire village Rakamgara (in Shahapur Taluka-Karnataka). He also granted Inam lands in various villages spread over in five taluks viz., Shorapur, Shahapur, Jewargi, Deodurg and Manvi. A magnificent mansion was constructed for him at Rangampet near Shorapur. Ramachar shifted his family from Kollur to Rangampet. The Raja of Shorapur also gave him a Tamra Patra stating that he was a Nyaya Ratna, the invincible scholar of the Indian System of Logic and Certified therein that the Jagir and the Inam lands conferred on him would continue to be enjoyed by him and his family Achandrarka (as long as the sun and the moon shine in the sky).

Every year Ramachar used to pay a visit to all the villages to collect the rent of Inam Lands as well as of his jagir.
Once on his usual rounds to collect rent he had been to Morat. He halted for a day there intending to go to Ballatgi, a village now in Manvi Taluka. The next day when he was about to start, he felt physically indisposed and felt sick. The temperature steadily rose and by evening he was in a state of feverish delirium. He had, in fact, a sudden attack of influenza. In those days, no remedy was known for influenza, and properly qualified doctors were not available. He was staying in the house of Timmappa Kuikarni. He was bedridden for two days feverishly tossing his head to and fro in the grip of mortal pain and high fever. Unfortunately he succumbed to it and breathed his last in the evening that day.

The tidings of his sudden and sad demise were sent to Rangampet. But as ill-luck would have it, before his son Madhwachar, reached Morat, the cremation had been completed.

Thus a great soul passed away that day causing such bereavement and sorrow to the members of his family at Rangampet and leaving a gaping void which could not be filled by any one in the World. Thus the curtain had been finally drawn on the mortal existence of a very noble and learned scholar who had left an indelible impression on the hearts and minds of generations.

II RAMACHAR.

The invaluable manuscripts brought by Ramachar from Nave Dweepa and the books written in his own hand in Bengali script were neatly stacked preserved and kept in a separate room in the first floor of the house at Rangampet by his grand son who had also been named as Ramachar after his illustrious and celebrated grand father. He was also a scholar of repute. The house is situated on the banks of a deep and wide well with rows of steps leading to the water. Once during rainy season there was a heavy down-pour. It rained continuously for days. As a result, the roof, the walls and most of the books stored in the room fell into the deep waters of the well. Most of them were sunk. Some of the books were brought to Gulbarga and kept in the new house there.
I have already stated that these manuscripts and books were written in Bengali. So no one in the South could read them. Professor R. N. Dandekar of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, who came to know of the Valuable manuscripts and books, directed that Dr. R. K. Sharma, Director of Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, New Delhi, should be contacted. Likewise Dr. R K. Sharma was informed of the manuscripts. He was kind enough to depute Shri Jeeshvishwar Jha. Bengali knowing curator of Gan-ganath Jha, Kendriya Sanskrit Vidya Peetha Allahabad. He came to Gulbarga in November 1982. He made an elaborate list of these manuscripts and intimated Director Dr. Sharma.

Dr. Sharma deputed a team to Gulbarga to examine and scrutinise the manuscripts. This visiting team consisted of Dr. P. N. Kawtekar, Professor and Chairman, Sanskrit Board, New Delhi, Dr. C. R. Swaminathan DEA (Sanskrit), Ministry of Education, New Delhi and Dr. Madan Mishra, Principal Shri Lal Bahadur Shastry Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidya Peetha, New Delhi. These distinguished worthies paid a visit to Gulbarga on 11th February 1983. They were convinced that the manuscripts were a priceless treasure.

However, an incident which may cause great interest to the readers may be mentioned here. This incident was narrated to me by my good friend Srinivasachar, who is in the direct family line of the celebrated Ramachar. Ramachar is his great ancestor.

Mr. K. L. Genert, Professor of Indology, Colon University West Germany, came to know of these manuscripts and books. Being desirous of purchasing these books, he wrote a letter to Srinivasachar Kolur expressing his intention. He went to the extent of offering Rupees two lakhs and a half for these invaluable manuscripts. But Srinivasachar, impelled by patriotic motives, firmly turned down the offer thinking that irreparable loss would be done to his country if these priceless manuscripts were sent outside India. Even consideration of such a huge amount of money which would have easily corrupted any Indian did not persuade him in the least to part from them and send them out-side India, which he so justifiably considered as the invaluable National Treasure.

He wrote back to him that he was not willing for the bargain and informed him to treat the matter closed. He thought that Indians are
by nature sentimental. Perhaps he thought of exploiting his sentimental nature to his best advantage. He again wrote a letter dated 5th April, 1982, stating that on 31st March he had a dream where-in his (Srinivasachar's) forefathers visited him and discussed with him on Indian Philosophy. This clearly appears to be a clever manipulation and fabrication by the gentleman to impress on Srinivasachar. He even suggested that the manuscripts would be kept in the consulate General's Office in Madras. It would be only change of place. Moreover the pious sentiments and holy traditions of his forefathers would be respected as the whole set of texts would be kept in one place. The fact, that he so relentlessly pursued the matter in order to avail of those priceless possessions, clearly indicates that he was willing to pay any amount of money demanded. But Srinivasachar rightly thought that it was not fair or proper on his part to evaluate the old books and manuscripts which were many centuries old, preserved from generations, in terms of cash. Such national sentiments and highly noble patriotic feelings which are deplorably lacking now-a-days, must be highly praised and appreciated by us. I better quote the very words of my friend, Srinivasachar, here:

If we purchase fifty betel leaves for a rupee in the market it has no value. On the other hand two betel leaves with a piece of betel nut offered as a token of honour, love and affection would be more valuable than fifty betel leaves purchased in the market.

The visiting dignitaries opined that the manuscripts were priceless and hence it was not possible to fix any amount as the right price for the invaluable manuscripts. Therefore, to wriggle themselves out of a hopeless situation-they offered to pay honorarium and desired that those manuscripts to be delivered in person in a safe and intact condition to the Rashtriya Samsthan, New Delhi. Accordingly Srinivasachar went to Delhi and delivered the manuscripts in person to the Rashtriya Sanskrit Samsthan, New Delhi, in March 1983. These are now preserved in Gaaganath Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidya Peetha, Allahabad.

As I have earlier narrated, Ramachar breathed his last at Morat in Kulkarni's house. He had taken the Pooja box along with him. It was still there in the house of the Kulkarni. Ramachar's death, at Morat, in somebody's house away from home and his dear and near relatives, is deeply significant for us. Here was a noble soul, a yogi in fact who had followed the path of renunciation and enlightened
knowledge for a long period of thirty years. He was following Naisthika Bramhacharya. He would have continued to be a student all his life and would not have left Nava Dweepa if his father had not appeared in his dream and appealed with tears in his eyes to go back to his village and become a Gransrhashrami. This clearly indicates that temperamentally he was a yogi who was following the path of renunciation and enlightened knowledge. He had cultivated and further intensified it by assiduous practice, nothing short of a recluse over a stretch of thirty long years. He had reached a stage, where for him, there was no going back. He had scrupulously kept himself aloof from the life of the senses. That is he was leading a life of non-attachment and detachment from worldly affairs. Only at the express wish of his parents he had returned and undertaken Grahastashrmas to continue the family line. Even afterwards as a house holder he must have been non-attached to the temporal worldly things like the lotus leaf on water and the lotus flower itself, the queen of flowers, whose roots are not attached to mud. The luminous essence of his life and the message becomes abundantly clear from the facts and condition of his death. Even his only son, Madhuvachar could not attend his father’s cremation ceremony.

Madhuachar, afterwards, went to Morut to perform the funeral rites of his father. While returning to Rangampet the next day he wanted to remove the pooja box and take it home along with him. That night he had the visitation of his father in his dream who strictly warned him not to remove the pooja box from the place where it had been kept. However, he instructed him to perform pooja of the idols of the deities and again keep them there in the same place. Madhuvachar, all his life, carried out the instructions of his father in letter and spirit. Every year on his way to Ballatgi to collect rent of his Inam lands, he used to halt for a day at Morut, in the Kulkarni’s house and perform Pooja of the idols and again keep the pooja box there in the same place. Even at the time of Ramachari the second, after the death of Madhuvachar the dream was repeated forbidding him to remove the box and take it home to Rangampet. He was, however, allowed to perform pooja there and keep it as usual. During his last days, Ramachari the second, told his son Venkatachar to perform the pooja of the idols only if he was permitted to do so in his dream. But Venkatachar had no such dream. Therefore, he did not open the pooja box and perform the pooja of the idols. However, he used to offer a coconut whenever he visited Morut.
As I said, Ramachar the second used to go to Morat once a year and used to perform the worship of the idols. But once due to unaccountable reasons he could not go to Morat and so the idols were not worshipped. Strangely enough every one in the Kulkarni’s family started suffering from one ailment or the other. So, the Kulkarni wrote to Ramachar requesting him to go over there and perform pooja. Ramachar forgot all about the letter and thus did not pay heed to the Kulkarni’s request.

In the meanwhile, a Brahmin had come to Morat. He was staying in Kulkarni Ram Rao’s house. Ram Rao requested him to perform the worship of the idols in the pooja box. The Brahmin agreed to do so. When he took his bath and was about to enter the pooja room, he saw a furious cobra on the threshold with its raised hood and its forked tongue angrily hissing and drawing towards him. The Brahmin was seized with terror and fell down unconscious. At midnight, the Brahmin had a strange dream. Lord Hanuman visited him in the dream with a whip in his hand and started whipping him black and blue. He fell down from the platform in front of the house on which he was sleeping. He woke up with a violent start and shivering all over with his body profusely bathed in sweat. His whole body was burning. He was in a state of feverish delirium. What a shock and surprise it must have been when he found the scorged marks of whipping all over his back and body! The Brahmin fled in the early hours of the morning without informing the inmates of the house. Ram Rao deputed a messenger to Rangampet. He narrated the whole incident in full to Ramachar. Ramachar went to Morat and performed the pooja of the idols. The news spread like wild fire all over the village and the entire village came to know of the incident.

During rainy season a portion of the pooja Room in Ram Rao’s house came down. Venkatachar was urgently sent for. When he went there, Ram Rao requested him to remove the pooja box and keep it on the shelf in the kitchen room. Venkatachar not knowing what to do placed two chits before the box and picked up one. He had picked up the chit with the word ‘Remove’ in it. Thank God he had been permitted to remove it from the place. So he removed and kept it on the Kitchen shelf. After repairs it was placed in the same Pooja Room as before. Thus every one developed a holy dread about the pooja box, afraid even to touch it.
After the demise of Venkatachar his son Srinivasachar used to go to all villages to collect rent of the Inam lands. He was a Government servant. He was in Hyderabad then. On his behalf his father-in-law, Rajendar Rao, a retired Government servant used to collect rent from the tenants. Srinivasachar had mentioned particularly about Morat to him and had requested him to find out whether the pooja box was safe in Ram Rao's house. Rajender Rao on his visit to Morat found out that the house was sold to some one who had completely demolished it with the intention of constructing a new one on it. The matter was conveyed urgently and immediately to Srinivasachar to his utter shock, dismay and surprise. So Srinivasachar immediately left for Morat and made enquiries about the Pooja box which everybody in Morat knew. He was told that it was given to a private doctor Gunatakal Srinivasachar there. When he wanted to contact him he found that he was out of station. He left a letter addressed to him in his house informing him about his visit instructing to pack all the idols in the box and keep them ready for him to be picked up and taken to Rangampet. He went to Ballatgi and stayed there for two days. Then the next day he want to Morat with the intention of Shifting the Pooja box to Rangampet if he had no such dream. So his mind was made up. There was no longer the superstitious holy dread about the box. He had already taken his bath in the early morning at Ballatgi. After reaching Morat he went to the doctor. The doctor, as instructed by him, had packed all the idols in a medicine box. The doctor had to narrate a separate story about the idols and the pooja box. The Patel who had purchased the house had requested him to take the pooja box with him as he was going to dismantle the house. Accordingly the doctor had brought the pooja box to his house. That night he had a strange dream. Some one appeared in his dream and told him to trace the Ganapathi idol and also the small copper piece of the Peeth Prabhavali (Arched seat) of Tandava Krishna which were missing. Strangely enough the stranger in the dream had correctly instructed him to go and search for the missing holy objects in the heap and debris of the dismantled house. Stranger enough than this, which turned out to be a minor miracle, the small copper piece of the Peetha Prabhavali of the Tandava Krishna and the idol of Ganpati were found in the debris after a diligent search as foretold in the dream! Srinivasachar collected the pooja box and went to the bus-stand. But perhaps strangest of all, on the bus-stand he was accosted by a total stranger who asked him wheather he was Venkatchar's son. On being
informed he was Venkatachar's son, the stranger ran up to his house and returned with a Hanuman idol and gave it to him. Thus miraculously he had recovered all the idols in the pooja box and thus in a singularly blessed mood he returned to Rangampet with the Pooja box.

As I have earlier narrated, his father had died and his mother was living alone in the house at Rangampet. When she learnt from her son that he had brought the pooja box from Morat, she was alarmed and filled with a holy dread because her son had performed a deed which his forefathers had not dared to do.

Another problem now popped up. Who should perform Panchamrita Abhisheka to the idols? Srinivasachar had not the necessary Gurupadesha to qualify himself to perform the idol worship. So he requested Narasimhachar Agnihotri of Shorapur to perform the pooja. He too was filled with a holy dread and quite unwilling to perform the pooja. Finally he was persuaded and prevailed upon to perform the pooja as he was the disciple of Srinivasachar's grand-father. But there was even more ticklish problem before them. Pooja of the Tandava Krishna could not be performed without the broken copper piece soldered and properly fixed. No gold-smith or copper-smith dared to undertake the work as each one was filled with a holy dread and awe about the idol, the deity of Ramachar. But after persistent persuasion and request they were finally prevailed upon to take up the work. And by the time they soldered the copper piece it was 1-00 PM Then the elaborate worship with Panchamritabhisheka was performed. It was over by 5-00 PM Then Srinivasachar took his meals. He had not tasted even a drop of water from the time he had started from Ballatgi after bath. Thus he had fasted for nearly 36 hours. These idols are now kept in Gulbarga in the new house. His house at Rangampet was recently sold and hence all the Pooja boxes along with all the articles have been shifted now from Rangampet to Gulbarga to the new house.

Not much is known about Madhwachar. Probably he was not so famous as his son Ramachar. But Ramachar the-II. his son was as distinguished and as great a scholar in some respects, perhaps even more distinguished than his own celebrated grand-father in other matters. The saga of Ramachar for learning, knowledge and scholarship was of epic dimensions. In the quest and conquest of learning and
scholarship he had to go a long way, traverse the subcontinent from one extreme end in the south from his native village Kollur finally to the extreme other end Nava Dweepa in the North. He had visited many seats of learning, studied under many famous teachers of his time and finally ended his quest and made a complete conquest of learning in Nava Dweepa under the most celebrated teachers of his time. This learning and scholarship was a result of Ghora Tapascharya for him of arduous toil and trouble of scaling many rocky and steep cliffs, of braving storms and tempests, thunder and lightening of chartering unknown seas, plumbing their unknown depths of painfully hard struggle and study, literally and metaphorically burning the midnight oil for thirty years literally, leading the life of an ascetic and a celibate. He had come a long way. He had seen. He had conquered. This strikes to me as Hatayoga. And Ramacher was in more sense than one a Hatayogi. The dizzy height he had reached, the profound depth of learning and scholarship he had attained, was the result of severe discipline, assiduous practice and passing through all the severe ordeals. In other words his scholarship and learning had been fashioned and forged and perfected in the smithy of arduous toil and assiduous practice.

Now focussing our gaze on his grand son who bore the name of his illustrious grand father. Ramachar the II appears to be an illustrious example of Raja Yoga and Ramachor the-II if we understand his personality in the correct perspective and light appears to be a great Raja Yogi.

The astounding scholarship he got and gained mastery over many subjects with such natural ease, spontaneity add facility without toil, moil or tears, go to prove it. The meritorious deeds of his past life appear to have taken human shape. The Ghora Tapascharya of his grand father to acquire learning seemed to have borne golden and mellow fruit and attended on him at his birth. He was shaped in a different smithy. The many talents he had, he had inherited at the time of birth from the rich culture, disciple and learning of his ancestors. The austere penance of his grand father and the meritorious deeds of his previous existence had been crystallised in him. The awe inspiring learning and scholarship which his grand father had acquired after such a painfully hard struggle had been given to him as a divine bounty. The many astounding talents he had, defy all analysis and reasonable explanation. So he was fashoined,
forged and perfected in God's own smithy. Ramacher the second did not venture out of the threshold of his own smug and secure home for study, learning and scholarship. Every thing was before him, within easy reach for the mere asking. So home was his patha-shala, his college, his University. And his father Madhavachar was the first and the only Guru he had. Ramachar the second studied at home. He listened to him with rapt attention and grasped what he was taught and retained in his memory whatever he learnt and understood. He had an extraordinary sharp, piercing and penetrating intellect. He had an even more astounding retentive memory. He needed no second teaching or telling. Mostly he studied by himself. He poured over books. His house had an amazing collection of books and rare manuscript copies which Ramachar-I had written in his own hand and brought from Nava Dweepa and neatly stacked them as his priceless possession and imperishable wealth. Within a range of five or six years Ramachar-II must have learnt all what his father had to teach him. And then he must have left the boy to his own devices. But the greatest thing he did for Ramachar was teaching him Bengali language. Ramachar with his precocious intellect must have learnt the language, learnt to read and write it and mastered it within a surprisingly short time. We already know how very vital it must have been for his study and scholarship and forging ahead in the path of knowledge. All the books and manuscripts of the old Ramachar were in Bengali script. So Bengali had the magic key to open the doors of that precious treasure of knowledge of his grand-father. It was the open sesame for him.

So armed with the knowledge of Bengali language, he poured and pouted over the books and manuscripts of the old Ramachar. To his incisive sharp intellect and exemplary sensitive mind, the subtleties of Nyaya Shastra never escaped him. Nothing presented a difficult problem. There was no hard nut to crack. Whenever he did not understand a problem or a difficult passage, there was his father by his side safely to bank upon.

The bright sun steadily rose on his mental horizon, dispelling the areas of gloom and darkness in his mind and extending the frontiers of his knowledge, clearing the cobwebs, fogs and mists of his mind. So being in his own home, never going any where out side his village in search of knowledge and scholarship, he Scaled, climbed up, slowly, steadily but surely the Mount Everest
of knowledge. He reached the dizzy top with such effortless ease and smooth and spontaneous facility. The hazardous distant travel and the painful struggle and study of the old Ramchar were not required for him who could gain the same superb mastery and reach the same dizzy height sitting quietly at home. He became the unrivalled master of Nyaya Shastra and Vyakaran Shastra. Like his grand father he gave world challenge in Nyava Shastra. This invincible champion of Nyaya Shastra did not meet a peer who could grapple with him in the subtle and piercing arguments and debates of Nyaya Shastra.

Unlike his grand father who could establish superb and unrivalled mastery over one viz., Nyaya Shastra, he mastered many with ease and facility unknown before. He was a many splendoured genius. He had perfected and mastered many skills and branches of knowledge like Nyaya Shastra, Vyakarna Shastra, astrology, palmistry, Ayurveda and pulse reading, and the game of chess. ‘Jack of all trades and master of none’ is a common saying in English. It is so because art is long and life is short. Life given to man is pitifully short. Within a brief span of life allotted to man by God he cannot fully master even one branch of knowledge. So, man acquires a smattering knowledge of many but does not acquire full knowledge of one. So he becomes just a jack of many and no master of one thing. He is satisfied if he becomes one like that.

But with Ramchar it was the other way round. He was the master of many and jack of none. One wonders and it does not easily stand to one’s reason and understanding, how he mastered all these, where he found time to study and gain such astounding proficiency in them.

Not satisfied with gaining such superb mastery over these subjects himself, he set about the noble task of teaching the less fortunate the ignorant and unenlightened. There too he gained a rare mastery and became an unrivalled and one of the most competent teachers. Two of his students, Krishtnamchar and Shri Shri Satya Dhyana Swamiji of Uttaradi Mutt rose to phenomenal heights. They too gave world challenge. The first one in Vyakarna Shastra and the second in Nyaya Shastra and Vedanta. The group of his students steadily grew and he could gather round him eighty students. His own home became his school and developed into a minor Gurukula. These students were given free bread and board and he gave them free
education. The Philanthropic ideal of the great man is really astounding. feeding the eighty disciples in his own home and giving them free education! The huge financial drain it must have entailed for him! we are almost staggered by the very thought! When servants were not available for cooking meals, he used to cook food himself and serve them himself.

Ramachar was a man of sound convictions which was the result of sound learning. assimilation and digestion of what he had learned, of his wisdom in fact. He was of the firm opinion that Vyakarna Shastra (Science of Grammar) was the sound basis and laid the solid foundation for Nyaya Shastra (Indian System of Logic). He has also written many books on Nyaya Shastra. Therefore one should go to Nyaya Shastra only after mastering Vyakarna Shastra. Nyaya Shastra begins where Vyakarna Shastra ends. He would contend, if a sentence gives full meaning it is valid in grammar. But in Nyaya Shastra the meaning has to be fully examined by the process of Mandana and Khandana-by proposal and rebuttal or both. In support of this statement he used to give this example. “Bhattasya Katyam Sarataha Pravishtahah”. The chameleon entered the waist of Bhatta. Grammatically speaking it is a valid sentence as it gives complete meaning. After scrutinising the meaning, Tanka Shastra will find fault with the meaning and rebut the meaning thus “Chidrabhavat Katham Praveshtahah” without a hole how can the chameleon enter?

Sri Sri Satya Dhyana Swamiji of Uttaradi Mutt was his distinguished disciple who learnt Nyaya Shastra under him. Later on he also gave world challenge in Nyaya Shastra and Vedanta-Philosophy.

It will be of great interest to us to note that Ramachar had attained superb mastery over the game of chess. And he gave world challenge in chess. It appears he had fashioned and perfected the Indian Style of Playing chess. There are two systems Bala and Nirbala. That is if there is support to any piece we cannot take it in Bala System and in Nirbala System it can be taken even if there is support. He had mastered both the systems. In the old system one could defeat his opponent only by pawn-mate. Check mate in any other form was not accepted as defeat. Ramachar had developed such a rare skill that he would give pawn-mate with a particular pawn. He used to play other systems called Huchha Malli and Yeddamalli with equal skill. Pawn-mate having only one bishop and one pawn on both
sides is called Huchha Malli. Pawn mate having only one knight and a pawn with both the parties is called Yeddamalli. They are definitely the most difficult systems of play making severely exacting demands on patience and intelligence and skill of the player. Naturally they have not become popular and nobody plays them today. He had mastered and perfected all the old systems of Indian chess.

Guru Bhatt of Gaunhar was also highly competent in the game of chess. Hence he was his inevitable companion in Chess. He had mastered the Bala system. Both of them had attained such superb mastery over the game, they used to sit back to back with the chess paper between them. There were no chess boards then. The game naturally did not end in a day. It continued five, sometimes six or seven days. When they stopped playing for the day they used to cover the paper with a huge basket. Srinivasachar was their helper-mate who used to move pieces as they advised and instructed him to do. Once young Srinivasachar mischievously removed the paper after they had played the game for four to five days and when the game was still incomplete. Ramachar got wild and angry. But he did not lose his nerve. Amazing and almost unbelievable as it may seem to many of us today, he arranged all the sixty four pieces correctly in the proper places as they were before. Such was his astounding memory at the age of eighty or eightyfive. Small wonder than if he could give world challenge in Chess

It appears that he had a rare power of clairvoyance. This could be seen in the power of his sight, touch and speech.

He was of medium build, strong and muscular. He had a pointed shrap nose with light green eyes. The brows were arched. He had a very fair complexion. His eyes were very sharp and penetrating. They seemed to bore into the heart of the person he was looking at and read it. He could intuitively divine what was going on in the mind of that person. He could read his past understand and analyse the feelings pulsating in his heart and even fore-tell the future correctly. He was always dressed regally and lived in regal style. He had an amazing healing touch. At the mere touch of hand and chanting few words of Mantra, diseases fled. Persons suffering from incurable diseases flocked to him. By the touch of hand and chanting a few words of the Mantra the patients brought to him were cured of their diseases. He had also the astonishing power of
reading the pulse and correctly diagnose the disease. Within few minutes of feeling the pulse of the patient he would so correctly diagnose the disease. Even doctors who could not diagnose difficult and complicated diseases, used to bring their patients to him. He had also an amazing knowledge of Ayurveda. He had rare medicines, pills and potions concocted and prepared at home from rare leaves and roots of herbs meant for different diseases. Normally nothing would escape his eyes. No disease would remain uncured before his amazing power of healing touch. He had also acquired a rare proficiency in astrology and palmistry. He could correctly read past, present and the future by studying the person’s palm or looking at his horoscope. He could correctly construct the map of his life.

He had a wonderful power of speech. Usually he was reserved and a man of few words; if he opened his mouth and made a statement, the words would prove to be prophetic. And hence people held him in great awe and respect.

Whenever a person came to him with some ailing or the other he would ask him to lie down or sit before him. Then he would write a few words (God only knows what he wrote or what he did) on his forehead or stomach. Then he would ask him to get up and walk a few steps. He chanted some Mantra. Miraculously indeed the person would be cured and would walk away happily.

Once, a courtesan and court musician Achhamma came to him. She was of course a prostitute but still very much respected in the society. She was pious and God fearing. Her left breast had swollen and there was shooting and excruciating pain there. She could not expose it before any doctor and talk to him about it. She was hiding her grief all to herself and hanging her head in shame. But when the pain was intolerable she came to Ramachar with her story of woe. Ramachar instructed her to go into the kitchen to the pole fixed there for churning butter milk and open the blouse and embrace it for a few minutes. She should repeat it for three or four days. In the beginning she took it as a joke. But when Ramachar repeated it again, she followed his instruction, she came to his house three or four days. Miraculously her disease which no doctor could diagnose or cure in those days, was cured. When Srinivasachar asked his grand-father how the disease was cured, Ramachar explained that there was the presence of Lord Krishna in the pole. It is difficult for us to analyse
it and reason it out. Amazing as it will definitely appear to us he would correctly tell whether a lady who had enjoyed conjugal bliss with her husband the previous night was pregnant or not.

We have already narrated how Ramachar knew Jotishya (Science of reading the future) very well. However, he practised it as a hobby and did not follow it up as a profession. Srinivasachar’s father had married twice. But he had no male issue. He married a girl of the Adya family for the third time. Ramachar predicted that the purpose of the marriage would be served and that was that. Strangely enough it transpired like-wise. Srinivasachar’s mother passed away when he was a child of two and he (Srinivasachar) had not seen properly the face of his mother.

Once a very strange thing happened. One evening Ramachar was taking his bath to perform Sandhyavandana (evening prayer). Srinivasachar and his brother-in-law were in the pooja room. They saw a huge cobra coiling itself round the pooja box which was kept in a cupboard a few feet away from the ground. Now Ramachar had already taken his bath. He had already entered the pooja room. He did not lose his nerve seeing the cobra. He performed Mangalarti to the Cobra. But the cobra did not move. He held the Arti to its hood. Even then the cobra did not uncoil itself and go away. Unafraid, Ramachar took the end of the box and slowly removed it. Srinivasachar and his brother-in-law were shouting to him ‘‘Tata, do not touch the box’’. But he did not listen to them. The cobra did not bite. It wriggled itself out. It now uncoiled itself. With its tail still in the cupboard, it slowly crept towards the floor. It was about eight feet long. And then it disappeared all on a sudden. Srinivasachar and his brother-in-law made a frantic search for it. With big sticks in their hands they removed the Patravali on the floor, they saw the cobra coming hissing towards them. Though their Tata (grand-father) was expressly telling them to leave the cobra and not to kill it, they beat it again and again till it died. Ramacher was deeply pained. The snake which he did not want to be killed for some unaccountable reason had now been killed. He instructed that the cobra should be removed to the open yard and burnt there after keeping a paisa in its mouth. Then he advised him to take bath. He taught him some Mantra and asked him to repeat it one hundred and eight times. Srinivasachar did so. Later, that day he narrated to Srinivasachar that it was not a cobra but a Brahmin in the disguise of a cobra,
otherwise it would have bitten him. The boy out of curiosity went to the spot where the cobra was burnt, when he removed the ashes, to his great surprise he found the dead body of the cobra in tact untouched by fire. The boy was shocked and felt extremely sorry and repentent for killing the cobra. He was thus convinced of what Tata had told him about the cobra.

Whenever a new Tahsildar or Assistant Commissioner came to Shorapur, as it was the custom in those days, Ramachar used to call on him. He would take with him a silver plate containing dry fruits, betal leaves and nuts covered with a white cloth. He used to bless him with his Asirvachana (blessing with the chanting of Mantra) This was his custom. The out-going officer would introduce Ramachar to the new officer.

Once a new Tahsildar by name Minhajuddin was transferred to Shorapur. Some people at Shorapur were envious of Ramachar who commanded such great respect even from high ranking Government officials. Therefore, they approached the new Tahsildar and complained to him about the beguiling ways of Ramachar who used to pocket every officer by his sweet words and lavish presents. Therefore he should not be trusted or believed. He should not therefore yield to his sweet words.

Ramachar as usual sent word to the Tahsildar that he would come and meet him. But the Tahsildar who wanted to test him, had set a trap for him. When Ramachar went to meet him in his chamber, he saw the officer sitting on a single chair with his feet with boots streetched on the table. Ramachar was unnerved by the supercilious and haughty behaviour of the officer and his deliberately discourteous and insulting attitude. He placed the silver plate on the table and sat on the floor. The officer was surprised at the cool behaviour of Ramachar and asked him why he sat on the floor. He quoted a sanskrit sloka which meant how in a scale the empty pan would go up and the pan with weighty objects in it would come down and rest on the ground. The officer who caught the full import of his words was ashamed of his own flippant and disrespectful behaviour towards the great man and openly apologised to him. Such was the ready wittedness and presence of mind of Ramachar.

Before his departure to Rakamgera, his Jagir village, he used to send his servant as his special courier to inform the village of his
arrival there the next day. He would then start with his wife in a bullock cart with his gadi and takiya etc. The entire village would come to receive him. Then the next day he would invite the entire village for dinner. He held his own court and he enjoyed special and independent powers of a judge. The parties under dispute would be Summoned. He would sit as a judge. He would hear the arguments on both sides and then pronounce his judgement. Such a judgement by him was almost irrevocable. Shorapur was the personal property of the Nizam called Sarfe Khas. Hence no court had jurisdiction to quash the orders of the Jagirdar except the Nizam himself with a special Farman (order of the Nizam). But such Farman was rarely issued. The Jagirdars of Shorapur enjoyed special privilege. Whenever there was a special function at the palace of the Nizam a Farman was issued to all the Jagirdars and Nawabs of the State. When a grand-son (Mukarrum Jha perhaps) was born, Ramachar received a Farman to attend the function. Srinivasachar was a boy of twelve or thirteen then. He wanted to accompany his grand-father to Hyderabad to attend the function. There was such a deep bond of love and affection between him and his grand-son, he never said no, to any of his reasonable requests. So he took him to Hyderabad. The boy had to be specially dressed for the occasion. He was dressed with a belt (Baglus)tied to his waist. The boy accompanied him to the court hall. The specious hall furnished with ornate furniture was packed to the full. There were Jagirdars, Nawabs, important officials and high dignitories all seated in rows of seats. All were dressed in the best of their clothes befitting the court and the occasion. There was the Nizam himself seated on his elevated throne.

His grand father offered a big silver plate with a hundred gold coins called Ashrafi each coin weighing a tola. It was the token of his respect for the Nizam and his present for the grand occasion. The Nizam touched it and the present was sent inside. The Brahmins chanted Asirvachana (Blessings accompanied by Mantra). The Moulvies and Pandits read their own poems composed for the occasion in praise of the Nizam in Urdu, Persian and Telugu. The boy was filled with awe. He took in the whole scene breathlessly. It was indelibly etched on his memory. Such regal-splendour, pomp and glory he had never seen before. He had basked in the evening glow of the hey day glory of the Nizam’s court. He had seen it and experienced a romantic thrill for the first and last time of his life.
Sagarada Achhappa was a good friend of Ramachar. Respecting his age, Achhappa used to call him Tata as others used to. He had Ugra Narasimha Saligrama with him in his house. Due to unavoidable reasons he could not perform pooja daily. He thought and feared that it would be a sin on his part to keep it with him without performing pooja to it for days together. He feared that he would be cursed. Therefore, he wanted to give it to Tata as Ramachar was deeply religious and performed pooja daily. So, he offered the saligrama with proper Dakshina to Ramachar. He worshipped it and kept it in a box along with other idols. To his great wonder, next day, when he opened the box, he found the Saligrama missing. But Achhappa brought it and said that it was found in his pooja box. It was indeed a miracle. This happened continuously for three days. At last Ramachar made a Sankalpa in the night, if the Saligrama again went to the pooja box of Achhappa, he would not take it back. That night he had a dream. He was instructed in his dream to keep it in Sampushtha (Round copper box) and lock it. So a round copper box with lock and key was specially prepared. From that day the Saligrama was kept in it. Even today it is kept in the same box and it is worshipped every year during Navaratri.

Ramachar used to perform Trikala Sandhya Vandana thrice daily, morning, noon and evening. He was not so particular about time for his morning and noon sandhya vandana. But he was very strict and very particular about his evening sandhya vandana which he performed every day exactly at sunset. Nothing would stop it. No major or minor inconvenience would ever cause him to stop it, He would not give it up even while travelling. He did not give it up even if he missed the train.

Naikal Tirumal Rao, a lawyer in Hyderabad was his distant relative. He was a good Sanskrit scholar and Uttaradi Mutt disciple. He had great respect for Ramachar. Whenever Ramachar visited Hyderabad, he used to stay at Tirumal Rao’s. He also noticed that Ramachar was very particular about Sandhya Vandana in the evening without any particular reasons. But being so well grounded in Nyaya Shastra he could give some convincing logical reply.

He would say that the Sungod travels from his house fresh in the morning. The Rakshas (demons) will be coming in his way.
He has to fight with them. Of course he conquers them easily without any assistance as he is fresh in the morning. At noon the Rakshas will not cause him any serious trouble as they simply cannot stand his blazing heat. But in the evening he will be so down and out depleted and fully exhausted in body and mind after his long, arduous journey across the sky. So he will not have the necessary strength to fight his formidable foes, the demons. If any one offers Arghya and chants Gayatri Japam, it is Brahmastra and the Rakshasas would be powerless to face him. So the sun will be highly pleased with any Brahmin who performs sandhya Vandana exactly at sunset. This was the logical reason, he gave to Tirumala Rao for his sandhya Vandana in the evening at the correct time. Tirumala Rao laughed heartily at this rejoinder. "Tata you are a Tarkika after all" Hence you gave a convincing reason".

Once a Nyaya Shastra Sanskrit scholar by name Jhangur Jha from Bengal came to Shorapur. Raja Krishtappa Naik, one of the descendants of the erstwhile Surpur samsthana was residing in the palace. He had heard of the fame and name of the scholars in all Shastras in Shorapur. He had visited all the Samsthas. He enquired Raja Saheb about Ramachar. He had come all the way from Bengal to discuss Nyaya Shastra with him. He was wearing a small golden bell on his wrist. He said he would place it at the feet of the Pandit who defeated him in Nyaya Shastra. Or if the won he demanded a Jaya Patra, a written declaration of Victory.

So Ramachar was invited from Rangampet. He reached Shorapur in the afternoon. Jhangur Jha was a great scholar. He showed him a book he had written on Nyaya Shastra. The book contained three hundred pages, it contained only one sentence. It was in Bengali script. Beyond doubt he was a great scholar. It was on the subject "Anumiti Prakarana". The discussion now started in the presence of the King. The procedure was, a given theory had to be proved. This is called Lakshana Samanvaya

A Lakshana was given "Parvato Vanhiman Dhoom Vatwat". And this had to be proved. One party used to raise objections, called Koti. The procedure was called Kotikrama, and the other party used to answer the Koti. If there were no further objections, the other party was supposed to have won. So the above theory was given. Ramachar asked him what he expected of him, should
he do Khandana or Mandana (Rebuttal or Proposal)? The pandit was surprised to hear it. Because either Khandana or Mandana could be done. How could there be both? The Pandit was discouraged and disappointed right at the start. Discussion started on the statement. There is smoke in the mountain. So there may be fire. It was an inference which had to be proved. Mandana was put forth by Ramachar. And the Pandit raised the Koti. All his objections were over after discussion. Ramachar now volunteered that this time he would raise objections and the Pandit should answer the objections. When the other party failed to answer, Ramachar took the defeated point. In this way discussion continued for three or four days. At last Jhangur Jha had to eat the humble pie. He accepted defeat. He removed the golden bell and placed it at the feet of Ramachar and surrendered. But Ramachar did not accept it. Magnanimously he gave it back. He did not want to dishonour the pandit. The Raja was thrilled and pleased beyond measure with Ramachar who had saved the honour and prestige of the Samsthan. How had he attained such superb mastery over Nyaya Shastra? Quite obviously he owed a deep debt to his celebrated ancestor, the first Ramachar. He had poured over the books written by him in Bengali script brought from Nava Dweepa and assimilated and digested and fully mastered them. He had fashioned and perfected the technique of Nyaya Shastra. He had perfected both Khandana and Mandana in a unique manner that could do credit to the first Ramachar. Like his illustrious grand father who defeated Desikachar who had challenged the court Pandits and called in question the prestige of the court and saved the honour. Here was his grand son who rose to even dizzier heights of fame. He accepted boldly the challenge of Jhangur Jha from west Bengal, the home land of learning. A fierce and protracted battle had raised between the pandits for days - nearly four days. And Ramachar the II had emerged as the undisputed victor and thus not only had he saved the court's prestige but enhanced its honour thousand fold!

Shri Shri Satyagnana Swsmiji of Uttaradi Matt once sent for Ramachar. He asked him to teach Nyaya Shastra to Shri Setu-Ramachar. Setu Ramachar was a relative of the Swamiji who was being groomed as his spiritual heir and the next Swamiji of the Mutt. Ramachar being the disciple of Uttaradi Mutt agreed with pleasure to do so. But he would accept the responsibility under certain conditions-
i) A separate cook and a servant should be provided to him. He should be allowed to take his meals separately. He should not be insisted on taking his meals in the Mutt only as it would be always late there. And he was not accustomed to late meals.

ii) Once he accepted him as his disciple he should obey his word implicitly obeying his orders and instructions. If he acted contrary to his wishes he would leave the Mutt.

The Swamiji agreed to these conditions. Ramachar went to the Uttaradi Mutt along with his family. As already agreed upon, separate arrangements were made for them.

Ramachar started teaching Setu Ramachar in the Mutt. He taught him Nyaya and Vedanta. He turned out to be one of his most distinguished disciples. He rose to such a phenomenal height that he too like his illustrious Guru, gave world challenge in Nyaya Shastra. He gave such a challenge after taking Sanyasa.

Setu Ramachar had the highest respect for his Guru. Ramachar. Strange and surprising as it may appear to many. He maintained the same attitude of respect even after becoming the Swamiji.

The Swamiji used to give Tirtha to Ramachar in a small silver cup. Very sensitive as the Swamiji was, he thought the hand of his Guru should not be below his while taking Tirtha.

Ramachar had an almost encyclopaedic range of mind. Whatever he had read he had chewed and digested. He had an extraordinary retentive power of memory. Every thing he had read and understood was at his finger tips. He had no need of books. He never referred to any book while he taught. He used to move about at a leisurely pace in the big hall and teach his students. He appeared at times like a moving and talking encyclopaedia. Among the numerous disciples assembled in the big hall he would remember the exact portion he had taught to a particular pupil. Even during discussion he did not refer to any book. He was so thorough going and perfect in his knowledge and scholarship.

Shri Shri Satya Dheera Swamiji of Uttaradi Mutt (i.e. Third Swamiji prior to Shri Shri Satya Dhyana Tirtha) honoured him by Kara Deepa Maryada. It means a torch bearer leading him in daytime. It was considered the highest honour in those days.
This Kara Deepa is still preserved in Srinivasachar’s family. The Swamiji had also given him a palaquin (it was called Pallakki Maryada) while he was in Hyderabad. It was brought to Rangampet. Later on he presented it to Hanuman Mandir at Tonnur which is about one kilometer away from Kollur. It might be still there.

Ramachar’s family is even to this day exempt from paying Mutt Tax (called Mathadhikara). On special occasions like Mahasabha, Sammelana or Mahasamaradhana a Rayasa (Circular) was issued to all the Pandits with instructions to attend. The Rayasa issued to Ramachar during Satya Dhyana Swamiji’s period would bear significantly the words in his own hand and then struck off ‘Puravashramado Setu Ramana Vinanti’ (Setu Rama before he took Sanyasa requests you). He used to attend only when he received such a Rayasa. Once a Mahasamaradhana was held at Rajmahendri. Rayasa was sent to all Pandits including Ramachar. This time the Rayasa did not contain the personal request of Seturama in his own hand. So, he did not accept the invitation and did not go. The Swamiji had somehow forgotten to write on it in his own hand as he used to do. The absence of Ramachar from the distinguished array of Pandits was most conspicuous and hence he felt it deeply. It was a big shock and surprise to him. He enquired every body. He was worried over it day and night. He took it so deeply to his heart that he suffered from a splitting headache. The headache was so severe and acute, he could not perform pooja. So, he deputed Galgali Venkannachar, the pet disciple of Ramachar, to bring Ramachar from Rangampet. Venkannachar prostrated himself before Ramachar and gave the message of the Swamiji Ramachar still refused to go. “As there is no respect for me in the Mutt I do not want to come” He said. He showed the Rayasa sent to him to Venkannachar. Now Venkannachar understood why Ramachar had declined. Then he explained to Ramachar that the Swamiji was suffering from severe headache which had made it impossible for him even to perform pooja. When Ramachar heard it he was moved to the depth of his being. He started there and then with Venkannachar to Rajmahendri. The Swamiji was overjoyed to see Ramachar. When he asked why he did not come, he hid the real reason to avoid further pain and suffering to the Swamiji. On the other hand he told him that he had no enough money for the travel. At these words the Swamiji broke into a loud smile. At his wish, a silver tumbler, full of rupee coins was
brought. These coins were poured on his head. It was an Abhisheka of rupees. Ramachar did not allow any body to pick up these coins. He said that they belonged to him. He also claimed the tumbler containing the coins as his. He asked the Swamiji how he should tie those coins in his torn dhoti. Then the Swamiji offered him a beautiful gold Zari laced Kashmiri shawl. With a smile, the Swamiji said to him ‘‘Ramachar you expressed that you had no money to meet the travelling expenses. I think you are now not so poor’’ Ramachar rejoined humorously. ‘‘Yes, I was leading the life of a poor man all these days eating ghee and fine rice’’. This was how they enjoyed each other’s company.

Satya Dhyana Swamiji was known as Karnamsha, because of his extremely munificent and charitable nature. He used to bestow Sambhavana on the pandits with a large hand. He used to feed the poor.

Once during chaturmasya, he was staying at Bijapur. People from nearby villages came in large hoards to have his Darshana. They were being fed in the Mutt twice a day during his stay. Even the beggars who were sumptuously fed on the left over, wept when he left Bijapur.

The Swamiji was once staying in Narasimha Devasthanam in Shorapur. Ramachar was also there. In the evening he wanted to go home to Rangampet So, he sought permission of the Swamiji. But he did not permit him. He asked him to stay with him for the night. However, he enquired why he wanted to go to Rangampet. Ramachar told him that in the evening he was in the habit of taking all kinds of sweets like puri, jamun, laddu etc. as his phalahar and as all this was not possible in the Mutt he wanted to go. Swamiji smiled as he knew it was a joke. But he got all the delectable dishes desired by Ramachar specially prepared for him. After the supper, again Ramachar persisted on going to Rangampet. Swamiji was naturally puzzled. He wanted to know why he still wanted to go when he had every thing he wanted to eat. Ramachar said he could not sleep. He further told the Swamiji that he was not in the habit of sleeping on other’s bed. Immediately a new carpet, a pillow, a bed-sheet, a shawl, a gadi were specially purchased from the market for Ramachar.
Once the Swamiji came alone to the house of Ramachar at Rangampet in the morning. As usual he came uninvited. A sitar was kept in the hall. He began to play it. Srinivasachar's mother was alone in the house attending to the domestic chores inside the kitchen. She heard the music outside. Thinking that some beggar had come, she shouted from inside, to go to the next house as she had nothing to give him. Even then the sound of the Sitar was being heard. "What an obstinate fellow he is", the old lady grumbled and with anger came out. She was awe struck to see the Swamiji sitting alone playing on the sitar. An enchanting child-like smile appeared on the face of the swami. The poor lady fell prostrate on his feet and begged forgiveness. She immediately ran out with message to Tata, Ramachar who had gone to a near-by shop.

He immediately came up. When he entered the house, the Swamiji was still sitting in the hall playing the sitar. He fell prostrate before him and begged forgiveness for what his daughter-in-law had unwittingly done and requested him not to take offence at her behaviour. The Swamiji had not taken it amiss. He only rejoined with a smile. "If she had seen me she would not have scolded me. I was just enjoying the whole thing". He treated it as his own house. Some times he would take all the food grains in the house and put them before the two elephants of the Mutt. He used to exhaust every thing in the house. He knew where eatables, oil, ghee, rice etc. were kept. While going, he would call Ramachar and ask him to purchase whatever he wanted from the shop. But the next day every thing would be sent double the quantity he had used. Some times he would search every nook and corner of the house to find out what manuscripts Ramachar had kept hidden from him. He would find manuscripts written in Bengali which he could not understand, to his utter dismay. In great pretended anger he would say "Ramachar, you would be Brahma Rakshasa in your next birth as you did not teach me Bengali"?

At this Ramachar did not take offence. "When I have not taught it to my own son why should I teach you? It is my trump card. Otherwise you would have sat on my head". He would say good humouredly.

He has written many books mostly on Nyaya Shastra, Vedanta and Alankara Shastra in Bengali script and Devanagari.
The Kula Devata of Ramachar's family (family deity) is ChandalaParameshwari, or Santi Chandamma. The temple is situated in a
city called Sannati, near Honagunta, in Chittapur Taluka,
Gulbarga District (Karnataka). Even though she is the family
deity, the members of the family are not permitted to go there
and have Darshana of the Devi. The reason why the pilgrimage to the
temple is prohibited was once narrated by Ramacher.

It was at the time of Madhwachar. Ramachar’s father. He used
to go to Sannati every year on Devi Panchami day in April for the
Darshana of the Devi. Once he was having high fever and hence he
was not able to go as usual for Darshana. He took it sorely to his
heart. That night the devi appeared in his dream and said “you need
not worry so much. I am here in your house you need not take
the trouble of coming to me” And then she vanished. From then
onwords he did not go. But Ramachar thought that the words of the
Devi were meant only for his father. Therefore, he went to sannati
and had the Darshana of the Devi on Devi Panchami. On his return
to Rangampet he had a dream that night. The Devi appeared in his
dream and said ‘you did not believe me. I had told you not to come
for my Darshana. You have disobeyed me, you will reap the conse-
quen ces”. Mysteriously enough Ramachar’s son who was eight or
ten years old then succumbed to typhoid and passed away within a
week. Ramachar sincerely repented. He performed Prayaschitta and
begged and prayed for givance of the Goddess. After words the
Goddess who was appeased by his repentance and prayers graced
him. She granted him a son to continue his family line. A son by
name Venkatachhar was born to him. Venkatachhar was the father of
Srinivasachar, the present head of the family. Even to this day the
members of the family do not go to Sannati. They offer Hundi.
They send the money to Sannati through somebody on Devi
Panchami day.

Once Ramachar had gone to Shahapur along with his wife Smt.
Seetabai and was staying in Deshapande Marthand Rao’s house for a
few days. He had gone to collect the revenue of his jagir of
Rakamgera. One day he had fever. The temperature steadily rose.
In the evening he was in a state of feverish delirium. The trusted
family servant Husaini rushed to Rangampet with the news. Venka-
tachar and Srinivasachar hired a taxi and brought him to Rangampet.
Ramachar did not allow anybody to examine him and give him medicine. They took him to Shorapur and admitted him in the Government Hospital. Kuppu Swamy was the doctor there at that time. Even in the Hospital Ramachar insited on performing Sandhya Vandana in the evening. The doctor advised him not to do so as he was in a state of high fever. But he did not listen, putting on a wet pancha he performed Sandhya Vandana. Afterwards he was in a state of coma. So he was brought back to Rangampet. After two or three days he passed away. He was then eighty eight or ninety.

Shri Shri Satya Dhyana Swamiji also passed away exactly one year after Ramachar. Satya Dhyana Swamiji had written an article which was published in Madhura Vani, a Sanskrit Magazine published from Bombay. He had written that Nyaya Ratna had fallen from the crown of Saraswati leaving a gaping hallow there. Alas! no gem of that size was available. Every gem was smaller in size and the space was vacant for ever.

Venkatachar had met the Swamiji during his last days in Bijapur “My Guru is gone and I will also go” said he. His words were prophetic. He also passed away exactly a year after the death of Ramachar. Thus a great soul, a staunch devotee of Saraswati, had departed from this material world and had left behind him a gaping void, very hard to fill up. There is an oil paniting of Ramachar Preserved in the family.
III VENKATACHAR

Venkatachar Kollur, the son of Ramachar and the father of present Srinivasachar was cast in a different mould. He was born the only son of Jagirdar. He was naturally born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Wealth, power and position were his for the asking. He had more than enough to spend and to spare. The pain, fever, and the fret, struggle and toil were unknown to him. Poverty, and its attending want, misery and difficulties were foreign to him. He had been brought up royally. His life style was that of a King. Surrounded by luxury, always he lived a very luxurious life.

He used to sit on a gadi with a Takia at his back. Always by his bedside were the poona slippers specially made to order. They were so conviniently placed that the moment he rose out of bed he would step into them.

His father had taught him, Vyakarana, Sahitya and Nyaya Shastra (Science of Grammer, literature and Indian system of logic). He had almost gained the same proficiency and mastery over Nyaya Shastra. But Nyaya Shastra appeared to him dry as dust. So he gave up the dull and endless leaves of controversy of Nyaya Shastra and stuck to literature. He also played chess with equal proficiency as his father.

He was taller than his father. He had a light dark complexion. His chest and back were very broad. He was stronger and more muscular than his father. If his father was other worldly, more philosophical and detached, Venkatachar was more adept in the ways of the world, given to the life of luxury and the senses. To him there was no better philosophy than enjoying all the good things of life. He wanted to drink deep and drink it full even to the last dregs the cup of life. To Ramachar learning and scholarship were his life-long passion. To Venkatachar the zest for life was his passion.
To live a life free from all wants and worries, poverty and misery, to live happily at all costs, live it to the full, artistically and beautifully was his prime concern. Bliss was it for him to be born as the only son of a rich jagirdar. To be young for him must have been very heaven itself. Looking at his life style at close quarters one finds that here was a man who refused to grow old gracefully. He always remained young in spirit. 'Youth is the lord of life, oldage is life's lumber room'. Venkatachar did not want to grow old and did not want to be thrown into the life's lumber room. For ever he remained young lording over life. Here was a man who had fashioned and perfected the most difficult art of all - the art of life!

He could be always found in his Diwan Khana. It was exclusively his own separate room, very spacious and airy. He sat there on the soft bed on the cot with a Takia resting at his back surrounded by friends and disciples looking like a king on his throne presiding over his court. There were two entrances to the hall - one from within the house and the other from outside overlooking the road. He did not move from his bed. He did not even go into the house unless called for. He would go in only for taking bath, performing pooja or for taking meals. Worries and cares were far away from him. He was always in a jolly good mood. He had his Pandan always by his side. He was fond of chewing betel leaves and nuts. He used to consume three hundred to four hundred betel leaves a day. His dress was most conspicuous and made him stand out distinctly from the group surrounding him. His aristocratic dress so carefully laundered and ironed, so spotlessly clean and trim and looking brand new, his clean shaven face made his disciples and friends surrounding him a motley crowd.

He wore gold laced Banarasi Dhoti and Glasgow Mull Jubba stitched by his special tailor. He wore Poona slippers. This was his usual informal dress at home in his Diwana Khana. But when he went on tour, he wore China silk shirt, woollen jacket, gabardine coat and gold lace turban. He had a gold wrist watch with gold strap. He carried a walking stick with a silver handle. On one of his wrists he wore two gold bracelets of solid eight tola gold. He carried in his waist a silver snuff box weighing forty tolas. Four silver chains with keys too made of silver were attached to it. The snuff box was filled with Madras snuff which was duly scented. He had an irresistible passion for perfumes.
His knowledge of perfumes was unbeatable and extraordinary—the quality uses and effects. He knew what quality of perfumes should be used in a particular season. He had even purchased a musk cat from some where. But it could not survive. It died soon. People laughingly called him Musk cat (Punugin Bekku in Kannada). He changed his dress thrice a day—once in the morning, then at noon and then again in the evening. He had a special washerman, Sangappa by name in Shorapur. The Washerman’s shop was famous in those days for laundry and ironing in the erst-while Nizam’s State. When he went out in his perfectly laundered and ironed dress and the fine aroma of his wonderful perfumes proclaimed his presence and heralded his coming furlongs together. Yes dress is the man! The dress the Jagirdar wore reflected and proclaimed his personality.

A dealer in perfumes used to come to Rangampet every year. He had set customers who would purchase on credit and pay the next year. Venkatachar was one among them. He would purchase the perfumes of the highest quality like Roohe Gulab, Roohe Chambeli, Roohe Kewda etc. that could last him for the year. He had a box containing six beautiful bottles always filled with choicest perfumes. It was called Ittar Dan. It is still with the family. But the bottles are all empty now. Vanished are those rich heady perfumes like the glory of the old Raj of Jagirdars! But the gentle breeze wafts along and brings back the rare scent of those perfumes to our memory’s nostrils. The sad lingering memories flash on our mind’s screen and make us recapture again the vanished glory of lavish luxury and riches of the old Jagirdars!

I have already narrated that Venkatachar was essentially a man of this world. In those days of prosperity and plenty surrounded always by lavish luxury and riches, with his unquestionable authority at home, lording himself over his circle, to whom he must have appeared as prince charming, living in the sweet and smug security of his home where he could have every thing for the mere asking, he must have found the world around him a fairy place and did not seek therefore a better heaven!

Venkatachar excelled his ancestors in other fields. He was a maestro of Hindustani music. His proficiency in musical instruments and the extraordinary skill with which he wielded them and played on and produced subtle, varying notes of music, amazed even the
professionals in the field. He learnt harmonium from Devi Das from Gwalior who was blind at birth. He had come to Rangampet to learn Sanskrit. Coming to know that he was a skilled musician who had superb mastery over harmonium, Venkatachar invited him to his house. An agreement was made between them. He should teach Harmonium to Venkatachar and in return he should teach him Sanskrit. It was an ideal pact which worked wonderfully well. Like his great father Ramachar, Venkatachar also was a man of convictions. He used to say that there are three ways of acquiring knowledge.

a) To pay fees and learn,
b) Learn by serving the Guru
c) Teach what you know and learn what he knows.

He became an expert in playing harmonium. Like-wise he attained proficiency in playing various musical instruments. For example he attained mastery in playing sitar. He could play Tabla and Violin. He knew vocal music. He knew very well both Hindustani and Carnatic music. But in playing sitar and Harmonium he was unrivalled. He used to play Harmonium gath in Sitar and Sitar gath in Harmonium with such facile ease as if it was a child’s play to him.

He learnt for four years. In 1918 or so, there was plague in Shorapur. So Devidas had to leave. Before leaving, he said to Venkatachar "At least you learnt to press the bellows properly". According to him one must know how to press the bellows with an exact amount of pressure to produce a particular swara, vadi, samwadi and to control tala also. He used to play Apracharika Raga, Apracharika Tala like Malgunji, Malashri in Lukshmi Tal Matta Tal, Brahma Tal, Chaturashri Jati Jhampa etc. He had a unique speciality in playing ordinary talas by playing Sawwa pat Laya, Dad pat Laya, Pown Pat Laya, Anaghata Sum, two Matras in three swaras and three swaras in two matras and so on. He could understand even without seeing, from hearing the sound, that a wrong finger was placed on a particular swara. He could recognise only on the basis of the pressure with the finger on certain swara. His swara jnana was so amazingly accurate.

This type of playing was a speciality of solo-performance and for accompaniment a separate system was followed. Therefore he was
in the habit of saying "My harmonium plays as well as sings". Such proficiency in harmonium is rare now-a-days and almost unheard of. Srinivasachar who is also an expert in harmonium learnt harmonium from his father when he was a boy of eight years old.

He was not only an expert in playing harmonium but also he could prepare the entire case and reed board of the harmonium. He prepared sitar and Tambura. He prepared fine articles in teak wood, rose wood, sandal wood etc. He knew carpentry, goldsmithy, masonry. He knew painting and sculpture.

In other words he touched nothing he did not adorn. He was a master in many fields, fashioning and perfecting them with his rare skill and leaving his own stamp on whatever he did.

Quite recently a Tmbura prepared and fashioned by his hands was presented to a music teacher at the time of her marriage. She was a devoted student of music of Srinivasachar. For months she had taken lessons from him in music.

Once a rich merchant of Rangampet, Veerabhadrappa asked him "Sir you know so many things. But can you stitch Chappals?" He was not offended by the remark as any body would. under the circumstances. He said with a smile. "Come tomorrow". Out of gunny bag and deerskin he stitched a pair of chappals. When Veerabhadrappa came to him the next day, he saw to his amazement that the Chappals were being stitched. He snatched one of the chappals and ran out. He showed it to one and all saying, "This is the chappal stitched by Jagirdar". Then he came back and asked "Sir What will you do with the chappals? Who will wear them"? Pat came the reply from the Jagirdar "Why? One can wear them while fetching sweet water from the Chowdhari well for pooja and cooking. As you know, it is two furlongs away from my house and there are thorns and small pebbles on the way. And one cannot walk the distance bare foot".

He was strong and of muscular build. He was five feet and eight inches in height. He was taller than his father. He could dwarf Srinivasachar, lean and lanky as he was, by his imposing height and magnificent build.

He had gone prematurely grey. His hair was almost snow-white. He wore dentures. He suffered from failing eye sight.
His eyes had developed cataract. And they had to be operated. Therefore he could not see things properly. He wore thick eye-
glasses. When-ever Ramachar introduced his son to some-body, he
used to do so quite humorously. "He is my elder brother", he
would say. Because he looked older than his father with his snow
white hair and thick glasses, dentures and with his walking-stick.
Ramachar on the other hand was in glowing good health. He never
wore glasses and never used a walking stick. His teeth were perfectly
alright.

Once in the rainy season due to heavy rain-fall, a portion of the
kitchen room came down. The wooden beam fell down. The uten-
sils and the cooking materials had to be removed from the kitchen. It
was risky to go there as the remaining portion also was on the verge
of falling down. But he did not care. He went inside and was
shifting the things from the kitchen to the hall outside. Unluckily the
other side of the beam fell down with a crash. It fell down directly
on his face, with the result he lost his teeth.

He was an ace in horsemanship. He would break any colt and
bend any adamant horse to his will. He taught the horses all sorts
of odd habits, like standing on hind legs if a new person wanted
to ride it, to lie down in water on its way, scampering in
different directions. During Kara Hannavi (A particular Full Moon
Day which falls in July) there would be horse race. He would come
dressed grandly for the occasion wearing gold lace dhoti; silk turban,
China silk shirt, wornen jacket, gabardeen double-chest coat with
gold button, leading the horse. The race would start. He would
ride his horse with a glass of water filled to the brim in his hand and
holding the bridle in another. Shot like an arrow from the bow
the horse would gallop away leaving all the other horses in the race
far behind. But the glass with water would not spill out. Not a
drop would fall to the ground. He would hold the horse between
his things there would be sufficient gap beneath his seat. He used
to travel on horse back long distances like Zalki, his father-in-law's
place in Bijapur district and Kallur in Manvi Taluka in Raichur
district without even being depleted.

He used to feed the horse with Kadale Hoorna (cooked
Bengalgram mixed with jaggery).
As already mentioned, he had given up Nyaya Shastra and stuck to Kavya (Literature) and Alankara (Meters); His narration and exposition and explanation from works of literature was really very interesting. He could hold the audience spell-bound with his account and explanation. People gathered round him in large numbers listening to his talks and narrations.

Every year he used to go to Gadwal, Vanaparthi Atmakur, Manik Nagar and Gurgunta Samsthanas on particular occasions to participate in the conference of Pandits specially invited by the Samsthanas. He was honoured with Sambhavana (the amount of money as a token of honour) for his learned discourses. He was detained even after the departure of the other Pandits, because the rulers of the Samsthanas-Gadwal Maha Rani and Manik Prabhu of Humanabed were so much attracted by his expositions and explanations of works of literature in Telugu, Marathi and Kannada languages. Even if he wanted to go on pressing business, some of his articles were hidden to hold him back. Thus he was a great favourite in those days and was liked and respected by one and all. He had a ready stock of Slokas (verses) for every occasion suitting the tastes of different people. Even Muslims used to come to him to spend time and be benefitted by his entertaining and enlightening discourses. One Abdulla Shariff was among them. People lost count of time. They forgot even their meals. They would sit listeing to him, his interesting anecdotes and enlivening discourses even late in the night with rapt attention. Their interest never flagging for a moment. He would explain a sloka for hours togheter illustrating with interesting examples and appealing narrations. He could hold the learned as well as the laity spell-bound with his narration and explanation.

He had a wonderful skill of narrating stories. These stories were often his own creation. They were not found in any book. He had a unique way of narrating the story. too. He would not narrate the story in full at one stretch. He would tell it part by part. Some times the story continued for more than a month. Never for once the interest of his audience in the story would flag. He would arouse their curiosity at every step making them ask questions. ‘What next?’ and then suddenly he would stop at an interesting development. Then he would ask them to come next time. Thus he would keep them on the tenter hooks of suspense all the while for days togheter till the end of the story.
Once he had gone to Kallur in Manvi taluka to collect the rent of his lands. He was staying in Malgi Bhimachar, his brother-in-law's. After completing his work he called some important persons of the village and started telling them a story, 'Ayyo Rama'. It continued from 9 p.m. to midnight. People hearing about the interesting story gathered in large groups. The story went on and on for days together with people gathering in ever-increasing numbers listening to it with rapt attention. Even after a month it continued. It was concluded after forty days. A gold smith was one among the audience. He was so thrilled and delighted by the exquisite skill in narration of the story teller that he prepared a beautiful silver snuff box weighing forty tolas with four silver keys and chains attached to it. It was his token of appreciation to Venkatachar for his expectional skill in narration of the story for forty days. It was with him for a long time. When he had gone to Gadwal Samasthan to attend the conference of the learned, he lost it.

Once he had gone to Bijapur for his eye operation. The doctor was his friend. He was operated. The doctor advised him not to move from bed. He felt bored naturally lying like that in the bed. So, he called all the in-patients there in the ward and started telling them story. When the doctor came on his usual rounds in the evening, he was surprised to find the entire ward vacat. He saw them all gathered round the cot of Venkatachar. The doctor asked them to go back. When his back was turned, all the patients gathered round him. Thus every-where he went, he gathered round him a large crowd of eager listeners. He had thus a wonderful gift of telling stories. He could tell interesting stories and enlivening anecdotes suited to every occasion and suited to every taste.

He had a rare collection of books and manuscripts neatly and conveniently arranged in his library. They were arranged in a spacious cupboard with serial numbers and information covers. If any one wanted a book he would write his name on a piece of paper and keep it in its place and then give the book. Rarely he gave a book to any body. There was a booklet called Ramakrishna Kavya by Surya Suri. It had sixteen folios and thirty six stanzas. The first half of each stanza related to Lord Rama and the second half which was the reverse of the first half, refered to Lord Krishna. It was called Anuloma Pratiloma kavya (reversible poem) For illustration one stanza is given: here:
The sage Vishwamitra came to the King, Dasharatha and requested him to spare the services of his two sons to fight the Rakshasas as they were destroying their yegna. As Dasharatha had been blessed with the sons after performing putra kameshti yegna in his old age, he did not want to send his sons with the sage. He loved his sons so dearly like a miser who loves his money more than his life. At the same time he was afraid of Vishwamitra. He might curse him. So he presented his sons immediately to Vishwamitra (I part)

Pootani, a Rakshasi, was sent to Dwaraka to suckle the child Krishna at her breast, intending to kill Krishna. Because her breast milk was poisonous: while he was feeding on her breast milk. (II part)

Some of the slokas (stanzas) he quoted were very rare. For example-

_Adimadhyanta rahitam dasha keenam puratanam _
_Adwitiyamaham Vande madwasth a sadrisham Harim _

O God! you resemble my dhoti in every respect. You are one and only one. My dhoti is also only one. It is torn on both sides and also in the middle. It is old, very old. Thus the poet expresses very powerfully his poverty to God.

He had a collection of more than one thousand slokas (verses) of rare nature. His memory was so powerful and strong that he could quote them verbatim. He gave this collection various titles Shringara Kalpadruma, or Alankara Chintamani, or Subhashita Kalpataru. He wrote all slokas in his own hand and bound the leaves himself. The book is still in the family.

A violonist by name Siddalingappa of Shorapur came to Venkatachar. He was a renowned artist. On his way to Shorapur he came to Rangampet to pay a courtesy visit to him and pay his respects. Often he used to come to his house for repairs of his violin. He took out his violin and started playing. Venkatachar
found that the strings of the violin had some-how been patched up. Therefore he admonished him that he was not taking proper care of his violin and maintaining it properly. though it was the means of his maintenance. Vain and highly conceited as Siddalingappa was about his profeciency in violin, he told him that he did not care and boasted that he could play and produce music even with a thread. The Jagirdar was stung to the quick by this arrogant attitude of a fellow musician. He thought of teaching him a lesson. He took out a piece of wire. He held it in his teeth and stretching it tightly he started playing Bhoop Raga on it. He started playing the different tones Sa-re-ga-pa-dha-sa-sa-dha-pa-ga-re-sa. He gave the piece of wire to Siddalingappa and asked him to play on it. Siddalingappa now repented and hung his head in shame. He requested him to forgive him.

His swara gnana was so perfect, he would immediately find out that a wrong finger was placed on a note.

He was extremely fond of wearing gold rings on his fingers. He wore gold rings studded with jewels and diamonds on the four fingers of each hand. If any one appreciated it, so generous was his nature that he would remove it and give it to him. It had almost become a habit with him. Sometimes in the night he would remove the ring from his finger and give it when he dreamt during his sleep that some body appreciated it. In the morning when he woke up he would find it near his bed.

He had a servant of his own who attended on him alone and served him alone. He was exclusively meant for his services.

In those days for the services rendered in the form of different kinds of work, the servants were given lands instead of wages. These lands were called Chakari Hola (Service lands). The barber, the sweeper, the cook, the tailor, the washerman, the scavenger— all were given lands to be enjoyed during their life-time. A Harijan called Bhagavanta was also given land. The service he rendered was that he used to stand at the gate with a stick in his hand. The gate was about one hundered and fifty yards away from the living quarters. If he stood there like that it was a sign that the Jagirdar was at the head-quarters.
He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and an ideal and noble teacher; whoever came to him with an ordent desire to learn Sanskrit, he taught irrespective of caste or creed. There were many who learnt Bagavadgita and Kavya from him. Karli Ramanna a weaver, Gumti Erappa a lingayat, Kalkonda Ayyappa a Vyisya, Raman Gowda a toddy contractor—all were his students. Even a Muslim by name Abdulla Shariff studied Bhagavadgita under him. Most of the students had learnt by rote the entire Bhagavadgita.

Shri Shadakshari Swamy Virakta Mutt of Rangampet studied Kavya under him. He was Srinivasachar’s classmate. He had learnt three kanda Amar Kosha by heart. He studied Kumarasambhava. But he had to discontinue his studies, abruptly. He was a petitioner in a case about the succession to the Peetha of Virakta Mutt of Manvi. It was going on in the Munsiff Court of Manvi. The judgement was in his favour. And he became the Swamiji of Virakta Mutt, Manvi. He had not heard of the death of Venkatachar. Once on the bus stand at Shorapur he met Srinivasachar. When he heard from him about the sad demise of his Guru, he was so over-whelmed with grief that he sat down unable to stand. He broke into uncontrollable sobs and tears. People gathered round him to know what had happened. He told that his Guru had passed away and he was unfortunate enough not to see him in his last days.

Earlier to him another Mari Swami of the same Mutt studied under Venkatachar. He became a great scholar in Sanskrit. Later on he became the Swamiji of Virakta Mutt of Hutgi. Once Venkatachar on his way to Zalki had halted at Hutgi. He went to the Mutt to see his disciple. The swamiji was running a pathashala in his Mutt and was at that time engaged in teaching his students. When suddenly he saw Venkatachar, he could not believe his eyes. He was so over-joyed that he got up immediately, rushed towards him and bowed to his Guru. However, Venkatachar told him that he was a Sanyasi now and he must not bow to a Grahasthashrami. The Swamiji said in all gratitude and humility “I am bowing to my Guru with whose blessings I have now become Swamiji and not to a GrahaStha. Venkataahar was over-whelmed with emotion. He embraced the Swamiji.

Another disciple, Revayya of Rangampet was studying under Venkatachar. But he left and went to some other place after some
time. When he came back after a few years to Rangampet he met Venkatachar. He told him that he was studying Bana's Kadambari. When Venkatachar asked him to explain the meaning of a sloka, he could not explain it satisfactorily. So Venkatachar asked him why he left when he had a Guru at Rangampt. Revayya died young when he was just thirty. His younger brother Siddayya Mathapati is still there in Rangampet.

Another disciple of his was Nilogal Kishan Rao. He was studying Tarka Sangraha along with Srinivasachar under him. Tarka Sangraha was so difficult that they could not go beyond one sloka.

In his last days Venkatachar was not keeping good health. He was under one treatment or the other. He used to call his servant whenever he wanted some thing though it was within easy reach, within a stretch of his hand. Even then he did not waste his time. Even in his last days he taught sitar to a goldsmith of Shorapur, Malkajappa by name. One Damodar Naidu, Medical Officer, Government Hospital Shorapur, was also his student in sitar.

As I have already narrated. Srinivasachar lost his mother when he was a child of two and had not even seen her face. She died of influenza in 1918. He has still preserved a photo of his mother. He was brought up by his step mother. He was extraordinary lucky in his step mother. She showered on him all her love and affection and brought him up like a real mother. He was too young to know that she was his step mother and his real mother was dead. And there we no need for him to feel the absence or loss of his real mother, because she had filled in the emotional gap with such care and tenderness. If she had treated him as a step child and acted as a step-mother would always do with rancour, jealousy and hatred, the emotitional injuries on the tender mind of the child would have developed into a bleeding wound which would not have healed but developed into a sore festering wound which would have left deep scars on his emotional nature. He has taken to his step mother in such a way that he had mistaken her for his own real mother.

He did not know that she was his step mother till he was a boy of ten. And it was revealed to him quite accidentally. All the members of the family and relatives had gone to Tirupati for his thread-ceremony. When the ceremony was being performed the boy saw
tears glistening on the eye lashes of his father. He was trying to hide his tears with great difficulty from others. The boy was surprised. His father was not of a sentimental type. He had not seen him before softening up with emotions so visibly breaking into tears. His father who had not even once mentioned her name before or even cared to remember her had now on this auspicious occasion of the boy’s thread ceremony suddenly remembered his dead wife. Memories of her had come rushing and crowding upon his mind so thick and fast that he had visibly broken down with emotion. He had now felt sorely and acutely the loss of his wife and felt deeply overwhelmed with pity for his son who had been orphaned at the tender age of two.

So, the boy was surprised and shocked beyond measure and asked him innocently why he was weeping? This sweet innocent question of the boy who did not know any thing about his mother even though he was a boy of ten, brought tears to the eyes of all. Then the tragic truth was revealed to him that his mother had died when he was a child and had made him an orphan. And the lady whom he thought was his mother was really his step-mother. But surprisingly the boy was not moved to tears as they all thought he would. All along he had not felt the necessity of his real mother. Because, his step mother had been so generous, kind, affectionate and loving that he had not felt any difference between her and his real mother. Even afterwards all her life his step-mother had treated him like her own son. She died one and a half year after his first daughter’s marriage in 1960. His grand father died after seeing his great, great grand daughter. He was so happy and proud of her, that he distributed one gunny bag-full of sugar to all the people of Rangampet. He celebrated the occasion with great pomp and ceremony with band and Shahani.

Venkatachchar was a born aristocrat. He was every inch a Jagirdar. This was revealed in his dress, in whatever he did, said or thought. He had his dhoties either from Banaras, Nagpur, or Manchester. He used to wear China silk shirts, English tweel and Glasgow Mulmul. He could purchase them from his favourite merchants at Shoreapur. He used to get his dairy from RamBhau Gyanoji Khese, Somwarpet Poona, harmonium from Gopal Sakharam and Company, Kalba Devi Road, Bombay and his slippers from Poona, his Salim-Shahi shoes specially made for him by a Cobbler, Amarappa of Shahapur.
He had throat cancer. It could not be easily detected in those days. But when it aggravated, he was taken to Wadia Hospital, Sholapur. But now it was too late. Nothing could be done. The malignant disease could not be controlled. His son and his relatives wanted to take him to J. J. Hospital, Bombay. But the doctors at the Wadia Hospital advised against it. They told them that the patient was not going to survive and he should be taken home. So, they brought him to Rangampat. After one and a half month he died.

His son Srinivasachar had taken a job then. He was employed in Industries and Commerce Department. The office was in Rangampet just near his house. But his father did not like the idea of his son going for a job. He wanted him to be always by his side in his last days, as he was his only son. Moreover he felt that he would be transferred to some distant place and there would be nobody to look after him in his last days. But his son promised him that he would resign if he were transferred to some other place. So he agreed.

At about 3 P.M. one day Srinivasachar was called from his office. His father had urgently sent for him. He was restless. He had asked his wife to prepare Dosa. But he was not in a position even to drink water as the passage in his throat had become narrow and almost been blocked.

He had given four Mull jubba to be stitched to his special tailor Timmoji and asked him to bring them before he died. But only two were stitched when he was alive and two were brought after his death. His daughter requested him to give his last advice to his son. At this he laughed and said that he did not hide any thing from him all these years of his life. He had told him all that was there to tell him when he was alive. But now when he was about to die there was nothing new or special to tell him. He told them that he was confident that he would look after his step mother as his own mother. Hence there was no need for him to tell him now at the last hour of his life. He asked his son to bring Panchanga (Lunar calendar). He wanted to consult it for the Muhurthas whether it was good one or bad one. But his eyes failed him. He could not see any thing clearly. Therefore he threw the Panchanga away and said bitterly “Who would die consulting Panchanga for Muhurtha?”
He had invited a Brahmin, Birmur Raghavendrachar, for meals the next day for the Shraddha (Annual Death Ceremony) of his father. He said he would perform it, if he were alive or else his son and the members of his family could have meals of his own Shraddha. His words proved profetic. It transpired exactly like that. Next day early in the morning he passed away. He was about eighty years old then. It was in the month of April 1949.

The Jagir is now gone. The Inam lands too have been taken away. But the servant family is still there living in the out-house for the last three generations.
III SRINIVASACHAR

The story of the family will not be complete without including Srinivasachar. He is the present head of the family. He is the last inheriter of the rank, title and status of Jagirdar in the family. He is the son of Venkatachar. His grand father was still alive. Life is a mixed bag. It is a proportionate or disproportionate mixture of joys and sorrows. Srinivasachar was no exception. He was fortunate to be born in the Jagirdar’s family. Wellknown for its scholarship and learning. At his birth he inherited rank, title, status and dignity, far above the generality of the common masses. More over he was the only male issue in the family. He was surrounded by wealth and luxury. He had all that a man could desire. Perhaps God had given him more than what a man normally desires. He had the first taste of misfortune when he was a child of two or two and a half year. He lost his mother as she died from influenza. He was too young then either to remember or know her. The hand that had snatched away his mother, had blessed him with a wonderful step mother who was to him all the love and affection of a real mother. The indulgence, sympathy and affection she showered on him was such that he did not feel the need of his real mother. Moreover, he was ignorant then that his mother had died. “Where ignorance a bliss, it is folly to be wise” says pope. He looked upon his step mother as his real mother. Only when he was a boy of ten it was accidentally revealed to him that she was his step mother. Even then it had no affect on him because he had not even properly seen her face or known her love. In another sense he was unfortunate again. He had all the facilities for sound sanskrit education and scholarship at home. But he did not avail himself of the opportunities at home. Again he had all the facilities required for the highest education outside. He had to discontinue his studies, when he was in the Intermediate, due to unavoidable reasons. His grand father Ramachar the-II had fallen ill at Shahapur when he had gone to collect revenue of his Jagir. At Rangampet his father was bed-ridden with illness. Being the only son in the family he had to look after them in their illness and oldage.
He took his grand father to Rangampet and tended them both in illness. That year his grand father passed away. Now there was nobody to look after the affairs of the Jagir. His father was always on his sick bed ailing from one disease or the other. He had to depend solely on his son to attend to the affairs of the Jagir and collect the revenue of the Jagir and the rent of the Inam lands. Moreover the Inam lands were spread over in many villages in five Talukas like Shorapur, Shahapur, Jewargi Devdurg and Manvi in two districts Gulbarga and Raichur. Thus his aspirations for higher education were blocked. He had to be content with a smattering of education. He was a dutiful and obedient son. To him filial love, duty and respect were more sacred then any thing else in the world. However, he inherited certain skills from his father, which afterwards he perfected with assiduous practice and hard work. He has attained great skill in carpentry, goldsmithy, sculpture and handi- craft. He learnt them from his father observing him at work. He also learnt playing upon harmonium from his father. He has now acquired rare proficiency in playing upon harmonium. The kind of skill he displays on harmonium is difficult to find in India to day.

He was more attached to his grand father than his own father. His grand mother Sitabai was the step mother of his father. She was of fair complexion. She was pious and virtuous, very generous, loving and kind. She was very fond of silk sarees and gold ornaments. His grand father attended to all her needs. He provided her with all she wanted. She was an expert cook. She prepared all kinds of rare dishes exceptionally well. She generously fed the guests with her rare dishes. She found her supreme satisfaction and her soul’s happiness when they belched with satisfaction.

Venkatachar married thrice. His first wife, a giral of eight at the time of marriage, did not go to her husband’s house at Rangampet. She died a year after her marriage in her parent’s home in Gulbarga. His second wife, Smt. Ramabai of Kallur, Manvi Taluka, Raichur District, had two female children. She had given birth to three sons but all of them had died at an early age. Thinking that she would not have any more male issues, Venkatachar married again a girl of Adya family of Zalki, Indi Taluka, Bijapur District. Her name was Padmavatibai. Venkatachar’s father Ramachar had predicted that the purpose of marriage, that is, of having a son would be fulfilled. And exactly it happened likewise.
Srinivasachar was born of this marriage. And Padmavatibai passed away two or two and a half year after the birth of her son.

This reminds us of the story of Karna in Mahabharata. Kunti had chanted the Mantra to the Sun God when she was still a virgin. And Karna was born of the power of that Mantra. Fearing that she would get a bad name, she placed the child in a wooden box and left it in the river Ganga. A day before Karna was to face Arjuna on the battle field. Kunti went to Karna at the time when he was performing Sandhya Vandana (evening prayer) The Goddess Ganga appeared in person and said to Kunti "I have brought up Karna all these years. He was a sacred deposit on my hands all these years. My duty and responsibility towards him is now over. As long as he was under my supervision he was safe. I protected him from all ills and evils. Now I am giving him back to you. It is now your responsibility to protect him. And Karna was killed the next day by Arjuna in the battle field for reasons which everybody knows. And his own mother who had revealed the secret of his birth to Karna and extracted a promise from him that he should not kill Arjuna, his younger brother, was responsible for his death. As long as Karna was under the protection of Ganga he was safe. But when his own mother took over the responsibility, he died.

But in the case of Srinivasachar the story is exactly the reverse. His own mother Padmavatibai placed her son in the hands of Ramabai, his stepmother, when the child was two or two and a half year old and she herself shut her eyes and passed into the hands of God. But his stepmother brought him up as her own son. And the boy did not know she was his stepmother till he was ten years old. And he did not know the difference between a stepmother and his own mother any time of his life.

Ramabai was an uncommon lady in many respects. She was not fond of silk and Banaras sarees, jewels and gold ornaments, good food, high living and luxurious life like most ladies. She lived the life of non-attachment. The responsibility of the household and the kitchen was on her. She was reserved and silent. She talked less but was always busy doing one thing or the other of the manifold household duties. She was extremely kind and generous towards her servants. She treated them with the unbounded affection and generosity as she did with her own relatives.
Srinivasachar married Venkubai, the daughter of his elder step-sister. She was ten years old and he was fifteen when the marriage took place. His sister in the beginning was unwilling to give her daughter to him in marriage as his father and grand-father had two wives and only one son each. The first wife in both the cases did not survive. Superstitious as she was, she reared, the same fate would befall her daughter too, if she was married into such a family. But Srinivasachar's father-in-law, Rajender Rao, schooled her for entertaining such superstitious belief and the marriage took place.

Now, more than fifty years have gone by, Srinivasachar and his wife Smt. Venkubai have now grown old gracefully in wedlock harmony and marital bliss. They are now two bodies with one soul. They have shared together their joys and sorrows fifty-fifty. Smt Venkubai has taken after her father strongly. She is in every sense of the term the chip of the old block. She inherits all the ideal qualities and virtues of her father. She is generous, kind and charitable even to a fault, to the hungry, needy, downtrodden, depressed and the denied. She would feed the hungry and would go hungry herself. This extremely generous and charitable nature of Smt. Venkubai has some times placed the family in embarrassing position and landed it in difficulties. It has become her second nature. This extreme goodness and charitable nature has been many a time taken advantage of by unscrupulous persons. But it cannot be helped. She has not the heart to send the poor and the needy that came to her door begging for help and money. Many a time when she has no money, she borrows money from others and helps the needy neighbours. She cannot bear the sufferings of her fellow beings. This goodness which is almost a weakness with her, has not annoyed her husband Srinivasachar. He is in fact extremely proud and grateful to God that he has blessed him with such an angel as his wife.

He was the first one in his family to join Government service. His father or ancestars had no need to seek Government service as they were rich Jagirdars. His father did not wish him to join Government service. But much against the wishes of his father, Srinivasachar took a bold step. He joined Government service as a clerk in the Industries and Commerce Directorate in the erstwhile Nizam State. He was allotted to Karnataka on 1-11-1956. He retired on super-annuation on 10-11-1970 as superintendent from the office of the Director of Industries and Commerce, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore. Now he is settled in Gulbarga.
Srinivasachar is a good musician. He is almost unrivalled in his proficiency of playing harmonium. He has participated many times in the Ganeshotsava in Hyderabad and many programmes and functions of Rajyotsava in Bangalore. He has given his musical performances on the occasion of centenary celebrations of Raghavendra Swamiji at Bangalore and the annual day celebrations of Sahitya Parishat. He has won the appreciation of the late distinguished Kannada writer, T. T. Sharma and his wife Rajamma. He has given three musical performances at the time of Dasara Exhibition in Mysore. He has participated thrice in the All India Industrial Exhibition, Madras in December 1970 and International Exhibition held in Delhi in May 1972.

He has worked with the late Dr. Panduranga Rao Padaki, Founder President of Kala Mandala, Gulbarga, as a member for many years and has participated in all the programmes and activities of the Mandala. He has accompanied on harmonium such celebrated musicians like Govind Rao Dantale, Baburao Hyderabad, Baburao Ichalkaranji, Lakshman Singh, Basawaraj Raj Guru etc.. He is gifted with historical talents. He has directed many plays and acted in some of them. He won appreciation from the highest quarters.

He has certificates of appreciation to his credit from Hon’ble Shri C. N. Patel, Ex. Minister, Karnataka State, Hon’ble Raja Pidda Naik, Ex. M.L.A., Karnataka State and Deputy Director, Kannada and Culture, Gulbarga Division.

It appears genius is inherited as well as acquired. In other words a genius is born as well as made. Only a few of us could be geniuses. No amount of labour and hard study can make us all geniuses. A certain portion of genius has to be inherited at birth from the ancestors. But it has to be tended and cultivated properly. It has to be forged, fashioned and perfected by assiduous practice and hard toil if we do not want it to run wild like an unweeded garden, if we want it to blossom and bear golden fruits. That is why Carlyle once said: Genius is ninety nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration.

This also holds good in case of Srinivasachar. As we have already seen, he was born in a family of renowned scholars and geniuses. Though he was denied full education either of the old school or the new school (oriental like his ancestors or the present education). He had inherited genius from his ancestors.
In the erstwhile Nizam State Urdu was the medium of instruction. Hence Srinivasachar had his education through Urdu medium. He has acquired rare proficiency in Urdu. He is well versed in Urdu literature. More especially he loves Urdu poetry. He quickly grasps the subtle shades and nuances, yield suggestions and the deep meanings of Urdu poetry and explains them with a facile and spontaneous ease the deeper meaning of those lines which has escaped the notice of those who are born to the language (whose mother tongue is Urdu).

He has collected Kannada Verses on Vayustuti of Pranesh Dasa known as Yogindra Dasaru. He has complied the meaning of each shloka there. Vayustuti is considered as Brahmastra (the formidable weapon of the Lord creator-Brahma). If chanted straight reverse and straight (punascharana) it has the effect of Brahmastra (weapon of the Lord Creator) which never fails. In addition to this, he has given phalashruti (the effect) to each and every sloka. Such a compilation is not so far done in full any where.

Vayustuti is solely ment for men. Women are forbidden to read it. But yogindra Pranesh Dasa has composed 2+41 verses for the benefit of women.

This compilation of Vayustuti had been formerly collected from various sources like Vyasa Sahitya and Dasa Sahitya by Naikal Tirumal Rao, an advocate and distant relative of Ramachar-II. It has been fully scrutinised and corrected by Ramachar-II. The manuscript contains nearly fifty pages. He wanted to publish it but he could not do so due to paucity of funds.

Another remarkable piece of work he has done is to discover parallel meanings and ideas in Sanskrit and Urdu verses. As all know Urdu though an off-shoot of Persian language was born on the Indian soil. It is a language of the Muslim rulers and the common masses of the north and some parts of the south. It enjoyed munificent royal patronage at the time of Muslim Raj and even to this day it has a large following. No language, literature or culture grows in a void. They are the products of the society and the result of a cooperative endeavour. So, Urdu has struck deep roots here and grown into a gigantic tree and borne golden fruits. It has lived and grown along with other languages. It has been influenced by other languages,
literatures and cultures of the land. Amazingly it has been resusci-
tated and influenced a good deal by Sanskrit language (considered
to be the mother of all languages in India) and literature impulses
behind all literatures, religions and cultures, has an amazing unity.
Common ideas, ideals and thoughts bind us all together, be we
Hindu, Muslim, Parsees or Christians. Sacred is this land, where
Mother Ganga, like the Ganga of love and brotherhood of man
flows. Doubly blessed are we who inherit a culture of oneness and
unity inspite of its diversity.

So. Srinivasachar's laborious research work in discovering the
beauty of Sanskrit slokas in urdu verses is commendable and going
to bear rich dividends in our march towards emotional integration.
It will cement the bond of brotherhood, oneness and unity between
Hindus and Muslims which is the crying need of the hour. Such an
emotional integration could be achieved even through architecture if
we properly explain and interpret how Muslim and Hindu architec-
tures have been influenced by each other in India.

Srinivasachar had written the article 'Beauty of Sanskrit slokas in
urdu verses' in urdu. But his friends advised him to translate it into
Kannada also so that all the Kannada knowing public of Karnataka
would be benefited by it. He had casually mentioned about the
article to Dr. V. V. L. Narsimha Rao Director of Oriental Manuscripts
Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad. He was very much
impressed and suggested that it should be translated into English and
sent to him. He wanted to publish it in the Departmental Research
Journal. He has translated a part of it into English and sent it to the
Director in March 1985. For obvious reasons it could not be
published. Now it is under consideration of the Government of India.

It is surprising, no one so far had worked in this direction
before. He has explained Sanskrit and urdu verses in full detail.
Nearly hundred and Seventy Sanskrit Slokas and equal number of
urdu Ashiyar have come under his close scrutiny and competitive
critical study. This book is named 'Bhasha Bhava Sangama' The
manuscript neatly stitched and kept is with him. If it is published,
it will be a valuable work.

Srinivasachar has been blessed with three daughters and two
sons. All the daughters have been happily married. The eldest son
is K. Pranesh. He is M.B.B.S. D.C.H. and a Government Doctor. Now he is working as Chief Medical Officer in General Hospital, Sindhanur, Raichur District. His second son K. Ramesh is B.Com., a rank student and gold medalist. He is doing his Chartered Accountancy in Bangalore. Srinivasachar is now settled in Gulbarga. He is leading a happy and contented life. He is grateful to God for his bounty and blessings.
Gone are the days of Jagirdars, of Kings and Princes and potentates. Their pomp and glory are just the memories of bygone days, the forgotten dream of good old days. They painfully cling to us as lingering memories. We hug them some times dearly to our heart with wistful longing.

These are days of democracy, the people’s Raj. The Kings, princes, potentates and jagirdars have become almost fossils. True, as Tennyson says, the old order changeth, yielding place to new. The old order has changed much yielding place to new fangled ideas. Much water has already flown under the bridge since Independence. In these days of science, technology and democracy, radical changes have taken place in our way of life, in our ideas, in the society around us, in the nation and the world at large. But let us not commit the folly or blunder that every thing old is rotten, something dead, defunct, out-moded and useless. Let us pause and ponder for a while and look back with a detached mind. There were certain good things which are now forgotten, certain values which are now thrown clean overboard.

Some of these Jagirdars were real aristocrats. They were not only bron rich, inherited Jagir, inordinate wealth, power, status, renown, rank and title by the accident of birth in a Jagirdar’s family. they were also inheritors of the aristocracy of culture and intelligence. They were inheritors of culture, art, literature, scholarship and learning. By their upbringing, education, learning and dignified demeanour they were a class apart. They were essentially men of culture, art, learning and scholarship. They were real kings among men and born leaders who established their superiority not aggressively or dictatorilly by the accident of their birth alone but also by their exceptional qualities which served as models for others. They were known for their munificent generosity, benevolence and philanthropy. They were also great patrons of art, culture, literature, learning and scholarship.
Many a time they kept an open house encircled by musicians, painters, artists of every kind of poets and men of letters. They held their own court. If they were pleased and appreciated their art, they gave Sambhavana with a large hand. Under their generous patronage, the artists flourished. And their art grew without let or hindrance. It was preserved and kept and handed on to the future generations. Their house, their protection, their patronage became a big banyan tree sheltering many in its cool shade.

Many servants were employed in their service. They did different kinds of work for them. The barber, the washerman, the scavenger, the tailor, the goldsmith etc., who did their respective kinds of work for them were generously treated by them not with wages but with chakari Hola, lands for their service rendered. They enjoyed these lands during their life-time as long as they were in their employ.

They participated in staging the plays encouraged and patronised the actors and the drama company. They participated in hunting and horse race. They were many a time experts in them. They were woven into the warp and weft of social life, lending dignity, colour and rhythm to it. They shared the joys and sorrows of the people around them helping them in hours of need, lending them money in times of crisis etc. They participated in festivals. On the occasions of marriage, birth of a son or daughter, chowla ceremony and the thread ceremony etc., they spent their money lavishly celebrating these functions in great pomp and splendour. On such occasions they fed the entire village in more sense than one they were the Anna-Data (Giver of food) the source of maintenance to the people.

They had plenty of leisure in those days. They had all the time at their disposal. How did they employ their leisure? Not idling away their time, eating, drinking, enjoying the good things of life and entertainment as most people would suppose. They did all these. But over and above them they employed their time most fruitfully, in bettering themselves, in improving their various skills in pursuing their various talents given by God relentlessly to perfection. Small wonder then, some of the Jagirdars were great scholars, learned men, distinguished men of letters, poets and writers, great musicians, painters and artists in many fields.
The religious customs in those days were more rigid. People were more religious and followed the religious customs strictly. But these castes, creeds and religions were matters of home and their private life. But they did not act as barriers in their own social life and raise walls in their cordial social inter-course. There was mutual love, understanding and trust among them. Different religions and customs instead of flinging them apart, brought them closer together. Communal harmony and social solidarity were the orders of the day. During festivals, marriage ceremonies, local fairs and other important social functions they came together. In the hours of crisis they sunk their differences and rose to the occasion as one man. Communal integration, secularism and unity are mere slogans today. Our ancestors did not mouth them aloud. But those ideals were the way of life of our people.

The Jagirdars of Ramachar family inherited scholarship, learning and culture along with their Jagir, Inam lands rank and title. It is an unusual characteristic of their family. Because usually these things are not inherited. As we have seen from first Ramachar for whose unchallenged scholarship and learning a Jagir and Inam lands were granted, to Venkatachar, all were profound scholars and distinguished men of learning. Venkatachar excelled his ancestors in certain respects. Apart from the traditional scholarship and learning running in the family, he excelled them in many fields. He had equal proficiency in music, painting, sculpture, game of chess, carpentry, masonry, acting etc. They were also ideal teachers whose disciple rose to phenomenal heights and could challenge in Nyaya Sastra, Vyakarana etc. Hence people used to say that every stone of Ramachar’s house echoes Nyaya Shashtra. The atmosphere of learning, scholarship and culture was such in the house that Venkatachar used to declare that even a buffalo calf would not utter Apaswara (a bad voice).

Those were the days of prosperity, peace and plenty, people had enough to spend and to spare. Those were the days of pomp and splendour of the Jagirdars. They lived in Kingly state. They spent their money lavishly. People that came to their house were sumptuously fed. Every thing in those days was available in plenty. Mother earth yielded more. Any number of guests that arrived could be fed.
I don't say that they were all paragons of virtue and excellence in every respect. After all they were human beings. They might have committed follies, foibles and indiscretion. They might have been guilty of sins and weaknesses that flesh is heir to. They were gods in some respects with clay feet.

Times have changed; now, changed fast. These are the days of democracy—people's Raj. The poet says Sceptre and Crown must tumble down: Kings have gone. The Nawabs and Jagirdars have licked the dust. One has to bow to the times.

Times have changed rapidly. The Jagirdars will have to accept the change. They should change their ideas according to the changing times. They will have to adjust themselves according to the changed circumstances for the simple and obvious reason, circumstances would not adjust themselves according to their conveniences. It is no use lamenting over the past. They should learn to rise to the occasion.

One is reminded here of the last words of Bahadur Shah Zafar the last Mogal King. He was a sensitive poet with a philosophical bent of mind. He lost his empire. He was sent into exile to Rangoon where he spent his last days languishing in prison. He took the sudden change of fortune sorely. He was born an emperor. He became an emperor. The British dethroned him. They imprisoned him and sent him to Rangoon far away from Delhi and his empire. Deeply mourning over his bad fate he says:

*_Kitna hai badnaseeb Zafer dafan keliye_  
_Do gaz zameen bhi na mili kooye yer mai._

He could not have two yards of land to bury his dead body in a place where he once ruled.

Srinivasachar, the present head of the family, has accepted stoically and philosophically what has come to his lot. He knows that whatever the Jagirdars lost, they lost it once for all. They are not going to get it back.

He is happy and contented with what is left to him. He is satisfied now because health and character are not lost. Only wealth is lost. So he affirms nothing is lost.
He has two sons. His elder son K. Pranesh is M.B.B.S. D.C.H. He is a Government doctor, and his second son K. Ramesh is a Rank student of Sharana Basaweshwara Commerce College, Gulbarga and a gold medalist. He is now doing his C.A. articleship.

He has given them good training and education. He is satisfied that he has carried out his duties and responsibilities towards them satisfactorily. He does not want any thing more for himself. He only prays God to give his sons long life and prosperity and good health. He prays the Lord Almighty to keep them physically fit, mentally alert and spiritually alive.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Samanya Jagadisi Teeka</td>
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<td>Paramarsi Madhuri Teeka</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Kevalanvai Mool Madhuri</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>Dwiteeya Sidhanta Jagadisi Teeka</td>
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<td>Tarkasya Bhavanandi Teeka</td>
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<td>Samanya Bhava Vidita Tippani</td>
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<td>Anumiti Gadadhari Vyadhikarna Jagadisi</td>
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36. Chintamani Deedhiti Siromani 44
37. Avachedaka Jagadisi Teeka 20
38. Samanya Lakshani Siromani 11
39. Dwiteeya Yutpathi Vada 11
40. Satpratipaksha Chintamani Gadadhari 107
41. Kevalanvayi Bhavanandi Teeka 170
42. Sidhanta Rahasyam Avachedaka Jagadisi Teeka
   Samanya Jagadisi Teeka Pakshata Moole Teeka 89
43. Hetva Bhava Savyabichara Gadadhari 10
44. Sadharana Gadadhari 4
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46. Vyadhikarani Gadadhari 39
47. Sidhanta Parasari Teeka Jagadisi 8
48. Savyabichara Siromani 11
49. Anumana Didheeti 14
50. Samanya Nirukti Teeka Vadartha 28
51. Visesha Nirukti Jagadisi 17
52. Dwiteeya Yutpathi Parasari 21
53. Sadharana Bhavanandi Tippani 24
54. Visesha Jagadisi 9
55. Gadadhari Chaturdasi Lakshani 9
56. Avachhedakatwa Nirukti Jagadisi 11

56 books counting

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<td>Satpratipaksha Kroda Shatakoti</td>
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6 books counting
Total 365
List of Manuscripts written in Devanagari by Kollur Ramachar-Il preserved in Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad.

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<td>Tarka Sangraha Pratipaksha Partichheda</td>
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<td>Samanya Kroda Patra</td>
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<td>Sadharana Grantha Patriaka</td>
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<td>14 books counting</td>
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By Venkatachar Kollur.

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<th>Sl. No.</th>
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<td>Samanya Nirukti etc.</td>
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<td>Sringara Kalpadruma (collection of 1023 shlokas)</td>
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LETTER OF APPRECIATION

I am pleased to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of 426 printed books and manuscripts on various subjects mostly relating to Nyaya Shastra-donated by Shri K. Srinivasacharya Jagirdar, the grand-son of Late Shri Ramacharya Kollur, II the Vidya Guru of Shri 1008 Shri Satya Dhyana Swamiji of Sri Uttaradi Mutt.

These manuscripts and books have been preserved in the "Sree Satyadhyana Vidya Peetha" Mulund (West), Bombay.

Sd/- M. G. Vidyasimhacharya
FACSIMILE OF THE COVER PAGE OF
VAYUSTUTI
Art by Ramachar-I

FACSIMILE OF THE COVER PAGE OF
SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA
Art by Madhavachar S/o Ramachar-I
तर्कालयादि पुस्तककार वेंकटचार तल-कॉलर

- by Venkatachary Kollur.
EPILOGUE

As the book itself suggests, the book is about Ramachar and his family line. The book spans over a period of five generations. All the five presented here were erudite scholars in successive five generations with an unbroken continuity. They are Ramachar-I, Madhwhachar, Ramachar-II, Venkatachar and the present Srinivasachar, the son of Venkatachar. This is something unusual. Material prosperity and wealth could be inherited. But Ramachar’s family for five generations could also inherit along with their Jagir and estate; scholarship, learning and culture.

Ramachar-I at the tender age of 14 about four hundred years ago set on a long, arduous and most difficult journey on foot in quest and conquest of learning from his native village Kollur near Shorapur in Karnataka to Navadweepa in west Bengal. Love of learning was burning like an unquenchable flame in the young lad literally and metaphorically sailed beyond the sunset in search of learning. He lived there in Navadweepa for a period of thirty long years. He served the Gurus as a devout disciple, burnt the midnight oil and mastered the ancient lore. He specialised Nyaya Shastra, Indian system of Logic and Philosophy and gained unrivalled and unchallenged mastery over Nyaya Shastra.

Ramachar has written many books. As there were no printing facilities in his time, these are in his own handwriting. He has also copied the ancient texts and provided illuminating, learned and very scholarly commentaries in his own hand-writing. A facsimile of his handwriting and a list of books is provided at the end of the book.

At the behest of his dear departed father, who appeared in a dream, he returned home after thirty years and was given a tearful and touching welcome by his dear mother and loving wife. He had mastered all the seventy-two Vadas of Gadadhar Bhatta and had become an unrivalled and superb master in Nyaya Shastra.
One Desikachar with his eighty disciples came to surpur (Now known as Shorapur) and challenged the court Pandits for a discussion in Nyaya Shastra. There was no one in the court to accept the challenge of the learned Desikachar and defeat him in argument. At the invitation of the King Ramachar came to Surpur. The learned discourse and arguments between the two pandits were arranged in the Gopalaswamy Temple. It was virtually a long sustained verbal battle which lasted nearly a week. In the end Ramachar gave a crushing defeat to Desikachar and emerged victorious. Out of gratitude, the king settled on Ramachar who had saved the honour of his court, a Jagir comprising of Rakamgera village, in Shahapur Taluka. He also conferred on him the title of Nyaya Ratna. In his own days he had given world challenge in Nyaya Shastra. He breathed his last in Morat in Manvi Taluka.

The son of Ramachar-I, Madhwachar, was a learned scholar in his own light though nothing much is known about him. But his son who was named after his illustrious grand-father seemed to be the reincarnation of the great man. He reinstated the family with full honour and glory of learning and scholarship of the famed family line. He was a born genius. Like his illustrious grand father he did not traverse impossible distances in quest of knowledge and learning. He was taught Bengali script by his father Madhwachar. He studied at home the invaluable manuscripts a rich and unique legacy left by his grand father. Mostly he was a self taught man. In no time he equalled his grand father in his superb mastery over Nyaya Shastra and excelled him in other respects. Like most of the scholars who are specialists in particular branch of knowledge, he had not the one track mind. He was a gifted man who excelled in many fields like Nyaya Shastra, playing chess, painting, pulse reading, Ayurveda, Palmistry, Astrology etc. Like his grand father he gave world challenge in Nyaya Shastra. He had collected eighty students and provided them with free bread and board in his house at Rangampet and taught and trained them in Nyaya Shastra. It was a Miniature Gurukula. One of his pupils Krishnamachar gave world challenge in Vyakarna Shastra.

He had mastered Bala and Nirbala system, Huchamalli and Yeddamalli systems and gained a superb and unrivalled mastery over chess. Thus he could give world challenge also in chess.
He was deeply religious and very orthodox. He performed Sandhyavandana thrice a day. Like his grand father who defeated Desikachar in argument in Nyaya Shastra he defeated Jhangur Jha in Nyaya Shastra.

Satyadhyana Swami of Uttaradi Mutt was his disciple. He taught him Nyaya Shastra. The Swami showed great regard to his Guru all his life. Shri Shri Satya Dheera Swami of Uttaradi Mutt honoured him with Kara Deepa Maryada and Pallakki Maryada. He passed away at the ripe age of eight-eight years. Satyadhyana Swami of Uttaradi Mutt mourned the death of his Guru in an article sent to Madhura Vani, published from Bombay, that a Nyaya Ratna had fallen down from the crown of Saraswathi leaving a gaping gap never to be filled up with the size of that gem.

Perhaps the most unique in this galaxy of great scholars, was Venkatachari the son of Ramachari the second. He was the finest synthesis of erudition and scholarship like his ancestors and worldly wisdom too. Born with a silver spoon in his mouth to luxury and riches he lived in kingly style befitting the tradition of the Jagirdars.

He held his court in his Devan-Khana with his own set of courtiers and followers. Life to him was a cup of heady refried wine. He drank it to the last drop sipping every drop with evident pleasure. He was a born epicurian and hedonist. He was a lover of the best and choicest things-food, clothes, perfumes. He was a lover of fine arts like music and painting and a generous patron too of the artists befitting his position as Jagirdar. He kept an open house to all those who came to him for help or sought his advice. He excelled in all kinds of instrumental music. He could also repair and assemble them and even some times prepare them. He gained rare mastery over harmonium. Only few in his days could equal him in his superb mastery over playing on harmonium. Like a born musician he could play with the same spontaneous ease and mastery over other musical instruments like Sitar, Tanpura, Violin and Tabla etc. Once his friend Veerabhadrapappa asked him whether he could stich chappals too. The next day the Jagirdar had made a beautiful pair of chappals out of deerskin. He took regular exercises. His outdoor activities, his passion for horse riding kept him always in glowing good health and spirit. He was taller, heftier and more imposing than his own father.
He had the best of horses. He could break and train any wild horse and bend it to his will. In horsemanship, in training a horse and riding it, he had no peer! He had gained mastery over Nyaya-Shastra like his father. But he soon found it dry as dust and not to his liking and chartered almost unknown seas to his ancestors like Kavya, Alankara and Sahitya. He was self-taught in these subjects. And in a record time he could gain mastery over them. He had a powerful retentive memory and shlokas from the various ancient texts flowed from his lips suited to every and any occasion and kept the audience around him enthralled and spell-bound. He was honoured with presents and titles in many courts in his days like Gadwal, Gurgunta, Manikanagar, Vanaparti and Atmakur.

He was a born story teller. These stories were not found in any book. He could spin a yarn suiting any occasion and enthral his listeners. He could tell the story for days together keeping his listeners on the tenter hooks of suspense.

He was a lover of Sanskrit and a born teacher. Who-ever came to him with a willing heart and devotion, he taught irrespective of caste, creed or religion. Amongst his disciples were Lingayats Vysyas, Toddy contractors. Even a Muslim, Abdulla Shariff, studied Bhagwad Geeta under him. He breathed his last accepting death as his colourful life. He maintained his dignity, nobility and equanimity even in the face of death.

The present scion of this illustrious family is my elderly friend Shri Srinivasaschar Kollur. At his request I composed this book. He was the last inheritor of the rank, title and status of Jagirdar. He lost his mother when he was a child of two. He was brought up by his step mother Ramabai. His grand father, the great Ramachar-II was still alive. He had two living models of greatness and scholarship before him in his family—his grand father and his own father. He was looked after by his grand father but he took after his father and inherited certain skills from him like carpentry, goldsmithy, sculpture and handicraft and playing upon harmonium. With assiduous practice and hard work he has attained proficiency in these things. He had all the facilities of sound Sanskrit education and scholarship at home. He did not avail himself of them. He had all the opportunities for the highest education in those days. But he had to tend and nurse his grand father who had suddenly fallen ill and his father too who
was always on his sick bed. Being the only male issue, the responsibility of looking after the Jagir fell on his shoulders. He had just his passed matriculation and stepped into the portals of the college. But he had to say hats off to the college education and bow down to filial love, duty and obedience.

The winds of change had already started blowing. In tune with the changing times, he was the first one to have English education in his family. He was also the first one to join Government service in his family. He joined as a Clerk in the Industries and Commerce Directorate in the Nizam State. He retired on superannuation on 10-11-1970 as superintendent from the office of the Director of Industries and Commerce, Government of Karnataka. He has married Smt Venkubai, the daughter of his step-sister. He has given many musical performances on such occasion as the centenary celebrations of Raghavendra Swami at Bangalore and the annual day celebrations of Sahitya Parishat. He has accompanied on harmonium such musical meastroes like Govind Rao Dentale, Basawaraj Raj Guru, Babu-Rao Hyderabadi, Lakshman Singh etc. He is a radio artist and participates in Vicha Deepika. He is a multi linguisit. He knows Kannada, English, Urdu, Hindi very well. He is already an author of two or three books which are still to be published.

It is really an uncommon family line which has inherited superb scholarship and learning along with their Jagir and material wealth with an unbroken continuity for five generations. Both the learning and scholarship did not become dry as dust and mechanical. Such astounding and almost unrivalled scholarship was a deep humanising and liberating influence. They were essentially men of culture. Their culture of the head, heart and mind radiated the mellow glory of our cultural heritage and ancient learning, scholarship and education like the golden glow of the evening sun. They were the true aristocrats not only in their rank, title and material riches but also in the qualities of their head, heart and mind. They were in a small but significant way the torch bearers of Indian's cultural heritage, scholarship and learning.

They were true kings among men who had amassed vast and imperishable treasure. They were kings with their power of knowledge, learning and wisdom. They had amassed imperishable and invaluable
treasure of knowledge, diligently gleaning bits of knowledge and learning from astounding store of ancient learned texts like humble bees flitting from flower to flower and collecting drops of honey and storing them in their bee-hives. They had digested and assimilated this vast store-house of knowledge resulting in an amalgamation and synthesis of wisdom. Yet they did not use and abuse their knowledge which had given them the power of kings over men like cruel despots to exploit the peoples ignorance and keep them under eternal bondage. They knew that in this world there is nothing comparable to knowledge (Nahignanena Sadrasyam). This knowledge, learning and wisdom which they had gathered like ancient Rishis through assiduous toil and moil and austere penance, created in them an enlightened awareness of themselves and the mission. God, their Father had assigned to them to teach, to educate, their less fortunate brethren and dispel darkness from their minds. They knew that their true happiness lay in not selfishly hoarding their knowledge and enjoying it them-selves and lording it over others but in distributing it among the needy and the unfortunate and the ignorant, in actually sharing it with such people and making them enlightened.

They had lighted their lamp-nay torches in the unquenchable flame of Goddess Saraswati with the resplendent light of thousand suns only to light the lamps in the hearts of men and to light up their paths in the encircling gloom. They had lighted their lamps only to enlighten others. They were thus essentially cultured men spreading their aroma of wisdom and beauty of behaviour around-nay as Mathew Arnold would put it- "spreading sweetness and light".

I honestly believe that this book of mine is my humble tribute to our ancient cultural heritage, scholarship and learning.