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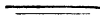
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SOUVENIR  
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OF

THE HON. MR. G. A. NATESAN



THURSDAY 24TH AUGUST 1933  
MADRAS

## NOTE

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AS one connected with the *Indian Review* and the publishing house of G. A. Natesan & Co. for over two decades it gives me great pleasure to present this memento of a happy occasion to the Hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan, as a small token of regard and affection. I desire also to take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks to all the contributors who so readily responded to my invitation to write to this Souvenir.

MADRAS,  
24th August 1933 }

B. NATESAN,  
*Asst., Indian Review*

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THE HON. MR. G. A. NATESAN  
EDITOR, THE INDIAN REVIEW

## The Rt. Hon. Dr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., C.H., LL.D.

*Coimbatore, 31st July 1933.*

MY DEAR AMBI AND CHANDRU,\*

**W**HEN I first knew your father, fully forty years ago, he was a student of the Madras Presidency College, and lived in Triplicane under the care of his mother and brother. He was not brilliant as a scholar or famous as a sportsman. But he managed to acquire many friends, both in college and outside, and was well to the fore at public gatherings and demonstrations. He had a pleasing address as well as good looks, and knew it. Men much above his age petted him and would have spoilt him but for the watchfulness of his brother and certain friends. Of these, two deserve special mention. Messrs. G. Venkataranga Rao and C. Hanumanta Rao. Both gentlemen were well known for their learning, high character, and devotion to things of the mind. The former especially had a great part in moulding Natesan's thought and outlook and might justly be called his good genius. Through Venkatarangam he was introduced to the Triplicane Literary Society, then the rendezvous of the active and wideawake spirits of the neighbourhood, on whom, once when political feeling ran high, an Anglo-Indian journal bestowed the half-ironical sobriquet of Bradlaughs and Hampdens. Here, both morning and evening, regaled by successive tumblers of coffee, Mr M. O. Parthasarathy Ayyangar laid down the law, like a second Samuel Johnson, on all matters of literature, politics, religion and social reform. Though only a little fellow, Natesan was made free of the conversation and, being quick and eager, acquired from the lips of his betters ready-made opinions on all subjects of public interest and, what was even more valuable, a readiness of thought and utterance which stood him in good stead when in his turn he became Secretary of the Presidency College Literary Society. It was in this capacity he made his mark at college, hobnobbing with professors, lawyers, journalists and celebrities of every kind, and mastering the arts of organising, advertising and buttonholing, which some persons affect to despise, but which are essential to a successful public worker. No light, however, but casts shadows. The success and vogue that he won brought in their train some jealousy and slander. Schoolboy prejudice as well as

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\*Ambi (Manlan Natesan), Chandru (Chandran Natesan)

schoolboy friendship is hardy, and much of the animosity which has pursued him in later life may be traced to these early days, when he was thought by his critics to have reaped better than he sowed.

I well remember the applause that greeted his choice of profession. It was then a bold departure for a graduate without means to establish a press and start life as printer and publisher. Various were the causes of his success. I am inclined to ascribe it in great part to the essential caution of his nature, which was ever content with a modest return and a correspondingly modest growth and expansion. From large-scale enterprise with the inevitable initial borrowing and eternal vigilance he recoiled instinctively. If my memory were clearer, I could mention at least two projects that he rejected firmly, although they dazzled the vision of his more theoretical minded brother. The *Review* had everything in its favour from the beginning, and no one was weighed down by diffidence. Mr. Ramanathan and I were pledged to give our best on the literary side. In those days I had to do two men's work in the Hindu High School, but, being thirty and in full vigour, I do not remember grudging the hours I devoted to Natesan's new venture. Electric lighting was then unknown. The large amount of proof-reading and other labour that fell to my share was done by the light of two candle-lamps late at night and early in the morning. My eye had a flair for the detection of wrong spelling and wrong type, and so strong is the bias that I then caught that I cannot now read even a borrowed book without itching to decorate the margin with marks for which every succeeding reader will curse me. No oculist ever told me, but I have always traced my premature acquisition of long sight—it came to me at 35—to the vigils of fostering which I took on myself beside the cradle of the *Review*. At the very start we had to tackle the great Boer War, and I undertook the preparation of a short history of the circumstances that led to it and the narration in connected form of the incidents of the war in each monthly issue. Natesan told me afterwards that a military officer asked him for the name of the soldier who wrote these monthly accounts as he felt sure only a specialist could have written them. Let me record another incident. In describing the exploits and final surrender of General Cronje, I expressed a wonder what the needs of civilisation could be that required the hunting down of such heroes. A professor who was known for his broad-mindedness and friendship with Indians wrote withdrawing his subscription for the

*Review*, which so openly sympathised with the enemies of the British Empire. If I lost Natesan more friends, he has not told me.

The story of your journal having been told on another occasion, you will perhaps thank me if I write something on your father's home life as I knew it. In Hindu families the mother's position is supreme. Every son who speaks of his mother says there was, is, and can be no mother like his. If Natesan advances the claim, I won't quarrel, except to register a like claim for my mother. These two ladies suffered more on account of their children than ladies of their status generally have to suffer. Poverty added its trials to other hardships and privations. They never disclosed to us the whole of what they endured in order that we might have the ordinary comforts of boyhood and a decent education into the bargain. Your father and I have often tried, with sobs that we could not hide from each other, to imagine the unknown with the help of the known. Were we really such ingrates as we seem to have been? The fact is, we couldn't be half enough grateful if we had a dozen lives. The ladies lived long enough, thank heaven, to see us comparatively well off. Did they, in the mutual confidence of old age, ever tell each other that their sons weren't such bad fellows after all? I would fain hope so. Your father, however, was blest in another relation beyond the common lot. Aiyān was father as well as brother, mentor as well as companion. Natesan bowed to his authority, but not always with grace. Thoroughly loyal at heart, he would on occasion be outwardly rebellious. Nothing could weaken their extremely tender affection for each other. But thunder and lightning always lurked in the air and might at any moment break out in fury. Natesan was the less restrained and more obstreperous of the two. As the eldest brother of my family, my tendency was to sympathise with Aiyān, though I could not for that reason be blind to the justice on Natesan's side. I must admit, however, that my mediacy was seldom of any real use. The most that could be said for it was that it was like the catalytic action of gold, merely witnessing the mutual reaction of two other bodies. I remember one occasion on which there was more than ordinary noise and recrimination. The old mother signed to me I was merely to watch and let the storm blow over. It was some minutes before I could find out the cause. One of Aiyān's academic projects had burst and involved him in some loss. Natesan was offering to take it on himself provided the elder brother would "never again". The handsome

offer, however, was mixed with several 'I told you so's and some other language lacking in respect. Naturally there was a little difficulty before Aiyān could be brought to agree.

This incident brings me to a standing quarrel between your father and me. I am all for forbearance and *kshama*, he has infinite faith in having it out with people. Perhaps both are right and both are wrong. You can carry either rule of conduct too far. To bottle up one's feelings of dissatisfaction or anger is not necessarily to forgive the offender. If one is not careful in the practice of self-control, one may be nourishing little grievances and end up by an outburst of passion disproportionate to the immediate cause. But these exponents of candour, your havers-it-out seem to be no better on the whole. Do they not often explode when they should not? And create disputes where no occasion exists? Does not the habit of manifesting your displeasure tend to disable you from acts of forgiveness? But let me not preach. Your father is nearing the great climacteric of life, and I have passed it. Neither can change much hereafter. He is he and I am I. We have been thrown together many years, we have lived under one roof and we have lived apart, we have differed and we have agreed, we have been engaged on common tasks and we have had our separate callings. But our hearts have never drifted and we have always wished well to each other—even when we have not been able to help each other. To many our unbroken friendship is a puzzle, to some alas! it is an eyesore. But it has stood the test of time. It will do so for the rest of our common lives.

It is good to see how deeply you love and venerate your father. It does you great honour. Believe me, if you were not his children, you might still cherish him as an example of self-help and industry, as one who never forgot public duties while pursuing private interests, who did more than his share as citizen, and who, to the extent of his opportunities, assuaged the pain and lightened the burden of those that looked up to him. No mere hanger-on or soulless manipulator can retain for long years the friendship and trust of such persons, to name but a few, as Krishnaswami Iyer, Rangacharya, Glyn Barlow, Dr. Nair, Wacha and Gokhale. It takes more than a semblance of ability or veneer of virtue to hold a place of prominence in public life for over a generation and to be elected over and over again to the corporation of a metropolis and the management of a university.

He will rejoice exceedingly and feel he has lived to good purpose if you improve on his career. But if that happiness be denied him, let him have the confidence that he leaves his business in the hands of those that can manage it and his good name in the keeping of those that can appreciate and cherish it reverently. One wish of his remains unfulfilled. He yearns to have grandchildren to perpetuate the family. I am not able to share his anxiety. An increase of population is not among the needs either of the nation or of our community. But I am willing to pocket my objection and let his desire for progeny be gratified, thinking, in this respect, not so much of him as of her who, as wife, mother and custodian of the household, carries on the good Hindu tradition. When your children grow up, let me wish that they may be sources of pride and joy to you all. In particular let me wish that their educational careers may be crowned with brighter success than yours. In this wish you will agree that I am not being excessively greedy.

With every good wish,

Yours affectionately,




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### The Hon. Sir Joseph Bhore, K.C.I.E., C.B.E., C.I.E.

I cannot let the occasion of the completion of his 60th year pass without sending Mr. G. A. Natesan a message of warmest appreciation of the great record of varied public work which lies behind him and an expression of hope that he may long be spared to continue it. A veteran journalist who has opened up new lines of journalistic enterprise, he has not been content to allow his gifts and energies to carry him along any single channel. He has participated equally in Municipal life, in University affairs, in the Indian Legislature, and has given generously and without thought of self in every sphere of work, of all those gifts with which he has been so richly endowed. To his friends, however, he will always stand pre-eminent for the sturdy honesty of purpose and singleness of aim which, combined with a peculiarly attractive personality, have made him a host of friends and left him without a single enemy.

## Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha, Kt.

SO far as my recollection goes I made the acquaintance of Mr G. A. Natesan in 1894 when the Tenth Indian National Congress was held in Madras, the late Mr. Alfred Webb, MP., presiding. I happen to have shaken hands with him for the first time in his own shop as a bookseller on the Esplanade Road. The acquaintance soon ripened into friendship which, I am glad to say, has continued uninterruptedly to this day I presume he was about 21 years when I first shook hands with him Thereafter we now and again used to exchange correspondence. When he, later on, embarked on his serious journalistic enterprise, namely, the publication of what is now so widely known, as the *Indian Review*, he earnestly wished me to be an honorary but anonymous contributor to the pages of that journal from month to month. This I did for a number of years till owing to a great pressure on my time I had to discontinue the monthly contribution. During this long interval I watched his career with the greatest interest. He seemed to me, to be one earnestly intent on making his mark in Indian journalism. There was in him the vigour of youth, the perseverance to succeed, and withal the desire to earn an excellent reputation. He has, I find, had a remarkable success and is no doubt able at present to enjoy the fruits of his incessant labour So far he may be deemed to be the architect of his own fortune, after the manner of many a well known American. He can be cited as a good example of "SELF HELP" which Mr Smiles so extensively inculcated. Of course, as he became better and better known, his honourable ambition to shine on the University took wings. It is not for me to appraise the value of his services as a Fellow of his University and a member of the Council of State. The work is there writ large enough which one may read as he runs. I daresay he is recognised in his own Presidency as a virile and valiant power of Indian journalism. I wish him every success on the honourable profession he is pursuing, and that he may be long spared to find fresh laurels to his brow.

## Dr. Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose, Kt., F.R.S.

IT is now more than third of a century that Mr G A Natesan began the career which resulted in his rendering most important services for the welfare of India. His sixtieth birthday celebration will evoke wide and sincere appreciation from his numerous admirers.

The *Indian Review* which he founded brought together the best thoughts of the East and the West in mutual understanding. His outlook for the future welfare of India is never circumscribed by any provincial boundaries; his efforts have, on the other hand, been directed in showing the underlying unity of India's ideals and aspirations in realising her higher destiny. The essential elements of the history of social and intellectual progress, contributed for the last three decades by the leaders of thought in different provinces of India, would have been forgotten but for the remarkable series of books on the subject published by this eminent journalist.

His activities have indeed been many sided. Among the important services rendered by him is the liberalisation of higher education by exercising his influence on the authorities to invite men of eminence to deliver courses of lectures before the University.

He has invariably supported all liberal measures in the Council of State.

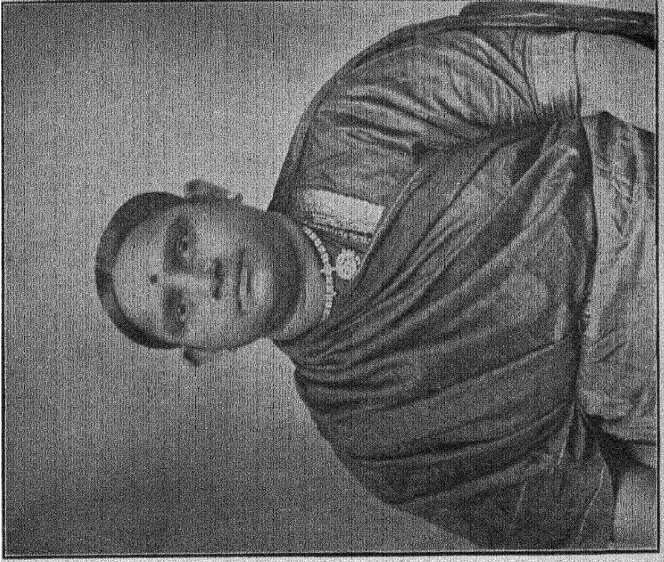
During his deputation to other countries, he has spoken most effectively on the contributions made by India in the advancement of world's knowledge.

These are some of the remarkable achievements of a single man who had no adventitious circumstances to aid him, he had to win his way step by step by his own efforts supported by his determination to serve a great cause. An example like this cannot but serve as a source of inspiration to the younger generation.

## Sir Muhammad Habibullah, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Kt.

THE completion of 60 years of life is generally an occasion for rejoicing, but, when such life has been devoted to public causes it becomes an event of Thanksgiving. The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur G. A. Natesan, who will celebrate his *Sashibadha-Poorthi* on the 24th of August, falls under the latter category. Though not born with a golden spoon in his mouth, he rose to eminence by dint of industry, resourcefulness, and merit, and is regarded as one of the distinguished sons of India. Unlike his contemporaries, he discarded the beaten track of Government service, and devoted himself to public work. Various and varied were the activities for which he utilised his talents and earned laurels in every one of them. As Editor of the *Indian Review*—a journal which is widely read and held in high esteem—he enjoys a unique position in the world of journalism. The encomiums paid and congratulations offered by distinguished men and by the numerous readers all over the English-speaking world, when the *Indian Review* celebrated its Silver Jubilee in January 1925, bear an eloquent testimony to the great popularity enjoyed by the journal, and the regard and esteem in which its Editor is held. The yeoman services rendered by him as a member of the Madras Corporation are universally acknowledged. He has been connected with that body for nearly a quarter of a century, during which period he was repeatedly re-elected unopposed, thus demonstrating the confidence reposed in him by his Constituency, which obviously regards him as its indispensable representative. Well may Mr. Natesan be proud of this achievement. Having drunk deep at the fountain of Knowledge, he has been evincing a keen and abiding interest in the educational problems of the country. For more than two decades, he served as a member of the Senate and Syndicate of the Madras University, and took an active part in the discussion of all important educational problems. His usefulness in these bodies was recognised by the University, which deputed him to represent it at the Universities Conferences held in Simla in 1924 and again in Delhi in 1929.

I think I may venture to refer to two of his activities which came under my personal observation, and in which I had ample opportunities of judging the value of his work—I refer to his unflinching and earnest championship of the cause of Indians Overseas, and his



MR. & MRS. NATESAN



membership of the Council of State. Messrs. Gandhi and Andrews, than whom there are no truer friends of our nationals abroad, and whose intimate knowledge of the intricate problems concerning them is unrivalled, have paid such tributes to Mr. Natesan that I make no apology for referring to them. The former wrote that "Sr. Natesan perhaps stood alone in India as a student of the grievances of Indians abroad, their valued helper, and a systematic and well informed exponent of their case. I had regular correspondence with him. When the deportees reached Madras, Mr Natesan rendered them full assistance. . . ."

When Mr Natesan was nominated as a member of the Council of State, Mr. Andrews hailed his appointment. While emphasizing the fact that the cause of Indians abroad had always found in him an indefatigable worker, Mr. Andrews designated him as "Member for Indians Overseas" on that body. Indeed, his nomination was largely influenced by the consideration that his unique knowledge of the problems in regard to those questions which at the time were assuming critical dimensions, would be a valuable asset. It is only right to say that these expectations were more than realised. Whether as a member of the Council of State, or of the Indian Emigration Committee attached to the department, his advice received the respect and attention which it deserved.

As a non-official in the front rank of politicians, he took an active part in the discussions of all questions which came up before the Council. His utterances were invariably characterised by earnestness, clarity and accuracy and commanded the respect of all parties in the House. One noteworthy feature deserves special mention. Though a nominated member, he never hesitated to criticise the measures of Government according to the dictates of his conscience with frankness and freedom and not infrequently voted with the Opposition, thus disproving the impression generally held that a nominated member must *ipso facto* walk into the Government lobby. In token of appreciation of his good work, the Governor-General re-nominated him for a second term.

In politics, he is a staunch Liberal, holding progressive views. As a Loyalist, he is proud of the British connection, while as a patriot, he is an ardent advocate of the early attainment by India of Dominion Status, as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations. He firmly believes that it is an ill wind that seeks to blow

India away, from the broad tranquil stream of ordered progress, in line with friends with whom Providence seems to have linked her destiny, into some backwater of stagnation or bitter internecine strife.

His activities in other spheres have been many and varied, and in every one of them he has displayed his talents in a remarkable degree. In this connection I wish to refer only to Mr. Natesan's deputation to Canada as India's delegate to the Empire Parliamentary Delegation in 1928. Having been in close touch with him and his performances there, I had formed the impression that he had not only added lustre to his already illustrious name but had also enhanced the reputation of India in the estimation of the representatives of the countries participating therein. His speech at a Conference held in Ottawa on the 30th August 1928 was characterised by his usual patriotism and earnestness and created a very favourable impression among the Delegates gathered. I wish the Hon'ble Rao Bahadur G A Natesan a long, full, unbroken period of happiness and of high, lofty felicity for a great many years.

## The Hon. Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, K.C.I.E.

*President, Legislative Assembly*

I have had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Natesan ever since I was a student at Madras. His record of public life, extending over thirty years, is one of which anyone can be proud. The *Indian Review* and the various other publications of Mr. Natesan have been the source of political education for the young men for over a quarter of a century. The enthusiasm and energy which Mr. Natesan puts forth in any work that he undertakes always evoke the admiration of his friends. I recollect vividly his enthusiastic work in connection with the problem of the Indian settlers in South Africa.

One feature of Mr. Natesan's public life, which I recall at present, is his immense popularity with the younger generation and the readiness with which he offers advice and guidance to the young men who seek them at his hands very often. I myself remember with gratitude the valuable advice that he gave me in the early days of my public life.

I join his numerous friends in wishing him a long life of useful activity and service,

## Dr. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

IT is now nearly forty years since Mr. G. A. Natesan was introduced to me one evening on the Madras Marina by a common friend. Mr. Natesan was, I believe, a student at College at the time, and after taking his degree, he joined the Madras Law College more or less as a matter of course like other graduates in arts. His heart, however, was not in his law studies and he did not care to take his degree in law. Fortunately for himself he did not aspire to join the Government service or the legal profession, but decided to carry on a printing business and set up a press of his own. Almost the first order which he received as a printer was from myself. I asked him to print for me a memorandum of arguments which I had prepared for transmission to Counsel in a case pending before the Privy Council. I am glad to say that my order was executed precisely according to my instructions and in a very satisfactory manner. Mr. Natesan had a large circle of friends and acquaintances even in those days who were willing to help him similarly. Shortly afterwards he decided to start the *Indian Review* as editor and publisher. The *Review* has succeeded in establishing a position for itself in the Indian journalistic world. Mr. Natesan had special qualifications for the business chosen by him and he found ample opportunities for developing them. He was not, however, content to be a mere man of business, but wished to enlarge his activities and seek opportunities for public service. He sought election to the city municipal council and has kept his seat in the council for a continuous period of more than a quarter of a century. A few days ago he was again elected as member of the Corporation without any contest. Mr. Natesan's gifts of speech and debate soon found larger opportunities for exercise both on the platform and in the Senate of the University from which he has decided to retire after 25 years of very useful service in the cause of education. When Mahatma Gandhi first came to Madras and endeavoured to rouse public interest in the affairs of our compatriots in South Africa, Mr. Natesan associated himself with him and has since maintained an abiding interest in the welfare of Indians overseas. As a journalist, politician and publicist, Mr. Natesan has played an important part in the life of Madras and the record of his work cannot fail to be a source of satisfaction to him when he looks back over the years that have gone by. One of the most valuable services rendered by him in the Madras Corporation was in the endeavour made by him to check nepotism in the municipal office—a task in which he did not flinch.

from the painful duty of the exposure of instances even at the risk of private friendship. Mr. Natesan's public services and his capacity for making and keeping friends have contributed to his nomination to the Council of State of which he has been a member for the last 8 or 9 years. He has taken an honourable and useful part in the deliberations of that body. He has never hesitated to express his opinions fearlessly and with independence. He knows how to combine independence of expression of his own views with courtesy towards his opponents and appreciation of their point of view. He has thus succeeded in winning the respect and attachment of officials and non-officials alike. It must have been a proud moment in his life when he found himself selected as a member of the Empire Parliamentary Delegation to Canada. His long-cherished ambition to pay a visit to Europe and America has been fulfilled. His disappointments in life have been few. His failure in the contest for election to the presidentship of the Corporation was one such instance. Mr. Natesan's resourcefulness, tact, capacity for organisation, shrewd knowledge of human nature and business aptitude have been of the greatest help to him in life. A man of strong likes and dislikes, staunch as a friend and to be reckoned with as a foe, he has secured a very wide circle of friends all over India and even outside. On the auspicious occasion of his sixty-first birthday, his innumerable friends will wish him long years of health and happiness.

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### Babu Bhagavandas

I send hearty congratulations on the completion of his sixtieth year by Shri G. A. Natesan, which is to be celebrated shortly. He has been one of the greatest educators of the Indian people through his excellent Monthly, the *Indian Review*, which has always been kept at a high level of intellectual quality during the past 34 years, since it was born, and through his numerous inexpensive, popular, widely-circulated publications, of the biographies and the writings and speeches of famous Indians as well as others, on the subject of political and social reform in India. I hope that he will continue his good work for very many more years.

## Mr. Henry S. L. Polak

THE news that my dear old friend G. A. Natesan is celebrating, within the next few weeks, his sixtieth year comes as something of a shock ; for it records the all-too-swift passage of time, and the recognition that younger men are taking the place of those who have grown old, or are growing old, in the country's service.

Among the latter is G. A. Natesan, and amongst all my memories of him I recall with the greatest affection and satisfaction the old days of the South African Indian Passive Resistance campaign, and my association with him in connection therewith, during my first two visits to India. I recall G. A. Natesan's generous activities on behalf of Mr. Gandhi and his other countrymen in South Africa, and how his heart flamed within him at the knowledge of the hardships and indignities to which they were being subjected by an unsympathetic and hostile Government. He was tireless in his efforts and restless in his energy. His vigorous speeches and writings on behalf of his suffering compatriots compelled attention by their obvious sincerity and accuracy of statement. I well remember the encouragement, affection, and assistance of varied kinds that he gave me during these visits, and I could write at length upon the many good-natured disputes that we had from time to time as to the best thing to do for the sake of the cause that we both had so dearly at heart.

Most of all I have to recall the loving service that Natesan gave to the South African Indian and Chinese deportees whom I had been able to rescue at Colombo and divert to Madras. I well remember how he devoted himself to them, day and night, during the whole of their stay in that hospitable City, how he sometimes slept and ate with them, though some of them were possibly untouchables, how he fraternised with them, helped them to restore confidence in themselves and pride in the cause that they represented, and then I remember clearly how, when he came to the station to bid them farewell on their journey to Bombay, and thence back to South Africa with me, he burst into tears as the train left the station. This big and generous-hearted personality that is known to all his friends as G. A. N. dwells in the hearts and minds of large numbers of South African Indians, many of whom remember with pride and satisfaction how his Firm in a variety of ways have given wide publicity to the story of the grievances, hardships and tribulations of the South African Indian community and other communities of Indians abroad

For myself I always feel an additional sense of pleasure in visiting Madras in the anticipation of a hearty welcome from G. A. N. and his family, to which, in a sense, I feel I belong. May he live long and happily!

## The Hon. Sir Frank Noyce, C.S.I., C.B.E.

IT is now just over a quarter of a century since I first met Mr. Natesan at a garden party at Government House, Madras, in the days of Sir Arthur Lawley. I remember being struck by the fact that one who looked so young should already have attained such an eminent position in the world of journalism. A common love of literature (modesty prevents my saying of the best literature!) soon led to a friendship which I have come more and more to value as the years have elapsed and his hair has become grayer whilst mine has almost disappeared. It is because I value his friendship so highly that I am not willing to follow the modern method of treating one's best friends and to dissect or rather vivisect his character in public, even in the pages of the *Review* over whose destinies he has so long and so ably presided. And I will leave it to others more competent than myself to appraise his distinguished public services. All I would say is that, although as is natural he and I do not always find ourselves in agreement, I have never ceased to admire his fearless independence of character. He has never held any view because it was the popular view or (a less common though by no means rare failing) because it was not but because it was his own view, based on a most careful study of the merits of the case. May his singleness of mind and integrity of purpose long be available to India!

### Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastri

MY hearty congratulations go to The Honourable Rao Bahadur G. A. Natesan on his Sixtieth Birthday. His manifold activities are well known—literary, social and political—and need no enumeration. What always struck me was his untiring energy in the pursuit of the course he chalked out for himself. Though his talent would have brought him success in any walk of life, he chose the independent profession of editor and publisher. The *Indian Review* and the publishing house of Natesan & Co are monuments of his zeal and intelligence. He was a pioneer and like all pioneers had to contend with difficulties which few can appreciate. Success obscures difficulties undergone and the industry, patience and courage extended over years before it was achieved.

In the field of Indian renaissance his name will be honorably associated. I and his numerous friends will always hope that time will deal gently with him and that he will have many years of rest and happiness. His son Mr Manian Natesan is full of promise and there is no reason why the publishing house of Natesan should not like that of Murray continue for generations or why Mr. Natesan should not crown "a youth of labour with an age of ease".

## Dr. C. Jinarajadasa

**I**T was in 1901 that I had the pleasure of first meeting my friend Mr. G. A. Natesan. I had come over from Ceylon to a Theosophical Convention at Adyar, and friends of mine took me over to George Town and I called upon Mr Natesan then. He gave us a cordial welcome, and though our stay was brief feasted us with Indian refreshments.

Among the many activities of Mr. Natesan, there is one upon which I particularly desire to comment, and that is the great service which he has rendered by publishing in cheap form the speeches of prominent Indian leaders, and also their biographies. I wonder how many hundreds of young men, perhaps thousands, have been inspired by reading these books published so economically and in such handy form. It was a similar public service, but in another department, which he has rendered in the publication of his cheap edition of the Bhagavad Gita, with the translation by Dr Annie Besant. Whenever I see people off from our Stations in Madras, I make a point of buying this edition and presenting it to them as an indication that on Indian bookstalls we can purchase not only magazines but also the greatest book of spiritual value in our Indian tradition.

Those who live in Madras know well how intimately Mr Natesan's activities have been woven into the Municipal life of the City. And in addition, as one of the "Elders" he has always taken a prominent part in National affairs in so far as they were voiced through the public opinion of Madras. Mr. Natesan has been a "publicist" in the best significance of the word, trying to educate the public into higher ideals.

## Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, K.C.I.E.

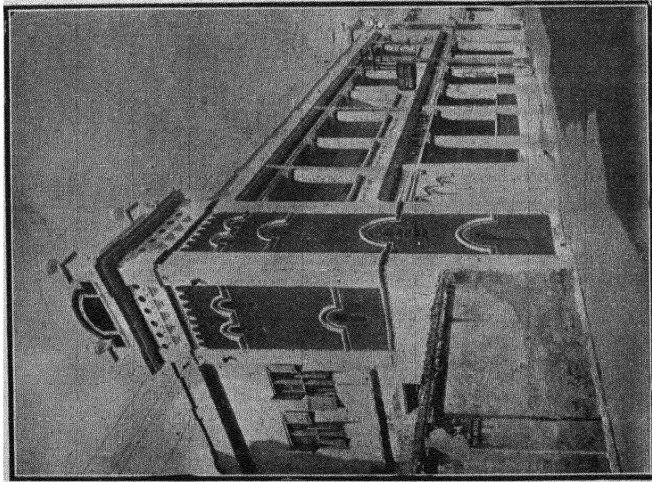
**P**LEASE convey my sincere felicitations to my friend Honourable Natesan whose work in many spheres of activity has been enterprising, wise and patriotic. Among his various public services shall mention his fight for the Indians in South Africa, his devotion to the work of the Corporation, his University work and the fearless discharge of duties in the Council of State. He has also been a pioneer in Indian Biography and Journalism. I wish him many more years of useful endeavour. *(By Cable.)*

## Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar

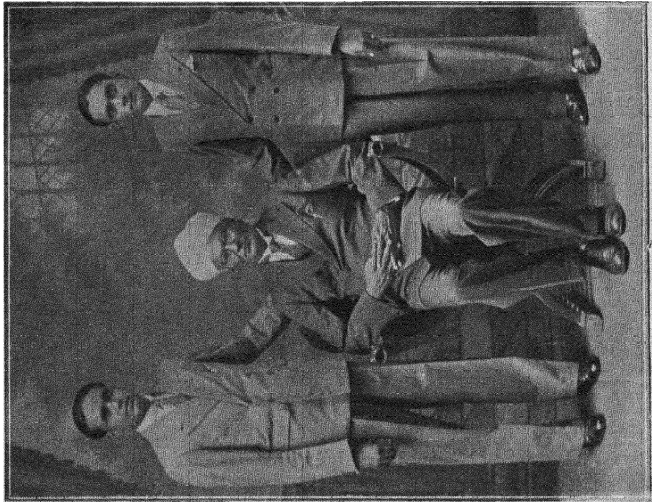
I have great pleasure in joining in the felicitations offered to Mr. G. A. Natesan on the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee. Mr. Natesan has a long record of politics, but that which made an unforgettable impression on me was that one evening he startled the Law College class with a big poster announcing the sudden release of Lokamanya Tilak. Mr. Natesan is now known as a moderate politician, but I know that he was fiery as a young man in those days. When he opposed Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar's "Gains of Learning Bill", he surprised older politicians by organising popular agitation against the Bill and compelled the withdrawal of the measure establishing the principle that not only reasonableness but public approval was necessary for a change in the law.

Mr. Natesan was perhaps the first to set an example 35 years ago for educated young men of South India boldly to harness their culture and education to business instead of seeking Government service or swelling the ranks of overcrowded professions. His publishing work can never be forgotten in the history of nationalism especially in South India. He was the pioneer in publishing cheap political literature. Others have taken up this line of national service following his example, but I doubt whether anyone has done it so successfully either from the business point of view of efficiency and cheapness without loss to the undertaking, or the point of view of extensive and effective propaganda.

Mr. Natesan has kept aloof from extremism in politics, but from what I know he is very much misunderstood in this respect I can say that within his heart there is no less of the fire of patriotism than is found in the most ardent nationalists in other camps. His detachment from partisanship is proved by the fact that he is even now one of Gandhiji's warmest friends and admirers. Every man shapes his own line of national service and the nation's progress is evolved out of it all. We would be committing a most serious blunder if we quarrel with the system of forces and counter-forces that nature and history develop in evolution,



The Office of the **INDIAN REVIEW** and the  
Publishing house of **G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.**



The Hon. Mr. **G. A. Natesan** with his sons **Manian** and  
**Chandran Natesan** who are in the business.



## Rajah Sir Vasudeva Rajah of Kollengode, Kt., C.I.E.

I have great pleasure to send you my warm greetings on the occasion of your Sashtiabdhapoorthi. On such an occasion, it is only meet that one should look back into the past and peep into the future. I have no doubt you can look back with pride upon your political and journalistic career.

You belong to the moderate school of politics—a school wedded neither to extremism nor to the policy of 'let alone'. Your motto has been 'hasten slowly'. It is often said that a nominated member of a Council subordinates his views to those of the Government and always votes with it, right or wrong. But in your career as a nominated member of the Council of State for three terms, you have always worked from the nationalistic standpoint and expressed your views, without fear or favour. I have always appreciated your work therein.

I have had occasions to see you work as a Senator of the Madras University and also to note your work as a Corporator of Madras. In the former your views were based on sound educational lines and in the latter on civic welfare and advancement.

As a journalist, you have been able to run a first class monthly for a period of 33 years, with contributions from eminent men, in and out of India, on varied topics of public interest. Your views have been specially liked for their clearness and conciseness. It has often been my pleasure to read your journal and derive much profit.

No one can come in contact with you without becoming friends with you, and you always cherished the friendship and stood by your friends.

I wish you many more years of useful political and journalistic career.

*(Letter to Mr. Natesan.)*

### Mr. U. N. Sen

*Managing Editor, The Associated Press of India*

EVER since I entered journalism about thirty years ago, I had entertained the highest respect and admiration for his independence, his judgment and his far-sighted vision in Indian political affairs. I have known him to have championed India's causes both in the Press and on the platform, and in the Council of State. I have seen him putting up valiant fight for India's rights and liberties. I pray he will live long to give the country the benefit of his long experience and mature judgment.

## The Hon. Sir David Devadoss

I wish my friend Mr. Natesan a very happy birthday and many many happy returns of the same.

I have known Mr. Natesan personally for nearly quarter of a century and his name was known to me long before I came to know him. What strikes one is his remarkable energy and untiring industry. He is affable and courteous and has a knack of making friends with all who come in contact with him. In the teeth of determined opposition and inveterate attack I have known him keep his temper and carry his point. There has not been a single public activity in Madras during the last 25 years—whether it be the National Congress, or the propaganda in favour of the Indians in South Africa or the erection of statues to prominent Indians or the entertainment to distinguished men—in which Mr. Natesan did not take a leading part. His public activities are varied and many sided.

He was a Fellow and a member of the Syndicate of the Madras University for many years and did creditable work. He fought for the rights of the Fellows against the veto of the Vice-Chancellor of those days and carried the matter up to the High Court of Madras which rightly held in his favour. His work in the Corporation of Madras is too well known to be mentioned in detail here. He invariably took the side of the Ratepayers and upheld the cause of his constituents and smoothed many a matter by making personal representation to the President and to the Commissioner after fully acquainting himself with the facts of each case. I do hope he will long continue to serve the City of Madras with his accustomed tact and zeal.

His work in the Council of State is highly commendable. Though a nominated Member, he speaks and votes against the Government whenever he feels that the Government is not in the right or that the interests of the country are neglected and he unhesitatingly supports the Government when he is convinced that it is doing the right thing notwithstanding the odium he might thereby incur in the country.

As a Journalist he has done yeoman service to the cause of journalism. The *Indian Review* which is entirely the product of his initiative and industry rightly occupies a very prominent place among the first-rate journals. May God bless Mr. Natesan with long life and happiness and enable him to work for the good of the country for many years to come!

## Mr. A. S. Iyengar,

*Editor, The Associated Press of India ; Secretary, The Upper  
India Journalists' Association*

I take delight in paying my tribute of admiration to Mr. Natesan on his sixtieth birthday. For various reasons he has entwined himself in my journalistic memory. I can recall several instances during my twenty years' career as a journalist in which he has played many a useful part—as a colleague of the working Journalist, as a man of practical wisdom, as a legislator and as a good and sincere friend.

It was in 1915 when I was a reporter in the *Indian Patriot* of Madras, that I came to know Mr Natesan rather intimately. My then Chief, Dewan Bahadur Karunakara Menon, used to consult him frequently on the topics of the day, particularly regarding the South African Indian problem regarding which Mr. Natesan, as the Secretary of the South African Indian Relief Fund and as a friend of Mahatma Gandhi, was keeping himself well informed. This agitation was given some quietus with the famous Smuts-Gandhi agreement. Mahatmaji soon returned to India and chose to visit Madras first, as a good number of labourers in South Africa were from the Madras Presidency. I remember how the Central Station in Madras was flocked and even hanging accommodation was not available. The train steamed in and the crowd, which had anxiously expected to see the triumphant Mahatmaji seated in the First Class compartment rushed towards it. But there was no such person in either the First or the Second Class compartments. For myself, I found myself slowly elbowed towards the rear of the train. Everyone strained his neck enquiring "Where is Gandhiji?" I had not seen Gandhiji before. A tiny-looking person dressed in Indian mill-made clothes (no Khaddar in those days!) with a turban typical of Gujarati style got down from a third-class compartment, as if absolutely unconcerned. He asked me, "Where is Mr. Natesan?" I replied, "He is looking out for Mr. Gandhi near the First Class compartment" Mahatma Gandhi did not even smile at my answer. There was however another somewhat oldish looking Gujarati who gently tapped me from behind and said, "This is Mr Gandhi." I was delighted because the purpose of my visit to the Central Station as the Chief Representative of my paper was achieved. I was so

delighted that I shouted for Mr. Natesan. But where was he? He was still disappointedly looking round for the object of his garland. Soon the word passed that Gandhi had arrived, and the whole crowd made a stampede. I managed however in the meantime to get a few questions answered by Gandhi—to the envy of other Press Correspondents on the platform. To cut the story short, Mr. Natesan's garland soon found its deserved object and when the crowd melted away, Gandhi was driven to Mr. Natesan's residence and I with him. This incident brought Mr. Natesan and me a little closer.

The next occasion arose when I was able to make a small journalistic scoop. Mr. Natesan has long been a Fellow of the Madras University. It was, I believe, early in 1917 when the University Examination results were announced, it appeared there was a "Slaughter" of the candidates in the Intermediate Examination. The late Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Iyer moved a resolution at the Senate Meeting recommending that those who had obtained over thirty marks should be deemed to have passed. Rev. Macphail, almost at the conclusion of a spirited speech against the resolution remarked, "You bring Jatkawallas and Rickshawallas and make them sit at the examination, and when they fail, you point out that there has been a slaughter." It was too good an observation to be missed by a Journalist, and I included it in my report, and my Editor had a leading article on it. The students of the Fenn Hostel held an emergent meeting of protest against Mr. Macphail's observations. My colleagues in the other Newspaper Offices, so I gathered, were asked to explain how they missed this part of the proceedings. I still recall how the next day when I went to the Madras High Court, they practically non-co-operated with me and went to the length of suggesting that I had wrongly reported! Dewan Bahadur Munuswamy Iyer, the Chief Representative of the *Madras Mail*, went to Mr. Natesan during the luncheon interval for verification. Mr. Natesan, I know, came to my rescue and defended the accuracy of every word of my report.

I am passing over the many occasions I met him when I was in Allahabad whither he came several times in connection with the Conferences of Moderates over the Montagu Reforms and the part he played in those deliberations. I shall come to the more recent activities of Mr. Natesan as a Legislator in Delhi and Simla.

He was first nominated to the Council of State in January 1924. To confess, I was not much pleased at it and gave expression to my feelings in my own way. Mr. Natesan has now been a Member of the Council for nearly a decade. His first speech in the House was delivered with such frequent shrugs of shoulders that Mr Howard, the Special Correspondent of the *Pioneer*, described him as the "most nervous speaker shivering through his very bones". When from my personal knowledge of Mr. Natesan, I told Mr. Howard how his description of Mr. Natesan was but a part of his constitutional mannerism, he realised the mistake. I think from that date, Mr Natesan had a very good press in the columns of the *Pioneer*. I have closely watched Mr. Natesan's career as a Legislator. When not sitting in the Council of State, he is the most ubiquitous person in the lobbies of the Legislative Assembly, valued for his advice and suggestions. Mr. Natesan is only to get up and the President of the Council of State always gives him a chance. Because he does not stand unless he has something useful to contribute. A nominated Member, he has not hesitated to criticise the Government whenever the occasion demanded. His speeches are generally loaded with quotations but they are so apt and authoritative that Mr. Natesan gives the most smashing blow with other people's weapons. Therein lies the secret of his moderation, yet extremism on occasions. I believe his speech on the Simon Report was the most telling in the Council of State.

As a Member of the Standing Emigration Committee, Mr. Natesan has taken a deep and abiding interest in the cause of Indians overseas. His election to that Committee from the Council of State is so much of a foregone conclusion that we in the Press Gallery can mention his name even before it is announced.

Mr. Natesan's business mind is ever alert. I would call him "a business journalist". Two years ago in Delhi when I had with me a bundle of the proceedings of the First Round Table Conference, he snatched it away saying "I can bring out a book". The promptness with which he brought out his book at popular price was a service both to the country and himself. Mr. Natesan's friends are a legion. Moderate or extremist, rich or poor, Mr. Natesan is liked by all. He is good at ferretting out news from every camp, but he will not make any unjust use of it. I am glad he is not a journalist working in a

Daily Newspaper for otherwise inspite of his old age, he would be publishing some interesting and exclusive items of news, almost every day.

Though not a journalist working daily, Mr Natesan has often championed the cause of the Press in India and I remember his withering criticism against the provisions of the Press Ordinance now included in the Consolidated Ordinance Act.

As a friend, Mr. Natesan has very few equals and he is well known for his hospitality. There is not a visit of mine to Madras which is complete without a good dinner at his residence. I remember with what feelings of satisfaction he took me one afternoon into the gardens of his Mylapore residence and indicated in how many years "This Mango Tree will bear fruit".

Mr. Natesan is really a "Friend in Need" I can refer to many instances. I know of one or two Newspapers which used to run to him for financial aid in order to send the evening Dak. He never disappointed. In my own case, when I was stricken with the greatest calamity in my life two years ago, Mr. Natesan ran up to me in Madras and gave me the most soothing words of consolation and advice. Again when, on the 7th September 1930, the late Mr K. C. Roy fell in the Assembly, struck with hæmorrhage, Mr. Natesan gave me the greatest possible assistance in meeting several difficult situations. I used to be so busy in those days that Mr. Natesan himself offered to phone me if there was any good lobby news.

I can multiply instances but I must come to an end. Mr. Natesan is entering sixty. But does anyone, who has seen or known him believe it? His youthful vigour and enthusiasm always belie the grey hair. He had a very bad shock in Simla in the Autumn of 1931, when he was thrown off a Rickshaw while going up a steep ascent to the residence of Rai Bahadur Mohan Lal, who was giving a Tea Party to Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer. Anyone with a less stout heart or a weaker constitution would have taken a long rest, but Mr Natesan was seen the next morning walking up and down the Mall. If national heroes educate people by addresses from platforms, Mr. Natesan through his publications at popular price and through his Journal, the *Indian Review*, has contributed in no small measure to the political awakening of India. I feel confident that Mr Natesan and his Publishing House and the *Indian Review* will render similar public service in the future as in the past.

## Dr. Eleanor McDougall, M.A., D.Litt.

*Principal, The Women's Christian College, Madras*

THE celebration of the sixtieth birthday of the Honourable Mr G. A. Natesan, which marks, as all South India must hope, not the close of his long and honourable career, but only the beginning of a new chapter in it, gives an occasion expressing how distinguished and valuable has been his devoted service to the public welfare. May that service be long continued, and may our honoured friend have the pleasure of seeing many of the causes which he has promoted come to a successful issue!

My first acquaintance with the Honourable Mr. Natesan was in 1919 when I first entered the Senate of the University of Madras. In my endeavour to follow the business and understand the speeches, it was always a great relief when Mr. Natesan rose to address the Senate. I felt sure of learning from his lucid and far-minded utterances what the issues involved, and what the merits of the proposal before us were. The clearness of his explanation, the candour and generosity of his summary of the arguments and his convincing advocacy of what he felt to be right were highly instructive to me, and it almost became my habit when we came to the vote, to see how Mr Natesan was voting and to follow his guidance. The Senate owes very much indeed to his example in the tone and temper of his speeches as well as to his statesmanlike leadership during the period of transition which followed on the passing of the University Act.

Every true friend of the University must hope that in every generation a leader like Mr. Natesan may be granted to maintain and exalt its traditions, and to guide it with his wisdom.

## The Hon. Sir Jogendra Singh

I have watched the progress of the *Indian Review* from its start and have seen it grow from a small beginning to the present position, which it occupies. May it live long and continue to be a symposium of well considered opinions: as it has been in the past, so it may be in the future!

## Mr. A. J. Powell

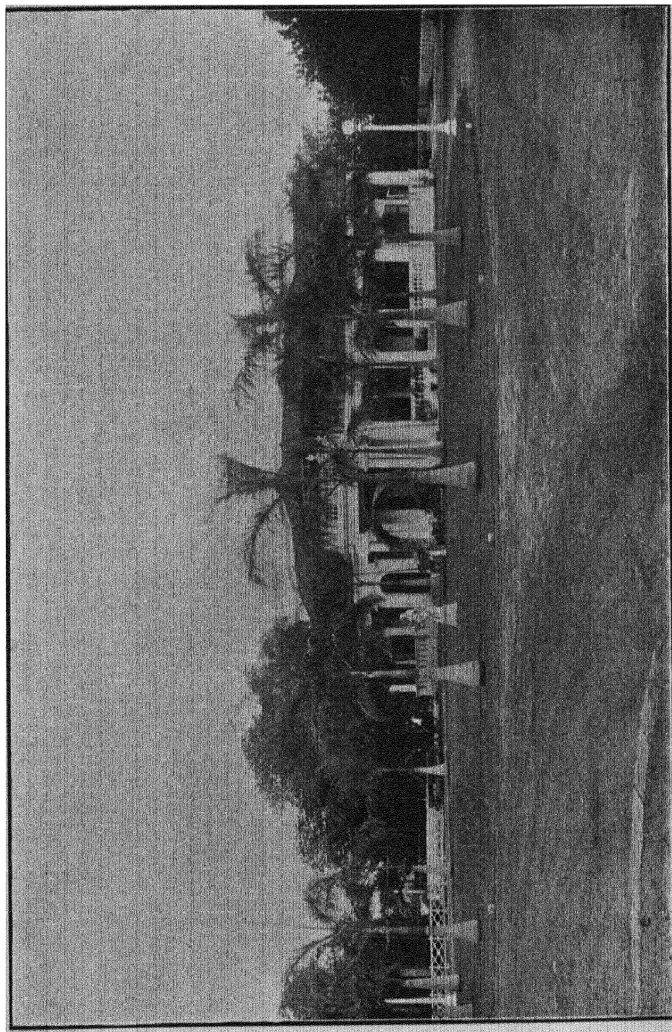
*Manager, Madras Electric Tramways, and Member  
of the Madras Corporation*

IT is over thirty years ago that I first came to Madras, and it seems as though I have known Mr G A Natesan for the whole of that period. This, however, is probably not quite correct, as I did not get to know very many people during my first few years. I certainly remember that it was in connection with the Tramways that I saw a good deal of him, more than twenty years ago. Nowadays, when one gazes at the stately Stanley Viaduct, with a double line of Tramways running over same, it seems strange to think that it is not so very many years ago that all the Trams going to Triplicane and Royapettah had to pass over a level crossing and through Chintadripet. I remember Mr. Natesan helped us a lot in persuading the Council to allow us to put down additional passing places, and thus improve the Tramway service.

I was first nominated to the Corporation in 1914, and Mr Natesan was then a sitting Member, and I think has been one ever since. It certainly seems that all my recollections of Meetings attended are associated with his cheery personality. He is one of those Councillois who only speaks when he has got something to say, speaks quickly, and very much to the point, and many a time I have known his few words to turn a debate completely round from the direction which previous eloquence had appeared to be steering it.

I am not a politician, and I really do not know if Mr Natesan is a Swarajist, Justiceite, or an Independant, and I certainly do not care. One thing I do know, and that is that he is a gentleman, and no higher compliment can be paid to any man.

Now that he is a Member of the Council of State, and is the Honourable Mr. Natesan, one can appropriately slightly misquote Shakespeare, and say "And Natesan is an honourable man". And in saying so, it would be with far more sincerity than when Mark Antony made a similar remark concerning Brutus,



**"MANGALA VILAS" the residence of the Hon. Mr. Natesan, where the Sashriabdha-Poorthi was celebrated.**



## Mr. S. Satyamurti, B.A., B.L.

I have very great pleasure in paying publicly my tribute of affection and gratitude to my esteemed friend, the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan. Sixty years is a long period of life in this country, especially for a strenuous man like my friend. But the years seem to sit lightly on him, and, on this auspicious occasion, his friends will only express the wish that he may grow younger, as the years go by.

I do not desire to write here of his public activities, except to say that he has a record of well discharged public duties to his credit. As a Journalist, as a politician, as a Municipal Councillor, as a member of the Senate and the Syndicate of the Madras University, and as a Member of the Council of State, Mr. Natesan has discharged his duties, efficiently and courageously, according to his lights. He has taken public life seriously. His services to the cause of Indians in South Africa will always be remembered with gratitude by them and by India.

I would rather write of his personal qualities of head and heart. Death severs many ties, but Mr. G. A. Natesan's attachment to the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar was so profound and sincere that, after his death and in spite of strong opposition, Mr. Natesan organised a memorial committee, and the Krishnaswami Aiyar Statue before the Senate House is the result of his enthusiastic devotion to a dead friend. This is a great human virtue, and I honour Mr. Natesan for it.

Mr. Natesan is one of those men who can be at home with the highest or with the lowest. He has neither the inferiority nor the superiority complex. I had the honour of knowing him in person when I was a student in the Madras Christian College in 1906 and 1907. Mr. Natesan was then a big public man, and I was a mere student. That made no difference. We have moved towards each other all these years, exactly on those friendly terms. I owe my first introduction to public life to him. Since then our paths have lain apart, not unoften in hostile political camps. But that has made no difference in our personal relations. On the other hand, we have learnt to love and esteem each other, the better for those differences of opinion.

One more personal characteristic of Mr. Natesan I should like to mention. To take defeat in a sportsmanlike manner is a very desirable

but a very rare human quality. By his age, position, and services on the municipal council, he deserves to occupy the Mayoral Chair of the Madras Municipal Council and has so deserved for many years. By a concatenation of circumstances, however, he has been kept from that chair. A lesser man may have gone away in a huff or miserably sulked. Mr. Natesan has done neither. At the very meeting at which he was defeated, he rose to his full height and made a speech which, for grace or appropriateness left nothing to be desired. Nor, has he given up municipal work. On the other hand, he has taken to it again. May he live long and serve his city and his country!

### **Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Editor 'The Leader', Allahabad**

**H**OW time flies! Mr. Natesan is about to complete 60 years of age. And yet it was as if but yesterday that I saw him first in the original office of Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., all bustle and motion, busy with the publication of "Indian Politics", which he was eager to bring out before the Congress of that year (1898)—held at Madras itself under the presidency of Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose. I next saw Mr. Natesan at the Madras Provincial Conference at Madura in 1901. Mr. Anandacharlu was the President. Mr. Govindaragava Ayyar won his first laurels on the political stage and there were there the veterans Vijayaraghava Chariar and G. Subramania Ayyar, among other noted men and eloquent speakers being Messrs. M. Krishnan Nair, K. R. Guruswami Ayyar, M. R. Venkatarama Ayyar and A. Rajarama Ayyar. Mr. Natesan at that time but 27 was one of the eloquent speakers at the Conference. During the 32 years that have passed since, Mr. Natesan has grown in age and stature, in experience and public usefulness, but at 60 he is the same vivacious, energetic, active man as he was when he was a young man full of vigour and ambition. He deserves every appreciation for his public spirit. He is an example to young men desirous of becoming publicists, how one can prosper even in that uninviting line which has been the grave of the worldly prospects of so many others. My one regret in this hour of congratulations is that his elder brother, Mr. Vaidyaraman, is not by his side to rejoice with him and to shower his blessings on him. Another good soul Mr. Natesan must be missing is Mr. K. B. Ramanatha Ayyar, but all are happy that Mr. Srinivasa Sastri is there to fill worthily the places of both of them. May Mr. Natesan have before him many more years of health and happiness, is my prayerful wish!

## Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao, B.A., B.L.

*Editor, The Mysore Economic Journal*

THE first impression that comes to my mind of my old friend Mr Natesan is that of an young boy at the Triplicane Anglo-Vernacular, now Hindu High School, Triplicane, where we were co-students, now nearly forty-five years ago. He was even then an active, garrulous personage with sharp eyes, full of animal spirits and the desire to get to the front. There was a peppermint seller in the outer court-yard of the old school and my friend, as ill-luck would have it, by accident made the bottles meet each other in rather violent fashion. The result was more disastrous to the bottles than to the peppermints, but the wily vendor tried to make capital out of it and tried to fleece my friend. But he, not to be outwitted, put on a brave show and well,—suggested, that he had placed the bottles at a wrong place and could not certainly claim any damages if they got toppled over when boys went about their own business. I don't exactly remember how the matter ended but my belief is my friend got off cheap and there ended the matter. But that incident is characteristic of my friend's qualities. He has always succeeded where others have failed. He has always made a new departure, and he has always stood out for the public cause. If he has proved a useful man of business and a man of affairs, it is largely due to his intrepidity, clearness of vision, capacity to forecast things, and an uncanny knack to beware of what is occurring round about himself. If you remember these qualities in one, and that in an ambitious man to make a mark in life, you will understand the Honourable Mr G. A. Natesan and how and why he has been both an independent and a prosperous public man from the very start of his life's career.

I have spoken above of his earliest school days. I next see him at the Presidency College—he was always a few classes above me—and there he created quite a stir by becoming the chief instigator of a design to push that College to the front and incidentally make for some public life among College boys. He was the most ardent Secretary of the Presidency College Literary Society, which became quite a famous institution in Southern India for some time. The biggest people delivered addresses before it and my friend became—as he well deserved to be—the man of the hour. The addresses were printed—a thing unknown in those days—and circulated *by sale*. Mr Natesan has

always been a business man, the business instinct has ever been strong in him. He sold and sold and made the Society not only famous but also left its finances strong. The result of his connection with the Society was that the journalistic instinct in him asserted itself and in later life claimed him to itself with results beneficial not only to himself but also to the nation. He later was one of the moving spirits of the University Union, quite a novel one then.

Seeking uncommon ways of doing service to the public has thus come to him quite naturally. He, indeed, typifies a class by himself. I cannot think of another who has made a success of his life in the manner he has done. He started as a journalist and is sticking to it still—most successfully—in his sixtieth year. Say what you will, that is a fine record. If he has not deviated much, he has not achieved less. What could a monthly journal do? So asked a friend when Mr Natesan started the *Indian Review*, now nearly thirty-three years ago. Why, what could it not do? At any rate, that is the answer suggested by the success of this particular monthly in the hands of Mr Natesan. To put it generally, it has shown that it can influence the public in a manner that a Daily ordinarily does not even yet. For considered opinions, for pros and cons and for critical estimates, one goes to a monthly. In India, before the *Indian Review* came into existence, political pamphleteering of a kind was known, but journalism of the monthly type was still comparatively unknown. Of course, Mr Natesan has consistently made the *Review* speak—as if with a soul. Has a journal a soul? asked the late Mr. Leonard Huxley and answered the question himself by flinging a copy of the journal he edited. Such a journal has been the *Indian Review* for many years now. It has not only spoken out fearlessly on public questions but also not infrequently moulded public opinion in particular directions. To particularize, on the Hindu Gains of Legal Learning Bill, on Indians in South Africa, on the position of Indians abroad generally, on Constitutional Reforms for India, and on many other topics, it has helped to create popular opinion in a manner which has been acknowledged on all hands as worthy of a very high class organ of public opinion. Opinions may legitimately vary as to the lines of policy advocated by it on occasions, but there can be no gainsaying the point that the journal has, in his hands, proved a most potent factor in developing public opinion on sound lines.

This brings me to two or three points in the daily labour of my old friend to which I should perforce refer, if I am to complete the picture I have in view. He was the first, down South at any rate, to endeavour to produce a monthly journal on up-to-date lines and maintain it in steady fashion on certain standardised lines. He modelled his *Review* on the far-famed *Review of Reviews* of Mr W T Stead, but unlike Mr. Stead, Mr. Natesan, with the instinct of a born business-man, improved on the idea by adding open column articles. He engaged to pay for them, a novelty then in Indian journalism proper as distinguished from the Anglo Indian. He shot at good writers of name and fame, but did not forget poor struggling folk like the writer of these lines. I then began a connection with the *Review* which, let me add, is still kept alive by occasional contributions. Mr. Natesan did himself—at least in the first years I am writing of—a good deal of writing and what is more, added to the stars of the first magnitude in India, some from England.

He was always fortunate in his writers. They brought something to the *Indian Review*, which he made the most of by the manner in which he set out their matter. Quick as quicksilver and dashing and impetuous even, his eyes were ever on the Manager of his printing house—an efficient man who had plied his trade all his life and is still growing strong at 60—with the result that the author saw his finished product exhibited in the manner he loved to see. So connections once begun with the *Review* were kept up and added to. I know of many great names in this connection, and of many others who have passed through Mr Natesan's office - eminent journalists, world famous writers and the very pick of politicians of the East and the West. But this is neither the occasion nor the place for referring to them. Suffice it to say that it is the personality of the Editor that made this possible. Let me refer to the second innovation he introduced into journalism in the South. He made us know the illustrated journal. The Madras dailies to day publish illustrations but in those days, illustrated journalism was not yet the regular order of the day. Mr Natesan popularised it. Others have copied the format of his *Review* and some successfully even. That is a compliment to Mr. Natesan, for as the adage goes imitation is the sincerest form of praise. The third point connected with Mr Natesan's activities is too closely connected with Mr. Natesan's work as Editor of the *Indian Review* and should be adverted to here. He has been

the first—almost the first from the business point of view—to issue literature for the use of poorer folk. In Stead's BOOKS FOR THE BAIRNS struck a new vein no doubt in England, but in India books are an imported matter, and the new life pulsating it required a new type of literature which had to be created. Mr Natesan sought to fill this gap and he has done it with admirable goodwill and splendid business ability. It is easy to be critical but after all is said and done, cheapness is a desirable attribute in a vendable thing. And where the quality of the stuff is good and it has a ready market, the manner of presentation, if not super-excellent, does not in the least matter. But to be plain, Mr Natesan's series, mostly made up from what has appeared in his *Review*, has always been got up well, and has had an irresistible appeal. The writer can say this with some inside knowledge. Not only that, he can testify to the continuous stream of editions that some of his little books have gone through during the past two or three decades.

But as Mr. Natesan the publisher deserves longer space than can be afforded on this occasion, I must pass on to another aspect of his work, though only briefly. Mr. Natesan developed quite early in life a passion for social conviviality. His chambers behind his office rooms were always well furnished and a fan whirled round to keep heads cool. At the proper hour, it became an improvised lunch room. Mr. Natesan has transacted more business at the lunch table in his office than by letter or travel. Intimate friends have met at that table almost daily and many introductions of notabilities have occurred at it. Some have risen to world fame from there, while others have become something like local celebrities. I remember many such parties but will not be drawn into describing them. Not infrequently Mr. Natesan has extended his hospitality to a wider circle. An occasion worth recalling was that when he invited the greater men and women of Madras to his buildings to meet Mr Ramsay MacDonald, the present Prime Minister, then but a mere member on a Commission. The Civil Service was represented at the Party and the Chief Secretary of the day—now a retired Knight and a shining light of the British Rationalist Association—was also there as well with the members of the Executive Council. Needless to say, the guest of the day came to know more of his host and a personal intimacy grew up between the two subsequently which, I think, has increased in its warmth with the lapse of time and holds fast to this day. On another occasion,

Mr. Nevinson, who was recently feted in London, was the chief guest of a select party at Mr Natesan's office. Incidentally I heard then that he had a sheaf of letters of introduction from great men like Morley and others in England to great men in India, including the then Viceroy and the Provincial Governors, all which he never used. Mr Nevinson has ever been a most independent man and held to lines of investigation which have precluded colouring, consciously or unconsciously. No wonder Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru wants him to-day in India. We might pay anything for that solace. Another notable public event in which Mr Natesan took a leading part was the welcoming of unjustly repatriated Indians from South Africa, when he hit on the quite novel idea of showing them the long streets of Madras seated on the longest trucks available in it. They thus saw the city quite joyfully and together and the city saw them in impressive crowds and heard of their untold sufferings in a country for which they and their forefathers had toiled and bled.

One may ask what is the outstanding trait in Mr Natesan—the trait that has meant success. Nobody, I think, denies he has been a journalistic success. He was among the first in South India to make journalism pay—him and his contributors. Now, what is it that has made him win through? Of course, many things go to make up for one's victory. But still there are personal factors which should have helped Mr Natesan to score in the battle of life. First and foremost, a most scrupulous regard to business habits. He would do anything but fail to keep his engagements, next, steadiness, pertinacity and application. Tried methods he would not change, whatever the pressure placed on him. Then, again, quick appreciation of talent in brother journalists and a desire to tap them, not without benefit to them. Alertness is another of his more remarkable qualities. His wide-awakeness made him know many things and this rendered it possible on his part to forestall others. He stuck to his business and success came to him, and he has stuck to success, with the result that he is known in four Continents and his *Review* perhaps even better. I will only add the prayer that he may be long spared to do good to the Motherland he has served so well, so assiduously and so patriotically!

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## Mrs. Kamala Saththianadhan

*Editor, The Indian Ladies' Magazine*

**W**E, Indians, undoubtedly have much to be grateful for to Mr. Natesan, and, long as his period of public work has been, we hope it will be longer still, and that Mr Natesan will be spared for many years more, for the sake of his friends as well as of India

What has appealed to me most in Mr. Natesan's work is his Editorship of the *Indian Review*. From its birth in 1900, his journal has kept up a steady standard of literary excellence, which has seldom been surpassed by other papers. In spite of the necessity for retrenchment in almost every field of work, Mr Natesan has not allowed his flag to be lowered

Besides the *Review*, Mr Natesan has to be congratulated on the many little books of biography and review he has published. He has done this work with great skill, forethought and scholarship, he has managed to gather together accounts of many important people and subjects, which have been of help, not only to Indians, but also to foreigners.

Mr Natesan has always been a leader in the improvement of the conditions of womanhood in India, and an ardent advocate of the many kinds of social reforms indeed. India needs many more selfless, efficient, energetic men like him

## Mr. Durgadas

*Editor, The Associated Press, Simla*

**I**T is very rare for a hard working journalist in this country to attain the age of sixty and, still rarer, to retain freshness of spirit and feeling of youthfulness. The Hon'ble Mr Natesan possesses both. He has always struck me as one whose success in journalism and in politics must be ascribed greatly to his ceaseless efforts, to persistence in the attainment of his objective and to the never-bending spirit which he brings to bear on the problems with which he is faced. His success in life is therefore richly deserved and stands out as an example to those who would wish to carve out for themselves a career of public service by sheer dint of their labours. I have no doubt that Mr Natesan will live many a long year to take part in the public life of the country both as a journalist and as a public man and I join others in wishing him a long and happy life,

## Mr. G. K. Devadhar, M.A., C.I.E.

*President, Servants of India Society*

OF the Hon. Mr. G A Natesan, the journalist, who founded the *Indian Review*, the pioneer among Indian publishers, the alert and vigilant member of the Council of State, the public spirited member of the Madras Corporation and the Syndicate of the Madras University, of the friend and protector of Indians Overseas, I will not attempt any estimate. I leave it to others. I will write about him as a friend, for it is as such, that I knew him best and valued him most.

He was one of my earliest friends in Madras. I met him in 1906. The late Mr. W. T. Stead, then Editor of the *Review of Reviews*, wished to send a deputation of a dozen English journalists to India to study the Indian situation and acquire first hand knowledge. The late Mr Gokhale, who was then the Secretary of the Indian National Congress, had asked me to go to Calcutta, to study the situation with regard to the holding of the Indian National Congress of that year. Some friends in Bombay, interested in the late Mr Stead's idea, advised me to go to Madras from Calcutta, and find out how far friends there were prepared to appreciate it, and support it, with a view to making the deputation's visit to India a success. After finishing my work at Calcutta, I went to Madras. There I met Mr Natesan for the first time. The Madras friends welcomed the idea of receiving the deputation, but saw as shrewd men, many difficulties in the way of making their visit a success, because of difficulties in the way of finding about a dozen Indian hosts, who could entertain them as guests. Moreover, there was the question of accommodating them in their own homes, to bring them into closer touch with Indian life and Indian aspirations, and to see that they were not thrown entirely in the company of Anglo-Indians. Mr. Natesan, and the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Iyer said that it was essential that they should be taken as their guests in their homes. That point impressed me so much that I think of it whenever I think of Mr Natesan.

From that day, he has been my constant friend from whom I have received every kindness. Not only myself but all members of the Society are his friends, and before the Madras Branch of the Servants of India Society was started, we went to him and stayed with him. His house was in a way a rendezvous for those who were members of the Servants of India Society, and the friends of the late

Mr. Gokhale, who had a great regard for Mr. Natesan and his abilities. To this day, even after the starting of the Branch, whenever I am in Madras, I enjoy his hospitality. I never miss my dinner in his house.

He has given me a lot of help at Madras, and I ever count upon it as certain. He has presided over many meetings where I spoke.

While I write about my friend Mr. Natesan, I cannot but mention the old mother of his. That venerable lady has given me many dinners. She was quite orthodox and often chafed at our hetrodoxy. She knew no English, but I made my friend my intrepeter, and learnt many things for the first time about the orthodox ways of life—some of them paradoxical—from his old mother. I would ask her why she objected to a non-Brahmin entering the kitchen, while she would go in a victoria driven by an untouchable Pariah. She would smile, and answer that she did not like to go beyond the inevitable. Again I would enquire of her, as to how she could allow a non-Brahmin woman to help her in kneading the blackgram flour for Papadams by holding the pestle at the top. She would simply laugh at me, and console herself that God will save orthodoxy—to her Hindu Religion. In this way, I learnt many intricacies of the orthodox life as practised in Madras Presidency for the first time in Mr Natesan's house.

I am grateful to Mr. Natesan for many acts of friendship extended to me. Not only to me, but to all members of the Servants of India Society.

### Prof. P. Seshadri, M.A.

*Principal, Government College, Ajmer*

OFFERING my cordial greetings and good wishes to the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, I can perhaps comment on some features of his career and character which have made an impression on me during the last nearly thirty years I can claim to have known him. At a time when Government service was looked upon as the only proper avenue of employment for educated young men, the Hon'ble Mr. Natesan turned his hand to a novel enterprise which he has carried to success by his determination, perseverance and hard work. There was hardly any career in journalism at the time he started the *Indian Review*, without even the advantages of a large capital and the other facilities which make for

success in work of this kind. There can be no better inspiration for young men than this example of success achieved by the sheer force of talent and industry.

Having had opportunities of studying his work at fairly close quarters, I may mention that he has always had a remarkable journalistic sense. With a 'nose' for news and instinctive knowledge of what will interest the public, he has always been vigilant to discover the trend of coming events and provide for popular demands. Whether it is the problem of Indians in foreign countries, or the coming of constitutional reforms in India, Mr. Natesan has always been ready with his publications suitable for the occasion. He should have made an equally great success if he had opportunities of editing a daily newspaper. He should have created a new record in India in publishing a newspaper containing the essence of all the latest features of journalism.

Apart from his success as a journalist, he should receive credit for having created varied cultural interests in a large circle of readers in India by many useful publications, almost all of them sold at a price within the reach of even the man in the street. The biographies of eminent Indians issued under his auspices have brought together a mass of valuable material of great service to Indians. The thousands of copies of the *Gita* in the English version which have been distributed by his press have certainly contributed to an awakening of interest in religion. There is hardly a single department of national activity in India to which he has not directed his attention and for the helping of which he has not produced cheap but useful literature.

Among his personal qualities, special reference may perhaps be made to his sense of friendship and to his readiness to help those who have rendered him a good turn or who are considered worthy of assistance. Free from any sense of snobbishness, Mr Natesan has always had a large circle of acquaintances even among those who are not very well placed in life and many a person can perhaps recall his pleasant greeting on the Esplanade in Madras, even at a time when he was not important enough to be taken notice of by a gentleman who had already risen to eminence in the journalistic profession. May he live long to enjoy the fruits of his work—of few people can it be said with equal force that they have been the makers of their own fortunes!

## Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, C.I.E.

THE Hon. G. A. Natesan's is a well known name in the Public Life of Madras. Partly because of the nature of his public activities and partly because of his work as a printer and publisher, his name has come to be known not only all over India but also outside India.

Throwing my mind back over the past, the first considerable activity of his that comes into my mind is his agitation against Sir V. Bhashyam Aiyangar's Gains of Learning Bill. He became associated, increasingly with years, with the late Mr V Krishnaswami Aiyar and his liberalism in politics became fixed, consistent and unwavering. His public work is well known to all and does not need to be recounted in detail. His work as a member of the Municipal Corporation and in the University for over twenty-five years, his deep interest in the matter of Indians overseas and the South African deportees will come into every one's mind. His part in the events of his time and in the Congresses and Conferences all over India and his fearless and independent work latterly as a member of the Council of State in spite of the handicap of being a nominated member are also well known. The contribution to nationalism which his publications constitute may not be appreciated now but will in time receive due recognition.

From the days at College when as Secretary of College Societies, he invited many public men to come and deliver lectures or to preside at meetings in the Presidency College, he made many friends both Indian and European and kept alive his contact with them and retained their affection for him by his own qualities of affection and loyalty. He took active steps to get public Statues in memory of Lord Ripon, Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and Mr. G K Gokhale. Though his friendships were many and remarkable for intimacy, his personal attachment to Mahatma Gandhi and the latter's affection for him require special mention.

There has always been much jealousy of his influence with Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar and Mahatma Gandhi as of his wide acquaintance with public men during the College days. He has had to live down a great deal of prejudice and suspicion during a very considerable part of his life both for himself as an individual and on the ground

of his being a liberal in politics Mr. Natesan has had the unique distinction of receiving warning from the Government on the one side and of being suspected as a Government man on the other. One is glad to find that by his steady and unwavering pursuit of the line of conduct that he had set for himself, he has disarmed opponents and irrespective of political differences people vie with each other in offering felicitations to him on the sixtieth return of his birthday.

Though I came to know of him near 40 years ago as a graduate from an up country College come to Madras to study Law, and subsequently came into touch with him in connection with a Memorandum for the Privy Council which he printed for Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, my personal association with him was such a slow growth during a period of twenty-five years, that I am unable to say when *he* came to know me and recognise me as a friend. Within the last fifteen years our intimacy had so grown that we had heated discussions on public and private questions at our evening beach meetings. This form of exhibition of our mutual affection had become so marked a feature of our daily meetings, that a common friend who used to enjoy them as a silent witness inquired from the *mofussil* whether we continued our meetings and sparrings at the beach as usual. I refer to these verbal quarrels in particular because they have given me a unique opportunity of bearing testimony to some of his not well known personal qualities and virtues.

I know, as few people know, how deep his affections are, how readily he forgets and forgives offences and apologises for them and how incapable he is of deep rancour or animosity. He claims to have changed for the better considerably since his younger years when he pronounced hard and inflexible judgments on men and to realise, now more than ever before he did, that people are really much better than we suppose them to be and I must say that there is much within my knowledge to justify this claim of his.

Those who loved Mr. Natesan have steadily grown to love him more and more, those who were indifferent to him have begun to like him; those who hated him and attributed all sorts of imaginable and unimaginable sins to him have abated a great deal of their hate and rancour. These changes are in themselves a tribute to his qualities. I hope I am right in the belief that they also attest to the slowly but steadily improving temper of the public judgments of our time.

## Mr. C. R. Srinivasan, B.A.

*Editor, The Swadeshamitran*

IT was a bit of a surprise to me to learn that Mr. G. A. Natesan completes his sixtieth year this month. How time does fly! I reckoned he was yet on the right side of fifty; few who meet him to-day will disagree with my estimate, he certainly does not look his age and it looks as though he has a recipe of his own to keep young while growing old; I wish he would share the secret with the world.

Mr. Natesan is one of the landmarks of Madras; if you go outside Madras and mention the name of Natesan say in Bombay, Calcutta or Delhi, they invariably conclude that you are referring to the Hon'ble Mr G. A. Natesan, he is the only one of that name well known elsewhere, and his name is a bit of luck too; it is short, easily pronounced, and carries no communal suffixes—Iyer or Iyengar, Pillai or Mudaliar, Chetty or Naidu, no scope for any confusion, frequently one notices in N Indian papers references to Ramaswamy Iyengar and Rangaswamy Mudaliar; small chance of any such liberty being taken with Natesan's name. Whatever might be his position in this Province, he is the one and only Natesan for every other Province.

Mr. Natesan has laboured in many fields, Municipal, Educational, Social and Political, but, to my mind, his claim to distinction rests largely on the part he has played as a publisher in Renaissance India, at the threshold of life, few have the vision to see the possibilities of an unchartered career and fewer still have the courage to stake all on its chances. Mr. Natesan had both the vision and the courage and more than all, the qualities requisite for success; I admire his enterprise, those were days, be it remembered, when there was no problem of educated unemployed; Government service still had its glamour and if Mr. Natesan had hankered after modest success, with his influence and qualifications, it should not have been difficult for him to find a suitable opening in the service-de-luxe; but to his credit it must be said that he preferred an independent career with all its hazards; the success that comes to those, who dare and do, has been his; none will grudge it.

Mr. Natesan's career as a printer and publisher at the beginning of the century carried potentialities he could not have foreseen when he commenced work ; the tide of Indian Renaissance was fast flowing and Mr. Natesan, shrewd business man as he developed, was quick to seize opportunities that came his way ; he became the publisher par excellence of current Indian National literature, the *Indian Review* that he founded apart from the success that it achieved in itself, gave him an admirable background for development of his publishing business ; the knowledge that he gained, and the equipment that came his way in the steady pursuit of his business, easily marked him out as one well-fitted to play no small part in the many-sided public activities that were opening out before him and it was not long before he found himself in the thick of them all, he had a genius for organisation which made his co-operation in every public endeavour doubly welcome, but whatever he attempted, the claims of his business were never far from his thoughts, every adventitious aid that came his way was pressed to its advantage, yet in doing this he was but pursuing the pathway of the pioneer and to this single minded devotion to his work, much of the success he has achieved in his business is attributable to.

To say this, should not however be held to deny or detract the value of the services he has rendered in many a field of public work. Service in terms of sacrifice is a latter day development and few of his generation can be held to pass that test, unlike a successful lawyer or a retired Government servant who takes to public work in his leisure hours, the advantage with Natesan lay in the fact that the normal pursuit of his business coincided with the development of public interest, and even if he had done nothing more than that, he would be yet entitled to credit and recognition. But in Mr. Natesan's case, few will deny that he has rendered service of no mean character in many a field of public work and it is but fair and proper that it should be adequately recognised. Mr. Natesan has lived a useful life with credit to himself and his country, and I am sure I am echoing the wishes of many a friend and admirer of his, that he should live long and do what more he can for the education and uplift of his countrymen!

## Mr. R. N. Aingar, Bar-at-Law

**A** grey head on well set up shoulders, a broad face with a determined look and quick, searching eyes; a jerky, impatient manner hiding an intensely dynamic and forceful personality; himself surcharged with an untiring activity and galvanising every one near him into unwonted energy,—Mr. G. A. Natesan is a live wire every time and all time.

I have called on him of an early morning at his palatial residence in Mylapore and found him supervising the garden work with an abundance of nervous enthusiasm. I have frequently seen him in his Editorial Sanctum in George Town, wherefrom he has so long been guiding the destinies of his now famous Publishing House with an unerring instinct for business. I have travelled with him through Central India and marvelled at his forethought in arranging the whole programme in its smallest details. He is indeed and always a perfect host and one loves to recall the many tea parties and dinner parties he has given or managed. I have sat with him on the same platform at a session of the National Liberal Conference and attended with him its several committee meetings, I found him quick in the uptake, conclusive in his repartees, and unimpeachable in his fund of information on all topics. His speeches in the City Corporation meetings and the University Senate discussions at Madras and in the Council of State deliberations at Delhi reveal his wide and thorough grasp of all civic, educational and political problems. Indeed one might almost be tempted to say of him that what he does not know isn't worth knowing.

This much is certain—he knows his own mind very clearly and he can make anybody do just what *he* wants. He has a driving force in him that soon overcomes all opposition and brings out the best in the other man. He has had indeed a peculiar flair for journalism but not of the mere dreamy or impracticable type. He is a hard headed business man who has sought success, who has achieved success, who has success writ large on him. His emotional stability and intellectual alertness happily combined with social diplomacy and political sagacity has enabled him to achieve much and of a lasting character. He can look back with pride and satisfaction on a long and eventful career in which he has closely identified himself with all public movements tending to elevate and ennoble life in its ever widening circles of Municipal, National and International activity. May he be spared long to continue such work!

## Sir Ross Barker

*Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, Government of India*

IT must rest with others to commemorate the striking services which Mr. G. A. Natesan has rendered in his own province of Madras, as a member of the Council of State and above all as a disseminator of culture and wisdom during the last 34 years as Editor of the *Indian Review*. My own experience of Mr. Natesan has been chiefly associated with the discharge by him of a little known but onerous duty that of examining candidates orally for the Indian Civil Service. The examination is usually conducted by a board of three or four examiners, who over a space of about three weeks interview the candidates in turn for about half an hour each and after this short experience endeavour to assign to them in the shape of marks their relative values as potential members of the Indian Civil Service. It rests with the Public Service Commission to select the examiners and there is a singular scarcity of men who are both well fitted and able to perform this responsible task. It requires a great aptitude in the choice of questions, a singular economy of words, a careful avoidance of every irrelevance and a swift realisation of the implications of answers. Ultimately it requires enormous discrimination and ability to arrive at a just appreciation of those impalpable factors which constitute character. It was a happy hour when in the early days of the Public Service Commission, Mr. Natesan agreed to undertake the task and he very gallantly came to the help of the Commission at short notice on a subsequent occasion. I know of no examiner whose judgment was sounder or whose penetration was more unerring. It is wider knowledge of many aspects of life, and his extensive reading enabled him to ask questions which were well adapted to every type of candidate. He was a citizen of the world, very capable of assessing those, whose first duty, if they were to be members of the Indian Civil Service, was to look at affairs with the broad and tolerant outlook of such a citizen. With his unassuming manner he was an enemy to every kind of pretentiousness and I well remember with what confidence I could call for his judgment on a voluble and conceited candidate.

As a reader of detective stories I hoped at one time to enlist Mr. Natesan as a sleuth, an occupation in which he would doubtless have excelled as he did in other matters. An aspirant to the Indian Civil Service hoped to further his career by breaking into the offices of the Commission and multiplying the marks assigned to him and two

other candidates by ten by the simple process of adding a O to them on the mark sheet. When he found his misdeed had been discovered, he repeated the process on the following night. It will be remembered that Arnold Bennett's "Card" initiated a career of great success by an identical villainy. Mr Natesan with unerring penetration at once pitched on that one of the three candidates who might have committed the crime, though the Police professed themselves unable to distinguish between them. I had hopes that Mr. Natesan would add to his other public services by unravelling the clues and unmasking the offender. Unfortunately the task became superfluous. The miscreant admitted his guilt coupling it with a request that he might again become a candidate for the Indian Civil Service.

All this however represents but a small part of Mr. Natesan's work. Of those wider fields in which he laboured I saw enough to appreciate his patriotism, his zeal for the advancement of India, his dislike of violence, his sagacity in counsel and his firm but temperate grasp of principles. It is a matter of regret to me that my severance from India has diminished my opportunities of associating with one whom I so greatly valued.

## Dewan Bahadur V. Shanmuga Mudaliar

*Ex-Sheriff of Madras*

**M**R. NATESAN has been in the forefront of our public life during the last 20 years of my acquaintance with him. He has made a name for himself as a journalist and politician. Others may dilate at length on his political work and his liberal propaganda, but I prefer to distinguish his solid achievements in the sphere of civic activities. He has not been content with platitudinous appeals to patriotism but has laboured incessantly for the good of the City and the Province of which he is such a model citizen. To have given 25 years of his life to the work of the University and to the Corporation of Madras is a record of which he may well be proud. But above all there is one aspect of his work that deserves particular mention. My friend is singularly free from the taunt of communalism. Mr. Natesan knows no distinction of caste or creed and it is a sight to see him fraternising with his Non-Brahmin, Muslim and Christian friends in the common endeavour to promote the common cause of all—citizens of the same Motherland.

Long may he be spared to continue his meritorious services to the Motherland!

## Prof. C. Kunhan Raja, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.)

*Head of the Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras*

THE name of the Hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan was known to me as long ago as 1907, when I was studying in the elementary classes of a High School. The *Indian Review* is the first English Periodical that I have seen; Mr. Natesan's publications in the field of Indian politics are the first books of general interest that I have read. Before the time when I first heard of the name G. A. Natesan, I do not think that I had heard of more than half a dozen Indian politicians. Those were exciting times when I first began to hear about Mr. Natesan, *i.e.*, the year 1907. I could not escape the storm of political troubles in India. It was the publications of Mr. G. A. Natesan and his *Indian Review* that satisfied my thirst for information on Indian politics at the time. In those days I could recite by heart the speeches of most of the national leaders of India, and I was able to do it because of the publications of Mr. Natesan. My earliest recollections of his publications are the invariable formula—"Price Rs. 3; to the subscribers of the *Indian Review*, Rs. 2-8".

For twenty years before our friendship began, I had the personality of Mr. G. A. Natesan deeply impressed on me. The causes for such a deep impression being produced in me are many. Ever since 1907 I have been a regular reader of his *Indian Review*. What is most striking in his journal is that the older it grows, the fresher it becomes. Neither in matter nor in method does Mr. Natesan allow his journal to become stale. Under his guidance, the *Indian Review* never got into a groove. It is always original and thrilling, but never aimless or sensational. The contributions came from a wide range of persons occupying high positions in the manifold walks of life. The consequent sustained interest is a unique feature of the journal. For this reason, the personality of Mr. G. A. Natesan is always present before the readers of the *Indian Review*. Every important event in the history of modern Indian politics is accompanied by a publication of Mr. Natesan, placing before the public the entire relevant literature connected with that event. His publications have the rare feature of being neatly got up so that even the most fastidious reader can handle them without blushing, and at the same time being fairly cheap, so that even persons of average means can buy them. Few factors have contributed towards the political education of the Indian

public, as the publications of Mr. Natesan. For every prominent person visiting Madras, Mr. Natesan has been the ever hospitable host, and this is another reason for my having heard of Mr. Natesan more than of the other national leaders of India. I do not know whether there is another house in India, which, like the house of Mr. Natesan in Thambu Chetty Street, Madras, will go down to history as having been hallowed by the presence for a number of years of many great men who have worked for humanity at large and for India in particular. When I had the privilege of sitting in the hall of that house, I felt that in times to come that house will become a temple of pilgrimage.

These were some of the factors that created such a deep impression on me, and when I was introduced to him about six years ago, I was able to start with a fund of friendship accumulated for nearly twenty years. During the last six years Mr. Natesan has looked on me with a paternal affection and he has ever regarded me as no less than a member of his happy home. He is now to me a steady and reliable friend, a kind guardian, a wise counsellor and a generous helper. He is so affectionate and kind to me that whenever I visit his house—and this is a very frequent event—he will not allow me to depart without taking something with me, at least some fruit grown in his garden.

A few days back, when the question of celebrating his completing the sixtieth year of his life was being considered, I tried to analyse the impression that he has made on me so that I may find out what it was in him that has made the impression so powerful. I consider this feature the most conspicuous. Mr. Natesan had many opportunities, and he created more opportunities for himself to help others, and he has done justice to all such opportunities, he had many provocations, but never did a harm to any one. There are few persons in public life of whom such a thing could be said.

The following verse (original in Sanskrit) written by a great poet, philosopher and scholar of ancient India, describes very appropriately the greatness, which Mr. Natesan now possesses :

They rise up because they are modest, their glories spread because they speak about the glories of others; their own ends are accomplished because they undertake only such activities as are for the good of others, the wicked persons, from whose tongue proceed insulting and injurious words, are condemned because they are patient; such are the great men honoured in this world, their ways being mysterious and wonderful. By whom are they not envied?

## Mr. J. Chatres Molony, I.C.S. (Rtd.)

FEW things have given me more pleasure than the invitation to contribute a few words to the Supplement of the *Indian Review* which celebrates the sixty-first birthday of the Editor, the Hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan. First, as is our European custom, I wish Mr. Natesan many happy returns of the day, and I express my hope that he may long be spared to continue his literary and political work. It is eight years since I left India for good, and nearly fifteen years since my association with Mr. Natesan on the Madras Corporation came to an end. The invitation is a pleasing proof that the passage of the years has not obliterated the remembrance of our friendship.

I think that our friendship was founded on the only basis on which a friendship can continue, namely, on the understanding that every man has a right to hold and to express his own opinions. On public questions Mr. Natesan and I probably disagreed more often than we agreed, but the disagreement, on his side at least was always frank and courteous, and from our disagreements I feel that I learned a good deal. I think that we both sincerely desired the good of India, but from Mr. Natesan I learned that the Indian has his own view of what is good, that the ideas and customs of the West, admirable, no doubt, for the West, are not necessarily suitable to, deserving of adoption by the East.

Good wine needs no bush, and it is scarcely necessary for me in this year of grace to commend the high level of literary excellence at which Mr. Natesan has maintained the *Indian Review* during the thirty and odd years of its existence. It was my good fortune to have occasional contributions accepted for publication, and of the editor's "oriental patience" I retain pleasing memories. It was greater than the patience of editors in Europe! On one occasion I was asked to contribute an article. Mr. Natesan sighed as he handed me the proof. "You seem to want about half the number in which to express yourself," he said. Nevertheless he printed the article unabridged! I join with all in congratulating Mr. Natesan on reaching this auspicious milestone in his course, and I trust that for him there are many milestones intervening between the sixty-first and the one which we all must reach some day.

## Mr. K. Balasubramania Iyer, B.A., B.L.

I feel called upon almost as a filial duty to send my best wishes and give expression to my heartfelt rejoicings on this occasion, as the son of my father\* with whom Mr. Natesan had a long record of close association and co-operation in public activities and intimate friendship. It took me a little time, indeed, to realise that Mr. Natesan, who is always associated in my mental picture with a vigorous young man of adventure and grit would be sixty years of age on the 24th August. This feeling at once gives the clue to his main qualities. My knowledge of him goes far back to my early years of childhood and not a day passed, then, without my having seen him engaged in vigorous—sometimes even heated—conversation with my father on many topics of public interest in those days. An interesting incident which comes to my mind on this occasion, will reveal the fundamental characteristic of Mr. Natesan. Once, when a wordy tussle ensued between a relation of mine and Mr. Natesan, I heard Mr. Natesan make the vehement remark that he would take a bet that, if both that gentleman and himself were to begin life in Australia, he would succeed and not the other gentleman, and that he had no need to bank upon the influential support of big men. This was, indeed, the spirit with which Mr. Natesan began life as a young man. He is, essentially, the maker of his own fortune. Without any adventitious aids, merely by his own capacities, Mr. Natesan chalked out a career for himself, and has now become the famous proprietor of a printing and publishing concern and the Editor of the *Indian Review*, a publicist and politician with a distinguished record of public service to his credit. For over two decades he has been prominently before the public eye and been connected with the Corporation of Madras and the University, and other public institutions, and he was also a devoted and prominent Congressman in the pre-non-co-operation days. His services for the cause of our struggling countrymen in South Africa deserve special mention, and he it was that, in the days of the passive resistance movement there led by Gandhiji, helped it from Madras. With Mr. Natesan, his friendship with a number of distinguished public men is a cherished and abiding possession and he has been always steadfastly loyal to them. It is well known with what sincerity and devotion, he worked for the erection of the statues of his friends, the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Iyer and Mr. G. K. Gokhale, which now adorn the compound of the Senate House.

We all hope and pray that God will vouchsafe to him long life, health and prosperity.

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\* The Late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Iyer.

## Mr. A. A. Hayles

*Editor, The Madras Mail*

FEW men can claim to have crowded as much into sixty years of life as the Hon Mr. G. A. Natesan, whose sixty-first birthday a host of friends and admirers will celebrate on the 24th August. As journalist, politician, University Senator, and fervent advocate of national causes he has spent busy days. It is impossible accurately to assess his influence on Indian public life. As publisher, his works have spread knowledge and inspired many thousands. As a keen journalist he saw what the public wanted and anticipated the demand for those facts about men and things which normally it is difficult to discover gathered together in a single volume. He produced such volumes, lightening thereby the work of politicians and publicists, partisan and opponent alike. His political attachments have always been marked by a robust sanity. It is this that has won him the friendship and sincere admiration of many who frankly disagree with his views. His devotion to the cause of Indians abroad, specially to that of those of his countrymen, who emigrated to South Africa, and their descendants has been consistent and effective. But to myself his work for the city of Madras, which he has made his home and the centre of all his activities, makes the biggest appeal. For twenty-three years he has been a member of the Madras City Council. It is a splendid record, deserving of greater recognition than has hitherto been accorded it. Throughout these twenty-three years Mr. Natesan has worked for better city government, for a cleaner, healthier Madras. He has scrupulously refrained from the more blatant methods employed by others, but the results of his labours have not suffered because he refused to use the City Council to advertise himself. His influence in keeping discussions to the subjects before the Council has always been, and still is, invaluable. Whatever new forces may arise in Madras City politics, the name of Natesan will always be remembered as that of one who realised the obligations and duties of citizenship, and strove to serve his fellows to the utmost of his ability.

The coming of his sixty-first birthday sees him somewhat released from the more pressing concerns of daily life and freer to pursue the ideals of service which have ever inspired his public life. God has

blessed him with a sufficient measure of prosperity, not enough to spoil him but enough to leave him free for the peculiar services to his fellows for which these times call, services for which his wide experience and ripe commonsense eminently fit him. I do not doubt that they will be willingly rendered. These are difficult days. Older leaders cannot always command the respectful hearing to which their abilities and knowledge entitle them, but Mr. Natesan will refuse to be silenced. His energy will make his suppression impossible. Therefore, in the good old British fashion, I gladly wish him "Many happy returns of the day", confident that whatever the number of days Providence may grant him, they will be well and worthily employed.

### Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao

I offer my hearty congratulations to my esteemed friend Mr. G. A. Natesan on his attaining his 61st birthday. He has had a strenuous life and it is a matter for great satisfaction that he is in the enjoyment of good health and is in a position to do public service for some years to come. At a time when the youth of the country were solely thinking of Government service as a career, Mr. Natesan adopted an independent profession and his energy and pushfulness has brought him to the top. I have known him since his boyhood and in later years as a friend and colleague in the political life of the country, and could tell many stories of his resourcefulness, adroitness, energy and patriotic fervour. In two directions, his work was of an abiding character. As a member of the Madras Corporation for over a quarter of a century, his strenuous and meritorious work deserved recognition, and in the natural course of events, he should have been elected the President of the Corporation. As one who has taken considerable part in the management of Local affairs in this Province, I regret that the exigencies of party politics stood in the way of his being elected to the highest honorary post in the Corporation. He has been connected with the University almost since he ceased to be a student of the Presidency College and has done very valuable work for the University all these years. He has been associated with almost every public movement in the Province for over a quarter of a century and his age has not in any way diminished his enthusiasm for public work. I wish him all happiness.

## Mr. Glyn Barlow, M.A.

*Late Editor, The Madras Times.*

**M**Y Indian Mail brings me the following piece of news:

“The Honourable Mr. G. A. Natesan, editor of the *Indian Review*, completes his sixtieth year on August 24th, when his Shastabdapoorthy will be celebrated.”

G. A. Natesan's sixtieth year! Well, well! Time flies fast indeed. In my mind's eye I see—as if it were yesterday—G. A. Natesan, a bright-eyed lad, seated beside me as my Indian assistant in the office of the *Madras Times*—see him so clearly that I find it difficult to realise that “the Honourable Mr. G. A. Natesan completes his sixtieth year”.

Seven years ago, at the celebration of the silver jubilee of the *Indian Review*, I wrote some paragraphs about Mr. G. A. Natesan in his youth; and now, with an old man's aptitude for reminiscences, I am reminiscent again.

My Indian assistant was fresh from the Presidency College, a newly-plumed B. A., who had qualified himself, however, for life's work not merely by poring over university text-books but by taking a deep and continual interest in men and matters; and it was for this that I accepted his eager offer of voluntary assistance on the *Madras Times*. I thought that, in my unfamiliarity with Indian ways, it would be an advantage to have an intelligent and well-informed Indian beside me as a referee. But G. A. Natesan was very much more than a referee. He was endowed with the journalistic spirit and soon showed that he could write, and, besides paragraphs on various Indian subjects, his anonymous weekly column of *Indian Notes*—wholesome tit-bits about Indian social occurrences—was a valuable contribution. For notes such as those G. A. Natesan had a particular aptitude, because even in his youth he was a shrewd judge of character and could recognise not only the good qualities of compatriots but also any foibles. He had a great dislike for anything that savoured of pretentiousness or of sham and was keen in its condemnation.

More than once my assistant opened my eyes to a delusion. A reminiscence will serve as an example:

A certain ‘millionaire’ of Madras had a reputation for charity, and every week there appeared in our local columns a notification to the following general effect:—

**FEEDING THE POOR.** Yesterday at the house of So-and-so twenty-five poor persons were fed sumptuously at So-and-so's expense, and went home full of praises for their benefactor.

It would have cost a considerable sum to have given a "sumptuous dinner" every week to twenty-five European guests, and I imagined that I was encouraging public charity by publishing the weekly notification that somebody sent me as a voluntary contribution. Indian food, however—in those far-off days, before the export of Indian comestibles had developed—was inconceivably cheap, and G. A. Natesan taught me the truth:

"So and-so's weekly notice is a self-advertisement; he sends it to you himself, or lets his clerk do so. Poor people can be well fed for an anna and a half per head, and can be 'fed sumptuously'—as the phrase goes—for two annas per head; so at the cost of three or four rupees a week So-and-so gets a standing advertisement for another Birthday honour."

The notification was never published again, and I found that all that my assistant had told me was true. This was by no means the only bubble that he pricked.

In a very short time G. A. Natesan had acquired a good working knowledge of journalism. On an English newspaper there were no prospects for an Indian journalist, however capable, and G. A. Natesan was not cut out for an underling. He was the kind of man who gets on best as his own master; and, with a relative's financial help, he set up a business of his own, just opposite the High Court. He invited me round and showed me with appropriate pride a very up-to-date printing-press, which was busily at work in fulfilment of printing-orders that he had secured in connection with the Law.

I remember feeling rather sorry that Natesan had become a "printer" instead of a journalist. But Natesan was wise in his generation; he was going to be printer and journalist both; the printing would bring him money and the journalism would bring him fame; and the press would print the journal. The journalism was very soon in evidence. The *Indian Review* was struggling for birth. G. A. Natesan consulted me about its prospective well-being. He realised that India would be at its best if Indians and Englishmen worked in harmony for its progress, and he showed me for my approval the little emblem of a turbaned Indian and a topee'd

Englishman side by side which for many years appeared on the green wrapper of the *Indian Review*. The young editor intended that from the very beginning his *Review* should be an authoritative publication, and the first number showed his intention. As a student, when he was secretary of the Presidency College Debating Society, he had had the knack of securing leading men for lectures and for chairmanships, and now, as a budding editor, he had the knack of securing the friendly help of leading men for his *Review*, and the very first number had an array of articles by illustrious contributors, one of whom was no less a personage than the Chief Justice of Madras. A winning personality has been a valuable asset to Mr. Natesan throughout his life.

The first number of the *Review* appeared thirty-four years ago, and in maintaining the valuable publication for all these years Mr. G. A. Natesan has done a fine piece of work for India. But besides being whole-hearted and untiring in the editorial chair he has been whole-hearted and untiring in his work for the public good, in the Corporation, in the University, and in the Council of State. And now, at the completion of his sixtieth year, the Honourable Mr. G. A. Natesan is truly a man who has "deserved well of his country".

With Mr. Natesan it has not been a case of brilliance but of character. Uprightness, high-mindedness, a hatred of sham, selfless zeal for India's true welfare, courage in holding fast to high principles, determination, untiring work, and a good heart—it is this that has made the Honourable Mr. G. A. Natesan great.

And now, as an old man in his seventy-eighth year—but, thank God, still hale and hearty—I am going to say a few words to my friend.

"Natesan, I wish that I could be in Madras on your sixtieth birthday, to take your hand and give you my hearty congratulations, but here in far-away England I wish you everything that you could wish for yourself. You have done great things for India, and I know that as long as you are blest with health and strength you will never tire of well-doing. To me you have always been a true friend; I can call to mind occasions when you proved the reality of your friendship, and I always remember you with affection. May you live for many years more, an honour to yourself and to those whom you love and to your native land."

## The Hon. Mr. Justice K. K. Pandalai

**M**Y title to add a laurel to this memento of Mr. Natesan on his attaining 60 years of age is that we have known each other for nearly three-fourths of that period. Others will speak more fittingly of a career unique in Southern India which chose not the well beaten paths to fame, and competence in our Presidency for University men. And yet this old Presidency College boy without wealth or influence of relations who is neither a lawyer, nor doctor nor engineer nor Government servant has become the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan, editor, City-father, elder statesman. The temptation is great to draw a sketch of this figure. But other and more skilful hands must do it when the time comes.

To-day I recall the happy days when neither of us was 'Honourable' but both were something greater, young earnest lads looking straight into each other's eyes, storing up on the broad turf round the Presidency College the lessons for the future. I am sure we would go back to them if we could. But the turf is gone. The place is now covered with blocks of buildings and more are rising. The present generation has to make a short journey beyond the College grounds to the cricket and football grounds. In the early nineties the football ground was just north of the main College building and the cricket ground was west of it, the gymnasium and tennis courts in the corner between the two.

My earliest impressions of Natesan were formed in the tennis and football grounds. He was a sportsman and has been one all his life. The sporting spirit of playing the game and appreciating the other fellow's point of view which was even then apparent has stood him in good stead.

He was not great at games nor an athlete in any sense. I well remember him and Mr. K. Vyasa Rao two kindred spirits sitting in earnest discussion on the turf near the tennis court while the more rough and tumble lot were learning feats on the horizontal and parallel bars. They had just come from the College Debating Society and were still debating some subject such as the propriety of beheading Charles I. They had a funny way in the heat of debate of plucking up the grass blades and chewing them with

great relish which got them among the more ribald, a vegetarian nickname. I plead guilty to breaking up these debates on many occasions and inducting my friend into tennis and football. I also plead guilty to having done so with a certain sense of patronage, for I could give him points on the football field as he could give me points in literary discussion. Another name which comes to mind in my efforts to introduce my generation to the mysteries of kicking a ball into the goal is of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer better known then and now to his friends as plain C. P. We were all proud to have been in the Presidency College. I was never so proud of anything so much as being Captain of football in my time. It was a great time those football days. We remember with affection R. L. Jones, Professor of Physics, who was the President of the Athletic Association and a keen football player. How often in those happy days has Natesan joined the fray in those evening hours which stand out in life as jewels in a string of pearls. There were many others who have since passed beyond the veil. There are still several who have made their mark in life and Natesan is one of those who have made the best use of the lessons learnt in the football field—to work in a team and kick into the goal.

There were no Brahmins and no Non-Brahmins in those days, no Hindus, Muslims or Christians. We were either players or critics. Natesan was both and hence his future success. It was not that orthodoxy was weak outside the College. It was far otherwise as we learnt to our cost. We had a picnic one bright moonlight night on the football field. The game was so popular that we could fit out more than eleven teams at the same time. It was a great meeting and huge quantities of Bakalabath (rice with curds and milk and condiments all mixed together) were consumed. Hindus of the most orthodox castes and of the most depressed, Muslims and Christians all sat abreast and vied with each other in doing justice to the good cheer. All went off grandly and the Captain was a hero, at the top of his fame. The next day came a frost, a killing frost, for some one in Triplicane started the legend that we had incurred one of the inexpiable sins. The unfortunate young man who owned this worthy as guardian had to wash off his sin by drinking cowdung water and the Captain was discredited and crestfallen.

## Mr. Nayapathi Subba Rao Pantulu

IT gives me very great pleasure to learn that the Hon'ble Mr. Natesan completes his 60th year by the 24th August. In these days when men of great promise are cut off in the prime of life, we must be thankful to Providence that he has been spared for the service of the country. The first time I came in contact with him was in connection with the 14th session of the Indian National Congress held in Madras in 1898 of which I was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Though young, he was so bold as to compete with influential firms of standing for the printing of the Congress report and the wonder is that he succeeded in persuading the Committee to give him the job. This was indeed a great honour to the young graduate who chalked out a new line, leaving the beaten paths of the Government service and learned professions. This trait in his character of getting round men and gaining his object while dealing fairly and squarely with them is a marked feature of his life. It struck me at the time that he was one who was bound to come to the front and make his mark in life. This he did in ample measure. It is unnecessary to dwell upon his numerous and varied activities in connection with the Indian National Congress, the Madras Corporation, the Madras University, the National Liberal Federation, the Council of State and several other institutions. What has impressed me most was the great work he did in connection with the South African struggle and the continued interest he has taken in the South African Indians and the shelter and help he gave them whenever they came over to this land. Above all, Mr. Natesan's name is indissolubly associated with the *Indian Review* which he has assiduously nurtured and made one of the most popular and leading magazines in Indian journalism. I cannot omit to mention his great achievement in the field of literary activity—the publication of numerous books and tracts on varied subjects for the dissemination of useful knowledge throughout the country about men and measures. I have admired his devotion to the Hindu Dharma in bringing out in cheap editions of thousands of copies of Dr. Besant's *Bhagavad Gita* and giving them away at the lowest possible price without any profit. His electrical energy is some thing remarkable and reminds one of the late Dr. Sir S. Subrahmanya Iyer of revered memory. I do not think there is any one in India who has the ear and won the esteem of so many Europeans and Indians. I rejoice with his numerous friends at the celebration of the Sashtiabdha-Poorthi and offer my felicitations and good wishes for his long life and happiness.

## The Hon. Sir M. Krishnan Nair

THE completion of sixty years of age is an important event in the lifetime of a Hindu. The Hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan attains his sixty-first year of age on the 24th of August 1933, and I have great pleasure in congratulating him on this auspicious event.

I have known Mr. Natesan for about 35 years. He has lived a vigorous and useful life. His general capacity, talents in debate and powers of organisation are of a very high order. He is also a person of a very high character.

The Hon'ble Mr Natesan has been the proprietor and Editor of the *Indian Review*, one of the best-conducted English monthlies in India. The *Indian Review* has an extensive circulation and recently published its Silver Jubilee, when Mr Natesan was the recipient of warm congratulations from many distinguished persons in India and England.

Mr. Natesan was nominated to the Council of State in 1924 and renominated in 1931. He has been a very active member of this body and his utterances in the Council have been always characterized by sobriety and common sense.

Mr. Natesan was an ardent congressman in the early years of that institution, when it was being guided by men like Mehta and Gokhale. But when it began to plough the barren sands of non-co-operation he seceded from it. He is even now a staunch liberal in politics. He is not, however, a dreamer but has a keen eye to the practical side of politics. He was one of the witnesses examined by the Public Services Commission in 1912 and by the Repressive Laws Committee in 1921. In 1928 he was invited to join the Empire Parliamentary Delegation to Canada where he created a very good impression by his tact, the vigour and wisdom of his speeches and his frank, pleasant and gentlemanly manners.

His public activities are not confined to politics. He has taken a leading and important part in the civic life of this city. He has been a member of the Municipal Corporation of Madras for about a quarter of a century. He has also been working actively in the field of education in this Presidency. He has been a member of the Senate and the Syndicate of the Madras University for more than 20 years. He was chosen with two others to represent this University at the Universities Conference which was held in Simla in 1924 and in Delhi in 1929.

Though Mr. Natesan is now 60 years of age, he is vigorous in body and mind and has many years of useful public life before him. I wish him long life and prosperity.

## Dr. Sir Profulla Chandra Ray, Kt., C.I.E., D.Sc., Ph.D.

SOME time in 1918, if I remember aright, I was invited by the Madras University to deliver a course of lectures. Mr. Natesan took a deep interest in this matter and throughout my stay of a week he acted as my friend, philosopher and guide. Since then I have been to Madras several times and come into close contact with Mr. G. A. Natesan. He once took me to his publishing house and I was surprised to find that none of his publications was a prescribed text book. I was rather agreeably surprised at this, because in Calcutta, the publishers have to depend mainly on prescribed text books and their "Aids" "Digests" "Compendiums" and "one day preparation series". Mr. Natesan is a prince amongst the publishers. The *Indian Review* under his efficient editorship has deservedly earned a high reputation. The general get-up and editing of his publications are of a high order. No wonder that he should be so successful in his own line, but he is something more. He is a patriotic and public spirited citizen. He has made the question of the disabilities of our countrymen in South Africa, his own and in connection with it he had the privilege of receiving Mahatma Gandhi as his guest a few years ago. He has been a prominent figure not only in Civics but also in the University of Madras. May he live long and continue his useful career!

## Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmaniam

MR. NATESAN stands out as a unique instance of a man who had worked his way up by his force of character. He has identified himself with useful public movements not in a dilettante manner but seriously and strenuously. To his efforts we owe the Ripon statue, the Gokhale statue and the V. Krishnaswami Iyer statue. His work for the relief of the Indians in South Africa is well known. These are just what come to my mind now.

His plain speaking and exposing of dishonesty created a host of opponents and cavillers. He ought to have been President of the Corporation. I hope and trust he will be Mayor.

It is a happy change of spirit in the public life of the Presidency that his whilom opponent in politics should engage himself actively to do public honour to Mr. G. A. Natesan. It is a happy augury for the future that men who have laboured in public causes are shown appreciation. I wish one did so more often.

## Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, B.A., B.L.

*Editor, The Hindu, Madras*

I need hardly say how great a pleasure I feel and how great a privilege I consider it to respond to your\* invitation to felicitate The Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan on the occasion of his Shashtipoorthi. Among the contemporaries of Mr G. A. Natesan, who have known and possessed an intimate knowledge of his life and public activities, I claim to be one of the oldest. I was his class-mate at the Presidency College, where even during his student-life, he showed that capacity for devoting himself to organised public work (which distinguished him in later life) in the conspicuous part he took in bringing up the College Literary Association and developing its activities, so as to make it a most useful part of our College work in those days. I was one of those closely associated in that work and despite controversies with him which often put us on opposite sides, we had always secured beneficial results from that useful organisation, during the time of his Secretaryship.

Mr Natesan took to journalism much earlier than myself and he was not only the architect of his own fortunes, having been born of poor but thoroughly respectable and high-caste parentage, in the Tanjore district, but he has also been able to establish in the *Indian Review*, an example of journalistic enterprise upon which so many of his successors in the profession have modelled themselves and expanded later on. The testimony to the conduct of that journal on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee will be still within the memory of its readers, and I do not propose, as a fellow journalist, to sing the praises of one among ourselves.

Of Mr. Natesan's public activities, it is wholly needless for me to write. Possessed of a restless and ever-active brain, he has always refused to be bottled up in narrow grooves or deterred by opposition or difficulties. He has chosen of late not to play the role of the active, assertive publicist that an earlier generation was so familiar with; but even where he provoked opposition, he almost always obtained the devoted and staunch support from many people, from leaders like the late Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar and from colleagues and subordinates equally enthusiastic with him. But whether he obtained the unstinted but critical co-operation of his late brother, who was in Government service, or the uniform indulgence and

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\* Letter addressed to Mr. B. Natesan, Assistant, *Indian Review*.

generous support and sympathy of the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Sastri, or the severely critical but equally sympathetic co-operation of the late Mr. K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar, or whether he encountered opposition elsewhere, at no time did he falter in the pursuit of strenuous public work and of all that he considered to be in the public interest. That, with his great abilities, qualities of industry and steadfast application, with his readiness to seek and give help to others, he should have succeeded so well both in his private affairs and in his public activities, can hardly be a surprise to all those who have known him from his boyhood.

It is hardly necessary for me to recount here Mr. Natesan's varied activities in the political life of the country and the civic life of the City, but I would be failing in my duty if I did not record, on this occasion, the eternal debt of gratitude under which he has placed our compatriots in South Africa by his fight for their cause all through the years of their great struggle.

I need hardly say how much satisfaction it gives to those who have worked and moved with him during these eventful years to be able to congratulate him on the completion of sixty years of strenuous and most useful life and to pray for God's blessings for an equally long, happy and prosperous life for the future.

## Mr. Francis Low

*Editor, The Times of India, Bombay*

**I**NDIA to-day stands on the threshold of self-government, autonomy in the provinces and a very large measure of responsible government at the Centre through an All-India Federation. There lies before the people of this country the unique opportunity of managing their own affairs in the best interests of India's vast population. No royal road to happiness and contentment exists under a democratic form of government. Their achievement depends on the influence, both at the polls and in the administration, of men of solid worth and moderate views. Extremism in any form is liable to cause trouble, both political and economic.

Mr. G. A. Natesan belongs to the category of men with sound and moderate views who have served India well in the past and shall, we hope, enjoy the opportunity of serving her better in the future. A keen nationalist in the best sense of the term and a staunch Liberal, he has, as Editor of the *Indian Review* and as a public man, done his country good service. In congratulating him on attaining his sixtieth birthday I hope that both he and his paper will continue to give that disinterested service to the country which they have done in the past.

## Mr. V. C. Seshachariar, B.A., B.L.

**M**R. NATESAN, my friendship with whom commenced nearly three decades back, has just reached the 60th milestone on the long journey of life. We both had the proud privilege of enjoying the genial friendship of the late lamented Mr V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, C I E , at whose kind suggestion it fell to my lot the pleasant task of editing of the translation in English of the text of the principal Upanishads and of Sri Sankara's Commentaries thereon. Straight from the College, Mr. Natesan started life as a Printer and Publisher and he readily and willingly came forward to undertake the printing of these Upanishads which have run into five volumes and have passed through three editions. This enterprise of ours brought us together almost in daily contact and laid the foundation for the growth and fostering of the most intimate friendship between us.

The memorable visit to our City early in 1897 of the illustrious Swami Vivekananda, on the eve of his departure to America, in connection with the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, brought us both in close touch with the revered Swami, and I as the Honorary Secretary of the Reception Committee and Mr. Natesan, as the Uncrowned King among the Madras Students vied with each other in making that Reception the splendid success that it proved to be. We also worked side by side for several years as Councillors in the City Corporation and as members of the Senate of the Madras University and of the Madras Mahajana Sabha and the several Congress Committees.

Mr. Natesan's work as a Publisher and Publicist is well known and needs no special mention at my hands. He is to-day a distinguished member of the Council of State and his journal, the *Indian Review*, among whose earliest sponsors I may here take leave to mention our eminent countryman, the Right Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, has come to occupy a foremost place among the journals in our land.

It is but fitting that with this long and intimate association of our minds and hearts for nearly thirty-five years, I must accord to myself the privilege and pleasure of conveying to my dear and beloved friend the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan and his life-partner, my heart-felt blessings with my most fervent prayer to the Giver of all bounties to confer on them both a long spell of health, happiness and prosperity.

## Mr. Henry W. Nevinson

YOU\* ask me for a few words in honour of Mr. G. A. Natesan, editor of the *Indian Review*, and in celebration of his sixty-first birthday. It is a difficult task, for it is now twenty-five years since I was in India, and the whole situation has changed since then. Those were the days when the Swadeshi movement was only just beginning. Lord Curzon had only lately retired, and his Partition of Bengal was rousing violent indignation. Lord Morley was Secretary of State for India, and Indians were naturally astonished that he had imprisoned Lala Lajpat Rai and another suspect without form of trial. The division between Moderates and Extremists had just shown itself, and it led to the uproar at the Congress meeting at Surat, at which I was present. That Congress then collapsed, and the outlook for advance in the great country became very dark. All the more when, just before the meeting of Congress, an attempt was made upon the life of Mr. Allen, Collector at Dacca, one of the earliest signs of the danger of political assassination.

I was intimately acquainted with both Gokhale, whom I regard as the wisest statesman I have known, and the finest nature of a man; and Tilak, the leader of the Extremists, a fine scholar of fiery temperament. I also knew Arabinda Ghose, the profoundly thoughtful saint among the Extremists. All the other leaders of Indian opinion in those days I knew and admired, though their opinions were often contradictory.

In that time of extreme difficulty and danger, I met G. A. Natesan in Madras and was much attracted to him, as I have since been in one of his visits to London. He has always seemed to me a man of calm courage, well restrained by good sense and a knowledge of realities. The position of such a man was hard enough in those distant days, and it must have become much more difficult since the great changes in Indian methods and objects. What then seemed extreme would be almost moderate now, and there is always a temptation among reformers to be carried onward to extreme party for fear of being left behind and losing influence. I have known so many fine natures ready to cry, "No matter where I stand so long as I stand with the furthest Left!" The mere mention of Srinivasa Sastri's name among the supporters of the present tribute is enough to prove to me that Mr. G. A. Natesan is not one of those unreasoning crowds.

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\* Letter to Mr. B. Natesan, Assistant, *Indian Review*.

I have always admired the skill and judgment with which he has carried on the *Indian Review*, and I honestly wish I had been able to contribute more to it, as he has often so kindly invited me. I now wish him all prosperity and a long and active life still before him. I am many years older, but still active and capable of admiration for such as he.

## The Hon. Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar

**W**IDELY known as the editor of the *Indian Review*, the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan was one of the earliest to take to journalism. His lives of the great men and women of India and his volumes of the speeches of the eminent orators and statesmen of the land would do credit to any firm of publishers. There is no doubt that these publications of his have greatly contributed towards the awakening of India. The *Indian Review* is easily one of the foremost journals of India.

Mr. Natesan belongs to the liberal school of Indian Politics. Avoiding sensationalism he keeps himself always in the public eye. He is a believer in "Dominion Status" for India. Like other liberals, he does not believe in agitation, subversive of law and order, as a means of securing the end in view. He takes an abiding interest in the condition of the Indians overseas and he never misses an opportunity of upholding their cause and doing his bit for them. The *Indian Review* has always a page or two devoted to Indians abroad which serves to constantly remind us of our countrymen overseas and their hardships and disabilities.

As an elected Councillor of Corporation of Madras, as an elected member of the Senate and the Syndicate of the University of Madras, as a member of the Council of State, as a member of a number of Committees, he has always played his part well. An ardent student of Economics he was the first, I believe, to induce the University of Madras to promote economic and commercial studies.

Though sixty years old now, he is still known as G. A. Natesan just because of the love the public have for him and his activities befitting a youth. May he live long and continue to be useful to the public in all possible ways is my earnest prayer to the Giver of all good!

## Mr. A. V. Patwardhan

I came in touch with Mr. G. A. Natesan under peculiar circumstances. The Late Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale was thinking of collecting a band of workers round about him who were to devote themselves for their life solely to the service of the motherland. In the month of November 1903, he had been to Sangli as the guest of the Late Rao Bahadur Achut Bhaskar Desai, who was then the administrator of the Sangli State, owing to the sad demise of the late Chief of Sangli. One day I happened to meet Mr. Gokhale on the road between Sangli and Miraj. When our conveyances crossed each other, he beckoned me to stop and I immediately stopping the *tanga*, got down from it and went to the carriage of Mr. Gokhale. He enquired of me as to what I was doing then and I gave the usual reply that I was preparing for the LLB. examination, on which he told me that he wanted to gather round him some workers, who are to devote their lives to the service of the motherland, and asked me if I was prepared to join him. The question was an unexpected one and naturally I was confounded. After some other talk he asked me to meet him at his residence the next day for further discussion of the idea. After that we had several talks between ourselves during the next week. Messrs. G. R. Abhyankar and V. K. Mankar and Dr. Deo were present at the time of some of these talks. Eventually it was settled that I was to give my final reply to Mr. Gokhale in the month of April of 1904.

After thinking to myself and after consulting my friends and relatives, I told Mr. Gokhale that I was willing to serve under him in the month of May 1904, when he was in Poona. In July 1904, I went to Mr. Gokhale, and the first work that was asked to do, was to go to Madras with him at the time of his visit to that city, to lay the foundation-stone of the Ranade Hall, that was to be built in Myslapore. Mr. Gokhale had then undertaken the responsibility of putting the Congress Organ—*Indu*—on self-supporting basis, which was possible only by increasing the number of subscribers to it. Madras Presidency was considered as a proper field to begin this work, and I was to be the first canvasser in that Presidency. I was to go with Mr. Gokhale to Madras and after the function of laying the foundation ceremony was over, I was to stay on in Madras after Mr. Gokhale's return and do the canvassing work. Some household mishap prevented me from accompanying Mr. Gokhale to Madras at that time, but I went to Madras immediately after, with introductory letters from

Mr. Gokhale to Mr. Natesan and to the late Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar. At the time of my first visit to Madras, Mr. Natesan's man had come to the station to receive me and so I went to his residence, in Thumboo Chetty Street, in the Black Town (George Town) as the part of the city was then named, straight. On my reaching the residence of Mr. Natesan, I was received by him warmly and also by his mother. Natesan's brother's children were in the house. I knew not the Tamil language at all and so after Mr. Natesan left for his office, I had to carry on myself with signs of hands to get whatever I wanted. Mr. Natesan was a busy man both by temperament and by his engrossments. Mr. Gokhale had asked him to guide me in my work and I stopped in Madras city for several days and was the guest by turn of Mr. Natesan and of Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar, according to the part of the city in which I did my canvassing work. At night whenever I was with Mr. Natesan, we always spent hours in discussing political problems of the day which, though then appeared to us to be difficult, were compared to to-day's problems very simple. In Mr. Natesan's house before long, I became one of its inmates and the affectionate treatment which I got there, is remembered by me even to-day.

Mr. Natesan's elder brother Aiyar was of a different temperament. He was a quiet gentleman, but of deep thought.

When I was going to Madras for my canvassing work later on in the year 1905-1906, Mr. Aiyar was in Government service, but in his talks with me, always expressed his desire to resign Government service and take up to some work of industrial bias, which will be of real use to his countrymen. Mr. Aiyar later on resigned his service and took to the publication of Industrial Magazines. Mr. Natesan since, before I met, was editing and publishing his *Indian Review*. By the conduct of this journal Mr. Natesan has served his countrymen well. In addition to this work of the journal, Mr. Natesan was publishing small pamphlets of various sorts, which has educated the middle class to a great extent and has supplied information about topics of the day. This service of Mr. Natesan is, in my opinion, valuable and he is doing it till to-day. Mr. Natesan had in him a vast store of energy of which best use has been made by him. When I began my work as a follower of Mr. Gokhale at this start, I came in contact with a man like Mr. Natesan and it has influenced me very much. The way in which Mr. Natesan conducted himself in his office and in his Press,

became a good example to follow. For three years successively, I came in touch with Mr. Natesan and his example has benefitted me much, when the work of the Press Management was entrusted to me. Mr. Natesan has got his present status in life owing to his personal qualities and I wish him long and useful career. I request young men to study Natesan's life, and if they pick up some of his ways, they are sure to serve their motherland well.

### Mr. Ferrand E. Corley, M.A.,

*Principal, Madras Christian College.*

THE first time I met G. A. Natesan (I think) was in the Senate of the University—the old Senate of the Curzon Act. I had heard much of him—had been pressed (who had not?) into the service of the *Indian Review*, but had not met him. It was in the periodic meetings of the Senate that I really came to know him.

Where many are giving their impressions I must be brief and cut out things that are secondary. Two things stand out in the impression he made on me.

(1) He had personality. There were scores of Indians in the Senate, plenty of Brahmans: there was no one quite like Natesan. Quick, alert, full of life—when he spoke, whatever the subject, it was always an outburst—he impressed you as a man who “gets there”. I began to understand the success of the *Indian Review*, the creation of a man who had the force, the originality, to take a new line and to make the thing go.

(2) He really cared about education. That does not mean he always thought as I did. He is a fighter. I am not, but I sometimes get involved in a fight, and we sometimes found ourselves on opposite sides. But, in alliance or hostile, I could always respect G. A. Natesan, because he was genuine. There were many in the Senate—even those put in as “educationists”—who showed no obvious interest in education, no deep sense of its value. But here was this man—a journalist before all things—who really cared, who was fiercely, passionately interested in education for its own sake.

We often differed, but that was no bar to friendship. I learnt to look for the kindly smile, the friendly twinkle of the eye, which all know. It is a pleasure to join in doing him honour, a privilege to be able to claim him as a friend. Long may he live!

## Mr. C. F. Andrews

IT is a very great pleasure to me to write for the pages of the *Indian Review* a word of congratulation to its worthy editor, the Hon G. A. Natesan, on the completion of his sixtieth year. My memory goes back to a day in November, 1913, when I had reached Madras along with my friend, Willie Pearson, on the way to South Africa. Mr G. K. Gokhale had asked us to go out to Natal, at a crisis in the South African Indian struggle, and we had stopped at the port of Madras on our outward journey. We had taken to 'Natal Direct' steamer, thinking that it would reach Natal before the B I S N. C. boat, which started from Bombay. The choice of steamer was an unfortunate one, as it turned out, because by taking this direct route to Natal, *via* Colombo, we were caught in the wake of a vast hurricane and suffered terribly on a very small boat from the buffeting of the winds and the waves. We also arrived in the end later than the steamer which went from Bombay down the East African coast, calling at every port

But the one advantage of this journey was that we came into close touch with those in Madras who were most deeply concerned of all about their own fellow-countrymen in South Africa. For it must never be forgotten that by far the larger proportion of those who had gone to South Africa under the old, bad, indenture system were from Madras,—chiefly Tamils from the South. Only a small number came from the U P. and the Punjab.

It was during this visit that I first was brought into close touch with Mr. G. A. Natesan, the genial Editor of the *Indian Review*. He was altogether enthusiastic and whole hearted in his sympathy with Mahatma Gandhi and his brave band of followers,—both men and women,—who had been willing to go cheerfully with their leader to prison and had suffered incredible hardships while so doing. Mr. Natesan was twenty years younger at that time. He was full of energy in any cause he undertook with his whole heart. Mrs Besant, also, was then at the height of her remarkable powers, and her personality carried the greatest weight in Madras as a social and religious reformer. She spent herself night and day in the cause of the oppressed Indians in Natal and Transvaal, when once she had taken up their cause Her interest never flagged. Bishop Whitehead, too, had actively taken up the South African Indian cause; and if I remember

rightly, Willie Pearson and I stayed at his bungalow on that occasion. It was a wonderfully inspiring time, for both of us. We had never visited Madras before this date. Our meetings during the short stay we made in the city were full of intense enthusiasm and created earnest sympathy with the Indian sufferers in Natal. We heard later, when we reached South Africa how shortly after we had left, the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, visited Madras and made his calculated 'indiscretion', speaking of the 'indignation burning and deep' which had been felt all over India on account of the brutal treatment of the Indians in Natal by those who had the power. Those were great days in India and the whole of India was united. With regard to that bold speech, I found out later that the Governor-General of South Africa, Lord Gladstone, had been vexed at Lord Hardinge's action which he much resented. But when I mentioned it to General Botha, he took no objection to it. 'Of course,' he said to me, 'the Viceroy would stand up for his own people!'

Looking back over the twenty years that have elapsed since then, it is easy to see what invaluable help the *Indian Review* has always given to the cause of Indians Overseas, and especially in South Africa, by bringing to notice month by month the grave injustices under which they have so often suffered. Though things are much better now than they were,—owing chiefly to the work of Mahatma Gandhi and the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri,—the treatment they receive is still unjust and their political rights have all been taken away. The Indians who are now growing up have no franchise at all. What little they had in the municipalities has now been taken away. As a community, they have shown remarkable powers of progress and self-development, but their political rights remain *nil*. They have no place in the body politic of Natal, but are kept outside the franchise altogether as though they were aliens and foreigners in the land of their birth. It is impossible, with a rising, educated community, for this state of things to continue much longer, and the persistent effort of the *Indian Review* to call attention to this gross anomaly must in time along with all the efforts, that have been made in the long run have its effect.

All through these intervening years, up to the present time, Mr Natesan's interest in the South African Indian Problem has never flagged. He welcomed, with all his heart, the choice of the Rt. Hon.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as the first Agent-General—a choice that was made at the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi. He supported him warmly in his efforts to found a College in Natal. He also gave his full support to his successor, Sir Kurma Reddi. Certainly, Madras Presidency has given her best to help the cause of South African Indians which Mahatma Gandhi first brought before the full notice of the Motherland. He has done yeoman service towards the upliftment, out of moral and economic and political bondage, of the agricultural labourers who had gone out under indenture to Natal. The moral and economic bondage is in many respects now removed since the indenture system has been cancelled, but the political servitude remains unredressed.

At the end of the present year, if what I have already planned is carried out, it is my earnest intention to go out again, for the eighth time to assist in the Indian settlers in Natal. The one great hope I have in my mind is that, on this occasion, I may be able to do something to remove the last vestiges of the repatriation evils from the Indian community and to obtain their full and frank recognition as an integral part of the life of Natal which is very rapidly becoming their own birthplace and the only home they know. Physically they thrive there better than in India itself, and if certain restrictions can be removed and liberties achieved, they should advance in other directions also. By a great united effort of cultural and technical education, they should be able in five years' time to prove themselves an indispensable asset to the common life of Natal, and if they can thus show their sterling worth, they will be able to claim in the end as their own inalienable right the political citizenship which has been denied them hitherto. No one will rejoice more than the Editor of *Indian Review* if this happy result can be accomplished.

## Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha

*Editor, The Hindustan Review*

I hasten to convey hereby my unstinted appreciation of the very valuable work done by the Hon'ble Mr. Natesan as the founder and editor of the *Indian Review*, in particular, and as a Liberal public man, in general. I am glad to learn that he will complete his sixtieth year on the 24th August. I offer him my heartiest felicitations and wish him a long life of useful public activities.

## Mr. K. M. Panikkar, M.A. (Oxon.), Bar.-at-Law

THE Honble Mr. G. A. Natesan has been for so long a time a prominent figure in the public life of the country that any appreciation of his services or tribute to his personality from one like me must savour of impertinence. It is only the auspicious occasion of his Sashtuabdha-poorti when, if at any time, an individual may look back upon the record of his work, and his friends and admirers may with justification recall his services to his country, that persuades me to send to the *Indian Review* these few lines of appreciation. Mr. Natesan is one of the few public men in Madras who have been connected with every aspect of its activity. He has been a member of the Madras Corporation for a longer time than any other of our city fathers. He has, for perhaps an equally long time, been a leader of opinion in the Senate and Syndicate of the University of Madras. As a journalist his record is well known. As Editor of the leading *Review* in South India for 34 years, he may well claim to be the doyen of the profession. As a publisher of popular political books he was a pioneer and his influence in shaping the opinion of the youth of the country is something which every one willingly acknowledges to-day. In the field of active politics, besides his contribution to the cause of Indians overseas, he has been closely associated with the Liberal party from its inception and has represented that school of thought in the Upper House of the Central Legislature.

Others more qualified than myself will no doubt write with knowledge on these aspects of Mr. Natesan's life of varied activity. I shall confine myself to one trait of his character which has appealed to me more than anything else; and that is his desire to encourage those who are younger than himself. It was in December 1918 when, as a young man just returned from Oxford after my education that I went to see Mr. Natesan with a letter of introduction from Mr. H. S. L. Polak. I had no claims of any kind on him or on his paper excepting Mr. Polak's introduction. Mr. Natesan was not merely kind in the superficial and often supercilious way in which our elders receive young people who have no claim on them. He positively insisted that I should write an article for the *Indian Review* and suggested to me a dozen different subjects. With some hesitation I undertook to do so and within the next few days the article was written and despatched. I was indeed surprised to find that the next issue of the *Review* gave

the article the place of honour. Surely an extraordinary instance of generosity to one who was totally unknown to the public and undeserving of such distinction.

It should also be mentioned that two days after the publication of the article, I received a cheque for Rs 15 which I prized very greatly as it was the first sum which I earned and naturally enough, with the enthusiasm of youth I hoped that coming from so orthodox a source it would be the forerunner of many more in the years to come. Apart from the personal aspect, this prompt payment for articles is indicative of Mr. Natesan's principles in life, exactitude and promptness. They were principles which he extended to all his spheres of activity and much of his undoubted success may be traced to his scrupulous adherence to these principles.

There is only one other aspect of Mr. Natesan's life to which I would draw attention that is his spirit of self-effacement. All those with whom he worked or who sought his collaboration in public causes ascended to eminence, so to say on his shoulders. It would seem that the surest way to success in Madras public life is to secure the active sympathy and co-operation of Mr. Natesan but Mr. Natesan, let it be said to his credit, remains the same. Mr. Natesan, the active and enthusiastic worker in all good causes without a regret and I might say without any tinge of envy. May he live long to serve the cause of national journalism, civic life and university education as he has done in the past!

## Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan

*Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University*

IT is a pleasure to know that the well-known Editor of the *Indian Review* and publicist of Madras, the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan, is completing his sixtieth year. Throughout his active life he has been taking interest in practically every public concern and institution of Madras. At a time when it is so very difficult to conduct successfully monthly magazines, he has been able to make his *Review* a valuable force in the political affairs of the country. It is no exaggeration to say that his publications have been a potent instrument for the political education of many of our politicians. I wish him and his journal a long career of further usefulness.

## Mr. S. Anantanarayana Aiyar, B.A., B.L.

IN the old days when the Universities and Colleges were not so many as at present and the *pial* schools flourished, it used to be a very common phenomenon for the humble teachers of these schools to point out with pride to an ex-pupil of theirs who had risen to greatness or otherwise attained a distinction. My position with respect to the Hon Mr Natesan is very much like this I can proudly point out to him as an old pupil of mine and enjoy by reflection some of the greatness to which he has attained. I have always felt that no man attains prominence and distinction in this world by a mere chance and that success in life is very often dependent on how you utilize your chances and this again is a matter of individual adjustment. I quite remember the Hon Mr. Natesan coming up to me, in 1889, a bright little boy, for admission into the sixth form of the Triplicane Anglo-Vernacular High School now the Hindu High School of which I was then the Headmaster. His brother and I became neighbours and friends and partly because of this and partly because of the impression created by the boy, I took to him readily and he passed through the school in the usual course. Our relationship did not end there. His brother and I became stronger and stronger friends which meant that I continued to come across Natesan almost every day as long as I was in Madras and very frequently after I left for the moffusil. I was thus in a position to follow his career. It was, I think, a surprise to us from the point of view of an ordinary college student that Natesan was not brilliant and I think it took one or two years longer to work through the Inter and B A. Exams. But even when he was a student there were signs of the dynamic energy of which all of us have had experience and promise of a career quite different from that of the ordinary student. If I am not mistaken, within the period of his college studies he had established his claims to be regarded as an exceptional boy and was regarded with a special smile and favour by the Professors of his College and many other high officials including the Governor. The sight of this little boy running about arranging for lectures and debates and securing the services of high placed officials whether to deliver addresses or to preside over meetings was something altogether new. But I do not think all this gave promise of his future career. To resume the narrative, after his college career was over and he became

a graduate, he took altogether a new line for his career in life. He joined a newspaper office as an apprentice and in this capacity acquired a fluency in expression and opportunity to acquire information and utilize it for journalism in a manner which must have been the envy of many a young man who was Natesan's contemporary. From an apprentice journalist to a journalist was an easy step in the case of Natesan and as I have stated on a former occasion the *Indian Review* was born a few years after he left the Presidency College as a Graduate I remember quite well the circumstances in which the *Indian Review* came into existence. The starting of the journal had been talked of informally amidst a group of friends including the late Mr. G. A. Vaidyarama Aiyar, Natesan's brother, myself, the late Prof. K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar and Mr. (now the Rt. Hon.) V S Srinivasa Sastri. I had invited them all for a short stay at Maduranthakam where I was employed and it was then decided to start the *Review* Natesan had the shrewdness to perceive that probably he was too young to take over full responsibility for running the journal and got Prof. K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar and the Rt Hon. V. S. S. Sastri to run the journal for a time. I believe it was for a year. Then he dropped those two "pilots" and started off on his own responsibility and all of us know what a tremendous success the journal has been. The credit is entirely Natesan's. No other could have maintained the journal and run it as an advertising medium as he has done. His methods were almost unprecedented and his energy inimitable. No wonder the journal leapt into success and fame and has been keeping it up. I am very proud that one of my pupils and friends should have come up so well in life. I think people like Natesan should have received special treatment in schools and colleges and should not have been made to run through the ordinary mills of Stocks and the Binomial theorem, of Logic and the ports on the west coast of Spain, all knowledge the acquisition of which, I think, was a waste of energy in the case of exceptionally constituted students like Natesan. The LT's had not been scattered abroad so thickly as they are now, for the Teachers' College was only a few years old when Natesan was a student. I readily admit that though I was the Headmaster of a high school, I did not see my way to devise any special method for the instruction of the exceptional boy like Natesan nor were there any facilities for such a procedure. Our classes were large, they were badly located and neither I nor my assistants

had the time to do anything more than to work out the dull routine of an ordinary school curriculum. All these must have been galling to an exceptional boy like Natesan. I know that he is fond of relating a story against me and the late Prof. K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar of a heavy imposition in Geography which he had to suffer. I am not sure the story is correct but things like that were not uncommon. I do not know how things are at present in high schools but when an example like that of Natesan and one or two others that I remember as a part of my school experience convinces me that in every school and college there ought to be facilities for dealing with special individuals. I can understand how disagreeable for Natesan it must have been to spout out the derivations of words, the names of the queens of England in regular order, the imports of Australia and the exports of Holland. Anyhow despite these disadvantages, he has risen to greatness and fame and we are exceedingly proud of it. He has attained the age of sixty, another fact of which we are all proud. May his further life be a long, healthy and a happy one!

### Sir Kurma Venkata Reddi

**L**ET me congratulate you\* on the celebration of your Sashti-Poorthi. Your varied activities in journalism, politics and social reform are well known to the Indian public. The *Indian Review*, the first monthly journal to be started in South India, has led the way to many less successful rivals. As the earliest publisher in Madras, you had undertaken the arduous task of presenting the country with compilations of the speeches of Indian National leaders and their lives. As a liberal politician you have served the country from the city council and the Council of State, and as India's representative to the Empire Parliamentary Conference. You have proved yourself worthy of our great nation.

Indians abroad owe not a little to you. You have brought home to the Indian public the appalling condition under which your compatriots lived in foreign lands.

You have reason to look back with satisfaction and pride upon the sixty years of your life, most of which you have spent in the service of our country. Let me wish you long life and prosperity.

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\* Letter to Mr. G. A. Natesan,

## Sir M. Visvesvaraya, K.C.I.E.

I first met Mr. G. A. Natesan, some seventeen years ago while he was on a visit to Bangalore with Mahatma Gandhi in connection with the propaganda for the protection of the interests of emigrant Indians in South Africa. I have also followed in the press his varied public activities as a member of the Madras Municipal Corporation, a Fellow of the Madras University and a member of the Council of State in Delhi.

The *Indian Review* which Mr. Natesan founded 33 years ago has maintained its position ever since in the front rank of periodical journalism in India. There is hardly a department of activity or aspect of Indian life—social, political, literary, economic or scientific—in which the *Review* has failed to interest itself. Its comments on the status and welfare of Indians in foreign lands have been particularly well-informed. Mr. Natesan's interest in the welfare of Indians residing abroad and his staunch advocacy of their cause have doubtless materially contributed to the attention given to that subject by the Government of India in recent years.

I am glad to have this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Natesan on the occasion of his sixty-first birthday and of wishing him many more years of continued success and distinction as a journalist, legislator and leader of public opinion in this country.

## The Hon. Sir M. B. Dadabhai

*President, Council of State*

I write to offer you my sincere and hearty congratulations on the occasion of your completing the sixtieth year on August 24th when your Sashtiabdapoorthy will be celebrated. You have been a successful journalist and a publicist of great reputation for over three decades and your work in the Corporation, the University and the Council of State is well known and well thought of not only by your friends and admirers but by the general public. You have conducted the *Indian Review* for over 33 years with great success and masterly ability. Your untiring and indefatigable energy, your sound and sober judgment, your affability and moderation have attracted attention not only in your Presidency, but throughout India. I send you my best wishes for your continued good health and prosperity and hope for many more years under your distinguished Editorship the *Indian Review* will continue its useful work.—*Letter to Mr. G. A. Natesan.*

## Mr. F. E. James, M.L.A.

I have known the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan for more than ten years, and for the past five years, since I came to Madras, I have had the privilege of knowing him as one of my best friends. This is, perhaps, not the place to speak of the intimacies of a friendship which has meant much to me in these years. I will only say that during all the changing conditions in India, this friendship has never lost its qualities of staunchness and frankness. Our political differences, when they have become marked, have never in the least degree strained our relationship as friends, and that is a tribute to its complete sincerity.

In the public sphere, I have known Mr. Natesan as a colleague on the Madras Corporation, and as a distinguished member in the Upper House of the Central Legislature. As a citizen, his work on the Corporation is well known. It is marked by devotion and sincerity. He is now the senior Councillor and it would have been fitting had he been elected to the Mayoral Chair as the first citizen of Madras. It was not to be, however, and Mr. Natesan's speech in congratulating his successful rival will long be remembered for its magnanimity and eloquence. "He nothing common did or mean upon that memorable scene."

As an honourable Member of the Council of State, Mr. Natesan has distinguished himself by his common-sense, nationalism and sturdy independence. His position as a nominated member he has never allowed to fetter his independence. His experience as a business man makes him an invaluable member of committees, and a constructive debater on economic and financial questions. Respected and trusted by all—whether Government or Opposition members—he is a good asset in the Council of Elder Statesmen.

It is difficult to think that Mr. Natesan is entering his 61st year. He has the physical vigour and mental freshness of a young man. I profoundly hope that he will not contemplate retiring from public life for many years to come. Given a continuance of that physical strength and alertness of mind which now characterise him, he can do so much in the coming years for his Mother India. It is true that new forces are moving, and a younger generation is shortly

coming into power, with fresh ideas, and different programmes. But there will be a place, and an important place in the New India, for the Elder Statesmen,—for the men who, though ripe in knowledge and rich in experience, yet move with the times and can appreciate the rapid march of events. Such a one is my friend Mr. Natesan, and I pray that he may be spared many years of useful service in the cause of his beloved country.

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19, ALBERT ROAD,  
ALLAHABAD,  
25th August 1933.

### Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru

DEAR MR. NATESAN,

I am very sorry that I have been unable to write to you\* so far. The fact is that since my return from England during the last 14 days I have been extremely busy and am trying to cope with the accumulation of my work. Nevertheless, I was reminded yesterday morning (the 24th of August) of the celebrations in honour of Mr. Natesan and I accordingly sent him directly a telegram of my greetings and best wishes.

My friendship with Mr. Natesan goes back to some thirty years ago during which period I have always held him in the highest esteem for his personal qualities, ability and character. If he had done nothing else but built up a paper like the *Indian Review* and brought out the many publications, which he has issued from his Press, he would have been entitled to the gratitude of his countrymen. He has, however, done a great deal more. In public life he has illustrated in his person a fine example of earnestness and level-headedness, which—to my mind—are far more valuable qualities than mere brilliance or party legerdemain.

My tribute to him, though belated, is none the less sincere. Please give him my best regards.

Yours Sincerely,  
T. B. SAPRU.

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\* Letter addressed to Mr. B. Natesan, Asst., *Indian Review*.

## Mr. K. S. Venkataramani, M.A., B.L.

I honour Mr. G. A. Natesan for his fine record of work ranging over a period of thirty-five years at a time of difficult transitional values. His work has been helpful to the political awakening of the country. It was pioneering and successful work. And success means the presence and development of certain valuable social and civic qualities. Mr. Natesan deliberately chose journalism as his career at a time when it was the easiest and most tempting thing for a graduate to enter the Government factory as a secretariat clerk and emerge after twenty-five years as a retired deputy collector and finally settle down in a town adding to the chronic confusions of our urban life.

Mr. Natesan's success in the sphere of his own choice is distinctly traceable, like all successes worth mentioning, to an attitude to life and the possession of certain definite qualities. He is fairly rich in the temperament which the West usually recognises and rewards with money. He believes in work, some work on some plan on a small and tidy scale, regularly a few hours a day. Nature rewards none so surely or gratefully as she rewards the steady worker who gathers the honey drop by drop.

Natesan is always business-like, almost demonstratively business-like. He is quick and decisive and almost always in an excitement to tell you of his possession of these fine qualities that go a long way to make for success in life. At some early and thoughtful period of his younger life, probably between the ages of twenty-five and thirty, the formative period of struggle, he had fashioned by his own self-help and for his own use, a nice little foot-rule to measure and assess men and things. So much so whatever proposition you may offer him now for his consideration, new or old, immediately his judgment is given. And next to courage, I think in evolution decisiveness is the quality most valuable. At any rate I have been always happy to meet people of this kind in distracted and indolent India where even when you want to buy an ounce of sugar from a grocery shop you are made to wait for hours longing for the thing. Natesan's virtue is that he knows his limitations well, and he employs an aggressive caution and hard and intensive work within the limits

of his choice. This always ensures success and he rarely suffers from the dream agony of idealists who would gather grapes of thistles. His primary defect as a public worker is his lack of imagination and a certain absence of faith in deep and renovating thought in the major issues of life and the higher things of the spirit.

Mr. Natesan is not vindictive and that is a fine quality. It adds so much to the charm of living in this cross-grained and conflicting world. Mr. Natesan is not a listener—his foot-rule philosophy won't allow it. Otherwise G. A. N. would have added inches to his stature. No Indian is a good listener save for one I have known, the late Kasturiranga Iyengar, a beautiful listener charmingly sympathetic to merit and aspiration.

Mr Natesan has earned a well deserved rest. But by temperament he will seek rest only in work. I hope it will be the full timed service of a public worker. Manian Natesan and Chandran have enough grit to organise and improve the Publishing House which Mr. Natesan has so laboriously wrought as a pioneering enterprise.

## Mr. Arthur Moore

*Editor The Statesman*

I first met Mr. Natesan in a game of tennis, and I seem to have seen him playing that game not very long ago, so that I was very surprised to be invited to celebrate his sixtieth birthday. It is a great pleasure to congratulate him on this auspicious day and to wish himself and the *Indian Review* many more vigorous years. He has made of it a really valuable comprehensive organ. Its wide catholicity of taste and the number of distinguished writers whom he has gathered to support him ensure that his readers will have put before them the best that is being thought and done in India, in politics, sociology, art, literature, and science. Nor is Mr. Natesan an arm chair politician. Before he was elderly, he was already an elder statesman, and in the Council of State the practical wisdom which informs his speeches is universally recognised. You may see him often in the lobby of the Assembly also, for he has the *entree* into all camps and is a counsellor behind the scenes. In a federal India, his store of wisdom should take on new value.

## Mr. F. H. Brown, C.I.E.

*The Times, London.*

AS a fellow journalist engaged for many years in the study of Indian questions, I feel it an honour to be asked to pay my tribute of regard for Mr. Natesan on the completion of his sixtieth year. I have known and read the *Indian Review* from its inception at the beginning of the present century, and have always been struck by the wealth of information brought together within its pages. It has played a great part in the advancement and enlightenment of public opinion in India. One of the greatest services which Mr. Natesan has rendered has been that of the publication at very moderate prices of the speeches and writings of many distinguished Indians, as well as those of British public men connected with the country. In this way he has brought within reach of the humblest students the ideas and arguments which have helped to mould India into nationhood. Not only so, Mr. Natesan has found time to render great service as a speaker and as a member of the Legislature. His *Review* has been a powerful force in India for reasoned progress. It is a matter for satisfaction that his son is associated with him in the enterprise, and now that the founder of the *Review* has reached his *Sashtiabda-Poorthi*, we may hope that he will be spared the more exacting tasks of editorship, though his experienced guidance will be needed while India is being directed into the new channels of provincial autonomy and federation.

## Sir Alladi Krishnaswami

*Advocate-General of Madras*

LET me convey my hearty greetings to you on the eve of your *Sashtiabda-poorthi*. It is not very many in this country that have to their credit your long and distinguished record of public service in different spheres of activity. Your activities have been manifold and varied and it may be invidious to single out any particular sphere of your public work for appreciation. You have done the pioneering work in this Presidency in the field of high class journalism. If for nothing else you are entitled to the gratitude and esteem of your countrymen as the talented Editor of the *Indian Review* for over a quarter of a century.

Wishing you the returns of many more happy birthday celebrations and many years of useful public work.—*Letter to Mr. G. A. Natesan.*

## Mr. Yakub Hasan

**I**N partnership with three merchant friends of Bangalore I opened a business on the Mount Road on the day the twentieth century began, and my business was hardly three months' old when Mr. G. A. Natesan came to me for an advertisement for the *Indian Review* that was then in its infancy. The journal had attracted my attention in Bangalore and as its regular reader I was already favourably predisposed towards its editor. A few minutes' conversation between the enterprising merchant and the budding journalist was therefore enough to make them mutual admirers and a friendship was struck then and there that has withstood the storm and stress of one-third of a century.

Mr. Natesan is a self-made man and he has made himself according to his own pattern. It is not given to every one to embark on a career of one's own choice, and people generally find themselves as a square peg in a round hole, and they joggle along somehow, making the best of the opportunities that happen to come in their way. But Mr Natesan knew in what direction his personal inclination ran, and he chalked out for himself a career that he was quite confident he would make a success of.

He made a hobby of his business and a business of his pleasure. He cultivated the art of writing and the art of speaking, and he made it his business to print what others wrote and spoke. Writers and speakers were his heroes, and imitation being the sincerest form of hero-worship, he loved to quote in his writings and speeches the eminent personages that he admired. While many a publicist would show off other people's productions as their own, Mr. Natesan's characteristic has always been to bring out authorities to support his pleadings to such an extent that uncharitable critics would even deny him any claim to originality. He has collected in his mind as well as in neatly got up volumes almost all the contributions that Indians and non-Indians have made in his time for the glorification and advancement of his Motherland, and the enormous national literature of this kind that he has gathered together and disseminated forms the best monument of his services to his country and people.

Mr. Natesan has in him all that make a pioneer of industry or a man of business. The spirit of adventure in him was tempered with caution, and he carefully calculated the cost of every project that he contemplated be it only the printing of a pamphlet. This habit of

balancing the ins and outs of a thing made him a useful member of every public body that he joined and of every association that he organised. Therein lies the secret of his success as a Councillor of the Corporation and Senator or Syndic of the University.

Considering his temperament, Mr. Natesan's politics could not but be of the moderate variety and if he is more forceful to-day in his criticism of the Government policy and measures, it is due to the fact that his patience and that of other Liberals is well-nigh exhausted at the ill-conceived tendency of the Britishers to tighten instead of loosening the shackles of India. There was a time when Mr Natesan invited me to join the Congress when it was held in Madras in 1914 (?) and I was remaining out on the plea that I would join the Congress only when I had brought my community to make common cause with the Hindu community in the fight for self-Government. My wish was soon realized at Bombay where the Congress and the Muslim League met in special sessions and formed a Joint Committee to formulate a scheme of India's constitutional advancement. Our friendship and the part we both played in bringing about this happy inter-communal co-operation was often pointed out as the best specimen of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Our ways, alas, parted when a moment arrived for the supreme sacrifice. An episode in my life, which gave me the sublimest spiritual satisfaction and which opened a way for the greatest service that any one could have rendered to the Holy Book of Islam, caused the greatest mortification and pain to my dearest friend and he regarded it as a supreme act of unwisdom at a time when the highest office in India under the British Crown was within my grasp. His friendship did not suffer the slightest diminution in those trying times when more fickle people were afraid to be seen in my company.

### The Hon. Sir Edward Benthall

**L**ONG before I met Mr. Natesan I used to read the *Indian Review* with the greatest appreciation which was naturally enhanced after I had the pleasure of meeting him, and later in being associated with him on the Council of State. I have always admired the sincerity with which he puts forward his views, and when views are put forward in such a way they must always command respect. Long may he continue to carry on the work to which he has devoted himself.

## Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, K.C.I.E.

I first met Natesan soon after I entered the Presidency College and he was then the very important Secretary of the Presidency College Literary Society. Before he came on the scene, it was the usual type of dead-alive institution rousing itself whenever some public man spoke before it, but generally somewhat unbusiness-like and fairly dull. Natesan infused into it all his liveliness and genius for publicity. No important personage passing through Madras or resident in it escaped his attentions and each one of them had to pay his toll by speaking before the Literary Society. Everyone of the students who had the possibilities of being articulate was forced to contribute to the discussions. Reserved and shy as I then was, I was forced to take part in the debates of that body although I very often played the truant and escaped the vigilance of Natesan, Natesan himself took vigorous part in the talks, and as usual with him disdained his grammar but was forceful and clear and made his meaning perfectly obvious. Then as now he made fast friends and never concealed his dislikes. I well remember the tempestuous manner in which he succeeded against some of his colleagues who proposed a vote of censure on his work as Secretary of the Society.

His business capacity demonstrated itself even then and he actually printed and began to sell the Addresses delivered before the Presidency College Literary Society. This and his connection with the University Union which was then a very important body constituted his apprenticeship in journalism. He did not bother very much about academic distinctions and took the very common sense view that it does not very much matter in later life how many marks one got in some examination decades ago. He determined however to be a graduate and became one.

Soon after, he started the *Indian Review* modelling himself on Stead's *Review of Reviews*. He initiated the practice of signed articles and succeeded in getting a formidable list of notable contributions. Illustrated journalism and popular biographies of Indian notabilities were amongst his innovations. With his matchless gift for improvisation and buttonholing he hauled in his journalistic net Viceroys and Governors and tourists and politicians. Many of us remember how rapidly he made the acquaintance of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and pressed him into service when he was travelling in India as Member of a Royal Commission.

But these outer activities of Natesan and his success in business and steady and continuous work in the Corporation and the Senate, as a member and office-bearer of the Liberal Party and as a Member of the Council of State are matters so well known that they need not be detailed at length. I would rather draw attention in this small sketch to the extent and the fervour of Natesan's loyalties. When I was an Apprentice-at-law working in the chambers of Mr V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, I often met Natesan in those chambers in company with a notable band comprising Mr V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (as he then was), Mr. G Venkataranga Rao, Mr K B Ramanathan and others. Political discussions used to be fast and furious and differences of opinion not infrequent. Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar's temper which was not of the sweetest was often frayed. Natesan's voice grew hoarser and hoarser and his contradictions almost incoherently vehement. But the friendship between Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar and Natesan grew the stronger for each personal and political quarrel and subsequent and swift reconciliation; and I am not exaggerating when I say that great orator and statesman as Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar was, he gained at least as much by association with Natesan as Natesan gained by association with him. I am not putting it too high when I assert that the talents of Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar would not have been brought to light without the aid of two loyal friends of his, Gokhale and Natesan.

One most engaging trait in Natesan is his capacity to make friends with persons of the most diverse types. Gokhale and V. S. Srinivasa Sastry, and N. Subba Rao, Gandhiji, and K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar, Wedderburn and Wacha what differences of temperament and personality are disclosed in the bare recital of these names! and with all of these men, Natesan was at home and served them with equal zeal and loyalty. His great services to Gandhiji when he came to Madras on behalf of the South African Indians are too well known to recapitulate. And from that day to this although differing from him in politics, I know that Natesan's faith in and intense loyalty to Gandhiji has never wavered and has been reciprocated in full measure.

It is by virtue of these qualities of the heart more than of the head that Natesan occupies the place which he now does in the public life of the country. He is a good friend and the gift of friendship connotes the gift of hatred and he is a good hater too. Whether you disagree or agree with Natesan, you cannot ignore his vivid and intense personality, his desire and ability to get things done and his fundamental loyalty to causes and persons whereto he is attracted.

## Dr. Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary

I had the pleasure of visiting in 1921 Mr Natesan's publishing house replete with volumes of lives and speeches of great notabilities who had contributed to the making of the nations. I blushed at his amiable offer to include amongst his enormous, nay, Homeric list of notabilities a sketch of my life and activities. With a proper sense of restraint upon which I still pride myself, I thanked and declined. Mr Natesan's publications are cheap. They are well got up, handy and useful. Even a casual perusal of his catalogue is a study in national bibliography. From a small beginning the publishing house has grown enormously with the willing assistance of his capable and devoted sons. May it grow from more to more!

Not the least of Mr Natesan's achievements is the *Indian Review* now in its 34th year of its highly useful existence. It has two remarkable features—the strict insistence of the philosophy of “nothing for nothing”. It has no “free list” nor does it seek or encourage “free contributions”. The labourer is worth the hire and every contributor receives a cheque. The occasional symposium of public opinion on public questions in the *Indian Review* is always a thing to look forward to and profit by. A feature of the *Review* is that it maintains a pleasant and dependable photo gallery.

Mr. Natesan is a true Liberal in every sense of the term—a worthy colleague of stalwarts like Sir Sivaswami Aiyer and Dewan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao.

I can not very well recall to mind my first acquaintance with Mr. Natesan. It ripened into intimacy soon—by 1921 when the Liberal Federation met at Madras under the presidency of Mr. C. Y. Chintamani. His sterling qualities of head and heart and his social virtues manifested themselves and were the basis of mutual goodwill and esteem and led to a lasting friendship. I was closely associated with him later on as a Member of the Council of State on which we worked side by side in the cause of the country.

In all the spheres of public activity he was and is a true Liberal in the broad sense of the term. Fearless and independent yet circumspect and courteous in all his views and expression.

His civic activities are marked and animated by the same liberal instincts and spirit as his other activities.

## Rao Sahib A. L. Pinto, B.A.

**L**ET me congratulate the Hon. gentleman on the very auspicious occasion. I know him from his boyhood days. In fact we were class-mates in the Presidency College together in the very early nineties. He was the Editor of the Presidency College Young Men's journal and the Secretary of the Literary Society. In these capacities even in those far off days he knew almost every one worth knowing in Madras. I don't remember a single instance in which Mr. Natesan did not come up for praise as the "Energetic Secretary" of the Society whenever any function was got up under the auspices of the Society. All his lifetime up till now his life has been one of energy. I remember the day when the first issue of the *Indian Review* came out of the Press which was founded by him and edited by him from the outset. Mr. Natesan has more than fulfilled the promises of earlier days and now he is one of the most noted Public men of Madras. May his shadow never grow less!

## Khan Bahadur Yahya Ali, M.A., B.L., M.L.C.

**P**LEASE permit me to offer to you my sincerest felicitations on the occasion of the celebration of your Sashtabda-Poorthi. It has been the glorious feature of your life that the best portion of it has been consecrated to the service of the Motherland. You may feel sure that the country will rejoice to realise that despite the strain of such arduous service you have maintained your strength, energy and zeal unabated and to fervently trust that there is yet before us a long span of life during which we will have the benefit of your guidance and lead especially since in the coming days of radical changes, the personalities of sober veteran national leaders like you will have the national capital which is the only insurance against abuse or deterioration. Personally it gives to me and to every member of my family the most refreshing happiness and I feel as if one of the eldest and venerable members of our family has achieved this badge of age and wisdom. I pray to God that you may be spared long to us so that we may join in the celebration of many an occasion like this in the course of your valuable and eventful life. (From letter to Mr. Natesan.)

## Prof. C. S. Srinivasachari, M.A.

*Annamalai University*

IT is a rare privilege for Indians to be able to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Institutions of their own creation. Mr. Natesan celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his *Indian Review*, eight years ago; and he now goes through the ceremony of *Sashtrabda-Poorthi*, in the midst of his wife, children and relations and friends, in the mellow sweetness of ripe age, riper wisdom and worldly prosperity. He has worked as a publicist for well-nigh forty years and as editor for nearly four-fifths of that span; and he preserves to-day the same vitality and zest for work, the same zeal for thoroughness of organisation and personal supervision, and the same geniality and softness and generosity of heart, although veiled under a crust of seeming severity, that marked him when I first came to know him nearly a quarter of a century ago. I have had unique opportunities of knowing him intensively and moving with him intimately almost as an adopted member of his family; and I have always found in him a frank and open counsellor and one ready to do a good turn, if it were in his power, spontaneously and without the necessity of either reminder or pressure. I have worked with him in various capacities as a regular writer and frequent contributor to the *Indian Review*, an author of portions of his publications, as a Joint Secretary, along with him, in the first years of the existence of the Madras Liberal League and as a fellow-worker in several good causes that he championed and laboured for. I have come to know him well in his several phases of activity, and to get to know him well is always to be liked, trusted and loved by him in turn. I should not make this tribute of mine a catalogue of the favours and kindnesses I have received from him, and I am sure there are several others who can bear testimony of equal, if not greater, weight, to the numerous virtues of heart and head that mark him. His fraternal love and reverence to his elder brother and the way in which he conducts his household have been valuable lessons to me and to others.

I wish and pray that Mr. Natesan and his *Review* may both be blessed with greater vigour and prosperity and become more deep-rooted landmarks—the one in the field of public life and the other in the area of healthy and serious journalism,

## Mr. B. Natesan

*Asst., The Indian Review*

I know well the thoughts and hopes that I should desire to speak ; but they are evasive, subtle things, and too often, like shy birds, will hardly let you approach them

A. C. BENSON.

**A**N occasion like this naturally recalls memories and incidents of a career crowded with fruitful labours. Doubtless there will be many who would dwell lovingly on Mr. Natesan's success in business and politics. G. A. N. has many happy gifts—a good appetite, a sanguine temperament, and ambition just equal to his ability, and a mind not too subtle or philosophic to enjoy the good things of life or feel the ardour of success. Success indeed has come his way—not as a sudden freak, but as the fruit of patient toil and diligent application. The Gods have been kind to him too : for the blessings of health, wealth and happiness have come to him in good measure. . . .

G. A. N. must be happy in the thought that two generations of youth have been nourished on the political and biographical literature of his creation. Time brings its own disillusionment, but I can hardly forget the thrill with which in those days I read his *Biographies of Eminent Indians*.

His first publication—*INDIAN POLITICS*—(1898) with an Introduction from the pen of W. C. Bonnerjea, one of the founders, and President of the first Session of the Indian National Congress—set the tone and standard of the literature that has issued from the house of Natesans during the last three decades. The aim was to educate public opinion in this country and to rally the British democracy to the cause of Indian freedom. And every foreign mail carried bundles of this literature to the men who counted in England.

I don't know if this double work—a necessity peculiar to the circumstances of this country—has ever been more zealously pursued.

It is not my desire to give a catalogue of all his publications but I must refer to an enterprise on which he had long set his heart. G. A. N., as a publisher, had long cherished the ambition to put the *GITA : OR THE LORD'S SONG* into the hands of every English knowing youth in the country. Thanks to the courtesy and generosity of that noble lady—Dr. Besant—more than a hundred thousand copies of that classic are now circulating in the country. . . .

Thirty years ago when public life in South India was in the making, G. A. N. was already an "inevitable". He gravitated towards

the great men and movements of his time with an aptitude that seldom comes of mere cultivation. Early in the first decade of the century, Vivekananda in the sphere of religion and Gokhale in Politics had captivated his imagination and he doted on them with the generous enthusiasm of youth. It might be the expression of ebullient life or a whim of publicity—he was in the company of the first men of his generation. . . .

G. A. N. has an uncanny sense of propriety and he always makes sure of the causes he espouses. Not that he is ever on the winning side—for it is sometimes glorious to fight even a losing battle—but he has a *flair* for the right thing and he seldom betrays himself into a false position. In politics as in business he shows the same judgment—an intuitive perception of the limits of practicability. In a world of infinite diversity, “each of you,” said an ancient philosopher, “are equally right relatively, equally wrong, absolutely”. The one thing that matters is the sincerity of conviction and the ardour with which we pursue the right according to our light. Hence it is that G. A. N. counts among his intimates men of diverse political thought. He could be seen hob-nobbing with men in khaddar as well as those in top-hat. . . .

The office of the *Indian Review* has been the meeting place of men who have moulded public opinion in our time, and my memory goes back to the days when ardent Congressmen gathered round his roll-top to discuss their agenda. for it is these small private parties that really think and plan for the big meetings. I recollect again how the Mahatma—then plain Mr. Gandhi of South African fame—squatting on a carpet and sweetly reasonable, was trying his wits on the stalwart Liberals of Madras, in a vain attempt to distinguish between legal and constitutional action. V. S. S., K. B. R. and G. V., familiar with the Mahatma's inexorable logic, discreetly withdrew, while the parrying was continued by a stout-hearted lawyer. Those were days when prison was a dreaded demogorgon, and decent men had a wholesome horror of it. “If we defy the law we will be arrested and sent to jail,” said good old L. A. G. in all solemnity, as if there could be no more dreadful calamity. “Exactly”, echoed Mr. Gandhi, “we will fill the prisons”—a thought that stupefied the constitutionalist. I think it was after one of these talks that Mr. Gandhi hatched his famous oath of resistance to the Rowlatt Bills. Was it

in that stuffy room behind the hall that he sought a few undisturbed moments to write his lucid article on . . . ? G. A. N. can tell. . . .

That reminds me of the mild surprise that Lord Pentland Governor of Madras, created by walking straight into the bookshop one fine afternoon. But that was nothing to the shock he gave officialdom by accepting Mr. Natesan's invitation, on behalf of the Reception Committee, to the Madras Congress of 1914. That fine act of courtesy and statesmanship was subsequently eclipsed by the blazing indiscretion of the internment of Mrs. Besant.

Pentland was in fact a kindly, old Scotchman, simple in taste and unconventional in his ways. And it is an irony of history that his name should be coupled with an act which, in all probability, was forced on him against his better judgment. G. A. N. himself had, as the Rt. Hon. Sastri humorously put it, "the distinction of a gubernatorial warning". But I prefer to remember Pentland by that courageous acceptance of the Congress invitation and the splendid tributes that were uttered on the occasion by two of the most accomplished orators of the time—Surendranath Banerjea and Bhupendranath Basu. . . .

G. A. N.—as Editor of a well known journal and head of a publishing house—was, I think, better known in England than many leaders of repute in India. Not a month passed without some M. P. or tourist presenting a note of introduction from well known public men in England with whom G. A. N. had evidently been on familiar terms. I now recollect one afternoon, when the present Prime Minister, then a member of the Royal Commission on Public Services in India, stepped out of a tram-car opposite the Y. M. C. A. and quietly walked into the office of the *Indian Review* with Lord Ronaldshay (now the Marquis of Zetland) and Sir Valentine Chirol. I don't know if Mr. Ramsay MacDonald brought the customary note from dear old Sir Wm. Wedderburn, but I am sure the late Lord Carmichael did produce the letter with the familiar, upright and rounded calligraphy of Sir William's. So I think did Mr. Charles Roberts, Mr. Montagu, and Lady Cynthia Mosley and a host of others. It is touching to see with what affection and regard he still speaks of Sir William Wedderburn. Would that such friendships were more common! . . .

G. A. N. has been happy in his friends and he cleaves to them with Boswellian fealty. For those who were his friends thirty, forty

years ago—alas! a steadily diminishing number—are still his best friends. And he is never more happy than in the company of these old, tried friends who love him alike for his weaknesses as for his virtues. I suppose he is happiest chatting with them at the beach on summer afternoons or entertaining them at his own hospitable house in Mylapore, revolving many memories and recounting the words and deeds of the giants of an earlier era. . . .

G. A. N. has the reputation of being a hard taskmaster and a quick impulsive person with a temper that is sometimes the despair of those nearest to him. Like all successful men he is apt to be abrupt in his manners and decisive in his dealings. But it is invariably the concomitant of a character that is mobile to a degree seldom realised either by himself or by those around him. Himself a tireless worker he does not suffer fools or idlers gladly. The calm of the philosopher who leaves things where they are, is not his. He may not be an artist in life, but he knows how to get things done, and he is in a hurry to do it as if the day of judgment is at hand. All the fussiness and the endless torrent of words spring out of an abnormal anxiety to put things in order. He is not a citizen of the world in the sense that you can be indifferent to your neighbour. He has no pretensions to universal benevolence. His circle of dependents may be narrow but that only deepens his interest in them. He is unsparing in his efforts to relieve them. And as Providence is said to help only those who help themselves he is exacting in his demands. That is the cause of his iron rule over his family or his office. His plain spoken words cut but they also cure. But every one knows his mind, he has no malice, and is never implacable. He is obsessed by trifles and a misplaced pin-cushion or a missing blotting pad throws him into a flutter. And then there is not a trivial detail with which he does not bother himself. I sometimes used to fear that in the counting of the trees he would forget the wood. But his judgment in weightier matters has seldom been at fault. That judgment comes of commerce with men and wide experience of life and affairs. For life has not been for him a dreamy thing, lived in soft fantastic reveries; it has been far the reverse. And he could truly say with the writer with whom, however, he has least in common: "I have practised activity, I have taught, worked, organised, directed. I have watched men and boys, I have found infinite food for mirth, for interest, and even for grief." . . .

Gibbon, in concluding his AUTOBIOGRAPHY, wrote approvingly of the choice of Buffon who "fixes our moral happiness to the mature season in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established on a solid basis". This, surely, is autumnal felicity. But with the prudence of the 18th century moralist he added that "these enjoyments would be tasteless or bitter if their possession were not assured by an annual and adequate supply. And I am indeed rich," he wrote, "since my income is superior to my expense and my expense is equal to my wishes". To my mind G. A. N. is in a similar happy position. And he has the additional satisfaction of knowing that the business that he and his brother built up and nurtured with such infinite care and toil will be tended with filial piety and devotion by his two sons. It is an inheritance of which they may well be proud. Manian and Chandran Natesan are already trying to relieve their father of much of the responsibilities of the publishing house. It must do the father's heart good to see his business growing more and more prosperous under the fostering care of devoted hands. Working with the rest of the staff and subjected to the same discipline the sons are familiar with every branch of the office work from proof reading to the preparation of the Income-tax account. They have had the benefit of practical education under the immediate guidance of the father and, if I may say so, are truly chips of the old block. Manian is trustful and generous to a fault while Chandran has something of the tough fibre of the businessman. I believe they are an excellent combination to sustain and enhance the reputation of the house of Natesans. . . .

A word about some others long connected with the firm may not be out of place. G. A. N. has a warm corner for them and the evening of his days is tinged with pleasant memories of their services. For he is not of that too common species, known in our group, as the self-made monstrosity. T. S., one of his earliest assistants, who quitted service in search of fresh woods, and pastures new, now five and twenty years ago, is seldom out of his mind, and whenever business or public work takes G. A. N. to Bangalore, he never misses him. T. S. has prospered under another sky and is grateful for the early training and the good auspices under which he began his career in the house of Natesan's. For there is a legend that G. A. N. has the Midas touch.

C. A. S. is an old classmate of Natesan's who joined the firm at its christening and retired only after it attained its age. In his time (he gave 18 years to its service) the firm grew lusty and strong and G. A. N. is never tired of acknowledging his indebtedness to his devoted labours. In those days C. A. S. was a picture of ease and dignity and what with his lace turban and silver snuff-box he was an impressive figure at the desk. He was passing rich with £30 a year but it did not prevent him from keeping up the traditions of the old Tanjore aristocracy. C. A. S.'s works are still there, piled on the massy shelves "more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left and full as useful". Only the other day as I sauntered round the office hand in hand with him, I showed him those leather bound ledgers "dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight". He has now exchanged the office for the open air hobby of gardening and Sutton's list of seeds has taken the place of the Day Book. I wish him an appetite equal to his interest in French beans and tomatoes.

It is pleasant to see the veteran Cashier now, (on a holiday visit) tending the master's plants in the garden with the same care with which he was wont to deal with his books of yore. I could see the old relation between master and assistant, never rigid, now steadily giving place to newer courtesies. And as they move about under the arched mango groves of Mangala Vilas, I guess they are talking of old times and their own intrepidity, and good humouredly smiling over the ineptitude of their successors. I do not grudge them their complacency. They have toiled to make our task easy, and as the evening shadows lengthen, a merciful Providence endows their memory with the soft colours of the sunset.

S. has literally grown grey in the service though he is still growing strong like a famous Scotch brand. A near relation of G. A. N.'s, he has been more or less a member of the household. There is a feeling that his very presence is a benediction, and no religious function nor any important transaction is undertaken without his blessing. He fixes the date for G. A. N.'s journey to Simla or Delhi; he writes the family document; and his counsel is always respected as of one who not only means well but whose participation is of the essence of success. As religion affects every aspect of a Hindu's life, his counsel is not always convenient to the modernist. G. A. N., like so many of us—"light half-believers of

our casual creeds,"—sometimes affects indifference to old ways but his courage fails him in the end and he succumbs to S.'s warning. The Fates, however, have dealt with S. rather unkindly but he bears it up with meekness and resignation as becomes a pious Brahmin. G. A. N. has endeavoured to give him relief but like a well known character in Byron he instinctively turns to his wonted labours in the office. It would be cruel to disengage him from the work of years—that is at once his recreation and solace. And though the mid-day sun is apt to send him to his slumbers, there is not a more diligent man in service than dear old S. For often have I heard the rest of the staff wondering at his energy and competence at *his* age. My felicitations to him in anticipation of *his* Sashtiabdha-poorthi!

K's services began, I think, with G. A. N.'s wedding and he is still the one servant equally at home in the office and at his residence. Both he and the Wharfdale which came with him have done their bit well. The latter has retired and yet this superannuated man goes on heedless of the years. He rocked the boys in their cradle and is bent on serving the third generation with equal gusto. May his heart's wish be fulfilled!

N. joined service as a lad of nine and is now master of all crafts from motor cleaning to the packing of Railway parcels. The young proprietors liked him as a playfellow as he strolled about with a marble in one hand and a whistle in the other. He began by learning the names of books by the pictures that adorn them! and now his knowledge of letters is so complete that he can distinguish GANDHI'S SPEECHES from the MISSION OF OUR MASTER. N. has now grown into a whiskered son of Islam aspiring to the joys, as he thinks, of matrimony. It is good to have pleasant illusions. Yes, let him marry and multiply! . . . .

The writer of these notes seldom indulges in personal reminiscences but the intimate, almost day to day association with one of such ebullient nature as G. A. N. for close upon two and twenty years could hardly have left him unmoved on an occasion like this. G. A. N. like Elia's excellent cousin insists on the prerogatives of primogeniture. When I joined the staff he was 15 years older than myself and he never waived his right to give advice and guidance. Nor has he since. May he continue long in the same mind: and when he shall be eighty—we can not spare him sooner—may he still persist in treating me "in my grand climacteric precisely as if I were a stripling"!











